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A Legal Analysis of the Fulfillment of Electoral Rights of Persons with Visual Impairments in Promoting Inclusive Elections in Palopo City in 2024

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Abstract

Although the electoral rights of persons with disabilities have been legally recognized in Indonesia, ensuring their effective participation in elections remains challenging, particularly for voters with visual impairments. Previous studies have predominantly examined disability rights from normative or general administrative perspectives, leaving limited empirical evidence on how legal guarantees are translated into accessible voting experiences at the local level. This study examines the implementation of electoral rights for persons with visual impairments during the 2024 General Elections in Palopo City and identifies the institutional and social barriers affecting the fulfillment of these rights. Employing a normative-empirical legal research approach, the study was conducted from January to May 2026 through semi-structured interviews involving 50 informants, field observations, and documentary analysis. The findings reveal that the General Elections Commission (KPU) of Palopo City implemented disability-based voter registration, provided Braille ballot templates, facilitated voting assistance, and established accessible polling station services. However, significant implementation gaps persisted, including difficulties in identifying eligible voters due to limited information disclosure by families, limited Braille literacy among some voters, uneven competence among polling station officials, insufficient accessible electoral information, and social attitudes that restricted independent political participation. From the perspectives of legal protection and substantive equality, these findings demonstrate that formal regulatory compliance does not necessarily guarantee the effective exercise of electoral rights. This study contributes an empirical legal analysis that connects normative guarantees with voters' actual experiences while emphasizing the importance of proactive voter identification, diversified accessibility measures, strengthened institutional capacity, and inclusive voter education to achieve substantive electoral equality.

Keywords: Electoral Rights; Persons with Visual Impairments; Inclusive Elections; Persons with Disabilities; Legal Protection

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INTRODUCTION

Democracy is a system of government that places the people as the ultimate holders of sovereignty within the state. In a democratic state, citizens possess the right to participate in political decision-making processes, either directly or through representatives elected in democratic elections (Caravantes and Lombardo 2024; Jose Maria Maravall 2003; Sahdan et al. 2019). One of the principal manifestations of the principle of popular sovereignty is the conduct of general elections, which serve as the constitutional mechanism for electing the President and Vice President, members of the House of Representatives (Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat/DPR), the Regional Representative Council (Dewan Perwakilan Daerah/DPD), and the Regional People's

Representative Councils (Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah/DPRD) (Radjab 2013; Riskiyono 2016). Accordingly, elections function not only as an instrument for the peaceful transfer of political power but also as a means of establishing a government that derives its legitimacy from the people and is capable of realizing the objectives of the state as stipulated in the fourth paragraph of the Preamble to the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia (Airlangga 2019; Amir 2020; Tjenreng 2020).

From the perspective of the rule of law (*rechtsstaat*), elections are not merely procedural instruments of democracy but also constitute an essential mechanism for the realization and protection of human rights, particularly the political rights of citizens. Article 1(2) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia provides that sovereignty resides in the people and is exercised in accordance with the Constitution, while Article 22E stipulates that general elections shall be conducted every five years based on the principles of direct, universal, free, confidential, honest, and fair elections (Jose Maria Maravall 2003; Putra 2024; Tamanaha 2004). These constitutional provisions reflect the state's commitment to ensuring that elections are conducted democratically, with integrity, and in accordance with the principles of equality and equal political rights for all citizens.

These constitutional guarantees are further implemented through various legal instruments, including Law Number 39 of 1999 on Human Rights, Law Number 7 of 2017 on General Elections, Law Number 8 of 2016 on Persons with Disabilities, and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), which Indonesia ratified through Law Number 19 of 2011. Collectively, these legal instruments affirm the state's obligation to respect, protect, and fulfill the human rights of all citizens, including the political rights of persons with disabilities (Jimly 2020; Jimly Asshiddiqie 2013; Satjipto Rahardjo 2008).

The rights to vote and to stand for election constitute fundamental political rights guaranteed as constitutional rights of every citizen. The exercise of these rights must be grounded in the principles of equality before the law and non-discrimination, ensuring that no individual is excluded from the democratic process based on physical, sensory, intellectual, or mental impairments. Consequently, persons with disabilities possess the same legal status as other citizens in exercising their political rights (Advitama et al. 2025; Fauzan and Sudrajat 2026).

The protection of the political rights of persons with disabilities is expressly affirmed in Article 5 of Law Number 7 of 2017 on General Elections, which provides that persons with disabilities who satisfy the statutory requirements are entitled to equal opportunities to serve as voters, candidates for the DPR, DPD, and DPRD, candidates for President and Vice President, and election administrators. Furthermore, Article 356 of the same law stipulates that voters with visual, physical, or other disabilities may receive assistance when casting their ballots upon their own request, while the secrecy of their political choice must be fully protected. These provisions demonstrate that the state not only recognizes the political rights of persons with disabilities at the normative level but also requires election management bodies to provide reasonable accommodation to ensure that such rights can be exercised effectively (Perbawa, Aidonojie, and Ajah 2025a; Rahim, Piyo, and Komendangi 2025).

The protection of the political rights of persons with disabilities has gained strong legitimacy within both national and international legal frameworks. Law Number 7 of 2017 on General Elections, Law Number 8 of 2016 on Persons with Disabilities, and the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) through Law Number 19 of 2011 affirm the state's obligation to ensure equal access and political participation for all citizens without discrimination. Previous studies have also examined the recognition of the political rights of persons with disabilities, constitutional guarantees, and the responsibilities of election management bodies to provide accessible facilities and reasonable accommodation. These findings indicate that the protection of the political rights of persons with disabilities is supported by a relatively comprehensive normative legal framework.

Despite these clear legal guarantees, a deeper empirical understanding is still needed of how such provisions are translated into electoral practices that are genuinely accessible to persons with visual disabilities. In particular, it remains insufficiently understood how electoral policies are implemented at the local level through the provision of accessible electoral information, the availability of assistive voting devices, assistance mechanisms, and the preparedness of election officials to accommodate the needs of voters with visual disabilities.

Furthermore, the relationship between the administrative compliance of election management bodies and the actual experiences of voters with visual disabilities in exercising their voting rights requires more systematic empirical investigation.

The gap between the normative recognition of rights and their practical implementation has significant implications for the quality of inclusive democracy. The existence of legal regulations does not automatically guarantee that persons with visual disabilities can exercise their voting rights independently, equally, safely, and confidentially. When electoral facilities are inaccessible, information is not provided in appropriate formats, or assistance mechanisms are inadequately implemented, formally guaranteed political rights may encounter substantial barriers in practice. Therefore, evaluating the fulfillment of political rights cannot be limited to examining compliance with statutory provisions; it must also consider the lived experiences of voters with visual disabilities as rights holders.

To address this gap, this study examines the fulfillment of the political rights of persons with visual disabilities in the implementation of general elections in Palopo City, Indonesia, through an empirical legal research approach. The study seeks to analyze the relationship between legal guarantees, the implementation of electoral policies, and the actual experiences of persons with visual disabilities in exercising their political rights. The analysis focuses on the accessibility of electoral information, the provision of accessible voting facilities and infrastructure, assistance mechanisms, the protection of ballot secrecy, and institutional and social barriers affecting the effective realization of these rights. Accordingly, this study positions the experiences of voters with visual disabilities as a central component in evaluating the effectiveness of legal protection in practice.

The primary contribution of this study lies in bridging the normative dimensions of legal protection and the empirical realities of political rights implementation for persons with visual disabilities at the local level. Rather than merely evaluating the existence and application of legal instruments, this study also examines the extent to which the implementation of electoral policies achieves substantive equality for persons with disabilities. Through this approach, the study is expected to contribute to the advancement of empirical legal scholarship, particularly concerning the relationship between state obligations, electoral accessibility, and the effective realization of political rights. In addition to enriching academic discourse on inclusive democracy, the findings are expected to provide an evidence-based foundation for policy recommendations aimed at strengthening electoral processes that are more accessible, non-discriminatory, and responsive to the rights of persons with disabilities.

The fulfillment of the political rights of persons with disabilities constitutes one of the primary indicators of inclusive elections. The concept of inclusive elections requires that every stage of the electoral process be accessible to all citizens without discrimination, including persons with disabilities. This principle extends beyond the right to be registered as a voter and encompasses access to electoral information, voter education, campaign activities, polling station facilities, assistive voting devices, and voting procedures that enable every voter to exercise their electoral rights independently, freely, and by secret ballot (Eliyanti and Sinaga 2025; Nazifah, Mangku, and Yuliartini 2021).

Among the various categories of persons with disabilities, persons with visual impairments have particularly distinct accessibility needs. Limitations in visual functioning often create substantial barriers for voters with visual impairments in accessing election-related information, identifying ballot papers, and casting their votes independently where electoral facilities fail to meet accessibility standards. Consequently, election management bodies bear the legal responsibility to provide appropriate forms of reasonable accommodation, including Braille ballot templates, electoral information in accessible audio formats, assistance in accordance with applicable legal provisions, and enhanced capacity-building for election officials to ensure the delivery of inclusive electoral services for voters with disabilities (Cristiani and Ghofur 2024; Nurul Alam, Cahyo Seftyono, and Moh. Nizar 2025).

Empirical evidence from the 2024 General Elections demonstrates the Indonesian government's commitment to promoting more inclusive elections through the registration of voters with disabilities in the Permanent Voters List (*Daftar Pemilih Tetap*—DPT), the provision of accessible polling stations, and disability-responsive voter education programs. According to the General Elections Commission of the Republic of Indonesia (*Komisi Pemilihan Umum*—KPU), 1,111,036 voters with disabilities were registered in the 2024 Permanent Voters List,

representing approximately 0.55% of the 203.05 million registered voters nationwide. Data from the KPU's Public Participation Information System (*Sistem Informasi Partisipasi Masyarakat*—SIPARMAS) indicate that voter turnout among persons with disabilities in the 2024 Presidential Election reached 43.41%. These figures underscore the importance of strengthening legal protection and ensuring equal electoral access for persons with disabilities throughout every stage of the electoral process.

At the local level, data released by the General Elections Commission of Palopo City indicate that the 2024 Permanent Voters List included 128 voters with visual impairments. This figure demonstrates that election management bodies have a legal obligation to ensure the availability of adequate facilities and services enabling all voters with visual impairments to exercise their voting rights independently, freely, and by secret ballot. Nevertheless, various election evaluation reports and information provided by organizations representing persons with disabilities continue to reveal a number of persistent challenges. These include inadequate accessibility at polling stations, the limited availability of accessible electoral information, insufficient assistive voting devices, and uneven levels of understanding among election officials regarding the provision of inclusive services for voters with disabilities. These circumstances illustrate a continuing gap between the normative guarantees embodied in legislation and their practical implementation during the administration of elections.

The fulfillment of the political rights of persons with disabilities has been examined in several previous studies. Perbawa (2025), in a study on electoral accessibility for persons with disabilities, found that the principal obstacles were the limited availability of accessible electoral facilities and the inadequate understanding among election administrators regarding the specific needs of persons with disabilities (Perbawa et al. 2025a). The study emphasized the importance of improving the quality of electoral services based on the principles of equality and accessibility.

Similarly, Cristiani and Ghofur (2024), in their study on the political participation of vulnerable groups in Indonesia, argued that although the national legal framework formally guarantees the political rights of all citizens, implementation at the regional level continues to face various administrative and social barriers that hinder the effective participation of vulnerable groups in electoral processes (Cristiani and Ghofur 2024).

Furthermore, Sukmiah and Masyitah (2024), who examined the implementation of Law Number 8 of 2016 on Persons with Disabilities, concluded that the protection of the political rights of persons with disabilities has largely remained normative in nature, while practical implementation has yet to fully satisfy the principles of accessibility and reasonable accommodation required by both domestic legislation and international human rights standards (Sukmiah and Masyitah 2024).

Likewise, Nurul Alam et al (2025), in her research on the fulfillment of the voting rights of persons with disabilities in regional head elections, identified several continuing challenges, including the lack of inclusive voter education, inadequate polling station facilities, and insufficient coordination between election management bodies and organizations representing persons with disabilities (Nurul Alam et al. 2025).

Although these studies have significantly contributed to the discourse on inclusive elections in Indonesia, most of them examine persons with disabilities as a single, homogeneous category without specifically addressing the distinct accessibility needs of persons with visual impairments in exercising their voting rights independently. Moreover, previous studies have generally focused on national electoral policies or broad evaluations of election administration, thereby providing limited analysis of the effectiveness of legal norms governing the protection and fulfillment of the voting rights of persons with visual impairments at the local level. Consequently, a comprehensive legal assessment of how these legal guarantees are implemented in regional electoral practices remains relatively underexplored.

Despite these valuable contributions, the existing body of literature continues to exhibit several significant research gaps. First, most previous studies have treated persons with disabilities as a homogeneous group without examining the specific accessibility needs and legal protection required by persons with visual impairments as voters. Such an approach overlooks the distinct barriers encountered by this group in exercising their voting rights independently, freely, and by secret ballot.

Second, prior research has predominantly adopted sociological, political, or public administration perspectives, whereas studies employing a legal approach to assess the effectiveness of the implementation of legal norms governing the fulfillment of the electoral rights of persons with disabilities remain relatively limited. Consequently, the extent to which the existing legal framework has been effectively implemented in practice has not been comprehensively examined.

Third, the majority of previous studies were conducted before the 2024 General Elections and therefore have not evaluated the effectiveness of the legal and institutional measures implemented during the most recent electoral process. Given that the 2024 General Elections introduced a number of initiatives intended to strengthen electoral inclusiveness, an updated legal assessment is necessary to determine whether these measures have effectively enhanced the protection of the electoral rights of persons with disabilities, particularly persons with visual impairments.

Fourth, research specifically examining the fulfillment of the electoral rights of persons with visual impairments in Palopo City remains extremely limited. This gap is particularly significant because the effectiveness of implementing inclusive electoral policies may vary across regions due to differences in social characteristics, institutional capacity, administrative practices, and geographical conditions. Accordingly, a context-specific legal analysis is essential to evaluate how national legal provisions are implemented at the local level.

Against this background, the present study possesses both theoretical and practical significance. From a theoretical perspective, it is expected to contribute to the development of legal scholarship, particularly in the fields of constitutional law, electoral law, and human rights law, by providing a comprehensive analysis of the implementation of legal norms governing the fulfillment of the electoral rights of persons with visual impairments within the framework of inclusive elections. Furthermore, the study seeks to enrich the development of the concept of inclusive elections within Indonesia's legal system by demonstrating how legal principles concerning equality, non-discrimination, and reasonable accommodation are translated into electoral practice.

From a practical perspective, the findings of this study are expected to serve as an evaluative reference and policy recommendation for the General Elections Commission (*Komisi Pemilihan Umum*—KPU), the Election Supervisory Body (*Badan Pengawas Pemilihan Umum*—Bawaslu), the Government of Palopo City, and organizations representing persons with disabilities in formulating more effective policies to improve accessibility and the quality of electoral services for voters with visual impairments. In addition, this study is expected to contribute to strengthening the implementation of the principles of equality, non-discrimination, and the protection of the political rights of persons with disabilities, thereby ensuring that electoral administration not only complies with legal requirements but also realizes substantive justice for all citizens.

Based on the foregoing discussion, this study aims to analyze the implementation of the fulfillment of the electoral rights of persons with visual impairments in the administration of the 2024 General Elections in Palopo City, to assess its conformity with the applicable legal framework, and to identify the factors influencing the realization of inclusive elections. Accordingly, this study is entitled "A Legal Analysis of the Fulfillment of Electoral Rights of Persons with Visual Impairments in Promoting Inclusive Elections in Palopo City in 2024."

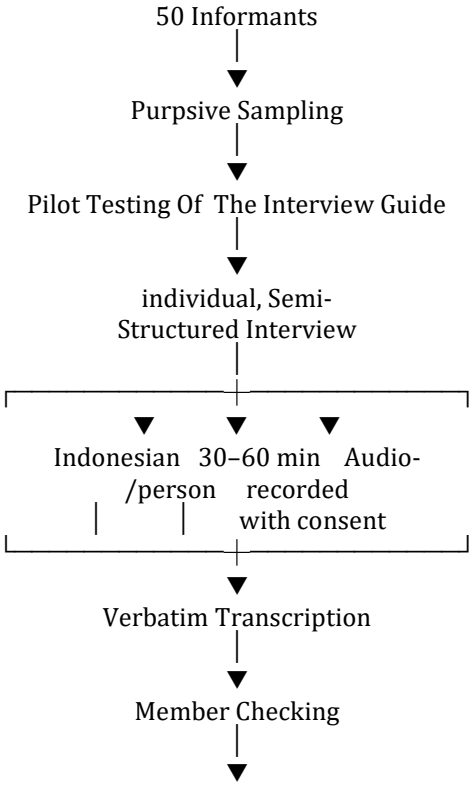
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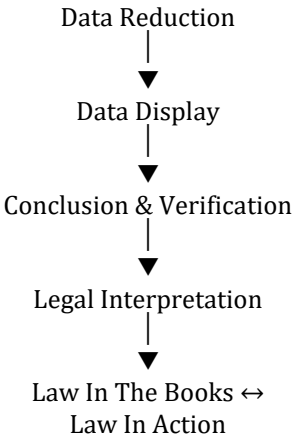
This study employed a normative-empirical legal research approach to examine the fulfillment of the electoral rights of persons with visual impairments in promoting inclusive elections in Palopo City during the 2024 General Election. This approach integrates normative legal analysis (law in books) and empirical investigation (law in action) to evaluate the consistency between legal guarantees and their practical implementation. The normative analysis employed statutory and conceptual approaches by examining the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, Law Number 39 of 1999, Law Number 7 of 2017, Law Number 8 of 2016, Law Number 19 of 2011 concerning the Ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), and relevant regulations issued by the General Election Commission (KPU) and the Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu).

The empirical research was conducted in Palopo City, South Sulawesi, Indonesia, from January to May 2026, with the Palopo City General Election Commission (KPU) serving as the primary research site. Primary data were collected through semi-structured in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation involving informants selected through purposive sampling based on their involvement in and knowledge of the implementation of the 2024 General Election. The study involved 50 informants, comprising KPU commissioners and technical officers, Bawaslu members, representatives of disability organizations, and voters with visual impairments. Interviews lasted approximately 30–60 minutes and explored voters' experiences, the accessibility of electoral facilities and information, assistance mechanisms, and barriers to exercising political rights. Secondary data were obtained from statutory regulations, official election management reports, policy documents, and relevant scholarly literature.

The collected data were analyzed qualitatively using the interactive model developed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), comprising data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Interview findings, observations, and documentary evidence were categorized according to the study's main themes and subsequently compared with applicable legal provisions. The analysis sought to identify gaps between legal norms and their implementation through three analytical perspectives: the rights-based framework established under Article 29 of the CRPD, the principle of substantive equality, and the effectiveness of legal implementation. These perspectives were employed to evaluate the relationship between the legal obligations of election management bodies, electoral accessibility, voter experiences, and the realization of substantive political equality..

The credibility and trustworthiness of the findings were ensured through source and methodological triangulation by comparing information obtained from the KPU, Bawaslu, disability organizations, and voters with visual impairments. Interview findings were cross-checked against official documents, reports on the implementation of the 2024 General Election, applicable statutory provisions, and field observations. This process aimed to enhance the credibility and consistency of the findings while ensuring that the conclusions were grounded in the correspondence between empirical evidence and the applicable legal framework. Accordingly, this study provides an empirical assessment of the effectiveness of legal protection in guaranteeing the electoral rights of persons with visual impairments in Palopo City. Interview Data Collection Procedure





RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Fulfillment of the Electoral Rights of Persons with Visual Impairments in the 2024 General Elections in Palopo City

The fulfillment of the electoral rights of persons with visual impairments constitutes one of the key indicators of the implementation of inclusive elections. Based on the findings of this field research, the General Elections Commission (*Komisi Pemilihan Umum*—KPU) of Palopo City undertook various measures to facilitate the participation of voters with visual impairments throughout every stage of the 2024 General Elections. These efforts commenced with voter registration and data collection, continued through the provision of accessibility facilities at polling stations (*Tempat Pemungutan Suara*—TPS), and extended to the delivery of electoral services on polling day.

The findings from interviews and documentary analysis indicate that the KPU of Palopo City identified voters with disabilities according to the type of disability during the preparation of the Permanent Voters List (*Daftar Pemilih Tetap*—DPT). This classification enabled the election management body to determine both the number of voters with disabilities and the specific forms of assistance and accessibility measures required on polling day. Consequently, the needs of voters with disabilities were mapped from the earliest stage of the electoral process, allowing appropriate electoral services to be prepared in advance.

An interview with Astiawati, Head of the Technical Administration and Legal Affairs Subdivision of the KPU of Palopo City, revealed the following:

> *"The role of the KPU of Palopo City in ensuring the electoral rights of persons with disabilities begins with the preparation of the Permanent Voters List (DPT). Data on voters with disabilities are classified according to the type of disability so that the required electoral services can be prepared from the outset. In addition, the KPU ensures that polling stations are physically accessible and that electoral services are provided in accordance with the specific needs of voters with disabilities on polling day." (Interview with Astiawati, January 2026).*

The interview findings demonstrate that the fulfillment of electoral rights is not limited to polling day but begins during the voter registration process. Classifying voters according to the type of disability provides an essential basis for election administrators to prepare services that correspond to the specific needs of each voter.

Documents obtained from the KPU of Palopo City indicate that voters with visual impairments included in the 2024 Permanent Voters List were distributed across nine districts (*kecamatan*). The data are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Number of Voters with Visual Impairments in Palopo City in the 2024 General Elections

District	Number of Voters
Bara	11
Mungkajang	5
Sendana	9
Telluwanua	26
Wara	31

West Wara	18
South Wara	12
East Wara	14
North Wara	11
Total	137

Source: General Elections Commission of Palopo City (2024).

As shown in Table 4.1, Wara District recorded the highest number of voters with visual impairments, totaling 31 individuals, whereas Mungkajang District had the lowest number, with only five registered voters. These data served as the basis for the KPU of Palopo City in determining the allocation of electoral services and accessibility facilities required at each polling station.

In addition to compiling voter data, the KPU of Palopo City provided various accessibility measures to facilitate the exercise of voting rights by persons with visual impairments on polling day. These measures included the provision of Braille ballot templates, improvements to access routes leading to polling stations, priority services for voters with disabilities, and assistance provided either by Polling Station Working Committee (*Kelompok Penyelenggara Pemungutan Suara*—KPPS) officers or by a companion chosen by the voter where necessary.

As explained by Astiawati:

> *"To facilitate voters with visual impairments, the KPU provides Braille ballot templates that may be used independently by voters who are able to read Braille. In addition, KPPS officers receive training on the proper procedures for assisting voters with visual impairments without influencing their political choices." (Interview with Astiawati, January 2026).*

Field observations conducted by the researcher at several polling stations confirmed that accessibility measures included relatively accessible entry routes, the availability of Braille ballot templates, priority services for voters with disabilities, and assistance for voters requiring support during the voting process. Furthermore, KPPS officers provided explanations regarding the use of these facilities before voting commenced.

Electoral services for persons with visual impairments were also provided during polling day. According to Syarifuddin, a staff member of the Planning, Data, and Information Division of the KPU of Palopo City:

> *"Electoral services on polling day were implemented according to the established schedule, from 7:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Central Indonesia Time (WITA). Voters with disabilities, including persons with visual impairments, were given priority service and therefore were not required to wait in long queues. Where necessary, KPPS officers also aided in accordance with the applicable procedures." (Interview with Syarifuddin, January 2026).*

Field observations further revealed that these services were provided from the moment voters entered the polling station until the completion of the voting process. KPPS officers first verified the identity of each voter and subsequently prioritized voters with disabilities before directing them to the voting booth. Voters requiring assistance received support either from KPPS officers or from companions of their own choosing after fulfilling the applicable administrative requirements. Conversely, voters who were able to use the Braille ballot template cast their votes independently.

Despite the availability of these accessibility measures, the findings indicate that several challenges remained in ensuring the effective fulfillment of the electoral rights of persons with visual impairments. Interviews with several informants revealed that not all voters with visual impairments were able to use the Braille ballot template because some were not proficient in Braille literacy. As a result, a considerable number of voters preferred to be accompanied by an assistant when casting their ballots. Moreover, variations in the knowledge and understanding of KPPS officers regarding the specific needs of voters with disabilities resulted in inconsistencies in the quality of services provided across polling stations.

Field observations also demonstrated that although access to most polling stations was generally adequate, several locations still required physical adjustments to improve mobility and convenience for persons with disabilities. In addition, information regarding the use of Braille ballot templates and the procedures for obtaining voting assistance had not been fully understood by all voters with visual impairments prior to polling day.

The rule of law theory emphasizes that the exercise of state authority must be grounded in legal principles that guarantee justice, equality before the law, and the protection of human rights. A.V. Dicey (1885) conceptualized the rule of law through three fundamental principles: the supremacy of law, equality before the law, and the protection of individual rights. In the context of electoral democracy, these principles require the state and electoral institutions to ensure equal opportunities for all citizens, including persons with visual impairments, to exercise their political rights without discrimination. Accordingly, the implementation of electoral regulations should not merely demonstrate formal legal compliance but must also ensure that legal guarantees are translated into accessible and inclusive electoral practices.

Field observations revealed that although access to most polling stations was generally adequate, several locations still required physical adjustments to improve mobility and convenience for persons with disabilities. Furthermore, information regarding the use of Braille ballot templates and procedures for obtaining voting assistance had not been fully understood by all voters with visual impairments prior to polling day. From the perspective of the rule of law theory, these findings highlight a gap between the normative recognition of electoral rights and their practical implementation. The existence of legal provisions guaranteeing equal voting rights does not automatically ensure substantive accessibility when physical infrastructure, electoral information, and assistance mechanisms remain inadequate. Therefore, the rule of law must be reflected not only in the formulation of electoral regulations but also in their consistent implementation by electoral institutions. This underscores the importance of strengthening institutional accountability and ensuring that electoral accessibility constitutes an enforceable legal obligation rather than merely an administrative commitment.

Overall, the findings indicate that the KPU of Palopo City undertook substantial efforts to fulfill the electoral rights of persons with visual impairments through systematic voter registration, the provision of accessibility facilities, priority electoral services, and assistance mechanisms throughout the voting process. Nevertheless, the implementation of these measures continues to face several practical challenges, particularly concerning the limited Braille literacy of some voters, inconsistencies in the quality of electoral services among polling stations, and the need to improve the accessibility and comprehensibility of electoral information for persons with visual impairments. These findings provide an important empirical foundation for the subsequent discussion, which examines the extent to which the implementation of these measures conforms to the applicable legal framework and the principles governing inclusive elections.

Factors Hindering the Fulfillment of the Electoral Rights of Persons with Visual Impairments in the 2024 General Elections in Palopo City

Based on the findings obtained through interviews with election administrators, field observations, and documentary analysis conducted at the General Elections Commission (*Komisi Pemilihan Umum*—KPU) of Palopo City, it was found that the fulfillment of the electoral rights of persons with visual impairments in the 2024 General Elections continued to face several obstacles. These challenges emerged during the stages of voter registration, the provision of services on polling day, and the dissemination of information and voter education programs for persons with visual impairments.

The research findings concerning the factors hindering the fulfillment of the electoral rights of persons with visual impairments in Palopo City are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Factors Hindering the Fulfillment of the Electoral Rights of Persons with Visual Impairments in the 2024 General Elections in Palopo City

No.	Hindering Factors	Research Findings	Data Sources
1	The registration of voters with visual impairments has not yet been fully optimized	Some families did not disclose information regarding family members with visual impairments, making it difficult for election officials to identify voters and assess their accessibility needs	Interview with the KPU of Palopo City
2	Electoral services for	Some members of the Polling Station Working	Interviews and

	voters with visual impairments at polling stations have not yet been fully optimized	Committee (*Kelompok Penyelenggara Pemungutan Suara*—KPPS) still had limited understanding of how to assist voters with visual impairments, particularly regarding assistance mechanisms and the use of assistive voting devices	field observations
3	Voter education and outreach programs have not yet been fully accessible	Information concerning the stages of the election was not optimally received by all voters with visual impairments due to the limited availability of accessible information media	Interviews with informants and documentary analysis
4	Limited public awareness regarding the electoral rights of persons with disabilities	Some families still assumed that persons with visual impairments had limited capacity to make independent political choices	Interviews with informants

Source: Primary research data, 2026.

1. Obstacles in the Registration of Voters with Visual Impairments

The findings indicate that one of the major obstacles to the fulfillment of the electoral rights of persons with visual impairments concerns the voter registration process, which has not yet been fully optimized. Voter registration constitutes the initial stage undertaken by election administrators to identify the number and characteristics of voters requiring special assistance on polling day.

Based on an interview with Astiawati, Head of the Technical Administration and Legal Affairs Subdivision of the KPU of Palopo City, election officials encountered difficulties in collecting data on voters with visual impairments. These challenges primarily stemmed from the reluctance of some families to disclose information regarding the disability status of their family members.

> *"Several election officials encountered difficulties in registering voters with visual impairments because some families were unwilling to provide such information and considered the voting rights of persons with disabilities to be of limited importance in elections. In fact, every citizen has the right to vote. Therefore, the KPU has sought to conduct direct data collection through information obtained from election officials at the local level and to raise awareness among families regarding the importance of the electoral rights of persons with disabilities." (Interview with Astiawati, January 2026).*

The theory of legal protection proposed by Philipus M. Hadjon (1987) emphasizes that protecting citizens' rights is a fundamental responsibility of the state, which is manifested through two forms: preventive and repressive legal protection. Preventive legal protection aims to prevent rights violations through the establishment of regulations, administrative procedures, and institutional mechanisms that safeguard the interests of citizens. Meanwhile, repressive legal protection focuses on resolving disputes or addressing rights violations that have already occurred. In the context of electoral administration, this theory emphasizes that protecting the political rights of persons with visual impairments cannot be achieved solely through normative recognition in legislation but must also be supported by preventive measures ensuring that all eligible voters are identified, registered, and provided with accessibility facilities appropriate to their specific needs. Thus, legal protection serves as an essential foundation for guaranteeing the equal and non-discriminatory exercise of voting rights by persons with disabilities.

The interview findings reveal that obstacles encountered during voter registration are not solely attributable to technical limitations within electoral administration but are also influenced by families' willingness to disclose information concerning family members with visual impairments. Consequently, identifying eligible voters and assessing their specific accessibility needs require additional time and resources. Viewed through the lens of Philipus M. Hadjon's theory of legal protection, these findings highlight the importance of strengthening preventive legal protection through proactive voter registration and data collection, enhanced coordination among the General Elections Commission (KPU), local governments, families, and

organizations of persons with disabilities, as well as the establishment of identification mechanisms that respect individual privacy and dignity. Furthermore, complaint-handling and registration dispute-resolution mechanisms should be strengthened as forms of repressive legal protection when voters with disabilities encounter barriers to exercising their voting rights. Therefore, the effectiveness of legal protection is determined not merely by the existence of regulations but also by the capacity of electoral institutions to translate legal guarantees into institutional measures that are responsive to the needs of persons with visual impairments.

2. Obstacles in Providing Electoral Services for Voters with Visual Impairments at Polling Stations

The findings reveal that although electoral services for voters with visual impairments were provided at polling stations (*Tempat Pemungutan Suara*—TPS), several practical challenges remained during their implementation. Based on field observations and interviews, some members of the Polling Station Working Committee (*Kelompok Penyelenggara Pemungutan Suara*—KPPS) were found to possess limited experience in assisting voters with visual impairments. This situation was reflected in differences in the ability of election officials to help, explain voting procedures, and support voters requiring additional help during the voting process.

John Rawls' (1971) theory of justice, developed through the concept of justice as fairness, emphasizes that justice must be realized through the arrangement of social institutions that guarantee equal basic liberties for every individual while giving particular consideration to disadvantaged groups. Rawls formulated two fundamental principles of justice: the principle of equal basic liberties and the principle governing social and economic inequalities through fair equality of opportunity and the difference principle. In the context of electoral democracy, Rawls' perspective provides a normative foundation for understanding that the formal recognition of equal voting rights is insufficient to guarantee justice when certain groups continue to encounter barriers to exercising those rights. Therefore, electoral institutions must provide support and facilities that accommodate the diverse needs of voters, ensuring that every citizen, including persons with visual impairments, has an effective and equal opportunity to participate in democratic processes.

The research findings indicate that not all voters with visual impairments were able to use Braille ballot templates independently. Some voters continued to rely on assistance from companions due to limited proficiency in reading Braille. Consequently, the voting process for certain individuals remained dependent on external assistance. Viewed through the perspective of John Rawls' theory of justice, these findings suggest that providing uniform accessibility facilities does not necessarily ensure equal opportunities for all voters, as individuals possess different abilities and needs. Although the availability of Braille ballot templates reflects an institutional effort to fulfill political rights, their effectiveness remains limited unless accompanied by alternative accessibility measures, education on the use of assistive voting tools, and assistance mechanisms that safeguard ballot secrecy and freedom of choice. Thus, electoral justice should not be assessed solely on the basis of equal provision of facilities but also on the extent to which every voter can exercise their political rights effectively, with dignity, and without discrimination.

3. Obstacles in Voter Education and Electoral Outreach for Persons with Visual Impairments

The study also found that voter education and electoral outreach programs for persons with visual impairments continued to face several constraints. Information regarding the stages of the 2024 General Elections had not been directly conveyed to all voters with visual impairments. Interviews with informants revealed that some voters obtained electoral information primarily through family members or their surrounding communities. Meanwhile, outreach activities specifically designed to accommodate the needs of persons with visual impairments remained limited in both scope and accessibility. In addition, the predominance of visually based information media created difficulties for voters with visual impairments in independently accessing information concerning electoral procedures, voting mechanisms, and the accessibility services available at polling stations.

4. Obstacles Related to Family and Social Environment

The findings further demonstrate that social factors associated with family members and the surrounding community also constituted obstacles to the exercise of the electoral rights of persons with visual impairments. Some families continued to hold the view that persons with visual impairments lacked the capacity to make independent political decisions and, therefore, did not need to be actively involved in the electoral process. This perception reduced the level of support available to some persons with visual impairments during both the voter registration process and the exercise of their voting rights. According to interview data, the KPU of Palopo City sought to address this issue by raising awareness among families and the broader community that persons with visual impairments are citizens who possess the same political rights as all other voters.

Overall, the findings indicate that the obstacles to fulfilling the electoral rights of persons with visual impairments in the 2024 General Elections in Palopo City include challenges related to voter registration, limitations in the provision of services at polling stations, insufficiently accessible voter education and outreach programs, and inadequate understanding among families and the broader social environment. These findings constitute the empirical basis for the subsequent discussion, which will analyze these issues from the perspectives of electoral law and the concept of inclusive elections.

Efforts Undertaken by the General Elections Commission of Palopo City to Enhance the Fulfillment of the Electoral Rights of Persons with Visual Impairments in the 2024 General Elections

Based on the findings obtained through interviews, field observations, and documentary analysis, it was found that the General Elections Commission (*Komisi Pemilihan Umum*—KPU) of Palopo City undertook various efforts to enhance the fulfillment of the electoral rights of persons with visual impairments in the 2024 General Elections. These measures were implemented as part of the administration of electoral services tailored to the specific needs of voters with disabilities, particularly to ensure that they were able to exercise their voting rights effectively throughout every stage of the electoral process.

The findings indicate that the efforts undertaken by the KPU of Palopo City to fulfill the electoral rights of persons with visual impairments were carried out through several strategies, namely improving the accuracy of voter registration, providing accessible facilities at polling stations (*Tempat Pemungutan Suara*—TPS), strengthening the preparedness of election officials, and conducting voter outreach and information dissemination programs targeting persons with disabilities and the broader community.

According to the findings, the first measure implemented by the KPU of Palopo City was the active registration of voters with visual impairments. This process was conducted through coordination between the KPU of Palopo City and election administrators at the district (*kecamatan*) and village (*kelurahan*) levels. The objective of this initiative was to ensure that persons with visual impairments who met the legal requirements to vote could be properly identified and included in the Permanent Voters List (*Daftar Pemilih Tetap*—DPT).

The interview findings further revealed that voter registration was not based solely on administrative records but also involved field verification efforts aimed at identifying voters with disabilities who had not yet been registered. Such measures were necessary because several obstacles remained in obtaining accurate information regarding the existence of voters with visual impairments, particularly when family members were reluctant to disclose such information to registration officers.

According to Astiawati, Head of the Technical Administration and Legal Affairs Subdivision of the KPU of Palopo City:

> *"The KPU continuously evaluates the services provided to voters with disabilities, both by strengthening coordination among election administrators and by raising public awareness that persons with disabilities possess the same electoral rights as all other citizens."*
>
> *(Interview with Astiawati, January 2026).*

The interview findings demonstrate that coordination among election administrators constitutes one of the principal strategies adopted by the KPU of Palopo City to improve the quality of voter registration and electoral services for persons with visual impairments.

In addition to improving voter registration, the findings indicate that the KPU of Palopo City also enhanced the preparedness of polling stations. These efforts included the provision of facilities designed to support voters with visual impairments in casting their ballots, such as Braille ballot templates and assistance mechanisms for voters requiring support during the voting process.

Field observations revealed that, during the implementation of the 2024 General Elections, the KPU of Palopo City provided various accessibility facilities to enable voters with visual impairments to exercise their electoral rights effectively. Voters who were able to read Braille were permitted to use Braille ballot templates independently, while those experiencing difficulties were allowed to receive assistance from companions in accordance with the applicable legal provisions.

In addition to providing accessibility facilities, the KPU of Palopo City also sought to strengthen the capacity of members of the Polling Station Working Committee (*Kelompok Penyelenggara Pemungutan Suara*—KPPS). The findings indicate that KPPS officers received guidance regarding procedures for assisting voters with disabilities, mechanisms for accompanying voters with visual impairments, and the obligation to protect the confidentiality of voters' political choices when assistance was provided.

The results of interviews and documentary analysis demonstrate that such training was intended to enhance the preparedness of election officials in responding to the diverse needs of voters. Through this capacity-building process, polling station officers were expected to provide services that corresponded to the specific conditions and requirements of voters with visual impairments during the voting process. Another effort undertaken by the KPU of Palopo City involved the implementation of voter outreach and information dissemination programs targeting persons with visual impairments. According to the findings, these activities were designed to provide information regarding the stages of the electoral process, voting procedures, and the accessibility facilities available to persons with disabilities on polling day.

The outreach activities were conducted through cooperation with various stakeholders, including local communities and organizations representing persons with disabilities, with the objective of ensuring that electoral information could be effectively conveyed to voters with visual impairments. Nevertheless, the findings also indicate that voter education programs still need to be further adapted to the accessibility needs of persons with visual impairments, particularly with respect to the use of communication media that are easier for them to access. Based on the documentary evidence collected during the research, the efforts undertaken by the KPU of Palopo City to enhance the fulfillment of the electoral rights of persons with visual impairments in the 2024 General Elections are summarized in Table 4.3.

Table 3. Efforts Undertaken by the KPU of Palopo City to Fulfill the Electoral Rights of Persons with Visual Impairments in the 2024 General Elections

No.	Measures Undertaken	Forms of Implementation
1	Improving voter registration for persons with visual impairments	Coordinating with election administrators at the regional level and conducting active registration of voters with visual impairments
2	Providing accessible electoral services	Providing Braille ballot templates, assistance mechanisms, and accessibility facilities for voters with visual impairments at polling stations
3	Strengthening the capacity of polling station officials	Providing guidance to KPPS officers regarding service procedures and assistance mechanisms for voters with disabilities
4	Conducting voter outreach and information dissemination	Providing information concerning the electoral process, voting procedures, and accessibility facilities for persons with disabilities

Source: Primary research data, 2026.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that the KPU of Palopo City undertook various efforts to enhance the fulfillment of the electoral rights of persons with visual impairments in the 2024 General Elections. These efforts included strengthening voter registration mechanisms, providing accessibility facilities, improving the preparedness of election officials, and

conducting voter outreach programs for persons with disabilities. The findings indicate that the fulfillment of the electoral rights of persons with visual impairments has become an integral component of electoral administration in Palopo City, although several challenges remain in its practical implementation, as discussed in the previous section.

DISCUSSION

Legal Analysis of the Fulfillment of the Voting Rights of Persons with Visual Disabilities in Realizing an Inclusive Election in Palopo City in the 2024 General Election

The right to vote is one of the fundamental constitutional rights inherent to every citizen as an expression of popular sovereignty in a democratic state. This right not only empowers citizens to elect political leaders and representatives through general elections but also serves as a crucial mechanism for ensuring public participation in the governance process (Raden 2024). Accordingly, the State has an obligation to ensure that every citizen, including persons with visual disabilities, enjoys an equal opportunity to exercise their voting rights without experiencing discrimination in any form.

From the perspective of constitutional law, the protection of voting rights constitutes an essential manifestation of the rule of law (*rechtsstaat*), which recognizes the protection of human rights as one of its fundamental principles. Friedrich Julius Stahl argued that a state governed by the rule of law must guarantee the protection of citizens' fundamental rights through the establishment of just legal norms and their effective implementation. Consequently, the fulfillment of the voting rights of persons with disabilities cannot merely be achieved through normative recognition in statutory regulations but must also be realized through concrete policies and practical measures capable of eliminating barriers to the exercise of political rights (Mecke 2019).

The findings of this study indicate that the General Election Commission (KPU) of Palopo City implemented various measures to ensure the voting rights of persons with visual disabilities during the 2024 General Election. These measures included the registration of voters with disabilities, the provision of Braille ballot templates, assistance for voters requiring support, accessible pathways to polling stations, and priority services for persons with disabilities throughout the voting process. These initiatives demonstrate the election management body's commitment to facilitating greater accessibility for persons with visual disabilities in exercising their constitutional right to vote.

Normatively, these efforts are consistent with Article 5 of Law Number 7 of 2017 on General Elections, which stipulates that persons with disabilities who meet the legal requirements shall have equal opportunities to participate as voters, legislative candidates, presidential and vice-presidential candidates, and election administrators. This provision is reinforced by Article 13 of Law Number 8 of 2016 on Persons with Disabilities, which guarantees the political rights of persons with disabilities, including the rights to vote and to be elected in general elections. Accordingly, the provision of accessible electoral services by the KPU of Palopo City constitutes an implementation of the State's constitutional obligation to protect and fulfill the rights of all citizens as mandated by national legislation.

The fulfillment of the voting rights of persons with disabilities should also be understood through the concept of substantive equality (Audina 2022; Verba 1995). Unlike formal equality, which merely requires identical treatment for all citizens, substantive equality demands that services be adapted to individuals' specific needs so that everyone has an equal opportunity to enjoy their rights. In the electoral context, the provision of Braille ballot templates, procedural assistance, and accessible polling stations should not be regarded as privileges but rather as forms of reasonable accommodation designed to remove barriers faced by persons with visual disabilities in exercising their voting rights (Sunaryo 2022).

This principle is consistent with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), which Indonesia ratified through Law Number 19 of 2011. Article 29 of the CRPD obliges States Parties to ensure that persons with disabilities can participate effectively and fully in political and public life, including by providing voting procedures, facilities, and materials that are accessible, easy to understand, and usable independently. Therefore, the electoral services provided to persons with visual disabilities during the 2024 General Election in Palopo City represent part of Indonesia's implementation of its international obligations, which have been incorporated into the national legal system.

Viewed from the perspective of Philipus M. Hadjon's theory of legal protection, the fulfillment of the voting rights of persons with disabilities represents a form of preventive legal protection. Preventive legal protection seeks to prevent violations of rights through the establishment of policies, procedures, and public services that provide legal certainty before disputes or rights violations occur. In this study, the registration of voters with disabilities, the provision of accessible electoral facilities, and the regulation of assistance mechanisms constitute preventive legal measures undertaken by the election management body to ensure the protection of the political rights of persons with disabilities from the preparatory stage through the implementation of voting (Hadjon 1987; Semyonovykh 2022; Sudastra and Huda 2020).

Nevertheless, the findings reveal that the fulfillment of the voting rights of persons with visual disabilities in Palopo City continues to face several limitations. Although accessibility measures were generally available, their implementation has not yet fully ensured voters' independence in exercising their voting rights. Some voters remained dependent on assistants during the voting process, particularly those who were not yet able to use Braille ballot templates effectively. This condition indicates that the fulfillment of voting rights has not yet achieved the dimension of comprehensive accessibility, as barriers affecting the quality of political participation for persons with disabilities persist (Chemnad and Othman 2024).

These findings demonstrate that the fulfillment of voting rights cannot be assessed solely based on the availability of physical facilities at polling stations. An inclusive election requires the integration of legal regulations, institutional preparedness, the capacity of election administrators, and the empowerment of voters with disabilities. In other words, the success of inclusive elections depends not only on compliance with legal provisions but also on the effectiveness of implementing those legal norms in electoral practice.

When analyzed through the perspectives of the rule of law theory and the theory of legal protection, the findings indicate that the KPU of Palopo City has fulfilled most of its legal obligations in ensuring the voting rights of persons with visual disabilities (Habib and Gilalo 2025; Hariza and Nurhidayat 2021; Tamanaha 2004; Toledo 2024). Nevertheless, these efforts require further strengthening, particularly in improving the quality of accessibility, expanding political education for persons with disabilities, and optimizing electoral services that enable voters with visual disabilities to exercise their voting rights more independently. Therefore, the fulfillment of the voting rights of persons with disabilities should not merely be viewed as an administrative obligation of election management bodies but also as a key indicator of the State's success in realizing an inclusive, equitable, and human rights–respecting democracy.

Legal Analysis of the Factors Hindering the Fulfillment of the Voting Rights of Persons with Visual Disabilities in the 2024 General Election in Palopo City

The fulfillment of the voting rights of persons with visual disabilities in the implementation of general elections is not solely determined by the existence of regulations guaranteeing citizens' political rights but is also influenced by the effectiveness of implementing legal norms at every stage of the electoral process. Although Indonesia has established a comprehensive legal framework through the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, Law Number 7 of 2017 on General Elections, and Law Number 8 of 2016 on Persons with Disabilities (Nurul Alam et al. 2025), the findings of this study indicate that the fulfillment of voting rights for persons with visual disabilities in Palopo City continues to encounter various obstacles that affect the effectiveness of exercising their political rights.

The findings identify three main factors that hinder the fulfillment of the voting rights of persons with visual disabilities, namely the lack of optimization in voter data collection, limitations in the quality of services provided at polling stations, and the inadequate implementation of accessible voter education and socialization programs (Perbawa, Aidonojie, and Ajah 2025b). These three factors demonstrate that the primary challenges no longer lie within the normative framework but rather in the implementation of policies and the provision of public services that have not fully accommodated the needs of persons with disabilities.

When analyzed using Soerjono Soekanto's theory of legal effectiveness, the successful implementation of legal provisions is influenced by five factors: legal factors (legal substance), law enforcement officers, facilities or infrastructure, society, and legal culture. These factors are interconnected and determine the extent to which legal regulations are effectively applied in

social life (Soerjono Soekanto 1980, 2008). In the context of this study, the legal substance has provided adequate guarantees for the political rights of persons with disabilities. However, its effectiveness is still affected by limitations in infrastructure, the capacity of election administrators, and public awareness regarding the importance of political participation of persons with disabilities.

The first factor hindering the fulfillment of voting rights is the lack of optimization in voter data collection for persons with visual disabilities. The findings reveal that the data collection process continues to face obstacles, including limited disclosure of information by families and communities regarding the existence of persons with disabilities (Nazifah et al. 2021). As a result, not all eligible voters with disabilities can be accurately identified during the voter data updating process. This condition affects the provision of accessibility facilities because voters' specific needs cannot be optimally mapped.

From the perspective of administrative law, voter data collection constitutes part of public service delivery that must be carried out based on the principles of accuracy, legal certainty, and non-discrimination. Inaccurate voter data not only has the potential to reduce the quality of the final voter list (*Daftar Pemilih Tetap/DPT*) but may also hinder the fulfillment of citizens' constitutional rights. Therefore, inclusive voter registration is a fundamental prerequisite for realizing elections that uphold the principle of equal rights (Lestari, Syahuri, and Thohari 2025a, 2025b).

The second obstacle relates to the quality of services provided at polling stations. The findings indicate that although basic facilities such as Braille ballot templates have been provided, the implementation of services at the practical level continues to face several challenges. These include the limited competence of election officers in assisting persons with disabilities, uneven understanding of inclusive service procedures, and the continued dependence of some voters on assistance from other individuals when exercising their voting rights (Chemnad and Othman 2024). This condition demonstrates that accessibility is not solely determined by the availability of physical facilities but is also influenced by the quality of human resources involved in election administration.

From the perspective of Lawrence M. Friedman's legal system theory, the effectiveness of law is determined by three main elements: legal substance, legal structure, and legal culture. From the aspect of *legal substance*, Indonesia has established regulations that guarantee the political rights of persons with disabilities (Hidayat 2024; Lawrence 2021). However, from the perspective of *legal structure*, there remains a need to strengthen institutional capacity and improve the competence of election administrators so that they can provide services that correspond to the needs of voters with disabilities (Flora, Thuong, and Erawati 2023). Meanwhile, from the perspective of *legal culture*, some segments of society still perceive persons with disabilities as dependent groups, resulting in accessibility needs not always being recognized as an essential priority in electoral processes.

The third obstacle concerns the inadequate implementation of voter socialization and education program**s**. The findings indicate that voter education activities conducted by election administrators remain generally oriented toward the broader public and have not been fully adapted to the specific needs of persons with visual disabilities (Ernesto Dal Bó, Pedro Dal Bó 2018; Hussain and Fani 2020). Information regarding electoral stages, voting procedures, and voters' rights is still predominantly delivered through visual media, which limits independent access for persons with visual disabilities (Budhi Santosa et al. 2024; Ramadhan et al. 2025). This condition results in some voters not receiving sufficient information regarding the mechanisms for exercising their voting rights and the facilities available during the voting process.

From a human rights perspective, access to information is an inseparable component of fulfilling citizens' political rights. Article 29 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) emphasizes that States are obligated to provide electoral information and procedures that are accessible to persons with disabilities. Therefore, the limited accessibility of voter education programs indicates that the implementation of accessibility principles requires further strengthening, particularly through the provision of communication media that are appropriate for the needs of persons with visual disabilities.

The findings also demonstrate that these three inhibiting factors are interconnected and form a chain of obstacles in fulfilling the voting rights of persons with visual disabilities.

Inadequate voter data collection affects the accuracy of accessibility facilities provided at polling stations. Limitations in polling station services influence the quality of voters' experiences in exercising their rights. Meanwhile, insufficiently accessible voter education prevents some persons with disabilities from obtaining adequate information regarding their rights and voting procedures. Therefore, addressing these obstacles cannot be undertaken separately but requires an integrated approach covering voter registration, voter education, and the implementation of voting procedures.

Viewed from the perspective of John Rawls' theory of justice, the State has an obligation to provide greater protection to groups that are positioned as the least advantaged (*the least advantaged*). In the context of electoral administration, persons with visual disabilities represent a group requiring specific protection and responsive services to enable them to enjoy political rights equally with other citizens (John Rawls 2011; Rawls 2005; Sunaryo 2022). Therefore, the provision of accessibility facilities and inclusive services should not be regarded as preferential treatment but rather as a mechanism for achieving substantive justice in democratic governance.

Based on the above analysis, it can be understood that the factors hindering the fulfillment of voting rights for persons with visual disabilities in Palopo City are primarily related to implementation aspects rather than regulatory weaknesses. This indicates that the main challenge in realizing inclusive elections does not lie in the absence of legal norms but in the effectiveness of policy implementation, the quality of public services, the capacity of election administrators, and the strengthening of a legal culture that respects the rights of persons with disabilities. Therefore, strengthening implementation mechanisms is a crucial aspect in ensuring the optimal fulfillment of voting rights for persons with disabilities while simultaneously improving the quality of inclusive democracy in Indonesia.

Legal Analysis of the Efforts of the General Election Commission of Palopo City in Realizing Inclusive Elections for Persons with Visual Disabilities

The implementation of inclusive elections is one of the important indicators in measuring the quality of democracy and the application of the rule of law principles. An inclusive election is not only characterized by the implementation of all electoral stages in accordance with statutory provisions but also by the existence of guarantees that every citizen, including persons with disabilities, has equal opportunities to participate effectively in the democratic process. Therefore, election administrators have both legal and moral responsibilities to ensure that all electoral stages are conducted in an accessible, non-discriminatory manner, and oriented toward the fulfillment of every citizen's constitutional rights (Istianah, Arsyad, and Kambo 2025).

The findings of this study indicate that the General Election Commission (KPU) of Palopo City has undertaken various efforts to improve the fulfillment of the voting rights of persons with visual disabilities in the 2024 General Election. These efforts include improving the accuracy of voter data collection, providing accessibility facilities at polling stations, enhancing the capacity of Polling Station Working Groups (*Kelompok Penyelenggara Pemungutan Suara/KPPS*), and conducting voter socialization and education programs for persons with disabilities. These initiatives demonstrate that the KPU of Palopo City has not merely performed its administrative functions as an election organizer but has also attempted to implement the principle of protecting the political rights of vulnerable groups as mandated by statutory regulations.

From the perspective of responsive law theory proposed by Nonet and Selznick, effective law is law that can respond to societal needs and developing in accordance with social dynamics (Habermas 1997; Hakim 2020; Tamanaha 2004; Wiratmaja 2018). Law should not merely be understood as a formal set of rules but must be realized through policies and actions that provide solutions to social problems. In this study, the various efforts undertaken by the KPU of Palopo City reflect the characteristics of responsive law because the election organizer has attempted to adapt its services to the specific needs of persons with visual disabilities. The provision of Braille ballot templates, assistance mechanisms in accordance with established procedures, and priority services at polling stations represent forms of institutional adaptation to the actual conditions experienced by voters with disabilities.

This approach is also consistent with the principles of good governance, particularly the principles of participation, equity, accountability, and responsiveness. In electoral administration, the principle of participation requires that every citizen has equal opportunities to engage in the democratic process without discrimination. The principle of equity requires election administrators to provide services that consider the needs of vulnerable groups to create equal opportunities for exercising political rights (Laden and Hasibuan 2024; Rahmi et al. 2026). Meanwhile, the principle of responsiveness requires election administrators to identify and address public needs effectively, accurately, and in accordance with applicable legal provisions. Based on the research findings, the efforts of the KPU of Palopo City in providing specific services for persons with visual disabilities reflect the implementation of these principles in electoral practices.

From a human rights perspective, the measures undertaken by the KPU of Palopo City also constitute an implementation of the State's obligation to respect, protect, and fulfill citizens' rights. This concept positions the State as the primary duty bearer responsible for ensuring that every individual can enjoy their constitutional rights without barriers. In the context of the political rights of persons with disabilities, the State's obligations do not end with the establishment of regulations guaranteeing voting rights but also include the provision of facilities, procedures, and services that enable persons with disabilities to exercise their voting rights effectively (Nazifah et al. 2021).

This obligation is consistent with Article 29 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), which requires States Parties to guarantee the participation of persons with disabilities in political and public life through accessible voting procedures, appropriate facilities, and assurances that persons with disabilities can cast their votes freely, secretly, and independently. Therefore, the provision of Braille ballot templates, assistance mechanisms that maintain the confidentiality of voters' choices, and priority services at polling stations constitute concrete implementations of these obligations.

Furthermore, the efforts of the KPU of Palopo City to improve the quality of voter data collection demonstrate that the election organizer has attempted to strengthen the planning aspects of electoral administration. Accurate data collection serves as the basis for determining the number of voters with disabilities, preparing election logistics, and providing accessibility facilities at each polling station. In other words, the quality of voter data collection is not only related to the validity of voter lists but also determines the effectiveness of fulfilling the voting rights of persons with disabilities in subsequent stages. Therefore, coordination among the KPU, District Election Committees (*Panitia Pemilihan Kecamatan/PPK*), Voting Committees (*Panitia Pemungutan Suara/PPS*), and Polling Station Working Groups (*KPPS*) becomes a crucial factor in realizing inclusive electoral services.

Nevertheless, the findings reveal that the efforts undertaken by the KPU of Palopo City still face several limitations. Voter socialization programs for persons with disabilities have not fully utilized accessible communication media, the capacity of election officers in providing services for persons with disabilities still requires improvement, and coordination with disability organizations has not been optimally implemented at every stage of the electoral process. These conditions indicate that inclusive election administration is a continuous process requiring ongoing improvement (*continuous improvement*) in terms of institutional capacity, human resources, and the provision of supporting facilities.

When analyzed using the perspective of public service theory, service quality is not solely measured by the fulfillment of administrative procedures but also by the ability of service providers to deliver services that are accessible, targeted, responsive, and oriented toward public satisfaction. In the context of electoral administration, quality services are reflected in the ability of election organizers to eliminate barriers that may restrict the political participation of vulnerable groups. Therefore, improving the competence of election officers, strengthening political education for persons with disabilities, and developing accessible socialization media are integral components of efforts to enhance the quality of electoral services (Firman et al. 2024; Jabbra and Dwivedi 1998; Lin 2023).

The findings of this study demonstrate that the efforts of the KPU of Palopo City reflect a commitment to implementing the principles of inclusive elections as mandated by Law Number 7 of 2017 on General Elections and Law Number 8 of 2016 on Persons with Disabilities. However, the realization of truly inclusive elections does not solely depend on election

administrators but also requires support from local governments, organizations of persons with disabilities, election supervisory institutions, and active community participation. Collaboration among stakeholders is an essential prerequisite for creating an electoral system capable of accommodating the needs of all citizens without exception.

Therefore, the efforts undertaken by the KPU of Palopo City can be viewed as an implementation of the State's constitutional obligation to fulfill the political rights of persons with disabilities and as a strategic step toward realizing inclusive democracy. Nevertheless, achieving genuinely inclusive elections requires strengthening institutional capacity, improving the quality of public services, optimizing coordination with organizations of persons with disabilities, and developing policies that are more responsive to their needs. Through this approach, elections will not merely function as a democratic mechanism for the transfer of political power but will also serve as an instrument for protecting human rights by guaranteeing equality, justice, and political participation for all citizens.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the fulfillment of electoral rights of persons with visual impairments in promoting inclusive elections in Palopo City during the 2024 General Election has been implemented through various efforts by the Palopo City General Election Commission (KPU). The implementation of these efforts is reflected in the provision of voter registration services, accessibility facilities at polling stations, assistance mechanisms for voters with visual impairments, and efforts to improve the capacity of election officers. These measures demonstrate that the KPU of Palopo City has attempted to realize the constitutional mandate of equal political participation and the principle of non-discrimination in electoral processes. However, the fulfillment of electoral rights for persons with visual impairments has not been fully optimal due to several implementation challenges. The main obstacles identified in this study include limitations in the accuracy of disability voter data collection, uneven accessibility services at polling stations, and the lack of inclusive political education and electoral socialization. These challenges indicate that although the legal framework has provided sufficient guarantees for the political rights of persons with disabilities, the effectiveness of implementation still requires strengthening through institutional capacity improvement, better coordination among stakeholders, and the development of more responsive electoral services. The efforts undertaken by the KPU of Palopo City represent an important step toward realizing inclusive elections based on equality, accessibility, and respect for human rights. Future improvements should focus on strengthening disability-inclusive voter data management, increasing the competence of election officers in providing disability-sensitive services, expanding accessible electoral information, and involving organizations of persons with disabilities in every stage of the electoral process. Such developments are expected to contribute to the establishment of an electoral system that not only guarantees formal participation but also ensures substantive equality for persons with visual impairments in exercising their political rights.

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