

**DIFFERENCES IN QUALITY OF LIFE AMONG EMPLOYED AND  
UNEMPLOYED PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN MALE' CITY  
OF THE MALDIVES**

**BY**

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## ABSTRACT

**Background:** The literature shows that numerous persons with disabilities belong to working age group. However, employment of persons with disabilities is comparatively lower than the general population. Although employment is among the many factors that were shown to influence the quality of life of persons with disabilities, to date, a nationwide survey to evaluate the prevalence of persons with disabilities in the Maldives have not been conducted nor has there are any reported. Also data regarding the employment situation of persons with disabilities is lacking. Moreover, studies aimed at this marginalized group are almost none in the Maldives.

**Objectives:** The present study aims to compare the differences in quality of life among employed and unemployed men and women with disabilities in Male' City of the Maldives. It also aims to identify factors that influence their quality of life.

**Method:** A comparative mixed method of study design was employed, to collect data from 125 of persons with disabilities, 75 were employed and 50 were unemployed in the Male' City. Face to face interviews with a semi structured questionnaire was used to collect data. Semi structured questionnaire was used to collect data on socio demographic characteristics and quality of life was assessed by the Quality of Life Scale. In addition, opinions regarding the factors that may have contributed to their quality of life was identified through two open ended questions.

**Results:** It was observed that employed persons with disabilities had higher quality of life than the unemployed participants ( $U = 0.50, z = -9.46, p = 0.00, r = 0.85$ ). However, findings from this research showed that quality of life of women with disabilities and men with disabilities did not have any significant difference ( $U = 1786.50, z = -.82., p = 0.05, r = 0.07$ ). As for the factors affecting the quality of life of persons with disabilities 11 factors were recognized as helping them to improve their quality of life and 13 were identified as to have negative impact on their quality of life.

**Conclusion:** The employed persons with disabilities in the Maldives have higher quality of life than the unemployed counterparts. The quality of life of men and women with disabilities tend to be similar. Additionally, the employed and unemployed persons with disabilities prioritized several factors affecting their quality of life.

**Keywords:** Quality of Life, Disabilities, Gender, Employment, Unemployment, Maldives