The Role of Smart Accessibility in improving the quality of life of People with Disabilities in Homes for the comprehensive rehabilitation

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Abstract- The study aims to identify the role of the smart social environment and smart accessibility in improving the quality of life for beneficiaries among individuals with disabilities in care homes. The problem of the study was to search for answers to the following questions: What does smart accessibility mean? What are the available smart assistive technologies in care homes for the rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities, and how do they contribute to providing the right to smart accessibility? What is the relationship between the smart social environment, smart accessibility, and achieving social and environmental sustainability in care homes for the rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities?

Based on all these data, this phenomenon has attracted attention to become the focus of research and study. Given the importance of improving the quality of life, maintaining the quality of life ranks high on the list of concerns and priorities of officials in various organizations. They continuously seek, through various means, to enhance the quality of life for individuals in general. Moreover, quality of life is considered a fundamental tool for fulfilling the desire of individuals with disabilities for independence, non-segregation, exclusion, or marginalization, as well as the importance of integrating them into society and empowering them to increase motivation and achieve the highest levels of performance, quality, care, and attention to individuals with disabilities in sheltered housing. A set of recommendations has been presented in the field of empowering and integrating people with disabilities, which includes the following: working to enhance awareness of the smart social environment and the right to smart accessibility by organizing awareness and training workshops for caregivers and rehabilitators of people with disabilities in shelter homes, as well as for people with disabilities themselves, assessing the needs of beneficiaries by conducting studies aimed at exploring and evaluating the needs and aspirations of people with disabilities. Working on developing smart accessibility standards in care homes reflects the actual needs of people with disabilities in these facilities, emphasizing the importance of providing continuous training for caregivers and people with disabilities through training programs on the use of software and smart technical aids to improve the quality of life for beneficiaries in care homes. Additionally, there is a focus on integrating smart technology and its diverse services and applications and adapting them in support sessions and psychological and social therapy for people with disabilities in care homes.

The conclusion of this study revealed that the comprehensive meaning of smart accessibility is not limited to providing suitable smart facilities but also includes providing smart tools and technological aids that facilitate communication and support independence and good social interaction, contributing to achieving environmental and social sustainability, which improves the quality of life for beneficiaries of people with disabilities in care homes, and provides a holistic view of the commitment of society and its individuals and diverse institutions to enhancing the quality of life for individuals from various categories.

Index Terms- key words: Smart Accessibility, Quality of Life Care Homes, Environmental and Social Sustainability.

I. INTRODUCTION

We live today in a rapidly evolving and advanced technological era, described by various expressions and terms, such as the era of the global technological revolution, the information technology age, and the technological explosion. This revolution has contributed to the emergence of numerous achievements and inventions. The expansion in the fields of modern communication technology and information technology has led to multiple changes in various aspects that fluctuate over time and space due to the increase in knowledge and science. This has resulted in what is called the communication and information revolution. Geographic boundaries no longer hold significance in the presence of modern communication technologies and media, which possess immense capabilities to penetrate borders, times, places, and distances between countries and societies. These technologies have also fostered relationships between nations and contributed to the spread of diverse values and prevailing cultures, making them closer and more familiar, especially within Arab societies. (Qanawi, 2019).

There is a relationship between technology and the social structure that it produces or is produced within its context. The technological variable does not operate in isolation from other social variables, such as population growth, social and economic changes, sources of energy, environment, and the overall structural elements shaping

our current society. Just as technology affects society and contributes to creating change, it is, in turn, influenced by social and economic conditions and the value systems that gave rise to this technology. Technology often appears as a response to the needs of individuals in society and meets their evolving life demands. Therefore, the role of technology and social factors in many cases in causing or activating social changes cannot be denied. Technology can break behavioral patterns that were stable, alter social roles that persisted for long periods, and formulate new, unexpected, or unfamiliar ones. (Hassan, 2013, p.14).

If the smart social environment is beneficial to members of society across different age groups in terms of meeting needs, responding to preferences, and achieving well-being, then its benefits are even greater for people with disabilities. Technology has played important roles in facilitating the services provided to them and in creating new patterns that did not previously exist in various fields. This applies not only to individuals living in care homes but also to those responsible for their care. Technology has opened new horizons for residents of care homes and their families by diversifying the choices, tools, and alternatives available to serve them and maintain their health. It has enabled them to achieve greater self-reliance and significantly strengthened their sense of independence.

The technological solutions offered to individuals range from simple smart devices to fully automated smart homes—places of residence and care that continuously monitor the individual's movements and activities throughout the day. These systems precisely track their health and physical condition and respond to their urgent needs and problems. This development culminates in fully automated cities that can diagnose diseases automatically with minimal human intervention. Care homes have witnessed successive technological advancements in all aspects of life around them—in homes, workplaces, vehicles, roads, offices, clinics, care centers, and all service sectors. (Hassan, 2013, p.15).

Within the framework of the ambitious Vision 2030 of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's leadership, we observe that upon the issuance of the Royal Approval of the (Rights of Persons with Disabilities Law) on 11/2/1445 AH, corresponding to 27/8/2023 AD, the right to (Accessibility) for persons with disabilities was formally included. This right is defined as a set of appropriate measures that ensure persons with disabilities have access to services provided on an equal basis with others, as well as access to their surrounding physical environment, transportation, information, and communication means, including technology tools, information and communication systems, and other public facilities and services.

Moreover, the Quality of Life Program, launched in 2018 as part of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 initiatives, encourages innovation, talents, and competencies to enhance quality of life and supports the overarching goals of Vision 2030. Chief among these goals is achieving a vibrant society in which all individuals and social groups live dignified and happy lives.

Therefore, this study aims to explore the impact of the role of the smart social environment in improving the quality of life in care homes for the rehabilitation of persons with disabilities.

II. IDENTIFY, RESEARCH AND COLLECT IDEA

- Problem Statement:

Social participation is a fundamental requirement for all members and groups of society. Through social participation, individuals contribute to identifying their needs, fulfilling their demands, solving their problems, and participating actively in the development of their community, which ultimately leads to positive impact and satisfaction. (Hawashin & Higazi, 2022).

Persons with disabilities living in care homes, like other social groups, strive to participate in their communities and achieve self-fulfillment through various forms of social participation. Many social science researchers have focused on studying the conditions of persons with disabilities and understanding their problems.

The effectiveness of persons with disabilities in care homes highlights the role of the smart social environment, as these technologies have penetrated society across various life domains, influencing its social structure and competing with social upbringing institutions, social care, and care homes in their roles. Creating a smart social environment has become an essential element and requirement in the life of every individual, including persons with disabilities in care homes, in their interactions and communications with their surroundings. It has become difficult to dispense with such environments, as they serve as sources of messages, means of transmitting these messages, or mediums for interaction and social relationships, in line with technological advancement. (Suhaila, 2017).

Based on all these considerations, this phenomenon has attracted attention to become the focus of this research study. Given the importance of improving quality of life, and since maintaining quality of life tops the priorities and concerns of officials in various organizations, they continuously strive by all possible means to enhance the

quality of life for individuals in general. Quality of life is also a fundamental tool to fulfill the desires of persons with disabilities for independence and to prevent their isolation, exclusion, or marginalization. It is crucial to integrate and empower them in society to increase motivation and achieve the highest levels of performance, quality, care, and attention for persons with disabilities residing in care homes.

- **Significance of the Study:**

The scientific and practical value of this paper stems from its focus on the phenomenon of the smart social environment and its role in improving the quality of life of an important segment of society—persons with disabilities in care homes. It draws attention to this group within the context of establishing a smart social environment. Additionally, the study will contribute, directly or indirectly, to assisting caregivers in care homes by helping them solve problems, empower individuals, and develop their capabilities.

Moreover, the study supports encouraging various community institutions and promotes investment by entrepreneurs and private sector investors in this field. It also fosters efforts to provide care within a smart social environment that ensures a higher quality of life for persons with disabilities residing in care homes.

- **Study Objectives:**

The primary objective of this study is to explore the role of the smart social environment and smart accessibility in improving the quality of life of beneficiaries—persons with disabilities—in care homes.

Accordingly, this study seeks to answer the following questions:

- What is the meaning of smart accessibility?
- What smart technological aids are available in care homes for the rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, and to what extent do they contribute to ensuring the right to smart accessibility?
- What is the relationship between the smart social environment, smart accessibility, and achieving social and environmental sustainability in care homes for the rehabilitation of persons with disabilities?

- **Study Concepts:**

The key scientific concepts related to this study are as follows:

1. Smart Accessibility:

A set of appropriate measures that ensure persons with disabilities have access to smart technological services on an equal basis with others. This includes access to their surrounding smart environment, transportation, information, and communication means, including technology tools, information and communication systems, and other smart public facilities and services that significantly contribute to their independence and self-reliance to the greatest extent possible according to their level of disability.

2. Quality of Life:

The concept of quality of life refers to a positive pattern of overall satisfaction experienced by individuals as a result of improvements in their personal lives, effective social communication and interaction, achievement of their goals and aspirations, a sense of present security, and positive outlook for the future.

3. Care Homes:

Care homes refer to establishments or institutions that provide shelter to persons with disabilities who are deprived of family care or disconnected from it, or whose families are unable to care for them due to deteriorating social or economic conditions.

4. Environmental and Social Sustainability:

Meeting human needs without compromising the health of ecological systems represented by the natural resources of the environment. An environmentally sustainable system preserves natural resources and prevents their depletion by protecting biodiversity. Social sustainability seeks to improve human quality of life through respecting rights and duties, caring for community requirements, and achieving a dignified life through the combined efforts of all community parties and strong social partnerships. (Juraish, 2023).

Smart Accessibility

This section of the study will interpret the meaning of smart accessibility, which can be summarized as follows:

Issues, challenges, and rights of persons with disabilities have received increasing attention worldwide. Numerous international organizations have enacted and ratified laws, charters, treaties, and initiatives aimed at supporting, promoting, and implementing the rights of persons with disabilities, preventing discrimination based on the type or degree of disability, empowering persons with disabilities, enhancing their social inclusion, and improving their accessibility in all areas of life—health, social, educational, technological, and sports.

One of the most significant frameworks is the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and its Optional Protocol, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2006. The convention contains many key principles, among which the following are most important:

1. Recognition of the importance of integrating disability issues as an integral part of sustainable development strategies.
2. Recognition of the importance of international cooperation to improve living conditions for persons with disabilities in all countries, especially developing countries.
3. Recognition of the contribution to the welfare of persons with disabilities, their full enjoyment of human rights, and their sense of belonging, which promotes human, social, and economic development in society.
4. Recognition of the importance of persons with disabilities enjoying autonomy, self-reliance, and freedom to make decisions and choices.

5. Recognition of accessibility to physical, social, economic, cultural, media, communication, health, and educational environments, and the importance of empowerment for persons with disabilities.

The convention also includes numerous articles covering most of the rights of persons with disabilities worldwide. Among the most relevant articles to the context of this study are the following:

- Article 2 of the Convention states:

The right to communication, which includes languages and display of texts, Braille, tactile communication, large print, multimedia and accessible use, augmented and alternative forms of communication (both visual and auditory), simplified language, human reading, and accessible information and communication technology. It also emphasizes the application of universal design, which refers to designing products, environments, programs, and services to be usable by all individuals to the greatest extent possible. However, universal design does not exclude assistive devices tailored for specific groups of persons with disabilities when needed.

- Article 20 of the Convention states:

Facilitating access for persons with disabilities to quality mobility aids, human assistance, and intermediaries; training persons with disabilities, specialists, and caregivers in mobility skills; and encouraging private entities to produce assistive devices and specific technologies related to different aspects of the lives of persons with disabilities.

- Article 21 of the Convention states:

Providing persons with disabilities with information intended for the general public using easily accessible and appropriate formats and technologies for various types of disabilities without imposing additional costs on them. It also requires acceptance and facilitation for persons with disabilities to use sign language, Braille, augmented and alternative communication methods, and all other accessible forms of communication of their choice in official transactions.

Article 22 of the Convention also states:

Respect for privacy, where no person with a disability—regardless of their place of residence or living arrangements—shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with their privacy, family, home, correspondence, or any other means of communication they use.

Additionally, the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired, or Otherwise Print Disabled was adopted in 2013 at the diplomatic conference. This treaty aims to improve access to published materials for beneficiaries who are blind, visually impaired, or have other print disabilities. The treaty recognizes several key principles, including:

1. Recognition of non-discrimination, equal opportunities, facilitated access, full and effective participation, and social inclusion for beneficiaries who are blind or have other print disabilities.
2. Recognition of the positive impact of new information and communication technologies on the lives of persons with visual and other print disabilities, supported by an enhanced international legal framework.

The treaty contains numerous articles covering the rights of persons with disabilities regarding published works. Among the most relevant to this study are:

- Article 7 of the treaty stipulates:

Commitment to effective technological measures and providing appropriate legal protection and effective legal remedies. This legal protection does not prevent beneficiaries with visual or other print disabilities from enjoying the exceptions and limitations provided in the treaty.

- Article 8 of the treaty states:

Ensuring equal protection of the privacy of beneficiaries with visual or other print disabilities as enjoyed by others in relation to reading published works.

- **Islamic Religion and Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities:**

Islam places great emphasis on the rights and empowerment of persons with disabilities in all aspects of life, including their right to smart and technological accessibility, in accordance with key Islamic principles:

- Principle of Justice:

Islamic teachings, as found in the Quran and the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), emphasize the application of justice when dealing with persons with disabilities, treating them equally with other members of society. An example is found in Surah 'Abasa (The Frowning), where the Prophet was gently admonished for turning away from a blind man, Abdullah ibn Umm Maktum, while trying to engage a wealthy, socially influential man in Islam. Allah says:

"He frowned and turned away because the blind man came to him. And how do you know that he might become purified, or be reminded and the reminder would benefit him? As for one who thinks himself without need, to him you give attention. And not upon you [is any blame] if he will not be purified. But as for one who came to you striving [for knowledge] while he fears [Allah], from him you are distracted."

(Surah 'Abasa, verses 1–16).

- Principle of Integration and Empowerment:

Islam stresses the importance of integrating and empowering persons with disabilities, avoiding their isolation or exclusion from society due to their disability. This principle has been emphasized for over fourteen centuries and is regarded by caregivers, rights advocates, researchers, and scholars as a foundational humanitarian value, reflecting the wide horizon of Islamic care. Allah says:

_"There is no blame upon the blind, nor upon the lame, nor upon the sick, nor upon yourselves when you eat from your own houses or the houses of your fathers or the houses of your mothers or the houses of your brothers or the houses of your sisters or the houses of your paternal uncles or the houses of your paternal aunts or the houses of your maternal uncles or the

houses of your maternal aunts or [from] what your right hands possess or [from] a friend. There is no blame upon you whether you eat together or separately. But when you enter the houses, greet one another with a greeting from Allah, blessed and good." (Surah An-Nur, verse 61).

- Principle of Ease and Relief:

Islam encourages ease and alleviation in all its teachings—worship, duties, obligations, transactions, and behavior—discouraging hardship, difficulty, and excessive burdens. This principle varies according to individual conditions, including mental, psychological, or physical disabilities, and the level of ability and capacity. Allah says:

"Allah does not burden a soul beyond that it can bear."
(Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 286).

- **Islamic Religion and Improving Quality of Life:**

The term "quality" is not a product of the modern era; rather, it is an ancient concept with numerous applications in various aspects of life, whether religious or worldly. In Islamic jurisprudence, it is expressed through terms such as Itqan (perfection), Ihsan (excellence), Tajweed (refinement), and Ihkam (precision). Islam emphasizes performing work with mastery and excellence, as reflected in many scriptural texts from the Quran and the Sunnah. The connection between quality of life and Islamic values protects the concept from drifting toward purely utilitarian perspectives devoid of ethical values and principles. Allah says:

"The work of Allah is perfect."
(Surah An-Naml, verse 88).

Evaluating quality in life requires specific standards and controls. In Islam, these controls and standards encompass both worldly and hereafter-oriented aspects. The worldly standards include precision, clarity, mastery, willingness, continuity, and sustainability. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said:

"The most beloved deeds to Allah are those done consistently, even if they are small."
(Sahih al-Bukhari, Hadith No. 6464).

The hereafter-oriented standards involve a person's sense of responsibility and awareness of divine accountability. (Hamouni, 2021).

Quality is a fundamental principle in Islam. Achieving this principle safeguards the components of a dignified life within society, ensures the integrity and success of actions, prevents social corruption, and forms the basis for the advancement and civilization of the community.

- **Smart Technological Aids Available in Care Homes for the Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities and Their Contribution to Providing the Right to Smart Accessibility**

Smart technological aids, which collectively create a smart social environment in care homes for the rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, are embedded within the environment where these individuals live and interact. These aids utilize smart technical tools and devices designed to enhance accessibility and quality of life.

The smart technological aids for persons with disabilities in care homes can be categorized into:

A. Artificial Intelligence (AI):

Smart Wheelchairs: Equipped with sensors and AI technologies to improve mobility and navigation both inside and outside care homes for persons with disabilities.

Smart Monitoring Systems: These systems analyze behavior and can provide alerts in case of abnormal or dangerous situations, enhancing safety.

Virtual Reality (VR) Technologies: Used in therapeutic, social, and rehabilitative sessions; VR is interactive and helps improve therapy outcomes and develop life skills for persons with disabilities.

AI Applications for Learning: Tools that boost self-learning efficiency among persons with disabilities.

AI Robots: Assist individuals in care homes with activities such as using the restroom, bathing, medication management, or eating independently, tailored to the type and degree of disability.

B. Cybersecurity:

- Data Protection and Encryption Systems: Secure personal and health information against breaches.
- Early Warning Systems: Provide timely alerts for unusual activities or emergencies, such as persons with disabilities deviating from designated paths or experiencing falls.
- Smart Watches: Offer safety services like location tracking and daily health alerts to support monitoring and well-being.

- **The Relationship Between the Smart Social Environment, Smart Accessibility, and Achieving Social and Environmental Sustainability in Care Homes for the Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities**

The relationship between the smart social environment, smart accessibility, and achieving social and environmental sustainability in care homes for the rehabilitation of persons with disabilities lies in understanding sustainable development as a way of life and a comprehensive, interconnected scientific perspective. This perspective integrates social standards and considerations through a network of relationships and interactions. However, there are obstacles to achieving inclusive sustainable development, notably the underutilization of human resources, especially persons with disabilities.

Global trends emphasize the necessity of providing protection, care, and social security to persons with disabilities through societal institutions. There is a close link between sustainable development and social security, as sustainable development aims to achieve more equitable and just growth by enhancing the capabilities and opportunities of the most vulnerable and marginalized groups in society (Moawad, 2020).

Inclusive and comprehensive development for persons with disabilities relies on building capacities and training the necessary human resources to achieve their integration and empowerment. Efforts include establishing exhibitions of assistive devices and technologies to aid children with disabilities, educating their families and caregivers on usage and borrowing options, providing assistive technology to those in need, seeking funding sources if insufficient, and pursuing innovative, out-of-the-box ideas aligned with global trends to offer new services that encourage independent living tailored to their needs (Subaie, 2023).

Therefore, the smart social environment and smart accessibility closely intertwine with the concept of social and environmental sustainability by fostering independence and empowerment for persons with disabilities, creating an interactive environment that encourages communication, participation, reduces isolation, loneliness, and exclusion, and strengthens social belonging. These environments build strong relationships between persons with disabilities and community members, enhancing social support and reducing discrimination and exclusion.
Furthermore, the relationship among the smart social environment, smart accessibility, and achieving social and environmental sustainability in care homes requires the development of comprehensive strategies and joint planning involving all relevant stakeholders. The goal is a holistic rights-based approach aimed at improving the living conditions of persons with disabilities across all types and degrees of disability, thereby promoting sustainability and effectively achieving the objectives of sustainable development.

• CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study highlights the significant and positive role of the smart social environment and the right to smart accessibility in improving the quality of life for persons with disabilities residing in care homes. The use of innovative smart aids and technologies contributes to providing independence for persons with disabilities according to the type and degree of their disability, alongside delivering efficient and high-quality medical, psychological, social, and rehabilitative services within these care facilities.

The comprehensive meaning of smart accessibility extends beyond merely providing suitable smart facilities; it also includes supplying smart technological tools and aids that facilitate communication, support independence, encourage social interaction, and contribute to achieving environmental and social sustainability. This holistic approach enhances the quality of life of persons with disabilities in care homes and reflects the community's overall commitment—individuals and institutions alike—to improving life standards for all social groups.

Moreover, fruitful cooperation among various community institutions, including caregivers, plays a vital role in shaping a smart care environment that promotes the well-being of persons with disabilities and ensures a more sustainable and inclusive future for them.

The active encouragement of investment and initiatives in the field of disability rights, well-being, quality of life improvement, and social justice also significantly contributes to building a cohesive and progressive society.

By adopting the recommendations proposed in this paper, it is possible to achieve a sustainable, flexible, and inclusive care environment that fosters independence for persons with disabilities. Additionally, it encourages ongoing research and exploration of innovative solutions that further improve their quality of life.APPENDIX

Appendixes, if needed, appear before the acknowledgment.

• Recommendations

1. Enhance awareness of the smart social environment and the right to smart accessibility by organizing awareness workshops and training sessions for caregivers and rehabilitation staff in care homes, as well as for persons with disabilities themselves.

2. Assess the needs of beneficiaries by conducting studies aimed at surveying and evaluating the needs and aspirations of persons with disabilities.

3. Develop standards for smart accessibility in care homes that accurately reflect the real needs of persons with disabilities residing there.

4. Ensure continuous training for caregivers and persons with disabilities by providing programs on using smart software and assistive technologies to improve the quality of life for beneficiaries in care homes.

5. Emphasize integrating smart technology, its services, and various applications into psychological and social support and therapy sessions for persons with disabilities in care homes.

6. Design specialized smart applications that facilitate communication and participation of persons with disabilities with their families in particular and with the wider community in general.

7. Invest in smart assistive technologies that enhance the independence of persons with disabilities.

8. Develop care home buildings technologically to be smart, friendly, and sustainably impactful on the lives of persons with disabilities.

9. Encourage research, innovation, and support studies that target developing smart technologies to promote environmental and social sustainability for persons with disabilities.

10. Promote cooperation and build partnerships with various community organizations—whether public, private, or nonprofit sectors—to enhance participation and social responsibility in the field of smart accessibility for persons with disabilities.

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