

(Original Article)

Strengthening Inclusive Governance: Collaborative and Digital Pathways to People with Disability in Bali's Tourism Sector

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Abstract

Employment opportunities for persons with disabilities (PWDs) in Bali's tourism sector remain limited despite the existence of supportive regulations, indicating a persistent gap between policy commitments and implementation. While previous studies have primarily focused on descriptive barriers, limited attention has been given to how governance mechanisms shape employment inclusion outcomes. This study applies an inclusive governance framework, operationalized through three dimensions—transparency, participation, and equality—to examine how governance mechanisms influence employment inclusion. Using a descriptive qualitative approach and the Miles and Huberman analytical model, data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and document analysis involving government institutions, NGOs, and PWDs. The findings reveal a persistent policy–practice gap driven by weak regulatory enforcement, fragmented information systems, and entrenched workplace stigma. Two key empirical insights emerge. First, digital employment platforms, particularly DNetwork, enhance transparency and improve job matching, thereby expanding access to employment opportunities for PWDs. Second, collaborative governance among government agencies, NGOs such as PUSPADI Bali, and the private sector contributes to increased employment inclusion, although its sustainability remains constrained by limited integration and resources. This study contributes to governance and public administration literature by demonstrating how digital integration and multi-stakeholder collaboration function as causal mechanisms that enable inclusive governance in practice. These results demonstrate that inclusive governance becomes effective when regulatory enforcement, digital integration, and multi-stakeholder collaboration are aligned, offering broader implications for inclusive labor policy in developing-country contexts.

Keywords

inclusive governance, disability, tourism, employment

Received: 17 November 2025; Revised: 24 December 2025; Accepted: 25 April 2026

Introduction

The employment problem of people with disabilities in Indonesia remains a serious issue. According to data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), the labor force participation rate for people with disabilities is only 40.53%, significantly lower than that of the non-disabled population (Ikawati et al., 2024). Bali, as a global tourist destination, has significant economic potential, but the implementation of inclusive tourism concepts has not been optimal. The low number of people with disabilities working in the tourism sector is largely due to stigma, lack of awareness among companies, and inadequate enforcement of regulations (Ayu et al., 2019). This condition reflects a broader structural issue in which formal policy commitments have not been effectively translated into inclusive labor market outcomes.

This pattern is consistent with broader findings in the hospitality and tourism literature, where (Manoharan et al., 2024) demonstrate through a systematic review that disability

employment remains underexplored despite its strategic importance, while (Bellucci et al., 2023) argue that accounting for disability and work inclusion in tourism requires both institutional accountability and value-based managerial commitment. Further, A systematic review by (Manoharan et al., 2024) on disability employment in the hospitality industry confirms that at least three reasons exist which caused this: stigma, perceived productivity concerns, and employer biases. These reasons remain among the most persistent barriers to inclusive hiring, even in contexts where supportive regulations exist. Those pattern suggests that regulatory frameworks alone are insufficient without parallel cultural and institutional change.

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) has become an international benchmark encouraging countries to develop inclusive and non-discriminatory policies. As an international instrument, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) emphasizes that everyone, without exception, has the right to equal employment opportunities and protection from discrimination. Although Indonesia has ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and integrated it into national law, its implementation at both national and regional levels remains far from ideal. This gap is particularly evident in the tourism sector, where the fulfillment of disability rights—including equal employment opportunities for persons with disabilities (PWDs) to become tourism workers—still requires serious attention (Pravita et al., 2023) This implementation gap mirrors broader patterns observed across Asia, where disability legislations have been endorsed but workplace stigma and uneven enforcement continue to limit meaningful inclusion (Luu, 2021).

Bali, despite being known as a global tourism destination with significant economic potential, still faces serious challenges in realizing inclusivity for people with disabilities. The government has issued regulations such as Bali Provincial Regulation No. 9 of 2015 concerning the Protection and Fulfillment of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Law No. 8 of 2016. However, their implementation remains hampered by stigma, lack of understanding among business actors, and the lack of an integrated job placement platform (Bali Provincial Manpower Office, 2024).

Data from the Bali Provincial Manpower Office indicates that only 36 companies officially report employing people with disabilities, totaling 119 people—a figure that falls far short of the estimated disability population in Bali. Furthermore, the implementation of the 1% minimum quota for private companies has not been optimal in practice.

Amid these challenges, the role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as PUSPADI Bali and DNetwork has proven to be pivotal in advancing the rights and employment inclusion of persons with disabilities (PWDs) in Bali. Both organizations bridge the structural gap between policy and implementation through rehabilitation programs, vocational training, advocacy initiatives, and the development of digital platforms designed to connect PWDs with inclusive employers.

PUSPADI Bali, headquartered in Denpasar, provides comprehensive rehabilitation services, including prosthetic and orthotic support, physical therapy, and entrepreneurship training for individuals with physical disabilities. According to PUSPADI's 2024 annual report, more than 1,200 beneficiaries across Bali and East Indonesia received mobility aids and empowerment training, with approximately 38% of them participating in income-generating activities within one year of completing the program. These results demonstrate that rehabilitation, when integrated with skills development, substantially enhances employability and self-reliance among PWDs.

Meanwhile, DNetwork, a digital employment platform established in collaboration with PUSPADI Bali and supported by the Australian Government's DFAT (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade) plays a crucial role in linking PWDs with inclusive job

opportunities. As of mid-2024, DNetwork had recorded over 4,000 registered job seekers with disabilities and 500 partner companies across Indonesia, including 73 companies operating in Bali's tourism and hospitality sector. The platform provides vacancy announcements, online training modules, and job-matching services that use accessibility-friendly interfaces, enabling users with visual or hearing impairments to navigate independently. The role of such intermediary platforms is particularly important in tourism and hospitality, where front-of-house hiring preferences often favor aesthetic and self-presentation skills, leaving PWDs disproportionately confined to back-of-house or entry-level roles (Manoharan et al., 2024; Tsui et al., 2024) Digital matching platforms can partially counteract this bias by surfacing candidates based on competence rather than appearance.

Field interviews conducted with officers from the Bali Provincial Manpower Office (Disnakertrans-ESDM, 2024) reveal that the presence of DNetwork has facilitated the government's efforts to monitor private-sector compliance with Bali Regional Regulation No. 9/2015 and Governor Regulation No. 44/2018, which mandate companies to allocate at least 1% of their workforce for PWDs. However, officials acknowledge that while the platform supports transparency and information access, enforcement remains inconsistent. Many companies still rely on informal recruitment channels or limit their inclusion initiatives to corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities rather than institutional policies.

Interviews with beneficiaries also reveal a change in attitudes among participating employers. For example, a hospitality company in Gianyar that partnered with DNetwork in 2023 successfully recruited five employees with hearing impairments as baristas and housekeeping staff. The company's HR division reported that productivity levels matched those of non-disabled employees after a three-month adjustment period, supported by sign language training for supervisors. This case illustrates how inclusive employment practices, when backed by structured collaboration between the government, NGOs, and the private sector, can produce tangible results. The example mentioned above aligns with broader empirical findings that, once initial accommodations are made, employees with disabilities often demonstrate comparable performance, stronger loyalty, and lower turnover relative to their non-disabled counterparts (Bellucci et al., 2023; Manoharan et al., 2024)

Nevertheless, challenges remain in terms of program sustainability, funding, and scalability. Many NGO-led initiatives depend on short-term grants, limiting their capacity to provide long-term support or expand to remote districts such as Buleleng or Karangasem. Furthermore, the lack of integrated data between Disnakertrans-ESDM, PUSPADI, and DNetwork makes it difficult to track progress systematically. The 2024 Disnakertrans report indicates that only 62 companies in Bali formally reported the employment of PWDs, despite hundreds of potential opportunities identified by NGOs.

Despite these limitations, the synergy between the government, NGOs, and the private sector is showing gradual progress. Collaborative initiatives such as the ULD-PUSPADI partnership in Gianyar have successfully placed 40% more PWDs in the retail sector between 2023 and 2024. With continued integration of inclusive governance principles, particularly in digital innovation, legal reinforcement, and participatory training, the partnership model championed by PUSPADI Bali and DNetwork holds great promise to drive a structural transformation toward a more equitable and inclusive employment ecosystem for persons with disabilities across Bali Province. In a previous study, (Sijabat & Mashur, 2022)) emphasized the importance of empowering people with disabilities in the tourist destination of Kuta, Bali, even though their involvement remains informal. Meanwhile, Sijabat & Mashur (2022) suggest that the principles of inclusive governance, which emphasize transparency, participation, and equality, can be applied to various

social issues, including the employment of people with disabilities. Building on this, recent comparative research demonstrates that disability-inclusive HR practices in the tourism and hospitality industry are not merely symbolic but produce measurable improvements in work-family balance and overall well-being among employees with disabilities, particularly when supported by inclusive leadership (Luu, 2021). This indicates that governance principles, when operationalized through concrete workplace practices, can translate into tangible employment outcomes.

In the employment context, one study demonstrate that the application of collaborative governance principles can increase the participation of people with disabilities through institutional strengthening. Collaboration between the government, private sector, and community, supported by adequate resources and a strong network and trust, is key to overcoming structural barriers to participation in the labour market (Feradiah & Prianto, 2024).

This study proposes an inclusive governance model that combines the active roles of stakeholders, government, private sector, and NGOs, to create an integrated digital platform that facilitates job placement for people with disabilities in Bali's tourism sector. This model emphasizes cross-sector collaboration and integrates the direct participation of people with disabilities in the formulation and evaluation of employment programs, allowing for more effective distribution of information on job vacancies and training.

The novelty of this research lies in its innovative approach, which not only relies on existing formal regulations but also combines data from the Disability Services Unit (ULD), PUSPADI Bali, and DNetwork into a comprehensive job matching system. Furthermore, this research emphasizes transforming the mindset of business actors through educational campaigns to change negative stigma and raise awareness about the potential of people with disabilities. Thus, the proposed inclusive governance model is expected to provide practical and innovative solutions to overcome obstacles to the active participation of people with disabilities in the tourism sector workforce in Bali.

This research was formulated to answer two main questions: How do governance mechanisms, particularly transparency, participation, and equality, shape the persistence of regulatory, informational, and sociocultural barriers to employment for persons with disabilities (PWDs) in Bali's tourism sector?; and How do inclusive governance practices, such as digital integration and multi-stakeholder collaboration, mitigate these barriers and improve employment outcomes for PWDs?

The findings of this study suggest that the holistic implementation of inclusive governance, through regulatory strengthening, the development of integrated digital platforms, and enhanced stakeholder participation, has the potential to bridge the gap between policy and practice, thereby expanding employment opportunities for persons with disabilities in Bali's tourism sector.

While existing studies on disability and tourism in Bali have provided valuable descriptive insights into barriers such as stigma, limited accessibility, and low regulatory compliance, they often remain confined to sectoral or case-based analyses. These studies have not sufficiently examined how governance mechanisms—particularly the interaction between state institutions, non-state actors, and digital systems—shape employment outcomes for persons with disabilities (PWDs). As a result, there is a limited understanding of how policy commitments are translated into practice within complex, multi-actor governance settings.

This study addresses this gap by situating the issue of disability employment within broader debates in governance and public administration, particularly the shift from hierarchical government to inclusive and collaborative governance. Rather than treating employment exclusion solely as a social or sectoral issue, this research conceptualizes it as a governance problem involving coordination failures, weak institutional enforcement,

and fragmented information systems. In doing so, the study contributes to the growing body of literature that emphasizes the role of multi-stakeholder collaboration, accountability mechanisms, and digital integration in improving public service outcomes.

To maintain analytical focus, the role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as PUSPADI Bali and DNetwork is positioned not merely as descriptive background but as part of the broader governance puzzle, specifically as intermediary actors that bridge gaps between policy design and implementation. Their involvement highlights both the potential and limitations of collaborative arrangements in advancing inclusive employment, which will be further examined in the subsequent sections.

Literature Review

Inclusive Governance and its Relevance

Inclusive Governance is a governance approach that ensures the active participation of all community groups, including people with disabilities, in the policy process and its implementation. According to (Sijabat & Mashur, 2022) this concept not only embraces diversity but also optimizes the potential of differences to create social justice. Inclusive governance has been widely discussed as both a normative principle and an analytical framework. As a normative principle, inclusive governance emphasizes fairness, non-discrimination, and equal access for all societal groups, including persons with disabilities (PWDs). In this sense, it aligns with global commitments such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly the principle of “leaving no one behind,” which promotes equitable participation in social and economic life. However, treating inclusive governance solely as a normative ideal risks limiting its explanatory power in understanding how inclusion is achieved in practice.

Shaffii (2018) emphasizes that inclusive governance is not merely a symbolic policy, but rather a concrete action in the interaction between government, the private sector, and the community.

Inclusive governance represents a governance paradigm that actively promotes the participation of all segments of society, including persons with disabilities (PWDs), in both policy formulation and implementation. (Södergren & Vallström, 2023) argue that inclusive governance not only values diversity but also leverages it to promote social justice and equitable development outcomes. Similarly, (Ayu et al., 2019) asserts that inclusive governance must transcend symbolic representation by institutionalizing meaningful participation among government, private, and community actors in decision-making processes.

Empirical evidence indicates that inclusive governance directly influences socioeconomic inclusion for marginalized groups. For instance, The OECD reports that one in seven working-age adults in OECD countries identifies as having a disability, yet persons with disabilities continue to face substantial employment, unemployment, and poverty gaps compared to those without disabilities (OECD, 2022). Notably, approximately 30 percent of youth with disabilities—and nearly 70 percent of those with high support requirements—are classified as NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training), compared to only one in eight youth without disabilities. This indicates that even in high-income contexts with structured inclusion frameworks, systemic barriers persist, underscoring the importance of consistent enforcement alongside policy design. Moreover, The International Labour Organization in 2009 estimates that the economic exclusion of persons with disabilities from the labor market results in GDP losses ranging between 3 and 7 percent in developing countries, a figure that has been consistently reaffirmed in subsequent ILO analyses and working papers (Ananian & Dellaferrera, 2024) Comparative evidence from Asian contexts further suggests that the effectiveness of inclusive frameworks is shaped not only by formal regulation but also by the strength

of implementation. While South Korea has progressively expanded its quota system with stronger penalties for non-compliance, similar quota arrangements in other Asian countries have not been strictly implemented, producing uneven employment outcomes for PWDs across the region (Luu, 2021). This contrast highlights that inclusive governance becomes effective only when regulatory design is matched by consistent enforcement.

In the context of employment, inclusive governance aligns closely with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) and Goal 10 (Reduced Inequalities), under the principle of “Leaving No One Behind.” In line with this, (Mursalim & Haq, 2022) argue that despite the enactment of Law No. 8 of 2016 on Persons with Disabilities, its implementation in Indonesia remains constrained by weak law enforcement, limited employment services, and inadequate cross-ministerial collaboration. They emphasize that inclusive policy strategies that are grounded in multi-stakeholder engagement and social accountability mechanisms, will be essential for advancing decent work and equitable employment services for persons with disabilities.

Recent scholarship reinforces that inclusive governance in tourism cannot be detached from concrete workplace practice. Benjamin et al. (2021) caution that "beyond accessibility," genuine inclusion requires reshaping how PWDs are represented in tourism promotional and organisational discourse, while (Fennell & Garrod, 2022) argue for a deeper ethical responsibility within inclusive (eco)tourism that moves past tokenistic compliance. (Cerdan & Darcy, 2021) similarly demonstrate, through a customer-to-customer co-creation study, that inclusive tourism experiences emerge most robustly when multiple stakeholders share decision-making power—an empirical anchor for the participation dimension of inclusive governance.

According to Amanullah et al. (2017) and Sijabat & Mashur (2022) this principle can be operationalized through three interrelated elements:

1. **Transparency.** Employment-related policies and job vacancy information must be disseminated in accessible formats. For example, the (International Labour Organization, 2025) emphasizes that digital employment platforms and accessible public employment services play a critical role in reducing labor market exclusion for persons with disabilities in Indonesia, where only 18.7 percent of persons with disabilities are employed—dropping to 13.5 percent among women with disabilities. This underscores the urgent need for inclusive digital job portals with accessibility features (e.g., screen reader compatibility, sign-language interfaces) to widen access to employment information for marginalized groups.
2. **Participation.** Active involvement of PWDs in policymaking ensures that employment strategies address real barriers. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), Article 4(3), obliges states to actively consult with and involve persons with disabilities—through their representative organizations—in policy development and implementation. The UN CRPD Committee's Concluding Observations on Indonesia (CRPD/C/IDN/CO/1, 2022) specifically urged the Indonesian government to strengthen meaningful participation of organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs) in decision-making processes, indicating that substantive participation—rather than tokenistic representation—is essential for effective policy outcomes (CRPD Committee, 2022).
3. **Equality.** Equality demands the removal of discrimination across all stages of employment, recruitment, training, and career progression. The ILO in 2024 reports that employees with disabilities earn on average 12 percent less per hour globally, with this wage gap widening to 26 percent in low- and lower-middle-income countries—nearly half of which cannot be explained by socio-demographic factors (Ananian & Dellaferrera, 2024). This underscores that inclusive corporate practices, such as

reasonable accommodation and anti-bias training, are essential not only for inclusion but also for equity in labor outcomes.

Collectively, these data underscore that inclusive governance in employment is not merely a normative aspiration but an empirically supported mechanism for enhancing productivity, equity, and social cohesion.

Method

This study adopts a descriptive qualitative approach to examine the barriers and opportunities in providing employment for persons with disabilities within Bali's tourism sector. The approach was selected to enable an in-depth understanding of social, institutional, and policy dynamics surrounding inclusive employment initiatives (Miles et al., 2018).

Data were collected through three complementary techniques to ensure comprehensive coverage and triangulation of information:

1. In-depth Interviews. This interview were conducted with three categories of informants by purposive sampling to capture diverse perspectives from key stakeholders involved in disability employment in Bali's tourism sector. A total of 15 informants were selected, consisting of:
 - a. *Persons with disabilities* working or seeking work in the tourism sector
 - b. *Government representatives* from relevant institutions such as the Bali Provincial Manpower Office and the Tourism Office; and
 - c. *Non-governmental organizations (NGOs)* actively involved in disability empowerment and employment facilitation, including PUSPADI Bali and DNetwork.

Selection criteria included direct involvement in employment processes, experience with disability inclusion programs, and institutional knowledge of policy implementation. Data collection continued until thematic saturation was reached, indicated by the recurrence of similar patterns regarding regulatory barriers, information gaps, and collaborative practices across interviews. The interviews explored personal experiences, policy implementation practices, and inter-organizational collaboration in promoting inclusive employment (Bellucci et al., 2023; Tsui et al., 2024)

Furthermore, Interview data were analyzed using a thematic coding approach informed by the inclusive governance framework. The coding process involved three stages.

- a. First, open coding was conducted to identify initial categories emerging from the data, such as regulatory enforcement issues, stigma, and access to job information.
 - b. Second, axial coding was applied to link these categories to the three analytical dimensions-transparency, participation, and equality.
 - c. Third, selective coding was used to refine core themes and identify relationships between governance mechanisms and employment outcomes.
2. Document Analysis. Policy and institutional documents were reviewed to contextualize field findings. These included national and regional legal frameworks such as Law No. 8/2016 on Persons with Disabilities and Bali Provincial Regulation No. 9/2015 on the Protection and Fulfillment of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, as well as statistical reports from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) and the Bali Manpower Office.
 3. Participant Observation. Observations were carried out at workplaces that employ persons with disabilities and at Disability Service Units (Unit Layanan Disabilitas, ULDs). The researcher examined workplace interactions, accessibility practices, and recruitment processes to identify inclusive and exclusionary patterns in daily operations.

Furthermore, Data were analyzed using interactive model (Miles et al., 2018), which involves three iterative stages:

1. **Data Reduction.** Interview transcripts, observation notes, and policy documents were coded and categorized thematically. Emerging themes centered on structural and attitudinal barriers (e.g., stigma, limited accessibility, and weak enforcement of regulations) as well as enabling factors (e.g., intersectoral collaboration, NGO advocacy, and local leadership commitment).
2. **Data Display.** Reduced data were organized into comparative matrices across informant groups and visualized through descriptive narratives and stakeholder interaction flowcharts to highlight relational patterns and policy linkages.
3. **Conclusion Drawing and Verification.** The study's conclusions were developed through continuous comparison and verification using triangulation of data sources (interviews, documents, and observations). Interpretation was guided by the inclusive governance framework, emphasizing the interrelated principles of transparency, participation, and equality in policy practice.

Given the researcher's engagement with NGOs involved in disability inclusion, this study explicitly acknowledges potential bias. The researcher adopts a reflexive stance by maintaining analytical distance from advocacy positions and focusing on empirical evidence derived from multiple sources.obtained.

Results and Discussions

Regulations at the Regional Level in Bali Province Governing the Employment of Persons with Disabilities

The analysis of Bali's inclusive employment framework reveals that while the province has established a strong regulatory foundation, the policy–practice gap persists due to weak enforcement, fragmented coordination, and insufficient data integration. From a governance perspective, this gap reflects an implementation deficit, where formal institutional arrangements fail to translate into effective outcomes due to weak coordination and accountability mechanisms (Bellucci et al., 2023; Luu, 2021) To translate legal commitments into tangible outcomes, three major policy implications emerge.

First, there is a need for institutional strengthening and monitoring mechanisms. The current enforcement of Law No. 8 of 2016 and Regional Regulations No. 9/2015 and No. 10/2019 remains largely declarative. The absence of structured oversight allows non-compliance to persist without consequence. Data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS, 2023) indicate that nationally, only around 30% of companies have fulfilled their disability employment quota obligations (Riana & Setyawati, 2025). Moreover, the Ministry of Manpower (Headline.co.id, 2026) reported that company compliance in reporting job vacancies under Presidential Regulation No. 57 of 2023 remains below 10%, reflecting weak enforcement infrastructure across provinces. Establishing a Provincial Monitoring and Evaluation Task Force, composed of representatives from the Bali Manpower Office, ULDs, NGOs, and business associations, would enable periodic auditing of company compliance, transparent reporting, and public accountability.

This finding is consistent with governance literature emphasizing that regulatory effectiveness depends not only on policy design but also on enforcement capacity and monitoring systems, particularly in multi-actor governance settings (Bellucci et al., 2023) In this context, weak enforcement can be interpreted as a failure of accountability mechanisms, which are central to ensuring that inclusive governance principles are translated into practice.

Second, digital integration is critical to overcoming information fragmentation (Sentanu et al., 2025). The absence of a centralized, accessible job-matching platform

hinders coordination between job seekers, employers, and policy implementers. An integrated inclusive employment portal, modeled after Indonesia's SISNAKER platform but adapted with accessibility features (e.g., screen reader compatibility, sign-language video guidance), would significantly enhance transparency and participation. A pilot initiative by DNetwork Indonesia demonstrated that digital job-matching platforms increased placement rates of PWDs by 31% within six months. This evidence highlights the potential of data-driven approaches to accelerate inclusion outcomes. The fragmentation of employment information observed in Bali reflects broader issues of information asymmetry in labor markets, which disproportionately affect marginalized groups such as persons with disabilities (Manoharan et al., 2024). In this regard, digital platforms function not only as technical tools but also as governance instruments that enhance transparency, reduce coordination failures, and enable more inclusive access to labor market opportunities.

Third, sustained capacity-building and awareness programs are essential to dismantle systemic stigma. Negative perceptions of PWDs' productivity, especially in the tourism and hospitality industries, remain a barrier to inclusion. Joint public-private training programs can serve as strategic tools for cultural change. For instance, collaboration between PUSPADI Bali and several hospitality schools in Gianyar in 2023 led to a 40% increase in PWD employment in the retail and service sectors within one year. Embedding disability sensitivity modules into tourism education curricula and employer training programs would further institutionalize inclusive practices. From a socio-institutional perspective, stigma can be understood as an informal institutional barrier that operates alongside formal regulations, often undermining policy effectiveness (Luu, 2021; Tsui et al., 2024). This indicates that inclusive governance requires not only formal regulatory interventions but also cultural and behavioral transformation within organizations and labor market institutions.

In summary, achieving effective inclusive governance in Bali's employment system requires a triadic policy approach: (1) robust enforcement through measurable accountability structures, (2) digital integration for data transparency and intersectoral coordination, and (3) sustained educational and cultural interventions to challenge stigma. These findings demonstrate that inclusive governance operates through interconnected mechanisms, regulatory enforcement, information integration, and cultural transformation, which jointly shape employment outcomes for persons with disabilities. Rather than functioning independently, these elements form an integrated governance system in which weaknesses in one dimension can undermine the effectiveness of others. This systemic perspective reinforces recent studies highlighting that multi-stakeholder coordination and institutional alignment are critical determinants of inclusive labor market outcomes (Bellucci et al., 2023; Manoharan et al., 2024). Strengthening these three pillars will bridge the gap between normative regulation and practical inclusion, positioning Bali as a model province for inclusive labor governance within Indonesia's broader framework of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) implementation.

Current Employment Status of Persons with Disabilities in Bali

According to data from the Bali Provincial Manpower Office (2024), there has been a significant increase in the employment of persons with disabilities (PWD), from 34 in 2021 to 179 in 2024. However, this figure is still far from ideal, considering that the population of persons with disabilities in Bali is estimated to be in the thousands. Of the 36 companies reporting the presence of disabled workers, only 119 individuals were registered, with the retail (such as Alfamart) and hospitality sectors being the primary absorbers. This disparity indicates a substantial gap between labor market potential and

actual employment outcomes, suggesting that inclusion is constrained not only by supply-side limitations but also by structural and institutional barriers.

Table 1. Summary of the Top Four Companies Employing the Highest Number of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in Bali

Table 1.
Summary of the Top Four Companies Employing the Highest Number of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in Bali

No	Company Name	Total of Persons With Disabilities
1	Krisna Holding Company	25
2	PT. Sumber Alfaria Trijaya (Alfamart)	23
3	PT. Mitra Prodin Gianyar	10
4	PT. Bali Maya Permai Food Canning	5

Source: Bali Provincial Manpower Office 2024

However, this progress is considered suboptimal due to the ongoing negative stigma surrounding low productivity and weak enforcement of the 1% quota for people with disabilities. Pande Putu Lala, a disability activist, stated that companies often view meeting the quota as a mere formality, rather than a commitment to inclusivity. This form of symbolic compliance reflects what governance literature describes as “decoupling,” where formal policy adoption does not translate into substantive implementation. This phenomenon reflects a wider regional pattern. Tsui et al. (2024) found that frontline hotel employees and managers across Asian contexts hold systematically divergent perceptions of disability employment, with managerial stigma functioning as the primary gatekeeping mechanism. Similarly, Akın et al. (2022) document that most tourism businesses lack structured disability inclusion programmes, leaving recruitment dependent on individual employer goodwill rather than institutional commitment. This indicates that employment inclusion remains highly contingent on informal decision-making processes rather than institutionalized governance mechanisms. Doan et al. (2021) drawing on auto-ethnographic evidence, additionally argue that emancipatory approaches—where PWDs themselves shape workplace narratives—are essential to dislodge entrenched stereotypes in hospitality settings.

Structural challenges in disability employment are closely linked to reliance on non-governmental organization (NGO) networks for job access. Evidence shows that 60% of persons with disabilities (PWDs) in remote areas face difficulties in obtaining employment information due to limited digital infrastructure, resulting in dependence on NGO-mediated channels. At the same time, only 23% of companies provide accessible facilities—such as ramps, adapted toilets, or assistive work tools—indicating that workplace environments remain largely exclusionary.

These conditions can be better understood when employment data are interpreted through the lens of inclusive governance, particularly across the dimensions of transparency, participation, and equality. From a transparency perspective, the fact that only 36 companies report employing 119 PWDs reflects fragmented data systems and the absence of an integrated employment database, which limits both accountability and access to information. From a participation perspective, the continued reliance on NGOs rather than formal institutional channels indicates uneven stakeholder engagement, where PWDs’ access to employment is mediated by informal networks rather than inclusive policy processes.

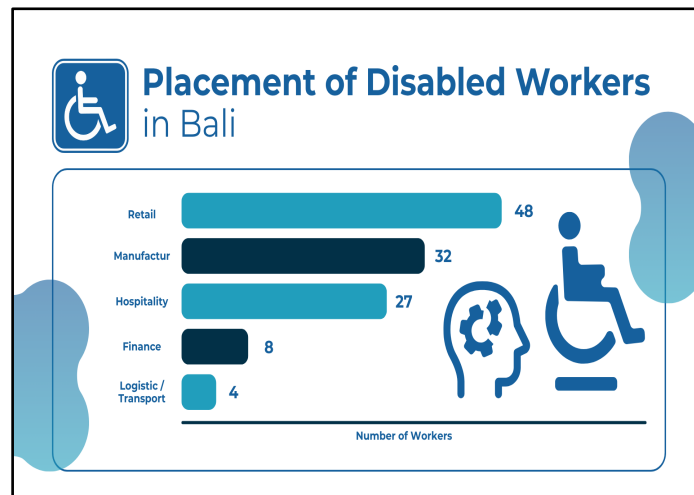


Figure 1.

Framework the Empowerment Theory by Paulo Freire

Source: Compiled from Bali Provincial Manpower and Energy Office (Disnakertrans-ESDM) Data 2024

From an equality perspective, the persistent gap between the mandated 1% employment quota and actual employment levels—often below 0.5%—highlights structural inequality driven by weak enforcement and employer stigma.

Taken together, these findings suggest that employment outcomes for PWDs in Bali are not merely shaped by labor market conditions, but by underlying governance dynamics. This reinforces the argument that without improvements in transparency, participation, and equality, policy commitments to inclusion are unlikely to translate into equitable employment outcomes.

Analysis on the implementation of Inclusive Governance Principles in Bali

Transparency: Lack of Integration and Data Gaps

Although Regional Regulation No. 9/2015 mandates a 1% employment quota for persons with disabilities (PWDs) in the private sector, its implementation remains uneven. For instance, PT Alfamart employs only 23 PWDs (0.53%) out of a total of 4,350 employees (Bali Manpower Office, 2024).

Data on workers with disabilities are more frequently collected through NGO initiatives, such as PUSPADI Bali—rather than through official government platforms. Consequently, job vacancy information is not evenly distributed, particularly in remote areas. Ni Wayan Reni (Gianyar Manpower Office, 2024) acknowledged that the government has yet to establish a dedicated platform, forcing PWDs to rely on DNetwork, which is managed by PUSPADI. Transparency is further hindered by the lack of regulatory dissemination to business actors, resulting in limited understanding of inclusion obligations among companies.

Participation: Limited Involvement of PWDs in Policy Processes

The establishment of Disability Service Units (ULDs) at 197 public service points represents a progressive step. However, only 30% of these units function optimally due to limited human resources and funding (Susilawati, 2024). In a labor policy discussion forum held in Gianyar (2024), for example, only two of the fifteen participants were persons with disabilities. Yet, active participation of PWDs in policy planning is crucial to ensure that programs align with their actual needs.

Equality: Structural Discrimination and Stigma

Regional Regulation No. 9/2015 on Disability Rights lacks firm sanctions for non-compliance, leading to 68% of companies in Bali admitting they have not met the quota due to doubts about the capabilities of PWDs (Interview with Dedy Panji Agustino, 2024). Such stigma contrasts sharply with success stories like that of Pande Putu Lala, who has worked as a customer service officer at the Gianyar Manpower Office for eight years. Structural discrimination is also reflected in gender disparities: among 119 employed PWDs, 68 are men and only 51 are women (Manpower Office Report, 2024).

Collaborative Efforts and Implementation Challenges

The Role of NGOs and Digital Innovation

Organizations such as PUSPADI Bali play a crucial role by employing 75% of their staff from the disability community and providing both training and assistive devices. However, these programs often face sustainability challenges due to reliance on foreign donors (Anwar et al., 2022).

Meanwhile, DNetwork has developed a digital platform to match PWDs with job vacancies, although it remains in the beta testing phase (Saputra, 2024).



Figure 2.

Framework the Empowerment Theory by Paulo Freire

Source: Challenges and Solutions in Integrating PWDs into Bali's Tourism Sector, Processed by the Researchers, 2026

A good practice example comes from iNKLUSIV Warung in Denpasar, which employs Deaf employees as waitstaff, demonstrating that inclusion within the tourism sector, contributing 60% of Bali's GDP, is indeed achievable.

The involvement of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), particularly PUSPADI Bali and DNetwork, can be more appropriately understood not merely as service provision, but as part of a broader governance arrangement in which non-state actors play intermediary and coordinative roles. Within the inclusive governance framework, these organizations function as bridging actors that connect persons with disabilities (PWDs), government institutions, and private-sector employers. Their activities—ranging from vocational training and advocacy to digital job-matching—contribute to enhancing transparency and participation in employment systems.

From a governance perspective, DNetwork represents an example of digital intermediation, where technology is used to reduce information asymmetry between job seekers and employers. By providing accessible vacancy information and facilitating

matching processes, the platform partially compensates for the absence of an integrated state-led employment system. Similarly, PUSPADI Bali plays a critical role in strengthening participation by empowering PWDs and facilitating their engagement with labor market institutions. The value of such intermediation can be understood more broadly through the lens of social impact accounting. (Bellucci et al., 2023) in their study of an inclusive hospitality enterprise, demonstrate that integrating PWDs into tourism employment generates returns that extend well beyond direct income, including improved personal autonomy, professional skills, family well-being, and community awareness of disability. Their findings underscore that the impact of inclusive employment platforms should not be measured solely in placement numbers, but also in the multidimensional capabilities they help develop among PWDs and their wider social networks.

However, while these NGO-led initiatives demonstrate the potential of collaborative governance, they also reveal important structural limitations. First, their sustainability is often constrained by project-based funding and donor dependency, which limits long-term scalability and institutional continuity. This concern echoes findings from the broader hospitality literature, where systematic reviews show that disability employment programs often depend on external funding sources or workplace champions for their initial momentum, raising questions about long-term institutional embedding once such support diminishes (Manoharan et al., 2024). Second, the reliance on NGOs to perform core coordination and service functions raises concerns regarding state responsibility and accountability, particularly in enforcing employment regulations and ensuring equal access at scale. In this regard, NGO initiatives should be understood as complementary rather than substitutive to formal governance structures.

Furthermore, while empirical cases indicate positive outcomes in specific contexts, such examples should be interpreted cautiously as context-dependent practices rather than universally replicable models. Variations in institutional capacity, employer commitment, and local infrastructure may influence the extent to which such initiatives can be scaled or sustained across different regions.

Overall, the role of NGOs and digital platforms in Bali highlights both the enabling function of collaborative governance and the necessity of stronger state-led coordination. Effective inclusive governance therefore requires not only the presence of active non-state actors but also the institutionalization of their roles within a coherent, accountable, and sustainable governance framework.

Regulation vs. Field Reality

Governor Regulation No. 44/2018 mandates company collaboration with persons with disabilities (PWDs); however, only 15% of companies have reported such partnerships (Bali Manpower Office Data, 2024). The weak enforcement of sanctions has discouraged companies from complying with existing regulations.

I Ketut Yadnya Winarta (Bali Tourism Office, 2024) noted that policy implementation remains hindered by a “pity-based mindset”, which unintentionally restricts opportunities for PWDs. This stigma reflects layered prejudices among business actors toward job applicants with disabilities. Evidence from a 2024 Bali Tourism Office survey reveals that 62% of business owners in Kuta still doubt the abilities of PWDs in interaction-based jobs such as receptionist or waiter positions (Rika & Dadang, 2022). Such doubts are not unique to Bali. Qualitative evidence from hotels in Hong Kong, for example, shows that managerial concerns frequently cluster around perceived slow work pace, emotional instability, and the assumption that PWDs are unsuitable for guest-facing roles, leading employers to channel them toward back-of-house tasks regardless of their actual capabilities (Hui et al., 2020). This pattern suggests that overcoming stigma requires not

only awareness campaigns but also structured exposure of employers and supervisors to the actual performance of PWDs in varied roles.

The findings indicate that despite the existence of supportive legal frameworks, employment access for persons with disabilities (PWDs) in Bali remains limited due to regulatory inefficiencies, weak institutional coordination, and persistent sociocultural stigma. However, inclusive governance practices present viable solutions for advancing equitable employment in the region.

Limited Employment Access

Ineffective Regulation.

Although Law No. 8/2016 on Persons with Disabilities and Bali Provincial Regulation No. 9/2015 mandate inclusive employment, enforcement mechanisms remain weak. Data from the Bali Provincial Manpower Office (2024) show that only 119 PWDs were formally employed in major sectors-retail (48 workers), manufacturing (32), hospitality (27), finance (8), and logistics/transport (4). These figures account for less than 0.5% of the total provincial labor force. Sanctions for noncompliant companies are minimal, and no structured incentive scheme exists to promote compliance. According to ILO 2023 statistics, only 18.7 percent of persons with disabilities in Indonesia are employed, with the rate dropping to 13.5 percent among women with disabilities. Moreover, 91 percent of employed persons with disabilities work in the informal sector, compared to 81 percent of the general population (ILO, 2025).

Fragmented Information Infrastructure.

Employment information for PWDs in Bali remains fragmented and heavily dependent on non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as PUSPADI Bali and DNetwork, rather than centralized government databases. A study by Marlina et al. (2024) reveals that the national labor force participation rate for individuals without disabilities is 70.6%, whereas for PWDs it sits at only 44.9%, plummeting further to 19.5% for those with moderate to severe disabilities.

This stark vulnerability is corroborated by official government publications; the Potret Penyandang Disabilitas di Indonesia report (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2024) notes that only 40.53% of PWDs categorized as Type 1 (broad spectrum) are employed, shrinking to a mere 21.65% for Type 3 (severe difficulty). This significant gap underscores how the severity of disability correlates with labor market exclusion, exacerbated by the absence of an integrated, transparent, and accessible employment information system at both national and provincial levels (Blanck, 2022).

Systemic Stigma.

Social stigma continues to be a significant barrier, particularly in Bali's tourism and hospitality sectors, where emphasis on aesthetics and customer interaction shapes hiring preferences. Employers often perceive PWDs as less productive or incompatible with customer-facing roles. This pattern is well-documented internationally. A systematic review of disability employment in the hospitality industry finds that employees with disabilities are typically assigned to entry-level and back-of-house roles, with limited progression opportunities, while front-of-house positions are reserved for those who fit conventional standards of physical attractiveness and self-presentation (Manoharan et al., 2024). Yet the same review also reports that, where inclusive practices are deliberately implemented, PWDs frequently demonstrate strong attendance, loyalty, and performance-suggesting that the productivity concerns voiced by employers often reflect bias rather than evidence. In the Indonesian context, ILO's Rapid Assessment on Employment for Persons with Disabilities (2020) revealed that despite legal quotas,

employer willingness to hire PWDs remains limited, with persistent judgments based on perceived disability rather than actual capability, a form of discrimination that confines PWDs to informal or low-progression roles (Gunawan & Monica, 2020). Consequently, most employment opportunities for PWDs remain confined to symbolic or back-office roles, restricting advancement and inclusion.

Inclusive Governance as a Framework for Reform Regulatory Strengthening.

Strengthening enforcement through progressive sanctions, including administrative fines and potential business license suspension, was widely suggested by respondents. Comparative evidence from Thailand and Vietnam demonstrates that similar regulatory mechanisms increased compliance rates by 18–24% within three years of implementation (Gede et al., 2019) Incorporating such measures into a revised Regional Regulation No. 9/2015 could enhance accountability and policy effectiveness in Bali.

Integrated Digital Platform.

Inclusive governance also requires transparent and accessible data systems. Collaboration among the Bali Provincial Manpower Office, NGOs, and the private sector is essential to develop a real-time inclusive employment platform integrating vacancy listings, candidate profiles, and training databases. Comparable initiatives, such as Kerjabilitas in Yogyakarta, have improved job-matching efficiency by 37% and shortened recruitment time by 25% (Ministry of Manpower, 2022).

Multidimensional Education and Training.

Capacity development for both PWDs and employers emerged as a recurring theme. Training for PWDs in tourism, hospitality, information technology, and entrepreneurship must be paired with disability awareness and sensitivity programs for company personnel. Practical experience from hotels that have implemented disability inclusion programs suggests that such training should extend beyond newcomers to include existing staff, supervisors, and senior management, and should incorporate experiential elements, such as disability-awareness simulations and structured interactions with PWD ambassadors, to reduce stereotyping and build genuine empathy (Hui et al., 2020). Embedding disability inclusion targets into key performance indicators and aligning them with non-financial recognition mechanisms further helps institutionalize inclusive practices within day-to-day operations. Evidence from the ILO (2024) indicates that, on average, workers with disabilities globally receive hourly wages 12 percent lower than their non-disabled counterparts, with the disparity expanding to 26 percent in low- and lower-middle-income economies. Notably, almost half of this gap remains unexplained by socio-demographic variables, suggesting that inclusive workplace interventions—such as reasonable accommodation and anti-bias training—are critical not merely for representation, but for ensuring equitable labor market outcomes.

Overall, these findings underscore that barriers to employment inclusion in Bali stem less from policy absence than from weak interinstitutional governance and cultural constraints. Adopting inclusive governance principles, transparency (open data systems), participation (multi-actor engagement), and equality (non-discriminatory opportunity), offers a practical foundation for sustainable reform in Bali's labor market ecosystem (Lord & Stein, 2018).

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the challenges of employment inclusion for persons with disabilities (PWDs) in Bali's tourism sector are not solely the result of regulatory gaps,

but are fundamentally shaped by governance dynamics particularly weaknesses in transparency, participation, and equality as core dimensions of inclusive governance. By applying this framework analytically, the study moves beyond descriptive accounts and shows how fragmented information systems, limited stakeholder engagement, and uneven enforcement mechanisms collectively reproduce barriers to employment.

Theoretically, this article contributes to governance and public administration studies by advancing inclusive governance as an operational analytical framework, rather than merely a normative principle. It highlights how governance mechanisms, such as digital integration and multi-stakeholder collaboration, function as causal pathways that can either constrain or enable policy implementation. In doing so, the study bridges the gap between abstract governance concepts and their empirical manifestation in labor policy.

Empirically, the Bali case illustrates both the potential and limitations of collaborative and digitally mediated governance in a developing-country context. While non-state actors and digital platforms can enhance access and coordination, their effectiveness remains contingent upon stronger institutionalization, regulatory enforcement, and state leadership. This finding underscores that inclusive governance requires not only participation and innovation, but also accountability and sustainability within formal governance structures (Lord & Stein, 2018).

Furthermore, it also resonates with comparative evidence from the international hospitality literature, which shows that durable disability inclusion depends less on isolated initiatives and more on the alignment of leadership commitment, structured HR practices, and accountable monitoring systems (Luu, 2021; Manoharan et al., 2024). Where these elements are aligned, inclusive employment generates measurable returns not only for PWDs but also for their families, employers, and surrounding communities (Bellucci et al., 2023).

More broadly, this study contributes to ongoing debates on inclusive governance and labor policy by demonstrating that achieving equitable employment outcomes in developing contexts depends on the alignment of regulatory frameworks, digital systems, and collaborative arrangements. The Bali experience thus offers a context-sensitive insight into how inclusive governance can be operationalized to address structural inequality, while also highlighting the risks of over-reliance on non-state actors in the absence of robust state capacity (Mangku & Yuliantini, 2019).

The findings suggest that advancing inclusive employment for persons with disabilities (PWDs) in Bali requires a combination of short-term actionable measures and longer-term structural reforms within the governance system.

In the short term, policy efforts should prioritize improving transparency and coordination. This includes the development of an integrated and accessible digital employment platform that consolidates data from government agencies, NGOs, and employers, as well as the strengthening of regulatory dissemination to increase awareness among private-sector actors. In addition, targeted capacity-building programs—such as disability awareness training for employers and job-readiness training for PWDs—can produce immediate improvements in workplace inclusion.

In the longer term, more fundamental institutional reforms are required to ensure sustainability and accountability. These include strengthening enforcement mechanisms for disability employment regulations through clear sanctions and incentives, institutionalizing the role of Disability Service Units (ULDs) within local governance structures, and reducing reliance on NGO-led initiatives by enhancing state-led coordination and data integration systems. Such reforms are essential to transform inclusive governance from fragmented practices into a coherent and durable policy framework (Taylor, 2011).

Ultimately, this study concludes that inclusive governance is not only a policy mechanism but also a transformative social contract that redefines equity, participation, and innovation in the pursuit of an inclusive labor market for all.

Acknowledgments

The author wishes to express profound appreciation to the Bali Provincial Manpower Office (Disnaker Bali) for their institutional support and facilitation throughout the research process. Deep gratitude is also extended to D-Network for their valuable information, coordination, and ongoing commitment to fostering inclusive employment.

The author further acknowledges PUSPADI Bali for their expertise and meaningful collaboration, which significantly enhanced the quality of this work. Finally, sincere thanks are conveyed to the disability communities and individuals with disabilities who generously shared their time, experiences, and perspectives; their contributions were essential to the completion of this research.

Declaration of conflicting interests

The authors declare that there are no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article. Although the study involves engagement with non-governmental organizations, including PUSPADI Bali and DNetwork, these organizations did not influence the research design, data analysis, interpretation of findings, or the decision to publish.

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