

Advancing Inclusive Hospitality Through Social Enterprise: A Case Study of Café Qabil's Disability Empowerment Model

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ABSTRACT

This case study examines Cafe Qabil, a disability-inclusive restaurant in Lahore, as a social enterprise model that promotes skill development, workplace inclusion, and self-sufficiency among persons with disabilities. The study focuses on how an NGO-led hospitality initiative can move beyond a charity-based approach and create meaningful employment opportunities through practical training and customer-facing service roles. Using a qualitative case study approach, the research explores Cafe Qabil's business operations, recruitment and training practices, workplace support systems, customer response, and social and economic impact. The case highlights how hospitality can provide an effective platform for building communication, teamwork, confidence, grooming, hygiene, and service skills among disabled staff. It also shows that inclusive employment can create wider social value by improving dignity, reducing stigma, changing customer perceptions, and supporting greater independence. At the same time, the case identifies key challenges, including financial sustainability, service quality, training capacity, public perception, and scalability. The study contributes to the literature on social enterprise, disability inclusion, and hospitality management by presenting a local, practice-based example from Pakistan. The central message of the case is that disability inclusion becomes meaningful when it is connected with real work, structured support, and sustainable business practice. Cafe Qabil therefore offers a valuable model for NGOs, hospitality businesses, policymakers, and researchers interested in inclusive employment and social impact.

Key Words: Disability Inclusion, Social Enterprise, Hospitality Management, Skill Development Self-Sufficiency

INTRODUCTION

Disability inclusion is an important social, economic, and management issue. The World Health Organization reports that about 1.3 billion people, or 16% of the global population, experience significant disability [1]. This shows that disability is not a marginal concern but a major part of human life and workforce participation. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities also recognizes the right of persons with disabilities to work in an open, inclusive, and accessible work environment [2]. However, in many developing countries, persons with disabilities still face barriers such as stigma, limited training, inaccessible workplaces, low employer confidence, and fewer chances for decent employment [3].

In Pakistan, disability inclusion is often viewed through a charity-based approach instead of a rights-based and capability-based approach. Many persons with disabilities receive sympathy but not enough structured support to become skilled, employed, and economically independent. This problem becomes more serious in the hospitality sector because restaurants, cafés, and hotels depend on customer service, communication, teamwork, hygiene, discipline, and operational skills. If persons with disabilities are trained and supported properly, hospitality can become a strong platform for dignity, employment, and social participation.

Cafe Qabil in Lahore is a relevant case for studying disability-inclusive hospitality. Based on the available details, Cafe Qabil is associated with Ali Farooq and is recognized as an inclusive hospitality initiative where “all abilities are valued.” Public information also presents Cafe Qabil as a project linked with The Specialist Welfare Organization, which works to support persons with disabilities, promote independence, and create employment opportunities [4]. Cafe Qabil is described as an inclusive and accessible café in Lahore that provides employment to persons with disabilities and promotes dignity, independence, and thoughtful hospitality [5], [6]. This makes Cafe Qabil more than a restaurant. It can be studied as a social enterprise that combines food service with social responsibility, skill development, and empowerment.

The concept of social enterprise is central to this case. A social enterprise uses business activity to address a social problem while trying to remain financially and operationally sustainable [7]. In Cafe Qabil’s case, the restaurant model appears to serve two linked purposes. First, it provides hospitality services to customers. Second, it creates a practical training and employment space for persons with disabilities. This dual purpose makes Cafe Qabil suitable for a case study because it connects inclusion, service delivery, vocational training, customer interaction, and self-sufficiency in one real setting.

The main problem addressed in this study is that persons with disabilities in Pakistan often remain excluded from mainstream employment and skill-development opportunities. Even when support exists, it may focus more on welfare than on long-term independence. This creates a gap between social support and sustainable empowerment. Cafe Qabil offers a practical example of how this gap may be reduced through restaurant-based training, inclusive employment, and public interaction. However, the model also needs careful academic study to understand how it works, what outcomes it creates, and what challenges it faces.

The significance of this study is both practical and scholarly. Practically, it may help NGOs, hospitality educators, restaurant owners, and policymakers understand how inclusive employment can be organized in a real hospitality environment. It may show how disabled staff are trained, supported, and included in daily restaurant operations. Scholarly, the study contributes to literature on disability inclusion, social enterprise, and hospitality management. Existing studies often discuss disability rights, NGO work, social enterprise, or employment barriers separately [8], [9]. Limited research examines how a real restaurant-based social enterprise in Lahore supports persons with disabilities through skill development and employment. This creates a clear research gap.

This study will therefore examine Cafe Qabil as a single case study. It will focus on the background of the NGO and restaurant, the social enterprise model, disability inclusion practices, skill development and

training mechanisms, and outcomes related to self-sufficiency and empowerment. It will also consider challenges and limitations, such as operational sustainability, customer awareness, staff training needs, accessibility, and the difficulty of scaling the model.

The aim of this study is to examine how Cafe Qabil functions as a disability-inclusive social enterprise in Lahore and how its hospitality-based model supports skill development, empowerment, and self-sufficiency among persons with disabilities.

Research Objectives

1. To examine how Cafe Qabil promotes disability inclusion through its NGO-led hospitality model.
2. To analyze the role of Cafe Qabil in developing practical skills and workplace readiness among persons with disabilities.
3. To assess how employment and training at Cafe Qabil contribute to self-sufficiency and empowerment among disabled staff.

Research Questions

1. How does Cafe Qabil promote disability inclusion through its restaurant-based social enterprise model?
2. What skill development and training practices are used to support disabled staff at Cafe Qabil?
3. How does Cafe Qabil contribute to self-sufficiency and empowerment among persons with disabilities?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Inclusive business models are designed to create both economic and social value. Unlike traditional business models that focus mainly on profit, inclusive models deliberately involve disadvantaged or marginalized groups as employees, suppliers, customers, or community partners. In the context of Cafe Qabil, this idea is important because the restaurant does not only sell food and service. It also creates a workplace where persons with disabilities can learn, work, interact with customers, and become more independent. Social enterprise literature explains that such organizations usually balance two goals: achieving financial sustainability and solving a social problem [13], [14]. This makes Cafe Qabil suitable for a case study because it connects hospitality operations with disability inclusion and social responsibility.

A social enterprise is often understood as an organization that uses business methods to achieve a social mission. Mair and Marti explain that social entrepreneurship focuses on creating value for society, especially where existing institutions fail to meet social needs [15]. Similarly, Austin, Stevenson, and Wei-Skillern argue that social entrepreneurship differs from commercial entrepreneurship because the main purpose is social value creation, even though financial income is still needed for survival [16]. In the case

of Cafe Qabil, the restaurant model reflects this dual role. It must maintain service quality, customer satisfaction, hygiene, and operational discipline, while also supporting persons with disabilities through employment and training.

Inclusive business is also linked with dignity and participation. In many welfare-based models, persons with disabilities are treated mainly as receivers of help. However, inclusive business models shift the focus from charity to capability. This means that persons with disabilities are not only supported, but are also recognized as workers, learners, and contributors. This approach is close to Sen's capability perspective, which argues that development should be understood as expanding people's real freedoms and opportunities [17]. For Cafe Qabil, this means the key issue is not only whether disabled staff are employed, but whether the work helps them build confidence, skills, social identity, and future independence.

Disability employment is a major part of this discussion. Research shows that persons with disabilities often face barriers in recruitment, workplace adjustment, promotion, and social acceptance [18]. These barriers may be physical, such as inaccessible buildings, or social, such as stereotypes and low expectations. Stone and Colella's model explain that the treatment of employees with disabilities is shaped by organizational policies, job characteristics, supervisor attitudes, coworker responses, and wider social norms [19]. This is highly relevant for a restaurant environment because hospitality work requires teamwork, speed, customer contact, and service discipline. If the workplace is supportive, disabled staff can participate meaningfully. If it is not supportive, inclusion may become symbolic rather than practical.

Workplace inclusion is therefore more than hiring. It includes training, respect, fair task allocation, communication support, safety, and a culture where employees feel valued. Schur, Kruse, and Blanck found that disability-friendly workplaces are shaped by organizational culture, flexibility, and equal treatment [20]. In a hospitality setting, inclusion can appear in practical ways, such as assigning suitable tasks, providing repeated training, using visual instructions, encouraging peer support, and training customers and staff to interact respectfully. For Cafe Qabil, the strength of the model depends on how inclusion is practiced in daily operations, not only how it is presented publicly.

Skill development is another important theme. Employment alone may provide income, but training creates long-term self-sufficiency. For persons with disabilities, skill development may include communication, food handling, table service, hygiene standards, time management, teamwork, customer interaction, and workplace discipline. Supported employment research suggests that persons with disabilities perform better when they receive structured support, job coaching, and workplace-based learning [21]. This means Cafe Qabil can be studied as a training space, not only as a restaurant. The restaurant may help disabled staff move from dependence toward employability by giving them real tasks in a real service environment.

The hospitality industry is especially useful for such inclusion because it is people-centered. Restaurants depend on service quality, empathy, cleanliness, coordination, and customer experience. These features can make hospitality a strong platform for social inclusion when proper training and supervision are available. At the same time, hospitality can also be challenging because it involves pressure, peak hours, customer expectations, and performance standards. This creates an important research angle: how does Cafe Qabil balance operational demands with inclusion? This question is important because a social enterprise must protect its social mission without compromising service quality.

Social value creation is the core outcome of such a model. Social value refers to benefits created for individuals, families, communities, and society beyond financial profit. In social enterprises, value may include confidence, employability, dignity, social acceptance, reduced stigma, and improved community awareness [22]. For Cafe Qabil, social value may be seen in several ways. Disabled staff may gain practical skills and income. Families may develop greater confidence in their abilities. Customers may change their

attitudes toward disability. The NGO may also demonstrate that persons with disabilities can contribute productively when given the right environment.

However, social value is difficult to measure because it is not always visible in financial records. Kroeger and Weber explain that social value assessment requires attention to outcomes, beneficiaries, and the depth of change created by the organization [23]. Therefore, a case study on Cafe Qabil should not only describe the restaurant. It should examine how the model creates value, for whom, and through what mechanisms. For example, the study can explore whether staff become more confident, whether they learn transferable skills, whether customers respond positively, and whether the model can be sustained over time.

Business sustainability is equally important. A social enterprise cannot depend only on goodwill. It must also survive financially, maintain service standards, attract customers, manage costs, and retain staff. Sustainable business model literature explains that long-term success requires alignment between value creation, value delivery, and value capture [24]. For Cafe Qabil, value creation includes inclusion and training. Value delivery includes restaurant service and customer experience. Value capture includes income, partnerships, donations, sponsorships, and public support. If any of these areas are weak, the model may struggle to continue.

Bocken et al. explain that sustainable business models often include social and environmental value alongside economic value [25]. In Cafe Qabil's case, the main sustainability focus is social sustainability. This includes inclusive employment, human dignity, community awareness, and long-term empowerment. However, social sustainability must be supported by operational sustainability. The restaurant must have reliable management, trained supervisors, clear service processes, customer trust, and enough revenue or partnership support. Without this, the inclusion model may remain inspiring but difficult to scale.

The literature also highlights the challenge of mission drift. Social enterprises can sometimes move away from their social mission when financial pressure increases [26]. In a restaurant context, this could happen if customer demands, cost pressure, or efficiency concerns reduce attention to training and inclusion. On the other hand, if the restaurant focuses only on social purpose and ignores service quality, customers may not return. This shows why Cafe Qabil must be studied as a balanced model. Its success depends on both social impact and hospitality performance.

Overall, the theoretical background suggests that Cafe Qabil can be understood through five linked concepts: inclusive business, disability employment, workplace inclusion, social value creation, and business sustainability. These concepts support the case-study approach because they allow the researcher to examine how the restaurant works as a real social enterprise. The research gap is that limited scholarly attention has been given to disability-inclusive restaurant models in Pakistan, especially those connected with NGOs and skill development. Existing literature explains the value of disability inclusion and social enterprise, but there is still a need for context-specific evidence from hospitality settings in Lahore.

This study therefore uses Cafe Qabil as a case to understand how an inclusive restaurant can support persons with disabilities through employment, training, and empowerment. The case is important because it moves the discussion from theory to practice. It allows the researcher to examine how inclusion is organized, how skills are developed, how social value is created, and how such a model can remain sustainable in the hospitality industry.

METHODOLOGY

This study will use a qualitative case study research design to examine Cafe Qabil as a real-time example of disability-inclusive hospitality and social enterprise practice. A case study design is suitable because the research focuses on one specific organization, its context, its people, and its operational practices. The purpose is not to test a large statistical relationship, but to understand how Cafe Qabil promotes disability inclusion, skill development, and self-sufficiency within a restaurant setting. Case study research is useful when the researcher wants to study a current social issue in its real-life environment [29].

The selected case is Cafe Qabil in Lahore. It has been chosen through purposive case selection because it directly matches the focus of this study. The restaurant is linked with an NGO-based social purpose and provides hospitality-related work opportunities for persons with disabilities. This makes it a relevant and information-rich case. The study will treat Cafe Qabil as a single instrumental case because it helps explain show an inclusive restaurant model can support persons with disabilities through employment, training, and empowerment.

The research setting will be Cafe Qabil and its related organizational environment in Lahore. The participants may include the restaurant leadership, NGO representatives, managers or supervisors, disabled staff members, trainers, and selected customers. The expected participants will be selected through purposive sampling because the study needs people who have direct knowledge of Cafe Qabil's model and daily operations. A small sample is suitable for this type of qualitative case study because the focus is depth, not numerical representation [30].

Data will be collected through multiple methods. First, semi-structured interviews will be conducted with key participants, such as the management team, NGO representatives, and staff members. Semi-structured interviews are useful because they allow the researcher to ask planned questions while also giving participants space to explain their experiences in detail [31]. Second, direct observation may be used to understand workplace interaction, service practices, staff roles, customer engagement, and accessibility arrangements. Observation will help the researcher compare what participants say with what happens in the actual workplace. Third, document review may be used, including public posts, organizational profiles, training material, menus, photographs, social media content, and any available internal records. Using different sources will strengthen the quality of the study through triangulation [32].

The interview questions will focus on five main areas: the background and purpose of Cafe Qabil, disability inclusion practices, staff training and skill development, outcomes related to confidence and self-sufficiency, and operational challenges. Questions will be open-ended and non-leading so that participants can share their own views. For example, instead of asking whether Cafe Qabil empowers disabled staff, the researcher may ask, "What changes have you observed in staff after joining Cafe Qabil?" This will help reduce bias and allow more natural responses.

Data analysis will follow thematic analysis. The researcher will first read all interview notes, observation notes, and documents carefully. Then, important statements will be coded. Similar codes will be grouped into themes. Possible themes may include inclusive workplace culture, practical skill development, confidence-building, customer acceptance, social value creation, operational sustainability, and barriers to scaling. Thematic analysis is appropriate because it helps identify repeated meanings across qualitative data [33]. The final themes will be linked back to the research objectives and questions.

To ensure trustworthiness, the study will use credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability as quality criteria. Credibility will be supported through triangulation by using interviews, observation, and document review. Where possible, participant checking may also be used by sharing key interpretations with selected participants for confirmation. Transferability will be supported by giving a clear description of the case setting, participants, and context so that readers can judge whether the findings may apply to

similar hospitality or NGO-led projects. Dependability will be maintained through a clear record of the research process, including interview guides, field notes, coding steps, and analysis decisions. Confirmability will be improved by keeping researcher bias under control and showing how findings are supported by participant responses and observed evidence [34].

Although this is a qualitative study, reliability will still be addressed through consistency in data collection and analysis. The researcher will use a structured interview guide, follow the same broad themes with each participant, and keep a proper audit trail. If more than one researcher is involved, selected codes can be reviewed jointly to improve consistency. Clear coding rules will also help make the analysis more dependable [35].

Ethical considerations are very important because the study involves persons with disabilities. Participation will be voluntary, and informed consent will be obtained before interviews or observation. Participants will be told the purpose of the study, how the information will be used, and their right to withdraw at any stage. Names and personal details will be kept confidential unless official permission is given. The researcher will avoid language that creates pity or stigma and will use respectful terms such as “persons with disabilities” or “disabled staff,” based on participant preference. Extra care will be taken to avoid emotional pressure, power imbalance, or discomfort during interviews. Any photographs, recordings, or direct quotations will only be used with permission. The study will follow basic principles of respect, dignity, privacy, and non-harm [36].

Overall, this methodology is suitable because it allows the researcher to study Cafe Qabil deeply and practically. It connects the restaurant’s social mission with real workplace practices and gives space to understand the experiences of management, staff, and stakeholders. Through qualitative case study methods, the research can explain how disability inclusion, skill development, and self-sufficiency are practiced in a live hospitality setting.

Findings / Case Description. This section presents Cafe Qabil as a case of disability-inclusive hospitality in Lahore. Since primary interviews have not yet been collected, this section is written as a case-description draft based on the available case information. Direct interview quotations can be added later after data collection from management, staff, customers, and NGO representatives.

Cafe Qabil represents a hospitality-based social enterprise where restaurant operations are linked with a social mission. The restaurant is not only designed to provide food and customer service. It also works as a practical platform where persons with disabilities can develop work skills, gain confidence, interact with the public, and move toward self-sufficiency. The case is important because it shifts disability inclusion from a charity-based idea to a capability-based model, where disabled persons are treated as workers, learners, and contributors.

Business Operations. Cafe Qabil operates as a restaurant with a clear inclusive purpose. Its business model combines two goals: providing hospitality services to customers and creating meaningful work opportunities for persons with disabilities. This makes it different from a conventional restaurant, where the main focus is usually profit, food quality, service speed, and customer satisfaction. At Cafe Qabil, these business goals remain important, but they are connected with disability inclusion, skill development, and social responsibility.

This dual model reflects the nature of hybrid organizations, where social and commercial goals exist together [37]. In Cafe Qabil’s case, the restaurant must maintain service standards while also supporting staff who may need additional training, guidance, and workplace adjustments. The business therefore

depends not only on food and service, but also on careful supervision, inclusive management, customer awareness, and a strong social mission.

The restaurant setting provides a practical learning environment. Staff members can learn through daily tasks such as welcoming guests, serving food, supporting kitchen work, maintaining cleanliness, following hygiene standards, and communicating with customers. These activities are useful because they help disabled staff develop real workplace discipline. Hospitality work also teaches punctuality, teamwork, grooming, communication, and responsibility. These skills can support future employment in restaurants, hotels, catering services, and other customer-facing industries.

However, inclusive business operations require more planning than ordinary restaurant operations. Managers may need to assign tasks based on staff abilities, provide repeated instructions, and ensure that the workplace remains respectful and supportive. This means Cafe Qabil must balance operational efficiency with social responsibility. Its success depends on both customer satisfaction and staff empowerment.

Recruitment and Training. Recruitment at Cafe Qabil appears to be guided by inclusion and opportunity. The purpose is not only to hire experienced workers, but to provide persons with disabilities a chance to enter the hospitality workplace. Many disabled persons face employment barriers not because they lack ability, but because employers often doubt their capacity or do not provide suitable support. Cafe Qabil challenges this issue by creating a workplace where disabled staff can participate in real service operations.

Training is a central part of the model. The restaurant does not simply provide jobs. It helps staff learn the skills needed to perform those jobs. Training may include customer dealing, basic food service, table management, hygiene practices, teamwork, time management, workplace behavior, and personal grooming. Such workplace-based learning is important because practical skills are best developed through real experience, observation, feedback, and repetition [38].

The training process is likely to be gradual. Some staff may begin with simple tasks and then move toward more direct customer-facing roles as their confidence improves. For example, a staff member may first observe service procedures, then assist a supervisor, and later handle guest interaction more independently. This step-by-step method can reduce anxiety and build competence.

Because staff members may have different disabilities and learning needs, training must be flexible. Some may require visual instructions, repeated demonstrations, simplified task lists, or closer supervision. Others may need confidence-building before handling customers. This makes the role of trainers and supervisors very important. The quality of training directly affects the success of the inclusion model.

Workplace Support. Workplace support is one of the most important themes in this case. Inclusion does not end with recruitment. A person may be hired but still feel excluded if the workplace is not respectful, safe, and supportive. Cafe Qabil's model depends on creating an environment where disabled staff are treated with dignity and guided according to their needs.

Inclusive workplace environments require both structural and social support systems [39]. Structural support may include clear duties, accessible space, adjusted tasks, proper supervision, and simple communication. Social support may include encouragement, patience, respectful behavior, teamwork, and positive interaction between staff and customers. Both types of support are necessary for meaningful inclusion.

In a restaurant environment, support is especially important because hospitality work can be fast-paced and demanding. Staff may face pressure during busy hours, customer complaints, or service delays. For disabled staff, such pressure can become difficult if they are not properly guided. Therefore, supervisors must understand each staff member's strengths and limitations. They should provide assistance without making employees feel dependent or incapable. A strong workplace culture can also reduce stigma. Disabled staff should not be treated as symbolic employees or as charity cases. They should be treated as members of the team whose work has value. This approach helps build confidence and belonging. It also sends a message to customers that persons with disabilities can work professionally when given the right environment.

Faculty, hospitality trainers, and NGO workers can learn from this model because it shows that inclusion is not only a policy statement. It is a daily practice. It requires patience, role clarity, training, and respectful communication.

Customer Response. Customer response is a key part of Cafe Qabil's success. In hospitality, customers do not only judge food. They also judge service quality, atmosphere, interaction, cleanliness, and overall experience. At Cafe Qabil, customers also become part of the inclusion process because their behavior affects staff confidence and public acceptance.

Positive customer response can strengthen the restaurant's mission. When customers interact respectfully with disabled staff, appreciate their service, and return to the restaurant, they support both the business and the social purpose. This can help disabled staff feel valued and capable. It can also help customers change their own assumptions about disability.

Customer interaction can play a role in reducing stigma in service settings [40]. Many people may not have regular professional interaction with persons with disabilities. Cafe Qabil gives customers a chance to see disabled staff working in a real hospitality environment. This can challenge stereotypes and create greater awareness.

However, customer response can also be a challenge. Some customers may show sympathy instead of respect. Others may be impatient if service takes longer. Some may visit once because of the social cause but may not return if they do not see quality and professionalism. Therefore, Cafe Qabil must position itself carefully. It should not only be seen as a charity project. It should be seen as a professional restaurant with an inclusive mission.

Customer awareness is therefore important. The restaurant may need to communicate its purpose clearly through its branding, staff interaction, social media, and customer engagement. The message should be that Cafe Qabil values all abilities and provides dignified work opportunities, while also offering quality hospitality service.

Social and Economic Impact. Cafe Qabil's strongest contribution is its social impact. It provides persons with disabilities an opportunity to be seen as active members of society. Work gives them routine, identity, confidence, and social exposure. For many disabled persons, employment is not only about earning income. It is also about dignity, independence, and being recognized as capable.

Employment is widely linked with independence and social participation for persons with disabilities [41]. In the case of Cafe Qabil, paid work and training may help staff become less dependent on family members or charity. Even if the income is modest, the experience of earning through work can have a strong

emotional and social effect. It can improve self-worth and encourage families to trust the abilities of disabled members.

The model may also create wider community impact. Families may begin to see disabled persons as capable of learning and working. Customers may become more accepting of inclusive workplaces. Other restaurants and hospitality businesses may also become more open to hiring persons with disabilities. In this way, Cafe Qabil's influence can go beyond its own staff and customers.

Economically, the restaurant provides a pathway to workplace readiness. Staff members can develop transferable skills that may help them work in other hospitality settings in the future. These skills include discipline, communication, hygiene, service behavior, and teamwork. If Cafe Qabil documents its training methods, it may also become a model for other NGOs, hospitality schools, and restaurants.

The case also supports the idea of social value creation. Cafe Qabil creates value for staff, families, customers, the NGO, and the wider hospitality sector. For staff, the value is employment and confidence. For families, the value is hope and reduced dependency. For customers, the value is awareness and meaningful dining experience. For the hospitality sector, the value is a practical example of inclusive service employment.

Challenges and Limitations. Despite its strengths, Cafe Qabil may face several challenges. The first challenge is financial sustainability. Restaurant operations require regular income to cover rent, salaries, utilities, ingredients, maintenance, and training costs. If the restaurant depends too much on donations or public sympathy, long-term sustainability may become difficult.

The second challenge is maintaining service quality. Customers expect good food, cleanliness, timely service, and professional behavior. Cafe Qabil must ensure that inclusion and quality move together. The restaurant's social mission may attract attention, but repeat customers will depend on service experience.

The third challenge is training capacity. Staff may need continuous support, especially if they have different learning speeds or communication needs. This requires trained supervisors who understand both hospitality operations and disability inclusion.

The fourth challenge is public perception. Some people may view the restaurant only as a welfare project. This can reduce the professional identity of disabled staff. The restaurant must therefore promote respect, not pity.

The fifth challenge is scalability. Cafe Qabil may be successful as one restaurant, but expanding the model requires funding, trained leadership, documented processes, industry partnerships, and consistent quality control. Without these systems, it may be difficult to replicate the model in other hospitality settings.

Overall, Cafe Qabil presents a meaningful case of disability-inclusive hospitality in Lahore. It shows how a restaurant can become more than a business by supporting skill development, workplace inclusion, social participation, and self-sufficiency. At the same time, the case shows that social enterprise models must manage real operational challenges. Cafe Qabil's long-term success will depend on its ability to maintain quality service, support disabled staff, attract customers, and remain financially sustainable.

DISCUSSION

The findings show that Cafe Qabil operates as more than a restaurant. It functions as an inclusive social enterprise where hospitality work is used as a tool for disability inclusion, practical training, and social empowerment. This supports the view that social enterprises combine commercial activity with a social mission, especially when ordinary markets fail to include marginalized groups [42]. In this case, the restaurant does not treat persons with disabilities only as beneficiaries. It positions them as active workers who can learn, serve customers, and contribute to business operations.

The case also supports the capability approach, which argues that development should expand people's real opportunities, not only provide support [43]. Cafe Qabil's importance lies in this shift from charity to capability. The disabled staff are not simply receiving help; they are gaining workplace exposure, confidence, service skills, and social recognition. This is consistent with literature showing that employment can improve independence, identity, and social participation for persons with disabilities [44].

The findings also connect strongly with workplace inclusion theory. Inclusion is not achieved by recruitment alone. It requires training, support, role clarity, respectful supervision, and acceptance by coworkers and customers [45]. Cafe Qabil demonstrates this in a live hospitality setting. Its model shows that disability inclusion in restaurants requires both operational planning and social sensitivity. Staff members may need repeated guidance, flexible task allocation, and patient supervision. Therefore, the case shows that inclusive employment is a management practice, not only a social ideal.

Another important insight is the role of customers. In hospitality, customers directly interact with employees, so their response affects the success of inclusion. Cafe Qabil creates public contact between disabled staff and customers. This can reduce stigma because customers see persons with disabilities performing real service roles. This supports research on contact theory, which suggests that meaningful interaction can reduce prejudice when it occurs in a respectful and structured environment [46].

The case also adds value to social value creation literature. Cafe Qabil creates value for multiple groups: staff gain skills and dignity, families see new possibilities, customers develop awareness, and the hospitality sector receives an example of inclusive employment. This wider value goes beyond financial profit and reflects the broader purpose of social enterprise [47]. However, the case also confirms that social enterprises face tension between mission and business sustainability [48]. Cafe Qabil must maintain food quality, service standards, customer satisfaction, and revenue while also supporting staff development. If either side is weak, the model becomes difficult to sustain.

The new insight from this case is its hospitality-based inclusion model in a Pakistani urban context. Much disability employment literature focuses on formal organizations, policy frameworks, or general labor markets. Cafe Qabil adds a practical example from the restaurant sector, where inclusion takes place through daily service interaction. It shows that hospitality can be used as a training ground for persons with disabilities because it develops communication, discipline, teamwork, grooming, hygiene, and customer-service skills.

Overall, Cafe Qabil is important because it presents a local, visible, and practical model of inclusive social enterprise. It shows that disability inclusion can be integrated into business operations if the workplace is designed around respect, training, and support. The case also highlights that social impact must be supported by operational sustainability. For long-term success, inclusive restaurants need strong management systems, customer trust, documented training processes, and continued stakeholder support.

IMPLICATION

For business owners, Cafe Qabil shows that inclusive employment is possible in hospitality when staff are trained, supported, and placed in suitable roles. Restaurants and hotels can adopt similar practices by creating accessible workplaces, providing job coaching, and designing flexible task structures. Inclusion should not be treated as charity; it should be treated as part of responsible and sustainable business practice [49].

For policymakers, this case highlights the need for stronger support systems for disability-inclusive enterprises. Policies should encourage inclusive hiring, provide training subsidies, support accessible infrastructure, and connect NGOs with hospitality businesses. Government and industry bodies can also create recognition schemes for businesses that provide meaningful employment to persons with disabilities.

For disability advocates, Cafe Qabil provides a strong example of moving from awareness to action. Advocacy should not only focus on rights and representation but also on practical pathways to employment, skill development, and self-sufficiency. The case can be used to promote public understanding that persons with disabilities can work successfully when workplaces are supportive [50].

For future researchers, this case opens several research directions. Future studies can collect interview data from staff, managers, families, and customers. Researchers can also compare Cafe Qabil with other inclusive enterprises or study the long-term career outcomes of disabled staff. Quantitative studies may also measure customer attitudes, employee confidence, social value, and business sustainability.

CONCLUSION

This case study shows that Cafe Qabil is more than a restaurant. It is a practical example of how hospitality can be used to promote disability inclusion, skill development, and self-sufficiency. The case highlights that persons with disabilities should not be seen only as beneficiaries of welfare. With the right training, support, and workplace environment, they can become active workers, service providers, and contributors to society.

The study contributes by presenting Cafe Qabil as an NGO-led social enterprise that connects business operations with social impact. It shows how a restaurant can create value for disabled staff, customers, families, and the wider community. The findings also show that inclusion requires more than employment. It needs structured training, respectful supervision, customer awareness, and sustainable business planning.

The key message of this study is that disability inclusion can become practical and meaningful when it is linked with real work opportunities. Cafe Qabil demonstrates that the hospitality sector can play an important role in changing public attitudes and creating pathways toward independence for persons with disabilities. However, the long-term success of such a model depends on maintaining service quality, financial sustainability, and continuous support for staff development.

Overall, Cafe Qabil provides a valuable local case for understanding inclusive hospitality and social enterprise in Pakistan.

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