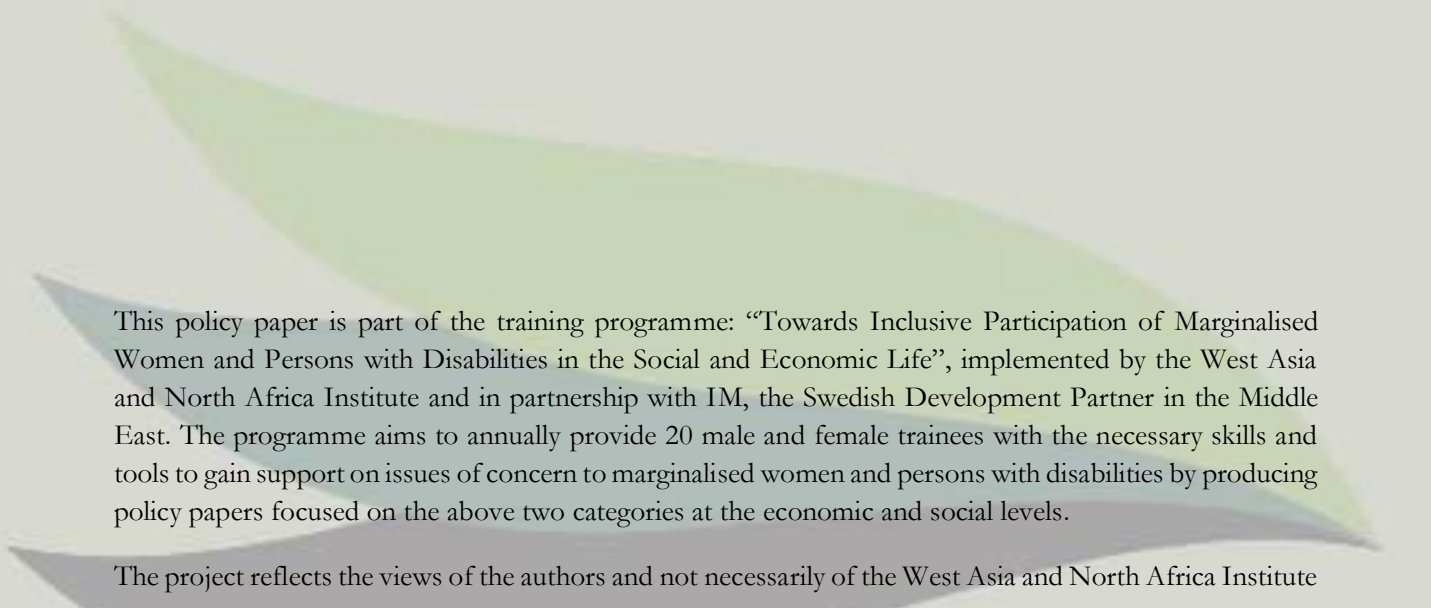


Media Monitoring of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the Official Jordanian Newspapers: Al-Rai and Al-Dustour





This policy paper is part of the training programme: “Towards Inclusive Participation of Marginalised Women and Persons with Disabilities in the Social and Economic Life”, implemented by the West Asia and North Africa Institute and in partnership with IM, the Swedish Development Partner in the Middle East. The programme aims to annually provide 20 male and female trainees with the necessary skills and tools to gain support on issues of concern to marginalised women and persons with disabilities by producing policy papers focused on the above two categories at the economic and social levels.

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Authored by: Enas Al-Duwaikat, Soraya Al-Maabrah, Rima Damjj, and Safa Abbasi.

Reviewed by: Hayat Al-Shoubaki

Translated by: Abeer Abu Saud

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1 Introduction

The media is considered one of the most important tools that influence the culture of a society, as it works to spread awareness about various societal issues and needs, and accelerates the dissemination of concepts, terms and ideas to form a public opinion that reflects the society's point of view¹. The media plays important roles on several levels, as it is the mirror of political, cultural, social and economic development, it also reflects the many developments that countries are witnessing. The media plays a major role in educating and spreading awareness of human rights in the political, economic, social and intellectual fields.

Nowadays, the media's role is clearly increasing; due to its role in influencing the lives of individuals by spreading awareness, educating and increasing their information, and highlighting the needs of different segments of society, such as: persons with disabilities. Words are important; the way people are talked about can completely change the way they are seen. Changing the way persons with disabilities are talked about and represented in the media can change society's views of them, and thus the negative social stigma surrounding disability can begin to fade. This enhances the ability of persons with disabilities to participate economically and socially².

The role of the media highlights the right of persons with disabilities to emphasise their rights, and portray them in the correct manner that is in line with the human rights approach, which considers the issue of persons with disabilities to be a human rights issue in the first place, thus moving away from the caring approach that expresses their issues either on the basis of pity, or as an extraordinary heroic achievement, which reinforces the stereotype image about them.

2 Executive Summary

The International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities called on ratifying states, including Jordan, to work on raising societal awareness of the rights of persons with disabilities, and to take a number of measures that enhance awareness of their rights through the application of these measures, including: Encouraging the media to highlight the rights of persons with disabilities in a manner consistent with the Convention and its content and in a manner that does not violate their rights³. This paper aims **to clarify the extent of the official written media commitment, especially Al-Rai newspaper and Al-Dustour, to tackle the rights of persons with disabilities correctly based on the human rights approach.** The paper also aims at shedding light on the extent to which media organisations and institutions are committed to the recommendations contained in the 2017 Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities with regard to media entities. The paper also presented general policies designed to contribute to tackling the

1 Radhi, Haider. 2018, The role of the media in shaping community awareness, Gulf News
[/http://akhbar-alkhaleej.com/news/article](http://akhbar-alkhaleej.com/news/article)

2 Media guide in dealing with issues of the rights of persons with disabilities, the Supreme Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. 2018

3 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities for the year 2008, Article (8), ratified by the Jordanian government in 2008

challenges faced by persons with disabilities in the media. The two newspapers were chosen based on Al-Dustour newspaper ranking first and Al-Rai newspaper ranking fifth in the most influential Arab newspapers for the year 2020⁴.

This paper relied on the "content analysis" approach to produce its results, because this approach suits the purposes and objectives of monitoring the journalistic content, and analysing it in a human rights manner based on the "Say and Don't Say" booklet on how to use legal terminology⁵ to correctly mention persons with disabilities⁶, and the media guide issued by the Supreme Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, in addition to the International Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities regarding how to raise awareness about them⁷. The monitoring was done in the first week of July 2021, in addition to desktop analysis and in-depth semi-structured interviews with a number of experts and activists in the field of media and the rights of persons with disabilities.

The paper concluded that the Jordanian official newspapers contain topics about the rights of persons with disabilities at 2% of their total content, moreover the problem lies in the method of including their rights in a 'caring' approach that completely contradicts the human rights approach used in "Say and Do Not Say", as well as marginalising them in some articles and news, and also sometimes failing to mention that the referred to person is with a disability. This contradicts the basis for "raising awareness" according to the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The paper presents a set of general policies; **with the aim of increasing the inclusion of the rights of persons with disabilities in the official Jordanian newspapers - Al-Rai and Al-Dustour - in a human rights manner, and contributing to raising societal awareness of the rights of persons with disabilities quickly and effectively.** These policies were as follows:

1. A policy for developing written media that includes rights for persons with disabilities, aiming to reach a society that possesses awareness and culture of the rights of persons with disabilities.
2. A policy to enhance the capacities of journalists in the field of the rights of persons with disabilities in the official written newspapers institutions, aimed at contributing to the creation of a media institutional environment that deals with persons with disabilities in a human rights manner.
3. A policy for the functional integration of persons with disabilities in the official written newspapers, aimed at achieving the principle of justice and equal opportunities for persons with disabilities in the official written newspapers.

4 Most Influential Arab Newspapers: Rankings of the Year 2020, Industry Arabic for Translation.

https://industrvarabic.com/ar_/most_influential_Arabic_newspapers/

5 Al-Azzah, Muhannad. (2018), Say and don't say in the field of the rights of persons with disabilities, The Supreme Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

<http://hcd.gov.jo/sites/default/files/Say%20and%20not%20to%20say.pdf>

6 Maghribi, Ziyad and Shaheen, Tasneem. 2018, Media Guide for Dealing with Issues of Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Supreme Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

http://www.hcd.gov.jo/sites/default/files/Media%20Guide_0_0.pdf

7 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2008, Article (8), ratified by the Jordanian government in 2008.

3 Key Terminology

- **Media Monitoring:** “It is a tool for researching a topic through data collection, verification and analysis in order to solve the problem or work on minimising it, and this is done within a specific period of time in order to achieve accuracy and objectivity of the monitoring process. The mechanism for data collection varies according to the topic being monitored. This could be done through observation, monitoring, or visiting the site related to the monitoring process. This method seeks to shed light on the violations that may exist in the media, whether those suffered by the media itself or the society, with a focus on the responsibilities and duties provided by the different media”⁸.
- **Persons with Disabilities:** “Those who suffer from long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory disabilities, which hinder their interaction and full participation in the society and limit meeting their requirements of normal life, and who depend on others to meet such requirements, or their need for a special tool that requires training or special rehabilitation on how to use it properly”⁹.
- **Official newspapers:** “Printed or digital newspapers that are considered a government entity in the country. They contain news and general information, as well as information on the course of events and the subsequent criticism and observations from people. They reflect the public opinion towards certain issues and situations, and they are sold on fixed periodic dates if they are printed newspapers, or are always available if they are digital newspapers, and readers can view them by subscription or purchase”¹⁰.
- **Al-Rai newspaper:** “A daily Arab political newspaper issued by Jordan Press Foundation (Al-Rai), distributed to all governorates of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, headquartered in the Jordanian capital, Amman. It’s first issue was published on June 2, 1971 during the government of Wasfi Al-Tal. One of the founders of the newspaper, and the first editor-in-chief was Nizar Rashid Al-Rafei”¹¹.
- **Al-Dustour Newspaper:** “One of the Jordanian press institutions, the first issue of which was published in March 28, 1967, as a result of the union of the two newspapers, Palestine and Al-Manar. It carried the name of Jordan Press and Publishing Company, and then worked on issuing Al-Dustour newspaper as well. Since its publication, the most important writers, journalists, technicians and press administrators have worked and written for it”¹².
- **The Human Rights Approach:** “It is the approach related to human rights which deals with the issue of the human rights of persons with disabilities based on the law so that the state is responsible for giving persons with disabilities all rights, and the ministries, government agencies and civil society organisations are obliged to give them their rights based on the law and not as a gift or grant from anyone. The approach of the provided

8 Guide to Monitoring and Dealing with Frequently Asked Questions and Issues, First Edition, 2019, Sultanate of Oman

<https://www.omaninfo.om/images/library/file/Book381888.pdf>

9 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities for the year 2008, Article No. (1), ratified by the Jordanian government in 2008

10 Ali, Kanaan. 2017, Journalism - its concept and types.

11 Malkawi, Faisal, managing editor of Al-Rai newspaper, 27-3-2017, press interview, see the link:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20171222050726/http://www.watanhor.com/news/>

12 “Al-Dustour Celebrates Its 43rd Anniversary,” Ammon News Agency.

<https://www.ammonnews.net/mobile/article/57226>

services is based on rights, not services, and it is sustainable and comprehensive, such as: maintenance and health follow-up, and dealing with persons with disabilities is not based on sympathy, but rather based on the full legal capacity of the person with disabilities.¹³

- **The Caring Approach:** “It is the approach that mainly depends on dealing with the issue of persons with disabilities as a humanitarian and health issue that needs the caring of the society and the kindness of charities and government bodies. This approach relies on an unsustainable methodology, as it relies on providing temporary, unsustainable services to persons with disabilities, such as: granting wheelchairs...etc. this approach doesn’t have an integrated sustainable national strategy, and it mostly relies on compassion.¹⁴
- **Awareness-raising:** “The International law did not define the meaning of awareness-raising, which is generally considered a broad term that includes the promotion of communication and awareness, with the aim of improving understanding and mobilising the local community to bring about changes in attitudes and behaviours. Awareness-raising programmes include a number of interventions, such as: organising public campaigns training courses, seminars, workshops, use of the formal education sector, audio-visual and printed materials, and various efforts on social media. Raising awareness of human rights enables individuals to take an active role in decisions that affect them, including mandatory efforts to defend and promote human rights”.¹⁵

4 Legal Framework

International standards guaranteed the rights of persons with disabilities through the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which included a set of general principles to be taken into account when working to promote and protect their rights, and its basis is respect for the inherent dignity of persons, non-discrimination, full participation in society, and respect for differences as part of human diversity, equal opportunity and access, and equality between men and women¹⁶.

Article 8 of the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities stipulates that the states must take immediate, effective and appropriate measures to raise awareness of all its components of society about the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities, combat stereotypes, prejudices and practices harmful to them, as well as organise effective awareness-raising campaigns regarding public acceptance of the rights of persons with disabilities, and the dissemination of positive perceptions about persons with disabilities, and social awareness of them. The same article also emphasised the encouragement of media agencies and entities to present the rights of persons with disabilities in a positive manner consistent with the principles of the Convention. Article 21 of the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities emphasised the need

¹³ Al-Majali, Taqi. 2017, *The Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Jordanian Legislation: A Comparative Study*, Published Master’s Thesis, Mutah University, Jordan.

¹⁴ Majali, Taqi. 2017, *ibid*.

¹⁵ The annual report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the reports of the Office of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General. 2020 Human Rights Council, forty-third session.

¹⁶ United Nations General Assembly Resolution (2006), ratified by the Jordanian government in 2008.

for persons with disabilities to have access to information by encouraging the media and information and data providers to make their services accessible to persons with disabilities, and to provide that information using sign language, Braille, and augmentative and alternative communication methods.

At the local level, the Jordanian constitution, in Article 6, paragraph 5, stipulated the law's protection of motherhood, childhood, old age, care for young people and persons with disabilities, and protecting them from abuse and exploitation. Since 2017, amendments have been made to the Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities No. 20, where Article 40 stipulated that “The Media Commission, the Journalists Syndicate, the Jordan Radio and Television Corporation, and official and non-official media and press institutions, each according to its competence, in coordination with the Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, shall do the following:

1. Include axes that show the rights of persons with disabilities.
2. Adopt editorial policies for language and terminology that ensure non-discrimination and full respect for them.
3. Include instructions for granting and renewing various licenses, such as websites, to make information accessible to persons with disabilities.
4. Train journalists and media professionals on the mechanisms of positive media handling of issues related to persons with disabilities such as publicise their rights and eliminate the prevailing social stereotypes about them.
5. Develop their capacities and their organisations capacities in the field of media and public communication in order to change the prevailing negative attitudes about disability.
6. Implement possible accessibility of press buildings and headquarters within 5 years from its date (2017).

5 Paper Outcomes

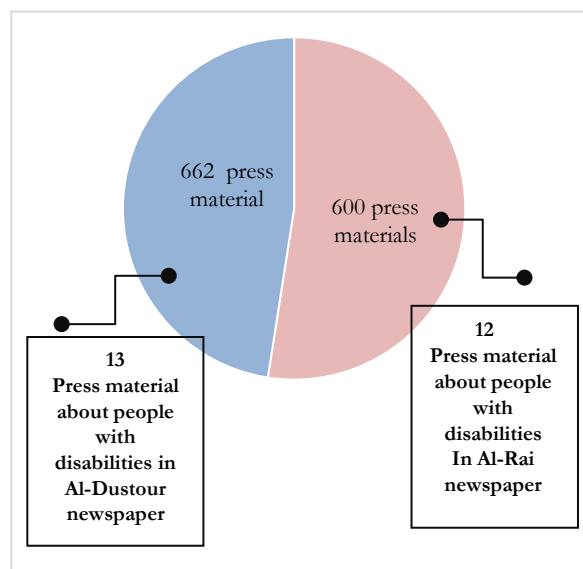
The research team monitored Al-Rai and Al-Dustour newspaper from 1-7-2021 to 7-7-2021, in addition to holding four semi-structured in-depth interviews with media professionals and human rights activists from persons with disabilities. Based on the information and data collection tools, the following results were reached:

5.1 The reality of the rights of persons with disabilities in the official Jordanian newspapers: Al-Rai and Al-Dustour

- **Number of articles and news that mentioned the term “persons with disabilities”**

The number of press materials published in the two newspapers, Al-Rai and Al-Dustour, during the monitoring period amounted to (1262) press materials, which varied between news and articles on economic, social and political topics. 600 newspaper articles in Al-Rai newspaper and 662 in Al-Dustour newspaper.

With regard to the rights of persons with disabilities, the results showed that the two newspapers were quite close in their coverage of this issue, 12 press materials at 2% in Al-Rai newspaper, and 13 press materials at 1.96% in Al-Dustour newspaper.



Although the participants emphasised the importance of the official written media in disseminating and reflecting the actual reality of the rights of persons with disabilities in a human rights manner, some articles and news dealt with the rights of persons with disabilities in a ‘caring’ approach that is completely incompatible with the human rights approach. Some media materials discuss persons with disabilities as being “with special needs” and that they are fragile and weak groups, describing their disability as incompetence and this is completely against the concepts of “say and not say” in the rights of persons with disabilities.

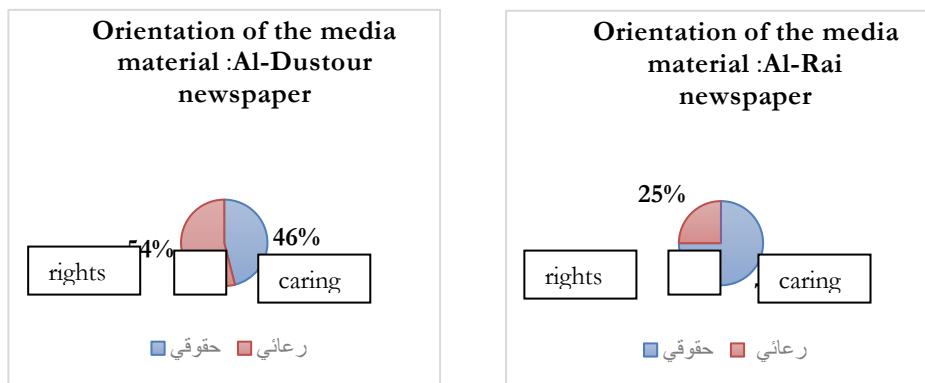
- The type of issue raised by the official Jordanian newspapers - Al-Rai and Al-Dustour

Economic, social and cultural rights are part of the human rights that address the basic social and economic conditions necessary to live with dignity and freedom. These rights relate to several aspects, including: (work, social security, health, education, food, water, housing, healthy environment, culture)¹⁷.



Where the media materials within the economic and social topics in Al-Rai newspaper constituted equal proportions of all the media materials presented, amounting to 50% economic and 50% social. As for Al-Dustour newspaper, the percentage was 38% for economic issues and 62% for social issues. Thus, during the monitoring period, it was inferred that Al-Rai newspaper paid attention to both economic and social issues, and Al-Dustour newspaper focused more on the social dimension than the economic one.

- The orientation of the media material



The orientation of the media material is an important element in covering the media material and communicating it in the correct manner that is in line with its objective. Despite its importance, the results showed that 54% of the total media materials that included the rights of persons with

¹⁷ The Global Network for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Introduction to Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. <https://www.escr-net.org/ar/resources/368498>

disabilities in Al-Dustour newspaper and 25% in Al-Rai newspaper included their rights with a caring approach, which is inconsistent with the human rights approach that deals with the issues of persons with disabilities on human rights basis and not caring basis.

Where Al-Dustour newspaper published on 1-7-2021, page 4, under the title: “Compulsory inclusion of self-employed workers in social security as of today”, the news item included mentioning persons with disabilities as persons **“with special needs”** and considered them to be a **category** that must be included to ensure social protection for them. This is incompatible with “say or do not say” because the term “people with special needs is a misleading expression, as it expresses every person who has a special need of any kind, and it is a matter that applies to all people,” and the word **category** does not fit with the human rights approach and they must be considered a **“segment”**.

And in Al-Rai newspaper, page 10, dated 3-7-2021, with the headline: “A couple invents glasses to allow their son to regain his sight”, he was described as **“suffering from a visual handicap”** The word **“suffers”** does not fit with the human rights approach “say and don’t say”; as it is considered a word that holds a person responsible for physical insufficiency.

Al-Dustour newspaper reported on page No. 3 on 3-7-2021 a news item entitled: “Development holds sessions to prepare a strategic and gender-responsive plan,” whereby persons with disabilities were described in its content as **“fragile and weak groups,”** and the correct way to describe them is being a **“segment”** and not a group; because describing them as a **“category or group”** “may confirm what many countries claim that the number of persons with disabilities is very low without any evidence based on an accurate census that is based on the adoption of a comprehensive human rights definition of persons with disabilities,” according to “Say and Do Not Say.”

Al-Dustour newspaper also published page 8 on 4-7-2021 under the title: “A sixty-year-old man has been dreaming of an **electric wheelchair** for five years.” His paralysis happened repeatedly: “First with the injury to his hand and leg on the right side of his body” then he became **completely paralysed and was confined to his bed and home.** The term “persons with mobility disabilities” was not mentioned, as was the “electric wheelchair”, and based on the media guide in dealing with the issues of persons with disabilities, this sentence amounts to “emptying the personality of persons with disabilities and attaching them to a tool thus moving away from the human rights approach.”

And in Al-Rai newspaper, page 11, dated 5-7-2021 and entitled: “Aya... a heroine and a diver who **defies** Down Syndrome,” based on “Say and Don’t Say”, the message to the world in dealing with success stories must remain focused on challenging the obstacles and barriers faced by a person with a disability to obtain what others can easily and easily obtain." **Persons with disabilities do not challenge their disability, but rather the obstacles to their access to their rights and freedoms.**

A news item was published in Al-Rai newspaper page No. 13 on 5-7-2021 entitled: “A series of achievements of the Faculty of Sports at Mutah University. The news item included the following: “The Best Community Work Award, which the faculty won for two consecutive years, was given for its excellence in charitable, humanitarian and community programmes, campaigns and activities, which targeted **people with special needs**. It added: the (Humanitarian Fun Day) initiative, was organised jointly by all the family of the Faculty of Sports to achieve **effective humanitarian, charitable and societal goals**. Yet according to “Say and Don’t Say”, human rights terminology was not taken into account in addition to the programme’s goal being humanitarian and not rights based rather based on considerations of religious reward (Thawab).

They were also described in Al-Rai newspaper in page 3 on 6-7-2021 as **having (natural disability)**, and this is incompatible with “Say and do not say”, that is to make the stereotypical term "**disability**" a "**characteristic of the person which sticks to him**", in addition to using this term to express weakness, inertia and ineffectiveness.



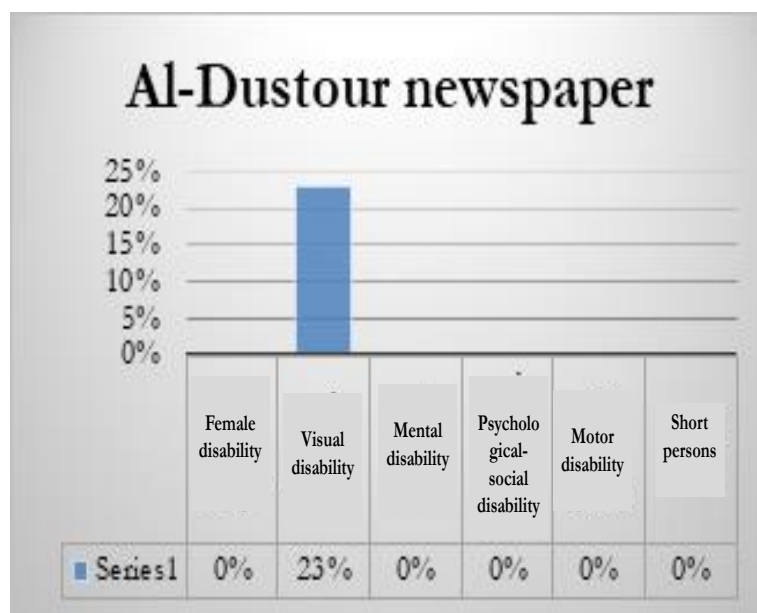
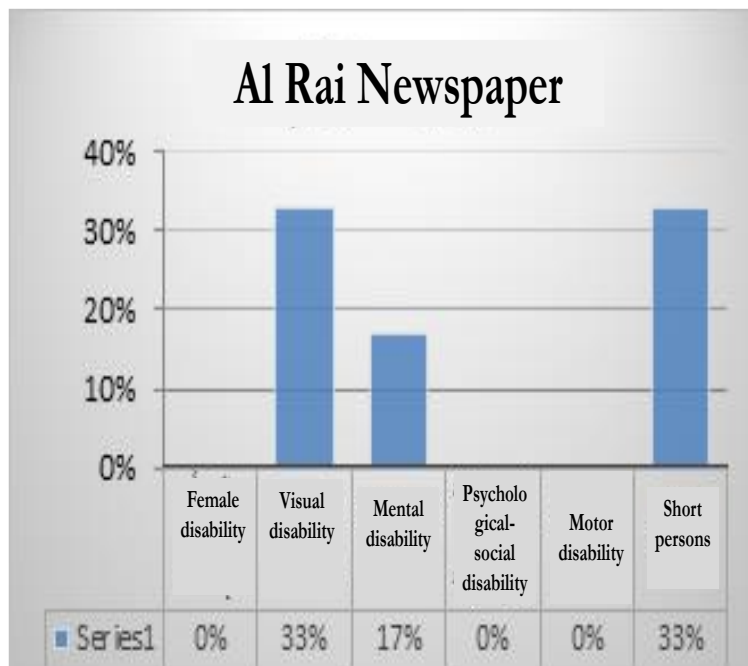
Al-Dustour newspaper reported on Wednesday 7-7-2021, under the title: "The Ministry is working on developing plans for conducting the general secondary examination (Tawjihi) to ensure the appropriate environment for all students, and there will be special rooms with supervisors that provide everything necessary for **students with special needs**."

- **Official newspapers focus on women with disabilities and different forms of disability**

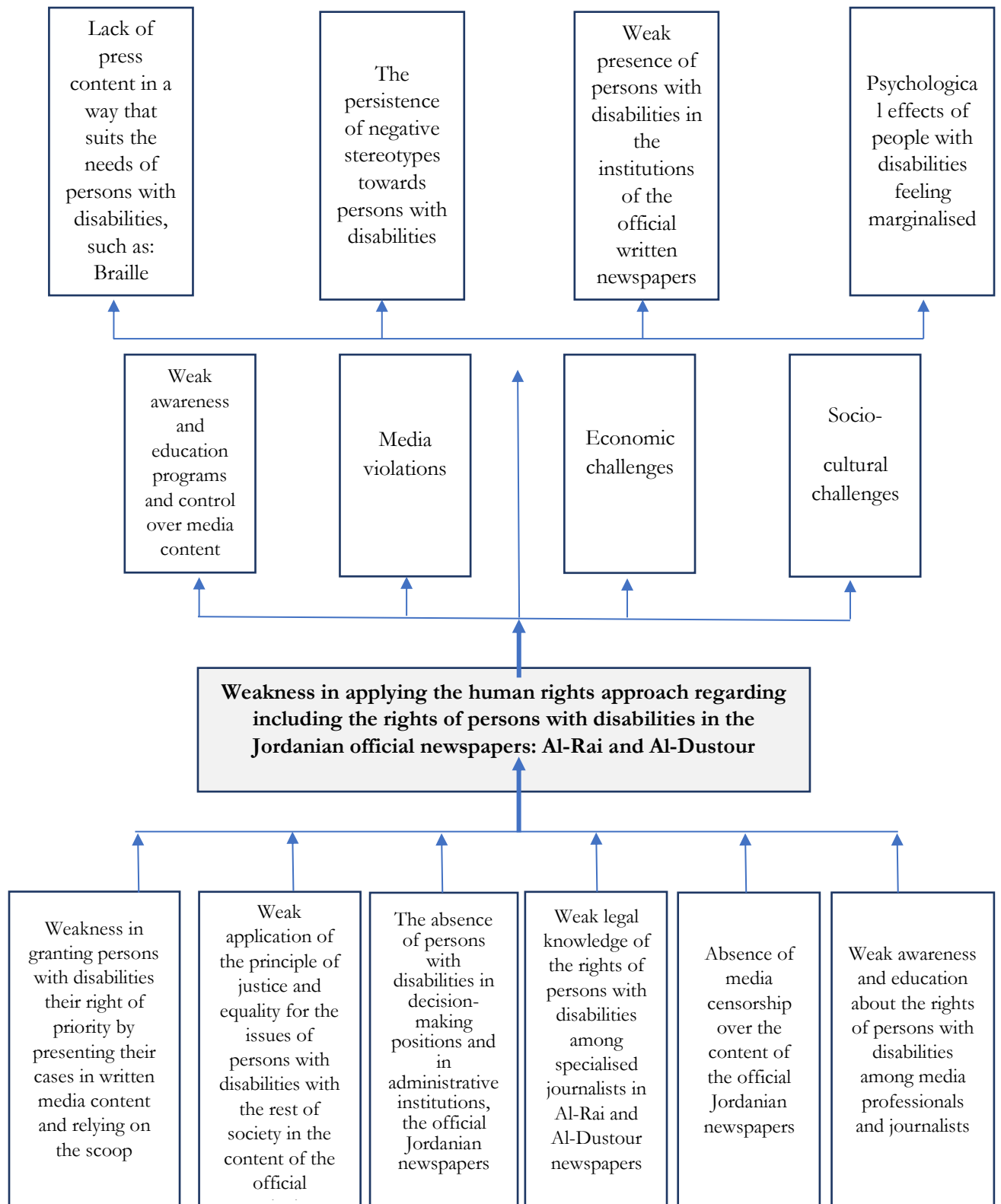
The International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities regarding awareness-raising stipulates in Articles 6 and 8 the following: “Combating stereotypes in all its forms, including those based on gender and age, and states parties have recognised that women and girls are subjected to discrimination in all its forms.” The percentage of mentioning women with disabilities in Jordanian official newspapers during the monitoring period was 0%. This reinforces the negative stereotype prevailing in society towards women with disabilities, thus increasing their marginalisation. The participants stressed the need to focus on women with disabilities, whose participation in various areas of life is often limited by the society.

Likewise, the percentage of persons with mobility disabilities was 0%, while short stature persons were mentioned in Al-Rai newspaper during the monitoring period 4 times, persons with psychosocial disabilities were mentioned twice in Al-Dustour newspaper, and persons with visual disabilities twice in Al-Rai newspaper. This weakens the community’s awareness of the different forms of disability and expresses it in the incorrect human rights manner.

Also, the percentage of mentioning persons with motor disabilities was 0%, while short stature persons were mentioned in Al-Rai newspaper during the monitoring period 4 times, persons with psychosocial disabilities were mentioned twice in Al-Dustour newspaper, and persons with visual disabilities were mentioned twice in Al-Rai newspaper. This weakens the society’s awareness of the different forms of disability and expressing it in the correct human rights manner.



5.2 Problems Tree¹⁸



¹⁸ A methodology to identify the problem, its causes and effects, where the trunk is the main problem, and the roots represent the causes of the main problem, while the branches represent its effects.

<https://sswm.info/ar/taxonomy/term/2647/problem-tree-analysis>

5.3 Challenges facing persons with disabilities in official newspapers: opinion and constitution

First: Sociocultural Challenges:

The prevailing negative stereotype about persons with disabilities due to following **the caring approach** to express their needs and rights instead of applying **the rights approach** that is in line with the principle of justice, equality and equal opportunities. Although persons with disabilities were mentioned at a fairly good rate during the monitoring period, the results showed that the press content of Al-Rai and Al-Dustour newspaper included the rights of persons with disabilities in a caring approach, which completely contradicts the “Say and Do Not Say” brochure in the language of the media while dealing with the issues of persons with disabilities. This indicates the weak commitment of the official written media to Article 40 of the Law of Persons with Disabilities Rights, which states: “Media strategies should include axes that define the rights of persons with disabilities, and should adopt editorial policies for language and terminology that achieve non-discrimination and full respect for them and their inherent dignity.”

According to "raising awareness", this will weaken social awareness of the rights of persons with disabilities in a human rights manner. This will contribute to the continuation of the caring image and misrepresentation painted by the media, which in turn leads to the continuation of the stereotyped image towards persons with disabilities as marginalised, fragile and weak groups.

Second: Media Challenges

Despite the participants' emphasis on the importance of the media's role in presenting the rights of persons with disabilities and reflecting the actual reality of them being the citizen's pen, the research team presents a question about whether there is specialised media for this segment of Jordanian society? And if there is a setting for accessibility of information?

Accordingly, the results showed **the lack of preparation for the access of persons with disabilities, particularly persons with visual disabilities, to media information in newspapers**. There is no electronic media content affiliated with Al-Rai and Al-Dustour newspaper that provides a Braille service. The results also concluded that there are no media professionals or specialised media for persons with disabilities, in addition to the lack of sufficient media space in the Al-Rai and Al-Dustour newspapers to address the rights and issues of persons with disabilities, as they were only represented as a result of the initiatives of some journalists without any institutional mandate by the administration.

Third: Media Violations

Despite the importance of objectivity in reflecting the lifestyle of persons with disabilities in a realistic and correct manner and in an appropriate human rights method, which in turn will contribute effectively to changing their lifestyle and their way of living, **the results showed the marginalisation of persons with disabilities when addressing their rights**. Some of the writings were only for the purposes of writing press content that is interesting to the reader without

focusing on the actual reality of their lives. This was done by only presenting the achievements regardless of the challenges they face in reaching such achievements. There was also a lack of credibility in conveying the actual information that was mentioned by activists in the field of persons with disabilities rights. In the same context, one of the participants said: "Some journalists write news and articles about a person with a disability and rely on information from secondary sources and not from the person himself."

Fourth: Economic Challenges

According to the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Law No. 20 of 2017, Article No. 25, "Governmental and non-governmental entities whose employees are more than 25 and less than 50 are obligated to employ one person with disability, and if their numbers exceed that, they are obligated to allocate 4% of their vacancies to them." Despite the legality and obligatory ratios, the percentage of employees and administrators with disabilities in Al-Dustour newspaper was 0% out of 250 workers and administrators¹⁹, and there was one person with a disability (hearing disability) in Al-Rai newspaper out of 351 workers and administrators²⁰. This indicates the absence of persons with disabilities in the media institutions and bodies of the official Jordanian newspapers, and the unequal opportunities to obtain their rights on equal footing the rest of the society, which contradicts with their integration programmes with the rest of society.

Fourth: Economic Challenges

There was one person with a disability (hearing disability) in Al-Rai newspaper out of 351 workers and administrators. This indicates the absence of persons with disabilities in the media institutions and bodies of the official Jordanian newspapers, and the unequal opportunities to obtain their economic rights with the rest of society, in contrast to their integration programmes with the rest of society.

Fifth: Awareness, Education and Content Monitoring

Multimedia is one of the most important tools that influence the local community in all areas of life, and it is necessary to work on raising awareness of media professionals and developing their scientific outlook and media skills. So, according to what was stated in the Legal Text No. 40 of the Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; it is necessary to train and rehabilitate media professionals in order for them to adopt methodological and pedagogical issues of persons with disabilities and deal with them in media context. Also, media professionals need to work on educational media materials that aim to correct wrong concepts and beliefs, thus purifying the media message from impurities. The paper reached the following results on the awareness and monitoring levels:

1. Weak awareness and education of how to deal with the rights of persons with disabilities in a human rights manner by the journalists working in the official press institutions.
2. Absence of allocating journalists specialised in raising awareness and education on the rights of persons with disabilities in press institutions.

¹⁹ Al-Riyalat, Mustafa, editor-in-chief of Al-Dustour newspaper, phone call on (9-8-2021)

²⁰ Muheisen, Rahaf, Head of Human Resources Department at Al-Rai newspaper, phone call on (8-11-2021)

3. Weak follow-up and monitoring of content and terminology used in writing articles or news regarding the rights of persons with disabilities.
4. Lack of awareness among some journalists of the importance of exclusivity, expansion and specialisation in presenting the rights of persons with disabilities.
5. Weak Jordanian official newspapers' interest in blogs and training courses on how journalists should properly address the rights of persons with disabilities and their impact on this segment of society.

6 Options and Alternatives

Based on the monitoring results of the official newspapers: Al-Rai and Al-Dustour, in addition to the semi-structured in-depth interviews, and based on the paper's goal to include the rights of persons with disabilities in a 'rights' approach, the research team proposed a number of public policies, represented in the following:

6.1 First: A policy for developing written media that includes rights for persons with disabilities

Objective:

To reach a society that possesses awareness and culture of the rights of persons with disabilities.

Programmes:

- The Jordanian official newspapers, in partnership with the Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, allocate a specific space in the official written newspapers for media coverage, including the rights of persons with disabilities.
- The Supreme Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to develop partnership programmes between media outlets and institutions related to the rights of persons with disabilities.
- Giving priority in news coverage and scoops that publish topics about persons with disabilities and their rights through an administrative decision issued by the newspaper's board of directors.

Advantages and opportunities of the suggested policy:

- Contributes to raising societal awareness quickly and effectively.
- Contributes to the reduction of violations directed at persons with disabilities by the society.
- Contributes to the dissemination of development projects for persons with disabilities through the specialised media for persons with disabilities.
- Does not require high financial costs.

Challenges facing the implementation of the policy:

- The time period required for implementing the programmes.

- Awareness of workers in the written media on the importance of implementing this policy.

6.2 Second: A policy to enhance the capabilities of journalists in the field of the rights of persons with disabilities in the institutions of official written newspapers

Objective:

To contribute to creating a press institutional environment that supports the rights of persons with disabilities.

Programmes:

- The Media Commission, the Journalists Syndicate, the Jordan Radio and Television Corporation, and the official media and press institutions, each according to its competence, in coordination with the Supreme Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, shall implement training programs for workers in official written newspapers on the rights of persons with disabilities.
- Institutions of the official Jordanian newspapers, in partnership with the Supreme Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, should strengthen the monitoring system in a way that enhances the rights of persons with disabilities.
- Allocating a budget item by the official written newspaper to media coverage of the rights of persons with disabilities.

Advantages and opportunities of the suggested policy:

- Increasing awareness of the rights of persons with disabilities for media professionals specialised in the written media.
- Contribute to reaching the largest segment of society through official newspapers, especially for people with disabilities.

Challenges facing the implementation of the policy:

- The extent of the desire of some workers in media institutions to engage in training programmes related to the rights of persons with disabilities.
- The weak ability of the written media institutions to cover the financial expenses of implementation.

6.3 Third: A policy for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the official written newspapers

Objective:

To achieve the principle of justice and equal opportunities for people with disabilities in the official written newspapers.

Programmes:

- Developing a functional program for the rights of persons with disabilities in the official Jordanian newspapers, in cooperation and coordination with the Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Civil Service Bureau and official newspaper institutions.
- Developing a rehabilitation and training program for the purpose of employment for persons with disabilities in the official Jordanian newspapers, in cooperation with the Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Civil Service Bureau and official newspapers institutions.
- Developing partnership programmes with the official written newspapers and the private media sector to employ persons with disabilities as part of their social responsibility in cooperation with the Supreme Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Civil Service Bureau and official newspapers institutions.

Advantages and opportunities of the suggested policy:

- Contribute to providing job opportunities for persons with disabilities in the official written newspapers.
- Contribute to promoting access to persons with disabilities in decision-making positions in media institutions.
- Unifying public policies and institutional work among all sectors regarding the promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities in the event that the third program of this policy is realised.
- Creating a suitable environment for persons with disabilities in the media institutions and bodies by virtue of the presence of a cadre of workers who are aware of their rights in these institutions.

Challenges facing the implementation of the policy:

- The financial cost of implementing the programmes.
- The employment systems in these newspapers may not allow giving priority to the employment for persons with disabilities.

This paper aims to increase the inclusion of the ‘rights’ of persons with disabilities in press media content, and to contribute to creating an appropriate institutional environment to deal with the ‘rights’ of persons with disabilities, and to reach a society that has awareness and culture of the ‘rights’ of persons with disabilities. Therefore, the research team relied on the standard scale represented in analysing the advantages, opportunities and challenges in implementing each policy separately. Accordingly, the optimal alternatives to the paper are to adopt:

- 1- **Creating written media that is sensitive to the rights of persons with disabilities.**

2- Creating an appropriate institutional environment for dealing with the rights of persons with disabilities.

If the media contributes to achieving its mission towards the rights of persons with disabilities as an integral part of society, and contribute to raising awareness of their rights and changing the stereotype towards them, this will be reflected significantly on all segments of society, including persons with disabilities, and thus move towards achieving the principle of justice and equality.

7 Annex

This paper is based on a series of interviews with official bodies and specialists in the media and the rights of persons with disabilities, the following are their names (in alphabetical order):

- a) Tasneem Al-Batayneh - a former member of the municipal council, head of the Yad Biyad Charitable Society, and a human rights activist in the field of persons with disabilities.
- b) Taqwa Al-Malkawi - a human rights activist in the field of persons with disabilities.
- c) Ali Al-Sawalmeh - the Jordanian champion of wheelchair running, a human rights activist in the field of the rights of persons with disabilities.
- d) Ghada Al-Sheikh - a media person with Al-Ghad newspaper.

It must be emphasised here that the information contained in this policy paper does not necessarily express their opinions, and they are not responsible for its content, but it rather represents the authors' positions and conclusions in analysing their experiences and information regarding the rights of persons with disabilities and their representation in the written media in general and the two newspapers Al-Rai and Al Dustour in particular.



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Royal Scientific Society, 70 Ahmad Al-Tarawneh St, Amman, Jordan | Tel: +962 6 534 4701 | info@wanainstitute.org

www.wanainstitute.org