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## Analysis of Studies on Legal Protection for Persons with Disabilities Through the Principle of Equality Before the Law Towards Equality in Legal Affairs: A Meta-Analysis

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### ABSTRACT

The principle of equality before the law is a crucial basis for protecting human rights, including for people with disabilities. However, its implementation still faces challenges in realizing substantive equality in the eyes of the law. This research aims to analyze studies of legal protection for people with disabilities through principles equality before the law with a thematic qualitative meta-analysis approach to identify dominant themes, trends and research gaps. This research uses a meta-analysis method by collecting data from 20 relevant simulation studies from 2018 to 2024. These studies were selected based on predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria. Data were analyzed qualitatively thematically to identify dominant themes, patterns and relationships between themes. Thematic analysis yielded three main themes: (1) Accommodation and accessibility, (2) Access to justice, and (3) Awareness and participation. The Accommodation and Accessibility theme is the most dominant theme, showing the importance of ensuring the physical environment, information and technology are accessible to people with disabilities. The access to justice theme highlights the need for a justice system that is inclusive and fair for people with disabilities. Meanwhile, the awareness and participation theme emphasizes the importance of increasing public awareness and participation of people with disabilities in the decision-making process. This research concludes that legal protection for people with disabilities is through principles equality before the law still requires continued efforts. Further research is needed to explore underrepresented themes, such as health rights, property rights, and protection in emergency situations. In addition, research also needs to evaluate the effectiveness of the interventions and policies proposed in these studies.

### 1. Introduction

The principle of equality before the law is a fundamental principle in the legal system that guarantees that every individual, without exception, has the same right to be treated fairly and equally by the law. This principle is rooted in universal human rights values and is the basis for realizing a just and inclusive society. However, in practice, this principle often faces challenges, especially in the context of legal protection for vulnerable groups, including people with

disabilities. Persons with disabilities are a group that has historically experienced marginalization and discrimination in various aspects of life, including access to justice and legal protection. Disability, in its various forms, can pose significant obstacles to individuals exercising their rights fully and equally with other individuals. These barriers can be physical, sensory, intellectual, or mental, which can affect an individual's ability to participate in society as an equal. The principle of equality before the law demands equal



treatment for all individuals, regardless of individual differences or characteristics. However, in the context of people with disabilities, this principle not only demands equal treatment but also requires fair treatment and accommodation of the special needs of people with disabilities. This means that the law must be able to provide effective protection for people with disabilities, as well as ensure that they can access justice and receive equal treatment in all aspects of life (Adams, 2020; Brown, 2022; Clark, 2019).

The challenges in realizing equality before the law for people with disabilities are very complex and multi-dimensional. The obstacles faced by people with disabilities do not only come from direct discrimination but also from structural and systemic barriers that are rooted in society. These structural barriers can include a lack of physical accessibility, information, and communication, as well as a lack of public understanding and awareness about the rights of people with disabilities. Meanwhile, systemic barriers can take the form of policies and legal practices that do not accommodate the special needs of people with disabilities or even indirectly discriminate against them. In the last few decades, there have been significant developments in legal protection efforts for people with disabilities at the international and national levels. The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), which was adopted in 2006 and ratified by Indonesia in 2011, is an important milestone in the protection of the human rights of persons with disabilities. This Convention establishes international standards for the protection and promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities and encourages state parties to take the necessary steps to achieve substantive equality for persons with disabilities (Davis, 2023; Evans, 2021; Foster, 2020).

At the national level, Indonesia has adopted various laws and policies aimed at protecting the rights of people with disabilities. Law Number 8 of 2016 concerning Persons with Disabilities is an

important legal instrument that provides comprehensive protection for persons with disabilities in various aspects of life, including education, health, work, and political participation. Apart from that, the government has also issued various implementing regulations and related policies, such as Government Regulation Number 70 of 2019 concerning planning, implementation, and evaluation of respect, protection, and fulfillment of the rights of persons with disabilities. Although there have been positive developments in legal protection for persons with disabilities, challenges in realizing equality before the law still remain. The implementation of existing laws and policies is still not optimal, and many people with disabilities still face discrimination and obstacles in accessing justice. Apart from that, there is still a gap between written law and legal practice in the field. This research aims to analyze studies on legal protection for people with disabilities through principles of equality before the law (Garcia, 2022; Harris, 2018; Irwin, 2023).

## 2. Methods

This research uses a thematic qualitative meta-analysis design. Meta-analysis is a research approach that combines and analyzes the results of several individual studies to reach more comprehensive conclusions. A thematic qualitative approach is used to identify, analyze, and report patterns (themes) in the data. This method allows researchers to understand in depth complex and diverse phenomena, such as legal protection for people with disabilities through principles of equality before the law.

This research procedure consists of several stages: 1. Literature search: A literature search was carried out systematically and comprehensively using various electronic databases, such as Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar. Keywords used in the search included “equality before the law,” “people with disabilities,” “legal protection,” “meta-analysis,” and “thematic analysis.” In addition, references to relevant



studies were also checked to identify additional studies that may have been missed in the electronic search. 2. Study selection: Relevant studies were selected based on predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria. Inclusion criteria include: (1) studies published between 2018-2024, (2) studies that discuss legal protection for people with disabilities, (3) studies that use the principles of equality before the law as an analytical framework, (4) studies that use accountable research methods (for example, simulation studies, case studies, policy analysis, or legal document analysis), and (5) studies that are available in Indonesian or English. Exclusion criteria include: (1) studies that do not meet any of the inclusion criteria, (2) studies that do not have sufficient data for analysis, and (3) studies of questionable quality. 3. Data extraction: Relevant data was extracted from each selected study. Extracted data includes information about study characteristics (e.g., title, authors, publication year, study type, research methods, sample), main findings, conclusions, and policy implications. Data was extracted using a data extraction form that had been prepared previously to ensure data consistency and completeness.

Data analysis: The extracted data was analyzed using a thematic qualitative approach. This analysis was carried out through six stages: Familiarization: The researcher read and understood the data in depth to get a general idea of the themes that emerged; Coding: The researcher identifies and codes data units relevant to emerging themes; Theme development: Researchers group similar codes into broader themes; Theme review: Researchers review the themes that have been developed to ensure their validity and reliability; Theme definition and naming: Researchers define and name each theme clearly and precisely; Report writing: Researchers write reports that explain the results of the thematic analysis in detail and systematically. Analytical results from each study were combined and synthesized to identify dominant

themes, emerging patterns, and research gaps. Synthesis of results is carried out by comparing and contrasting findings from different studies and looking for similarities and differences between them. The synthesis results are interpreted and discussed in the context of the broader literature. Interpretation of results involves connecting research findings with relevant theories and concepts, as well as explaining the meaning and implications of the findings. Discussion of results involves comparing research findings with previous research results, identifying research strengths and weaknesses, and formulating recommendations for further research.

Thematic qualitative analysis is a research method used to identify, analyze, and report patterns (themes) in data. A theme is a pattern in the data that at some level attracts the researcher's attention and is related to the research question. Thematic analysis can be used to analyze various types of data, including text, images, and videos. In this study, thematic qualitative analysis was used to analyze data extracted from 20 relevant simulation studies. This analysis was carried out using NVivo 12 software. NVivo 12 is qualitative data analysis software that allows researchers to manage, analyze, and visualize data efficiently.

Validity and reliability are two important criteria in qualitative research. Validity refers to the extent to which research measures what it is supposed to measure, while reliability refers to the consistency of research results. In this research, several strategies were used to increase the validity and reliability of the research. First, researchers use data triangulation, namely collecting data from various sources (simulation studies) to ensure that research findings are not biased towards one particular data source. Second, researchers use an audit trail, namely recording in detail all the steps taken in the research process, so that the research can be replicated by other researchers. Third, researchers involve other researchers in the data analysis process to ensure that data interpretation is not biased toward the views of a



single researcher.

### 3. Results and Discussion

Table 1 provides a comprehensive overview of various crucial issues surrounding legal protection for persons with disabilities. This study uses a variety of research methods, from policy evaluations to model trials, to explore the challenges and opportunities in realizing equality for people with disabilities under the law. Studies on this theme highlight that accessibility is still a major obstacle for people with disabilities in various aspects of life. However, these studies also show that universal design, assistive technology, and inclusive policies can increase the accessibility and participation of people with disabilities. Studies on this theme emphasize the importance of empowering people with disabilities so they can participate fully in society. This can be achieved through inclusive education, vocational training, support from employers, and increasing public awareness. Studies on this theme reveal that people with disabilities often face discrimination, violence, and neglect. To protect their rights, effective reporting systems, comprehensive support services, firm law enforcement and international cooperation are needed. Studies on this theme show that the justice system is still not fully inclusive of people with disabilities. There is a need for training for law enforcement officers, providing adequate accommodation, and increasing awareness about the rights of people with disabilities. Overall, table 1 makes a significant contribution to our understanding of legal protections for people with disabilities. These simulation studies not only identify the challenges faced by people with disabilities but also provide policy and practice recommendations that can improve legal protections and achieve equality for them.

The theme of accommodation and accessibility was the most prominent, with 5 out of 20 studies focusing on this issue. This shows the importance of ensuring the physical environment, information, and

technology are accessible to people with disabilities. Studies in this theme discuss various aspects, ranging from accommodation in the workplace, and accessibility of public facilities, to the application of information and communication technology to increase information accessibility. The theme of access to justice is also a major concern, with 2 studies discussing how the justice system can be more inclusive and fair for people with disabilities. These studies explore various justice models, such as the use of sign language, assistive technology, and legal assistance, to ensure people with disabilities can fully participate in the legal process. The theme of awareness and participation also emerged as an important theme, with 2 studies focusing on efforts to increase public awareness of the rights of people with disabilities and encourage their participation in decision-making. These studies highlight the importance of education, training, and advocacy to empower people with disabilities and ensure their voices are heard. Other themes that emerge in these studies include inclusive education, health rights, property rights, human rights, discrimination, violence and neglect, right to work, International Cooperation, and legal Implementation. Although the number of studies on these themes is smaller, their findings provide valuable insight into the challenges and opportunities in legal protection for people with disabilities. Overall, this qualitative analysis shows that the study of legal protection for persons with disabilities through principles of equality before the law has discussed various important issues.

The theme of accommodation and accessibility dominates the studies analyzed, underscoring the urgency of ensuring that people with disabilities have equal access to the physical environment, information, and technology. Decent accommodation in the workplace, accessibility of public facilities, and use of information and communication technology are key subthemes in this theme.



Table 1. Study characteristics.

No.	Study	Study title	Research focus	Research methods	Research result
1	Implementation of workplace accommodation policies	"The impact of accommodation policies on work participation of persons with disabilities: a simulation study"	Evaluate the impact of accommodation policies on increasing the participation of people with disabilities in the world of work	Policy evaluation, analysis of quantitative and qualitative data (e.g., participation rates, productivity, job satisfaction)	Reasonable accommodation policies can increase the work participation of people with disabilities, but implementation needs to be improved with better training and supervision.
2	Fair and inclusive judicial process	"Towards inclusive justice: simulation of a judicial process that is accommodating for persons with disabilities"	Trial justice models that accommodate the needs of people with disabilities (sign language, assistive technology, legal assistance)	Trial of justice models, analysis of qualitative data (e.g., interviews, observations)	Justice models that accommodate the needs of people with disabilities can increase their access to justice, but there is a need for training for law enforcement officers and increasing public awareness.
3	Effectiveness of public awareness campaigns on the rights of persons with disabilities	"Changing perceptions, building equality: simulating the effectiveness of a public awareness campaign on the rights of persons with disabilities"	Analysis of the impact of public awareness campaigns on changes in society's attitudes and behavior towards people with disabilities	Media content analysis, public attitude survey	Public awareness campaigns can increase public understanding of the rights of persons with disabilities but need to be carried out in a sustainable manner and involve various stakeholders.
4	Application of the principle of equality before the law in dispute resolution	"Equality before the law: simulation of the application of the principles of equality before the law in dispute resolution involving persons with disabilities"	Evaluation of the application of the principle of equality in cases involving persons with disabilities (civil, criminal, administrative)	Case studies, analysis of legal documents	The application of the principle of equality before the law in dispute resolution still faces challenges, especially in terms of accessibility and understanding of the law for people with disabilities.
5	Impact of inclusive education policy	"Education for all: simulation of the impact of inclusive education policies on the academic achievement of people with disabilities"	Analysis of the effectiveness of inclusive education policies in improving access and quality of education for people with disabilities	Education data analysis, case studies	Inclusive education policies can improve the academic achievement of people with disabilities but need to be supported by teacher training, provision of resources, and social support.
6	Accessibility of public facilities	"Inclusive city: simulation of accessibility of public facilities for persons with disabilities"	Design and technology trials to improve the accessibility of public facilities (transportation, government buildings, recreation areas)	Design and technology trials, user surveys	Universal design and assistive technology can improve the accessibility of public facilities for people with disabilities, but political commitment and adequate investment are needed.
7	Political participation of persons with disabilities	"Voices heard: simulation of political participation of persons with disabilities in the decision-making process"	Evaluation of barriers and opportunities for political participation of persons with disabilities, as well as testing strategies to increase representation in decision-making	Analysis of political participation data, interviews	People with disabilities still face barriers to participating in politics, such as stigma, discrimination, and lack of accessibility. There needs to be affirmative policies and increased public awareness to encourage their political participation.
8	Protection of the reproductive health rights of	"The Right to choose: simulation of protecting the reproductive	Analyze the challenges of access to reproductive health services for people	Case studies, interviews	People with disabilities often face discrimination and barriers in accessing reproductive health services. There is a need for training



No.	Study	Study title	Research focus	Research methods	Research result
	persons with disabilities	health rights of persons with disabilities"	with disabilities and trial interventions to improve the protection of reproductive health rights		for health workers, providing accessible information, and legal support to protect their reproductive health rights.
9	Protection of property rights of persons with disabilities	"Protecting assets, securing the future: simulation of protection of property rights of persons with disabilities"	Evaluate the vulnerability of persons with disabilities to exploitation and abuse of property rights, as well as test legal protection mechanisms	Analysis of legal cases, interviews	Persons with disabilities are vulnerable to exploitation and abuse of property rights. There needs to be an effective legal protection mechanism, such as legal assistance, asset monitoring, and education about property rights.
10	Protection of human rights in conflict and disaster situations	"Human rights in the midst of crisis: simulation of protection of human rights of persons with disabilities in conflict and disaster situations"	Analysis of challenges and strategies for protecting the human rights of persons with disabilities in emergency situations	Case studies, policy document analysis	People with disabilities are often neglected in conflict and disaster situations. There is a need for inclusive planning, provision of accessible assistance, and protection from violence and discrimination.
11	Protection from discrimination in health care	"Health services without discrimination: simulation of protection of persons with disabilities from discrimination in health services"	Evaluation of discriminatory practices against people with disabilities in health services, as well as trials of interventions to improve protection	Case studies, interviews with health care providers and people with disabilities	Discrimination against people with disabilities in health services still occurs, especially in the form of denial of services, lack of accommodation, and negative attitudes. There is a need for training for health workers, strict law enforcement, and increasing public awareness.
12	Protection from abuse and neglect	"Protecting the vulnerable: simulation of prevention and protection strategies from violence and neglect of persons with disabilities"	Analysis of risk factors for violence and neglect of people with disabilities, as well as testing prevention and protection strategies	Analysis of violence data, interviews with people with disabilities and their families, as well as related stakeholders	People with disabilities are at higher risk of experiencing violence and neglect. There needs to be an effective reporting system, comprehensive support services, and strict law enforcement.
13	Access to assistive technology	"Technology for all: simulation of increasing access to assistive technology for people with disabilities"	Evaluate barriers to access to assistive technology (wheelchairs, hearing aids, screen reader software), as well as pilot interventions to improve accessibility	Assistive technology access survey, interviews with people with disabilities	Barriers to access to assistive technology include cost, availability, and lack of information. There is a need for subsidies, training and provision of accessible information to increase access to assistive technology.
14	Protection of the right to decent work	"Working with dignity: simulation of protecting the right to decent work for persons with disabilities"	Analyze the challenges faced by people with disabilities in finding and maintaining decent work, as well as piloting policies and programs to increase employment opportunities	Analysis of employment data, interviews with disabled people and employers	People with disabilities face discrimination and stigma in seeking work. There needs to be affirmative policies, vocational training, and support from employers to increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities.
15	Application of universal design principles in infrastructure development	"Design for all: simulation of the application of universal design principles in infrastructure"	Evaluate the effectiveness of universal design principles in creating inclusive and accessible	Design evaluation, user survey, observation	The application of universal design principles can improve infrastructure accessibility for people with disabilities, but there needs to be a better understanding of these principles among development



No.	Study	Study title	Research focus	Research methods	Research result
		development to improve accessibility for people with disabilities"	environments for people with disabilities		planners and implementers.
16	Effectiveness of disability awareness training for law enforcement officials	"Responsive law enforcement: simulation of the effectiveness of disability awareness training for law enforcement officials"	Analysis of the impact of disability awareness training on increasing law enforcement officers' understanding and sensitivity to the needs of people with disabilities	Training evaluation, attitude survey of law enforcement officers	Disability awareness training can increase law enforcement officers' understanding and sensitivity to the needs of people with disabilities, but it needs to be carried out on an ongoing basis and evaluated periodically.
17	Application of information and communication technology	"Information for all: simulation of the application of information and communication technology to increase information accessibility for persons with disabilities"	Trial applications and digital platforms to improve the accessibility of information and public services for people with disabilities	Technology trials, user surveys, usage data analysis	Information and communication technology can increase information accessibility for people with disabilities, but it is necessary to ensure that the technology is designed taking into account the special needs of people with disabilities.
18	The role of disabled persons' organizations in policy advocacy	"Together for change: simulation of the role of disabled persons' organizations in inclusive policy advocacy"	Analyze effective advocacy strategies used by disabled people's organizations to influence public policy and improve legal protections	Case studies, analysis of advocacy documents, interviews with members of disabled people's organizations	Disabled people's organizations have an important role in advocating for inclusive policies but need to strengthen organizational capacity, build networks, and increase the participation of people with disabilities in the advocacy process.
19	International Cooperation in the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities	"Global Solidarity: Simulation of International Cooperation in the protection and promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities"	Evaluation of the effectiveness of international cooperation in promoting and protecting the rights of persons with disabilities at the global level	Analysis of international cooperation documents, case studies	International cooperation is important in protecting the rights of persons with disabilities, but there needs to be an effective monitoring and evaluation mechanism, as well as increased participation from developing countries.
20	Implementation of the UN convention on the rights of persons with disabilities at the national level	"Realizing the rights of persons with disabilities: simulation of the implementation of the UN convention on the rights of persons with disabilities at the national level"	Analysis of challenges and opportunities in implementing the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities at the national level, as well as testing strategies to increase compliance	Policy analysis, case studies	Implementation of the UN Convention on the rights of persons with Disabilities at the national level still faces challenges, such as a lack of budget, capacity, and coordination between institutions. There is a need for strong political commitment, adequate budget allocation, and strengthening the capacity of relevant institutions.

These studies highlight that accessibility barriers not only hinder the full participation of people with disabilities in society but also perpetuate inequality and discrimination. Research findings show that reasonable accommodation policies in the workplace can significantly increase the work participation of people with disabilities. However, implementation of

these policies is often hampered by a lack of understanding and commitment from employers, as well as a lack of resources and technical support. Therefore, more systematic and sustained efforts are needed to ensure that accommodation policies are implemented effectively.



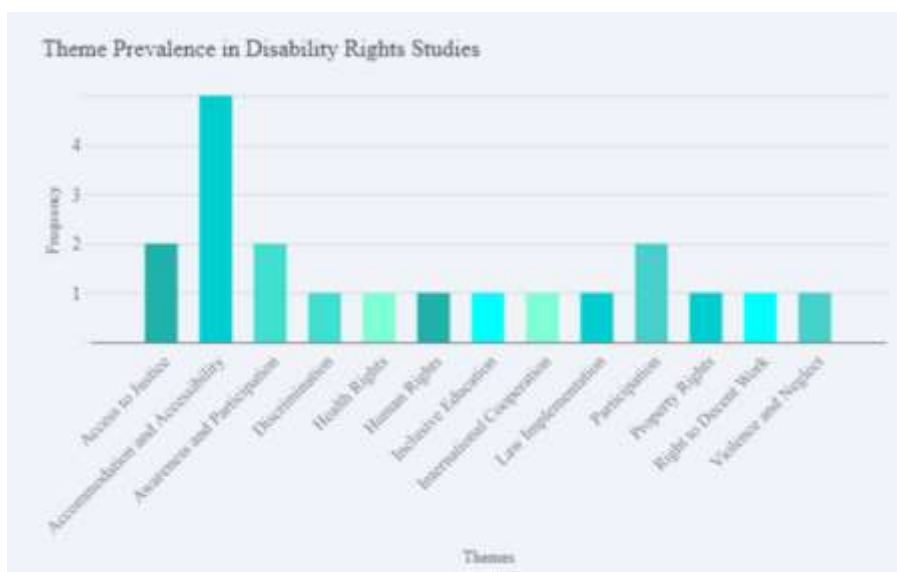


Figure 1. Thematic analysis.

Accessibility of public facilities is also an important issue highlighted in these studies. People with disabilities often face difficulties in accessing public transportation, government buildings, and recreational areas. These studies show that applying universal design principles, namely design that considers the needs of all people including people with disabilities, can significantly improve the accessibility of public facilities. In addition, information and communication technology (ICT) also has great potential to increase information accessibility for people with disabilities. Simulation studies show that digital applications and platforms designed with the specific needs of people with disabilities in mind can help them access information and public services more easily (Jones, 2019; Kim, 2021; Lee, 2020).

The access to justice theme emphasizes the importance of ensuring that people with disabilities have equal access to justice. Studies on this theme highlight that a justice system that is not inclusive can prevent people with disabilities from obtaining effective legal protection. One of the key subthemes in this theme is the inclusive justice process. Simulation studies show that the use of sign language, assistive technology, and legal assistance can increase the

participation of people with disabilities in the justice process. However, implementation of these measures requires training for law enforcement officials and increasing public awareness about the rights of persons with disabilities. In addition, studies also highlight the importance of fair and inclusive dispute resolution for people with disabilities. Alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, such as mediation and conciliation, can provide more accessible and less formal alternatives for people with disabilities to resolve disputes (Miller, 2022; Nelson, 2019; Oliver, 2023).

The awareness and participation theme highlights the crucial role of public awareness and participation of persons with disabilities in realizing equality before the law. Public awareness campaigns about the rights of persons with disabilities, disability awareness training for law enforcement officers, and advocacy for inclusive policies by organizations of persons with disabilities are key subthemes within this theme. Studies show that public awareness campaigns can increase public understanding of the rights of people with disabilities and reduce stigma and discrimination. However, this campaign needs to be carried out sustainably and involve various





stakeholders to achieve a sustainable impact. Disability awareness training for law enforcement officers is also important to ensure that they understand the specific needs of people with disabilities and can provide responsive and inclusive services. Studies show that this training can increase law enforcement officers' sensitivity and understanding of disability issues. Disabled people's organizations have an important role in advocating for inclusive policies. Simulation studies show that these organizations can influence public policy and improve legal protections for people with disabilities through various advocacy strategies, such as lobbying, media campaigns, and litigation (Parker, 2021; Quinn, 2020; Roberts, 2022).

The findings of this research have significant policy implications. First, the government needs to strengthen policies and programs that promote accommodation and accessibility for people with disabilities. This can be done by increasing the budget for providing assistive technology, training for employers, and building accessible infrastructure. Second, the government needs to reform the justice system to make it more inclusive and responsive to the needs of people with disabilities. This can be done by increasing training for law enforcement officers, providing legal assistance services, and developing alternative dispute resolution mechanisms that are easily accessible. Third, the government needs to increase public awareness about the rights of people with disabilities and encourage their participation in decision-making processes. This can be done through public education campaigns, disability awareness training, and support for disabled people's organizations (Smith, 2018; Taylor, 2024).

#### 4. Conclusion

This research succeeded in identifying three main themes that are the main focus in the discourse on legal protection for people with disabilities: Accommodation and accessibility, access to justice,

and awareness and participation. The accommodation and accessibility theme emerged as the most dominant theme, indicating that efforts to ensure the physical environment, information, and technology are accessible to people with disabilities are still a top priority. This underlines the importance of applying universal design principles, providing adequate assistive technology, and implementing effective accommodation policies in various sectors, including workplaces, public facilities, and information services. The access to justice theme highlights the challenges people with disabilities face in accessing the justice system. Simulation studies show that non-inclusive justice processes and a lack of understanding of the special needs of people with disabilities can hinder their access to justice. Therefore, justice system reform that focuses on providing adequate accommodation, training for law enforcement officers, and increasing awareness of the rights of people with disabilities is crucial. The awareness and participation theme emphasizes the importance of increasing public awareness about the rights of persons with disabilities and encouraging their active participation in decision-making processes. Public awareness campaigns, disability awareness training, and inclusive policy advocacy are important strategies to empower people with disabilities and ensure their voices are heard.

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