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No care without justice: A normative ethical perspective of the employment of people with disabilities in hospitality businesses

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ABSTRACT

People with disabilities (PWDs) face discrimination in the hospitality workplace. The aim of this paper is therefore to frame issues surrounding the employment of PWDs in the hospitality industry in normative ethical terms. To achieve this aim, we conducted twenty-eight semi-structured interviews with owners/managers of hospitality businesses and other relevant stakeholders. Drawing on the ethics of justice and ethics of care, our study found that when organisations demonstrated to their employees and other stakeholders the fairness in the procedures taken to implement PWD inclusion actions, the inclusion actions were significantly supported by coworkers, and the organisations were able to achieve distributive justice and care for PWDs. This study, thus, demonstrated that organisational members were willing to take part in caring actions for employees with disabilities (EWDs) not only when they perceived that inclusion actions for EWDs were procedurally fair, but also when they perceived that the PWDs deserved distributive justice outcomes.

1. Introduction

People with disabilities (PWDs) represent the largest minority group facing discrimination in the global labour market (Khan et al., 2019; Kin-Kwan, 2020; Tabares, 2023). In the Netherlands, for example, Peijen and Wilthagen (2022) show a higher unemployment rate among PWDs (9.6%) than people without disabilities (4.5%). Versantvoort and Van Echtelt (2016) reported that only 17% of Dutch employers hired PWDs; 30% of the employers considered employment of PWDs as part of their responsibility, while 30% felt that it was not their responsibility to employ PWDs.

This also holds for the global hospitality industry where discrimination has been shown to negatively affect the likelihood of PWDs being employed (Kalargyrou & Volis, 2014). In the Netherlands, despite evidence that shows the increasing labour shortage in the hospitality industry, the employment of PWDs is considerably lower than that of people without disabilities (cf. Peijen & Wilthagen, 2022). PWDs are perceived to have limited productive capacity and inappropriate aesthetic qualities (in the case of physical disabilities) required for the hospitality industry (Nickson et al., 2005). Some employers consider the employment of PWDs too costly, especially when adjustments to the

workplace are required to accommodate their special needs (Houtenville & Kalargyrou, 2012). The high prevalence of negative perceptions regarding the employment of PWDs in the hospitality industry implies that when most businesses engage in such initiatives, oftentimes the business case may be the driver (Tabares, 2023). For example, anecdotal evidence suggests that when organisations employ PWDs, accessing government subsidies is often the driver (Gould et al., 2020). For such organisations, policies, and practices regarding the inclusion of PWDs are not given prominence on their agenda, and are often pursued in a piecemeal manner (cf. Houtenville & Kalargyrou, 2012; Kalargyrou & Volis, 2014). The lukewarm attitude towards the employment of PWDs and the widespread stereotypes regarding their potential means that PWDs are more likely to have low esteem and altogether avoid seeking employment opportunities.

Public policies and initiatives are increasingly being implemented to enhance PWDs' employability (Gröschl, 2013; Khan et al., 2019). Their effectiveness has been limited because the discourse about the employment of PWDs is generally constructed in terms of the business case perspective (Barclay et al., 2012). The Dutch government, for example, developed the Participation Act (in Dutch *Participatiewet*) in 2015 to enhance the participation of PWDs and those who do not have

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https://business.gov.nl/facts-and-figures/factsheet-hospitality/#art:number-of-businesses

access to the labour market. This regulatory framework places an obligation on businesses to hire PWDs. However, its effectiveness is rather debatable. Some evidence shows that compliance is limited with financial penalties put in place failing to deter non-compliance (cf. Borghouts-van de Pas & Freese, 2021). Employers often undertake a cost-benefit analysis of compliance with such a framework and often decide to comply based on the existence of the fit between inclusion goals and the business model pursued (Borghouts-van de Pas & Freese, 2021).

Scholars have suggested some measures organisations can undertake to enhance the employment of PWDs. Schur et al. (2005) for example contend that it is essential that organisations develop a corporate culture that can remove obstacles that prevent PWDs from accessing employment opportunities. Such a corporate culture may need to be fully grounded in ethical values. As a matter of fact, other scholars have argued that some firms employ PWDs to align with their ethical values, but also to fulfil their responsibility to society (Gould et al., 2020; Shultz & Brender-Ilan, 2004).

The academic discourse regarding the employment of PWDs in the hospitality industry focuses on the business case perspective (Kalargyrou, Trivellas, & Sigala, 2020) and human resources management (for example, Houtenville & Kalargyrou, 2012). The ethical connotations underlying the logic of PWDs' employment in the hospitality industry have relatively been under-researched (Barclay et al., 2012; Bencivenga et al., 2019). We, therefore, argue that the application of ethical theories such as the ethics of justice and ethics of care can unravel complexities surrounding the decisions organisations make to integrate PWDs in the workplace (Bencivenga et al., 2019). We adopt these two theoretical perspectives because they are complementary; they offer procedural and distributive fairness perspectives and the relational dimension that the employment of PWDs immensely needs (Barclay et al., 2012; Bencivenga et al., 2019). Thus, the ethics of justice provides a platform for ethics of care to be practised thereby allowing the effective inclusion of PWDs in the workplace (Colella, 2001).

This study, based on the Dutch hospitality industry, therefore, seeks to answer the following questions: (a.) How are the ethics of justice manifested in the orientation of hospitality businesses and organisational members towards the employment of PWDs? (b.) How are the ethics of care manifested in the inclusion practices undertaken by hospitality businesses for PWDs?

2. Theoretical perspectives

We first conceptualise the notion of disability. We then present a review of the two ethical theories - ethics of justice and ethics of care - that underpin our investigation.

2.1. Defining disabilities

We adopt the definition of PWDs by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (UNCRPD): 'persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others' (United Nations, 2006, p. 4). This definition encompasses both the medical and social models of disability. The medical model posits disability as the state of being unable to meaningfully participate in their society because of physical, sensory and intellectual impairments (Swain & French, 2000). This model helps to shape the negative perceptions that limit employment opportunities for PWDs (cf. Oliver, 2013).

The social model seemingly counters the negative perceptions associated with disability (Oliver, 2013), and considers disability as a consequence of the interaction between constraining social, economic, environmental, and attitudinal factors that restrict an individual's ability to contribute to society (Mittler, 2015 cf. Shakespeare & Watson, 2002).

Policy frameworks to remove barriers PWDs face are inspired by the social model (Gröschl, 2013). Within the hospitality literature, the PWDs' inclusion efforts equally draw upon the social model. Research pinpoints at organisational measures aimed at addressing biases, prejudices and discrimination regarding disability, but also at designing the workplace environment to suit the needs of PWDs (Markel and Barclay, 2009Bengisu & Balta, 2011; Houtenville & Kalargyrou, 2012; Kalargyrou & Volis, 2014).

2.2. Ethical perspectives of the employment of PWDs

2.2.1. Ethics of justice

The ethics of justice posit that individuals ought to be treated with fairness and as an end in themselves and never as a means to an end (Rawl, 1971; cf. Shultz & Brender-Ilan, 2004). In accordance with this theory, organisations that have diverse groups of employees have a moral obligation or duty to ensure social justice for every member of the organisation without the expectation of any benefits (Gotsis & Kortezi, 2013; Tabares, 2023). In other words, the ethics of justice view ethical inclusion practices in terms of achieving social justice for the PWDs rather than from the outcome that would produce the greatest good for the organisation (Dahanayake et al., 2018; Tomlinson & Schwabenland, 2010).

While the ethics of justice regard equality among individuals in terms of access to opportunities as a fundamental condition for fairness and justice, paradoxically the ethics of justice can also lead to inequalities. Extant literature on workplace accommodation of EWDs suggests that the unequal treatment that favours EWDs can draw different reactions from coworkers depending on how they understand the concept of fairness (Coleilla et al., 2004; Colella, 2001). Some coworkers may resent such treatment (Paetzold et al., 2008).

Theorists have developed two major frameworks to help in understanding fairness in the integration of PWDs: procedural justice and distributive justice perspective (Coleilla et al., 2004; Colella, 2001). Procedural justice is 'the degree to which people perceive the process through which outcome decisions are made as fair' (Colella, 2001:102). Further, Colella (2001, p.102) considers distributive justice as 'the perceived fairness of the outcome of a decision'. In terms of distributive justice, coworkers primarily evaluate the fairness of the inclusion actions based on the equity and need criteria (Colella, 2001). Equality is another evaluative element of distributive justice albeit concerns that achieving it through the provision of special treatment to EWDs can inadvertently lead to unfair treatment of coworkers (Paetzold et al., 2008). Colella (2001), however, argues that coworkers are likely to view an inclusion action as fair if: a.) the inclusion actions do not place a significant burden on the coworkers; b.) the inclusion actions do not lead to a deprivation of the limited organisational resources that could also be used by coworkers. In other words, coworkers will perceive the inclusion actions as unfair if they lead to unfavourable outcomes for them but create some competitive advantage for the EWDs. From a procedural perspective, Coleilla et al. (2004) contend that inclusion actions may be viewed as fair if procedures meet nine principles²: a.) voice/process control; b.) consistency; c.) bias suppression; d.) accuracy; e.) representativeness; g.) ethicality; h.) correctability; i.) interactional justice, and j.) informational justice. Meeting such conditions can help the chances of co-workers' resentments but can also instil a sense of fairness among the EWDs (Coleilla et al., 2004; Colella, 2001).

2.2.2. Ethics of care

The scholarly interest in the ethics of care arose in the early 1980s as scholars started engaging with feminist social theory and moral inquiry (Gilligan, 1982). Ethics of care centres around ethical decision-making processes that are fundamental to individuals' interrelationships

² For a detailed account of the nine principles, refer to Coleilla et al. (2004).

(Ripamonti et al., 2021). Such decisions emphasise actions that can impact the needs of other people (McAllister & Bigley, 2002). In seeking to meet one own needs and survive, human actions and relationships can lead to social injustices and a lack of care (cf. Dahanayake et al., 2018). Therefore, understanding the context in which such needs and relationships occur is key to reaching moral and empathetic decisions (cf. Byrd & Sparkman, 2022; Gotsis & Kortezi, 2013; Ripamonti et al., 2021). The ethics of care can be enacted when individuals contextualise their daily challenges within the broader societal and cultural frames (Burton & Dunn, 2005; Lawrence & Maitlis, 2012).

Organisations that draw their values on the ethics of care may see discrimination, prejudices associated with the employment of PWDs as a lack of caring, empathy and concern for others (cf. Gotsis & Kortezi, 2013). Thus, care in organisations can be given by nurturing durable relationships among organisations' members through dialogue (Antoni et al., 2020; Bencivenga et al., 2019). Dialogue in pursuing the ethics of care is grounded in an understanding that individuals are fundamentally and mutually dependent on others to the extent that seeking care from others is a fundamental need of all human beings (Noddings, 2003). This entails that the way organisational members communicate with each other about work experiences, challenges, and personal stories can create enduring relationships that are important in meeting each other's needs (Kin-Kwan, 2020). The dialogue the relational spaces and structures that organisations create can be instrumental in establishing collective norms, reciprocity and values within the organisation (Tronto, 2015). Ethics of care requires organisations to set transparent roles and responsibilities as well as to develop adequate supportive mechanisms for caregivers to prevent them from experiencing stress that may emerge from caring obligations (cf. Antoni et al., 2020).

Ethics of care compels organisations to exhibit a strong commitment towards the empowerment of EWDs and treat them with dignity. Therefore, allocating adequate resources towards actions that support and empower EWDs is crucial (Ripamonti et al., 2021). Thus, organisations ought to fundamentally place the weaker employees at the core of safeguarding and caring strategies (cf. Kalargyrou, Kalargiros, & Kutz, 2020). Such a caring attitude can also be exhibited to non-disabled coworkers who can in turn help PWDs who may be struggling with independence following induction and on-the-job training (Kin-Kwan, 2020).

3. Methodology

3.1. Study design and data collection

This study, qualitative and interpretative in nature, focuses on fourteen businesses that operate in the Dutch hospitality industry. The choice of businesses – mostly social businesses - is the most appropriate for revealing how hospitality businesses can address tensions between the ethics of justice and ethics of care as they create space for the employment of PWDs (cf. Byrd & Sparkman, 2022). To recruit the participating firms, work placement agencies and social services departments of the municipalities provided us with names of hospitality businesses they worked with on issues related to the employment of PWDs. We also depended on our network of hospitality practitioners with some knowledge of hospitality businesses that employed PWDs. In total, we conducted 28 semi-structured interviews with owners/managers of businesses, people with disabilities (PWDs)³ employed by these businesses, employees without disabilities (EWoDs), representatives from work placement agencies, and government officers following a purposeful sampling technique (See Table 1). We chose individuals who could provide deeper insights into the issues under investigation.

Prior to the interviews, a data collection protocol was created (See Appendix 1 Sample Questions). We conducted two rounds of semistructured interviews. The first round consisted of 22 interviews conducted with owners/managers and a limited number of EWoDs and PWDs. We asked owners/managers about the reasons why they employed PWDs, the integration practices, and the challenges they faced. We also asked them how they dealt with any tensions that may have emerged from the employment of PWDs. We further asked PWDs about their difficulties in finding suitable employment and their experiences within their workplaces - including integration practices and perceptions regarding the treatment they received from EWoDs. We also asked a limited number of EWoDs about their perceptions of the employment of PWDs and the integration measures their businesses pursued. The final round of interviews involving stakeholders such as government policy officers and placement agencies was aimed at corroborating and triangulating insights from the first round of interviews with owners/managers, PWDs and EWoDs, but also seeking insights into their influences on businesses' orientation towards diversity and employment of PWDs.

Interviews ranged from 20 min to 1 h in length. Upon securing consent from participants, interviews were recorded. The interviews were conducted in Dutch and English depending on the interviewees' preferences. To ensure data accuracy, the transcripts in Dutch were translated into English by a Dutch native speaker with a high level of English language skills. Overall, the interviews produced 376 pages of raw data.

This study complied with the institutional research ethics guidelines. Names of the participants and any details that could identify them were anonymised and kept securely in files that were password protected. Anonymised raw data in audio and transcripts were stored in an encrypted Google Drive folder. Informed consent from all participants was sought following an explanation of what the research involves and the implications of their participation.

3.2. Data analysis

We adopted the abductive analytical approach. We started by observing a "surprising fact" and subsequently related it to "a plausible theory of how this [fact] could have occurred" (Saunders et al., 2019, p. 148). In our study, the surprising fact was that the resentment PWD inclusion actions attracted. Thus, we chose the abductive approach because our intention was not to fundamentally build new theories regarding the moral responsibility associated with the employment of PWDs but to build upon existing theories. We drew upon our familiarity and engagement with existing theoretical perspectives throughout the research process while being open to a significant number of emergent concepts and themes from raw data (Timmermans & Tavory, 2012).

The analysis was divided into four phases. The first phase involved manually transcribing the audio-recorded interviews. These transcripts were read several times by the first author and two research assistants. The data were broken down into fragments before subjecting them opencoding. These data fragments included the various opinions about the employment of PWDs, and integration practices which were coded as first-order codes while we maintained the terms used by interviewees as much as we could (Gioia et al., 2013). We ended up with 37 distinct codes that were linked to statements made by the various interviewees.

The second phase involved axial coding. First-order concepts were refined in an iterative manner (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). We then relied on a more theory-oriented approach. We identified relevant theoretical concepts from the literature and created second-order constructs. Concepts such as equality, social justice, fairness, and responsibility and obligation emerged consistently from the data when understanding perceptions on the employment of PWDs. Additionally, concepts such as compassion, dialogues, and inter-organisational relationships, and caring emerged constantly from the data when we focused on the integration practices within businesses. These were then compared and

 $^{^3}$ The study primarily interviewed people living with mild and moderate forms of intellectual disabilities such as autism, and Down Syndrome, and those with physical disabilities.

Table 1Details of Interviewed Respondents and Firms.

Responde	ent's Details		Nature of Operation	Size	Length of interview		
Age	Code	Education Level	Gender	Position			
34	SEM 1	Secondary	Male	Owner	Restaurant	15	41
27	SEM2	Tertiary	Male	Owner	Restaurant	8	38
53	SEM3	Secondary	Male	Owner	Restaurant	16	60
25	SEM4	Tertiary	Male	Manager	Restaurant	11	57
43	SEM5	Secondary	Female	Owner	Café	9	48
50	SEM6	Tertiary	Male	Manager	Restaurant	19	32
28	SEM7	Tertiary	Male	Owner	Café	10	56
46	SEM8	Secondary	Female	Owner	Restaurant	17	43
49	SEM9	Secondary	Male	Owner	Restaurant	12	51
36	SEM10	Secondary	Female	Owner	Restaurant	14	28
25	SEM11	Tertiary	Male	Manager	Restaurant	7	25
49	SEM12	Secondary	Female	Manager	Restaurant	17	33
39	SEM13	Secondary	Female	Owner	Restaurant	10	45
51	SEM14	Secondary	Male	Manager	Café	7	22
32	PLM1	Tertiary	Female	Placement Manager	Placement Agency	_	56
35	PLM2	Tertiary	Female	Placement Manager	Placement Agency	-	53
50	PLM3	Tertiary	Male	Placement Manager	Placement Agency	-	30
48	PLM4	Tertiary	Female	Placement Manager	Placement Agency	-	42
55	PO1	Tertiary	Male	Policy Officer	Municipality	_	54
43	PO2	Tertiary	Female	Policy Officer	Municipality	_	47
19	PWD1	Non-disclosed	Female	Employee	Restaurant	19	23
24	PWD2	Non-disclosed	Female	Employee	Café	10	24
18	PWD3	Non-disclosed	Male	Employee	Restaurant	16	21
31	PWD4	Non-disclosed	Female	Employee	Restaurant	23	
25	aEWoD1	Secondary	Male	Employee	Restaurant	11	23
19	EWoD2	Secondary	Female	Employee	Restaurant	16	20
22	EWoD3	Secondary	Male	Employee	Café	7	28
22	EWoD5	Secondary	Female	Employee	Restaurant	17	25

^a EWoD stands for employee without disabilities.

integrated with various conceptions of organisational integration practices, such as workplace adjustment and inclusive human resource management practices from the limited extant literature (Kalargyrou, Trivellas, & Sigala, 2020; Kalargyrou & Volis, 2014). We, therefore, ended up with six second-order themes. Examples include a.) perceptions that are oriented towards equality and duty; b.) designing a caring environment. The final phase involved iteratively organising the second-order themes into aggregate theoretical dimensions. Distilling the second-order themes culminated in the generation of two aggregate dimensions: organisational justice orientation and ethics of care (See Fig. 1 for the Sample Data Structure).

4. Findings

4.1. Ethics of justice

We draw on the procedural and distributive perspectives of the ethics of justice to understand how co-workers, PWDs and employers perceive the fairness of their organisations' actions and processes towards the inclusion of PWDs.

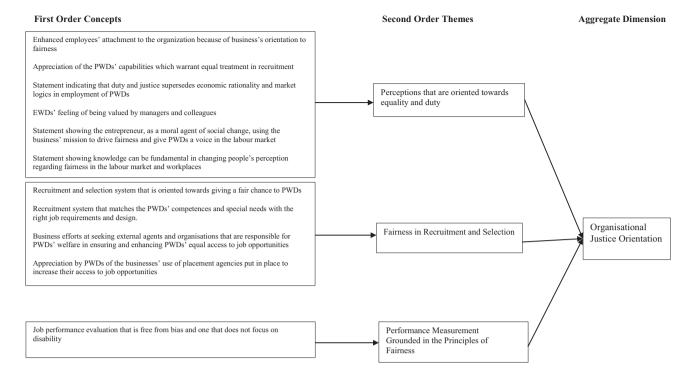
4.1.1. Perceptions of justice and duty

Most participants identified the employment of PWDs as a social justice and fairness issue. One EWoD stated: 'When we were informed that the restaurant was going to recruit five PWDs from X Organisation, ⁴ I was so happy that this restaurant showed a caring attitude and a belief in fairness. I have family members who are disabled and seeing that our restaurant was employing these people, I felt very proud of my employer, and this has made me think again about my intention to work elsewhere.' (EWoD1). Justifying the need to treat PWDs fairly, other participants expressed positive attributes of PWDs regarding their suitability to work in the hospitality industry. They expressed that PWDs - if given a conducive working

environment - could perform as well as EWoDs: 'I find that when job instructions are repeated a number of times, PWDs can be more productive. Sometimes I forget that I am dealing with a colleague with disabilities.' (EWoD2). They are more punctual than most of us. They are also more enthusiastic and cheerful, and we often hear that in the feedback from guests. (EWoD3). The positive perceptions of the co-workers of fairness in this study suggest their employers may have made necessary efforts to show co-workers of EWDs that the processes and actions required for the inclusion of PWDs in the workplace were undertaken in a fair manner. It appears that employers may have made some efforts to not only offer adequate information regarding why it is necessary to provide PWDs with increased access to the workplace, but also to ensure that the coworkers' opinions were considered in the decisions to implement PWDsinclusive actions. Coworkers seem to support accommodation actions their organisations are implementing largely because of the possibility that such actions can lead to favourable distributive justice outcomes for them and PWDs. It is also fundamental to note, as the response of EWoD1 remarked, that the close proximity to the issue such as having a close relative that is disabled can lead co-workers to construe that inclusion actions or processes are fair (Coleilla et al., 2004).

Owner/managers, however, consider employment of PWDs not only as a means towards achieving justice for this vulnerable group of people but also as a mechanism to fulfil their duty to the wider society. They reiterated that employing PWDs provided them with an opportunity to help address some of the societal challenges: 'I think it is our duty to ensure that everyone is given a chance no matter what that costs. I live in this society where everyone is important – no matter who you are.' (SEM8). 'I would not mind if hiring PWDs meant that I would need to incur extra costs. I think employers should take on PWDs for the sake of assisting them to live a satisfying life.' (SEM3). The sentiments above show that achieving fairness within a society should not necessarily involve a trade-off with profitability or be linked to some form of business case. In other words, achieving fairness through fulfilling a duty to both PWDs and society entails that hiring PWDs should not be deterred by unfavourable cost-benefit analysis (Khan et al., 2019).

⁴ The anonymized organisation to be referred to as 'X Organisation'.



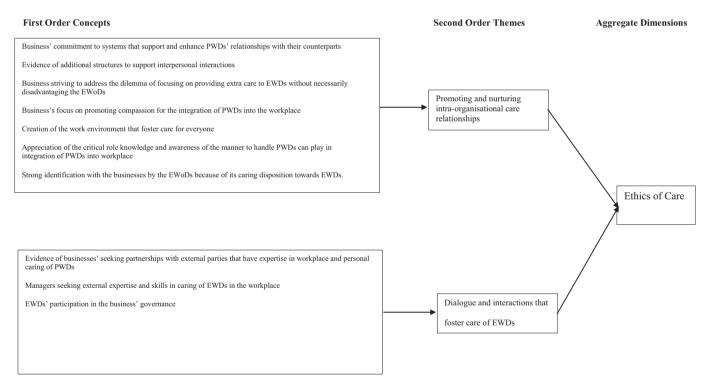


Fig. 1. Data Structure.

One participant spoke of taking a strong activist and missionoriented approach to the employment of PWDs to fulfil his organisation's duty to the achievement of social justice: 'PWDs need to be given a chance. How do they prove to us that they are equally capable of doing the job if we keep them out of the workplace? – I have been employing a lot of PWDs in this restaurant and other restaurants in other cities to make a statement and advance their [PWDs'] interests. To do so, I let my employees know why I do it and how we all can be part of this mission. Luckily, they are all on my side' (SEM1). Indeed, fostering distributive justice outcomes for PWDs may require advocacy and mission-oriented individuals to take it as their duty to discredit negative stereotypes that drive injustices in the hospitality labour market. Crucially, taking such an approach requires managers to inform and solicit input from co-workers of PWDs who could inadvertently be affected negatively. Eventually, resentment from coworkers in response to special treatment offered to PWDs may have been minimised.

4.1.2. Fairness in recruitment and selection

Participants highlighted the importance of implementing recruitment practices that are grounded in redistributive justice principles. One participant stated: 'As much as I believe in meritocracy, I like to deliberately hire PWDs because I think they deserve a chance in life just like everyone.' (SEM12). The positive discrimination taken by SEM12 as a distributive justice-focused practice seems to suggest that relying only on meritfocused recruitment and selection practices can impede the achievement of fairness for PWDs (cf. Rawl, 1971). SEM12's views were in part supported by one EWoD who stated: 'It is easy to say there is no suitable job for PWDs. Oftentimes, there are jobs that can be offered to PWDs as part of the business's social responsibility.However, before hiring PWDs, all the necessary procedures to let the co-workers know why they are hiring the PWDs need to be done' (EWoD4). Indeed, as EWoD4 observes, fairness can be achieved by promoting PWDs' access to relevant job opportunities that they are qualified for without due consideration to mental and physical attributes. As stated elsewhere in this paper, it is also remarkable to realise that when making decisions aimed at achieving distributive fairness, transparency can be essential for prospective coworkers to tolerate and support the potentially unfavourable distributive justice outcomes arising from the special treatments the PWDs would receive once they are employed (Coleilla et al., 2004; Colella, 2001).

Positive discrimination in hiring to advance distributive justice for PWDs was somewhat a contested issue for organisations that did not employ PWDs. These organisations were sceptical about the effectiveness of such an action to achieve justice for PWDs and their coworkers: 'I believe hiring the best person who fits the job requirements is just and fair. Hiring PWDs because of their disability is unfair to other people who may be qualified for the job; it could create resentment. Imagine how the PWDs who have been hired by consideration of their disabilities may feel. Some may feel that they don't deserve the job; they may that someone may have been unfairly treated in order to get them [PWDs] hired. 'SEM5.

The views advanced by SEM5 align in part with arguments advanced by Rawls' (1971) postulation that one's talent and suitability for the job should only be the fundamental criterion for achieving fair equality in employment to all. However, based on the distributive justice's need criterion (Colella, 2001), it is vital to also consider that the social background of some PWDs may necessitate that such affirmative actions be pursued to bring some form of justice for the PWDs (cf. Prasad, 2023).

To enhance the chances of recruiting PWDs and dispel the negative perceptions that employing PWDs affects the distributive justice outcomes for co-workers, hospitality businesses are engaging specialised placement agencies to thoroughly prepare PWDs for the hospitality workplace. One participant remarked: 'We make sure that the right people go to the right place and job. We have received good feedback from the PWDs we matched, their employers and coworkers.' (PLM3). One PWD confirmed the benefit of engaging such organisations in achieving fairness for them: 'The agency did a great job to find some work here for me.... I am treated well and respected.' (PWD3).

Engaging placement agencies not only allowed a smooth transition of PWDs to the hospitality workplace, it was also vital for creating a positive perception in the coworkers about the PWD's potential. Eventually, organisations can realise distributive justice outcomes for the PWDs and their co-workers (Coleilla et al., 2004).

4.1.3. Performance management grounded in the principles of fairness

Performance management was identified as one of the core areas in which hospitality businesses can demonstrate fairness and justice in integrating PWDs into the workplace. The first element is workplace adjustment. Some participants considered adaptations to the workplace to enhance the performance of PWDs as instrumental to the achievement of distributive justice outcomes: 'PWDs cannot perform their jobs at the

same pace as their able-bodied colleagues even when they have comparative levels of competencies. The fair thing employers can do is to make workplace adaptations so that PWDs can realise their potential. It is also fair to coworkers who would have taken on some additional tasks to help their disabled colleague' (EWoD4). 'A lot of negative things are said about the lack of the suitability of PWDs to work in this industry. I always believe that if you make changes to the workplace and give them the appropriate tools to meet their needs, the PWDs can be as good as EWoDs and in some cases much better.' (SEM10). 'Some PWDs work better if you give them small and short tasks. They like to approach things in a structured way, and it is important to consider that. It will cost time and money at the beginning, but after a while, you can earn that back when they start working well.' (SEM14).

While workplace adjustment was appreciated by PWDs as an attempt by their employers to ensure fairness, other PWDs were fearful of the resentment such actions may attract from their non-disabled co-workers: 'I appreciate that my boss understands the challenges I have. — I also appreciate what this restaurant does to make my performance better, but I think my counterparts feel I always get special treatment while they don't (PWD4). Such sentiments are corroborated by other participants who were less enthusiastic about such an approach to the pursuit of fairness for all employees. For example, SEM5 stated: 'We need to be careful about the negative side of such treatment: we have to be careful that such adjustments do not use all the resources could be shared equally among all workers.' Indeed, several participants felt that such adaptations may still create a perception of injustice among able-bodied co-workers who may see significant resources being devoted to the workplace adaptation to meet the needs of their disabled counterparts. As Colella (2001) argues, the judgement of the fairness of the workplace adaptation to meet the needs of PWDs is based on whether such adjustments yield unfavourable outcomes for the co-workers of PWDs in terms of access to organisational resources and rewards or not. Essentially, involving co-workers in the decision-making process can make them perceive such actions to be distributive and fair and ultimately minimise resentment (Coleilla et al., 2004; Paetzold et al., 2008).

The second element of performance management is performance measurement. Some participants revealed that they developed performance measurement systems that were geared towards fairly evaluating the performances of all employees including the PWDs: 'I avoid biases when evaluating the job performance of my employees. I treat the PWDs just as I would treat a normal employee when I am evaluating their performance. (SEM2). The view that having in place a performance system based on equality can address the problem of bias that PWDs face in performance assessments is somewhat problematic. An organisation's pursuit of equality in this case can perpetuate the traditional use of performance standards that are grounded in ableism (Schur et al., 2005). One PWD noted: 'Although my manager tries to avoid being biased against me in performance evaluation, a uniform approach to performance evaluation can make them forget that our disabilities can place limitations on how well we perform the job' (PWD1). A strong focus on equality in performance measurement can unintentionally downplay the impact of disability on one's ability to perform tasks to their full potential in the absence of any accommodation actions. The remarks above highlight the fact that achieving the desirable distributive justice outcomes through performance measurement ought to embrace a shift from the notion of equality towards equity; the shift that can promote a sense of selfactualisation in disabled employees (Colella, 2001).

4.2. Ethics of care

In our study, a significant proportion of businesses pursued PWDs' inclusion initiatives that were grounded in the ethics of care. These initiatives were a.) nurturing of intra-organisational care relationships and b.) dialogue and interactions that foster care of PWDs.

4.2.1. Nurturing intra-organisational care relationships

Nurturing intra-organisational care relationships requires a strong

 $^{^{5}\,}$ Coworkers often complain that working alongside PWDs can lead to a huge workload being placed upon them.

foundation that is based on the awareness of the structural challenges that PWDs face in the workplace. The provision of training and continuous support was one of the essential initiatives businesses pursued to foster the care of the PWDs (cf. Thakur et al., 2023). Such training programmes enhanced the PWDs' skills and confidence required to perform their jobs: 'I have been taught a lot of skills in serving customers better and also how I could work together with others in a busy café like this. At first, I was anxious to work alone, but I think this has made all the difference; I now work independently.' (PWD1). '[Supervisor's name] always praises me when I do well. He understands what I am able to do, and what I am unable to do. He coaches me when I lack the skills. I started with washing dishes, but I am now discussing with [supervisor's name] if I can be at the till or paying point.' (PWD2).

To reinforce learning and better integration of PWDs into the new working environment, some businesses implemented a mentoring (buddy) system. Through such a system, experienced co-workers with or without disabilities who have a high degree of patience, and a caring attitude are identified to provide continuous support and encouragement to PWDs: "In the past, we hired one PWD who struggled a lot to find their 'place' in this business because everyone was busy with their work. It was sad to see her unable to cope; she left. Since then, I set aside time for experienced workers to act as buddies for the new PWDs. — Now the PWDs, and their buddies can recognise that we are a caring enterprise." (SEM7). 'We try to give them [PWDs] as much freedom as possible but at the same time train and guide them into routine tasks where necessary. We have 5 PWDs here and have asked 2 EWoDs to be their supervisors but at the same time their buddies. The chosen EWoDs received training for that. I also support them because I don't want them to have to do it all by themselves.' (SEM13).

Furthermore, participating businesses undertook awareness-raising activities for all EWoDs to remove stereotypes and discrimination as a major step towards building an organisational environment that cares for PWDs. One EWoD acknowledged that their knowledge and skills in working with PWDs had greatly improved: 'I understand it was crucial for us to know how someone with autism can behave in certain circumstances and what instructions and tasks they could handle. Working alongside PWDs and seeing how good the owner treats PWDs helps appreciate diversity in the workforce.' (EWoD5). Such awareness-raising actions can minimise EWoDs' resentment to organisations' actions aimed at the provision of care to their counterparts EWDs (Colella, 2001; Paetzold et al., 2008). Thus, raising awareness can allow coworkers understand not only the structural challenges their disabled counterparts face but also the dire need for care provision that can address such challenges (Coleilla et al., 2004). Furthermore, the role of owner/managers in nurturing care of all employees within their businesses is of paramount importance if the PWDs are to experience good care within their workplaces. One manager remarked: 'While we strive to provide the best work and caring conditions for the PWDs, we are also very careful that we don't neglect our duty of care towards non-disabled employees. - We know that establishing a workplace environment that fosters care of everyone is important for the success of the PWDs' integration, but also in furthering our social mission.' (SEM4).

Central to the ethics of care is the establishment of a caring architecture that supports those responsible for treating PWDs with care and compassion (Gotsis & Kortezi, 2013). First, a limited number of businesses developed a cadre of trained employees that were responsible for monitoring the institutionalisation of compassion, empathy, and care within their enterprises: 'To achieve a truly caring environment for PWDs and everyone else, we need to have a group of committed workers that can safeguard the caring culture.' (SEM9). However, such workers experienced significant workloads emanating from additional caring work for PWDs. Second, a limited number of businesses organised social events where PWDs and all other employees shared their life stories, achievements, and adversities: 'The staff outings where we told our life stories made me appreciate how tough it was for PWDs to face discrimination and stereotypes because of their disability. I have also come to appreciate how resilient colleagues who are living with disabilities are in the face of

adversity.' (EWoD5). Such activities facilitated openness, mutual trust, and the development of empathy towards each other; the aspects which are crucial for a caring environment.

While compassion is crucial in the ethics of care in an organisation, some owners/managers strove to ensure that caregiving as a social process was not counterproductive to the ethics of care: 'I always strive to create an atmosphere that gives EWDs the impression that because they are disabled then they shouldn't be at the mercy of those that are offering them some help. I say this to make them less dependent on others; I make them feel that they can be useful just as everyone here.' (SE12). Indeed, expressing empathy can unintentionally lead to paternalism - keeping the PWDs in a perpetual position of subordination to the caregivers (Kittay, 2011). Therefore, for many of PWDs, such actions may have been empowering and confidence-building. They may further have provided them with positive experiences in their workplace (Antoni et al., 2020). Similarly, by investing in actions that promote compassion, businesses may signal to all employees their commitment to care for PWDs. Such signals can motivate EWoDs to become committed carers of PWDs (Gotsis & Kortezi, 2013).

Third, the establishment of non-hierarchal organisational structures was central to the delivery of care to PWDs. These structures allowed for maximum interactions between the organisations' members (PWDs and EWoDs) and their managers: 'Our organisation has a flat structure which allows everyone to talk about workplace issues easily. PWDs can come directly to me and discuss their problems without requiring to go through their supervisors. Likewise, I am able to go to them and ask how they are faring in – This is not possible when an organisation has a clear line of command.' (SEM2). Organisations that possess such relational and non-hierarchal structures can facilitate a shift from the PWDs being overly dependent on EWoDs towards interdependence with other organisational members. This shift can be emancipatory preventing PWDs from being caught in passive acquiescence that is associated with being vulnerable (Kin-Kwan, 2020). In an indirect way, the relational and hierarchal nature of some participating organisations' structures dissuaded an individualised and instrumental approach to caregiving and work, but also minimised competition among peers (Noddings, 2003). Certainly, instrumentalised and competitive work relationships can make caring for EWDs challenging (Antoni et al., 2020) leading to the widespread cases of burnouts among the non-disabled coworkers as they outcompete each other in caring for the EWDs.

4.2.2. Dialogue that fosters care of PWDs

Ethics of care requires organisations to interact and receive diverse inputs from a wide range of stakeholders (Antoni et al., 2020). It also demands that the vulnerable and powerless members be given a chance to voice their concerns and interests. Most businesses in this study developed some blueprint for engaging in dialogue with external organisations such as placement agencies, charities, and government departments to access technical advice in caring for PWDs. One owner/ manager describes how their nascent business was able to engage the social workers from the municipal social services department in building an organisational environment that helped PWDs to thrive and feel integrated: 'I had no idea how I could make the PWDs I hired feel safe and welcomed in this business. It was by chance that I met my former high school classmate who advised me to approach the social benefits office which in turn linked me to a placement/coaching agency. The agency has been providing me with skills to work with the PWDs. It has also been coaching PWDs to handle different tasks at the restaurant.' (SEM11). A social policy officer from a municipality confirms how his department's dialogue with businesses was instrumental in the development of compassionate and caring workplaces for the PWDs: 'We know that many businesses do not have the knowledge and skills in handling PWDs well. We always encourage such businesses to seek help on how they could do this from us and placement agencies that we work with.' (PO1).

Establishing a caring environment requires increased participation of the PWDs in building such an environment (Lawrence & Maitlis, 2012).

First, businesses in this study developed PWD-friendly channels for listening to PWDs' concerns and needs. One owner/manager describes how they opened up a dialogue with PWDs after realising that their voices were drowned out by other employees: 'You can't downplay the fact that some PWDs may lack the confidence to have their voices heard in staff meetings. I hold 10-minute talks, twice a week, with the EWDs to listen to their concerns. This has helped me and other employees to ensure that the EWDs' experience is very positive. (SEM8). Leadership commitment to establishing appropriate channels for dialogue with employees can be supportive of the caring actions directed towards PWDs. Leadership that emphasises intra-relationships for caring can be essential in showing the organisation's ability to understand in a compassionate manner the daily personal struggles EWDs face. While such dialogue may focus largely on the understanding of the complexity of personal lives of the EWDs, as the sentiments above seem to portray, such conversations can be taken as an opportunity for leaders to show their empathy and relatability by equally sharing their own personal struggles (Coleilla et al., 2004).

Second, the voices and concerns of EWDs were also heard through guaranteed participation and representation in the governance of businesses. One participant stated: "We deliberately invited one EWD to our small 'board' so that whatever we decided at that level should also take into consideration their concerns." (SEM6). Fostering care by listening to the voices of PWDs and a representation in decision-making reflects the businesses' social justice orientation that PWDs deserve to be treated fairly and with respect. For some businesses, such actions echo their social mission - the empowerment and enhancing the welfare of the marginalised section of the population (cf. Doherty et al., 2014). Listening to diverse voices – an essential component of ethics of care can in turn allow organisations to pursue procedural justice and garner support from the coworkers of the distributive justice outcomes for EWDs (Coleilla et al., 2004).

5. Discussion and conclusion

5.1. Theoretical implications

Our study set out to answer two questions. The first question was: 'How is the ethics of justice manifested in the orientation of hospitality businesses towards the employment of PWDs?'. To answer this question, we considered the ethics of justice from two perspectives: procedural justice and distributive justice. To our knowledge, little or no research has been conducted in the hospitality industry that highlights the interactions between these two perspectives (cf. Barclay, 2011). Drawing upon Coleilla et al. (2004) and Colella (2001), the contribution of our study is in demonstrating that when both procedural justice and distributive justice are carefully considered, organisational orientation towards the inclusion of PWDs in the workplace within hospitality businesses can be more effective. We found that when organisations took some efforts to demonstrate to employees the fairness in the procedures taken to implement PWD inclusion actions, the inclusive actions were significantly supported by coworkers resulting in the organisations achieving distributive justice for the PWDs. Thus, our study departs from previous studies in that it shows that to effectively guarantee fairness and justice in the workplace inclusion of PWDs, it is also vital to consider how the organisations can best guarantee distributive justice to coworkers of PWDs. Guaranteeing distributive justice to coworkers can help attract support from coworkers for organisational actions aimed at guaranteeing justice towards PWDs (cf. Paetzold et al., 2008).

Aligned with Coleilla et al. (2004), our study found that organisational factors such as organisational norms and values, and practices may have profoundly influenced how the inclusion of PWDs into the workplace may have been considered procedural fair to PWDs and their coworkers. For example, our study showed that by virtue of the fact that a significant number of studied organisations were social businesses that draw on ethical norms and values, it was easy to convince coworkers to get coworkers in processes regarding the development of any PWD

inclusion actions in order to achieve procedural fairness. For some coworkers, ethical norms and values of their organisations compelled them to accept justice outcomes that were even unfavourable for them as long as the social injustices PWDs face were addressed (Colella, 2001). Similarly, organisations that implemented PWDs inclusion policies and practices that were based on the views of coworkers, overall, generated a positive perception regarding the procedural and distributive fairness of the inclusion of PWDs in the workplace.

The fact that our study and those of Colella (2001) and Coleilla et al. (2004) found that the perception of fairness was positive when some organisational factors, as stated above for example, were considered seems to be in contrast with Paetzold et al. (2008). Paetzold et al. (2008) argue that coworkers only perceive unfairness when PWD-focused inclusion actions lead to the supported PWDs realising more distributive justice outcomes than theirs. However, as stated elsewhere, when coworkers' personal values are strongly oriented towards social justice and fairness, as was the case with a significant number of coworkers in the studied businesses, their ethical values are more likely to compel them to support inclusion actions to address social injustice that PWDs face (Coleilla et al., 2004; Gotsis & Kortezi, 2013).

The second research question our study set out to answer was: 'How is the ethics of care manifested in the PWD inclusion agenda undertaken by hospitality businesses? Our study identified two major actions that businesses could undertake to pursue the ethics of care. These actions included nurturing intra-organisational care relationships and dialogue that fostered the care of PWDs. Our study demonstrated that the ethics of care could be fundamentally based on the building and fostering of dialogue and the establishment of interdependent relationships within organisations (cf. Byrd & Sparkman, 2022; Colella, 2001; Kin-Kwan, 2020; McAllister & Bigley, 2002). In other words, the fostering dialogue and the establishment of interdependent relationships were the antecedents of a caring and compassionate environment for EWDs and also for EWoDs to thrive (Colella, 2001; Shahzad & Muller, 2016). Such an environment not only induced and enhanced organisational members' positive feelings of empathy, support, and relationships with others, but it also empowered all organisational members, and changed their perceptions of their potential and capabilities to care for one another (cf. Byrd & Sparkman, 2022).

Our study further demonstrated how the ethics of care can motivate organisations to develop organisational structures that may be supportive of the caring of EWDs in the workplace. Previous studies have not adequately examined the relationship between the ethics of care and organisational design and structures (cf. Byrd & Sparkman, 2022). In our study, the inclusion of EWDs in the decision-making and governance structures of some businesses served as a central plank of care and ameliorated their independence and trust (Branicki, 2020). The 'cooperative, respectful and attentive relations' that were embedded in such organisational design structures were fundamental in minimizing paternalism or preventing it altogether (Branicki, 2020; Kittay, 2011, p.55). Thus, the less hierarchal, relational and inclusive nature of the organisational structures allowed EWDs to feel empowered and develop a sense of belonging to their workplaces (Amis et al., 2020). Furthermore, businesses also established appropriate channels and positions that allowed conversations not only regarding the personal and workplace challenges EWDs faced but also regarding the support every employee could receive from their organisations. Such actions supported the flourishing, among organisational members, of compassionate and relational values (cf. Kin-Kwan, 2020).

Overall, our study builds upon literature on hospitality management, in particular the literature that has examined the employment of PWDs within the hospitality settings (Kalargyrou, Trivellas, & Sigala, 2020; Kalargyrou & Volis, 2014; Kin-Kwan, 2020). This stream of literature does not fully address the ethical complexities and tensions that characterise inclusion actions in the hospitality industry. Our paper, therefore, advances this literature by demonstrating that ethical theories - in particular the ethics of care and ethics of justice - can mutually help

organisations address difficult moral questions regarding the employment of PWDs in hospitality organisations. The insights it draws upon both the procedural and distributive justice perspectives of the ethics of justice theory provide the means of addressing workplace resentments that can arise from providing distributive justice outcomes to PWDs in the workplace (Coleilla et al., 2004; Colella, 2001; Paetzold et al., 2008). Literature suggests that in the workplaces where resentments occur as a result of pursuing fairness for PWDs, caring for PWDs can be challenging (cf. Tronto, 2015). Our study indicates that when organisations take measures that guarantee both procedural and distributive justice for PWDs and EWoDs, pursuing the ethics of care can be more effective and less challenging. Our study, thus, demonstrates that organisational members may be willing to take part in caring actions for EWDs when they perceive that inclusion actions for EWDs are procedural fair and also when they perceive the PWDs deserve the distributive justice outcomes (cf. Bencivenga et al., 2019; Coleilla et al., 2004; Colella, 2001). Taken together, our study demonstrates that the inclusion of PWDs in the workplace can be effectively pursued when the ethics of care and ethics of justice are enacted in unison. The symbiotic relationship between these two theoretical perspectives means that the ethics of justice can serve as a platform and scaffold upon which the ethics of care rests (Shahzad & Muller, 2016).

Finally, our study suggests that the ethics of justice (procedural and distributive) and ethics of care can complement the social model of disability in addressing the postulations within the medical model (Oliver, 2013; Putnam et al., 2019). Our study implies that prescriptive actions from these two ethical theories can not only counter the negative attitudes and stereotypes associated with disability but can also address the social and environmental factors that limit the PWD's ability to work in the hospitality industry (Houtenville & Kalargyrou, 2012; Kalargyrou & Volis, 2014).

5.2. Implications for practice

This study raises several implications for policy and practice. It highlights the need to create a culture of respecting diversity, treating PWDs fairly, and providing a caring environment for PWDs and EWoDs. The findings of this study provide managers of businesses with the means by which they can achieve fairness as they endeavour to establish a workplace that is inclusive of PWDs. It provides some ways by which the tensions between the ethics of care and ethics of justice can be addressed. For example, to facilitate the effective inclusion of PWDs within the workplace, managers need to ensure that actions aimed at achieving procedural and distributive justice are put in place. These actions can serve as scaffolds for actions that are necessary to the development of a caring environment for all the organisational members. Our study, therefore, highlights the importance of following procedures in redistributing organisational resources, but also of fundamentally redesigning organisational structures, practices, norms and values, and interpersonal relationships in addressing the exclusion PWDs face in the labour market and workplace.

Furthermore, our study shows the importance of employers' partnerships with placement agencies in guaranteeing fairness, equality, and care for PWDs. We, therefore, suggest that employers should collaborate with placement agencies and municipal governments to access specialised assistance in the areas of recruitment, coaching, and redesign of workplaces and tasks. It may also be important for businesses that are employing PWDs to share, through the national hospitality industry

Appendix 1. Interview protocol (Sample questions)

associations and other platforms, their positive experiences and best practices with other firms who may not have developed positive attitudes to, and experiences with, the employment of PWDs.

5.3. Limitations and areas for further research

This study is based on a limited number of interviews and only focuses on the employment of PWDs by businesses in the Dutch hospitality industry. This, therefore, makes the generalisation of the findings to other contexts challenging. We call for further studies examining the perceptions that different organisations may hold with respect to the employment of PWDs across different economic sectors in other geographical contexts. This study draws insights largely from owners/ managers and EWoDs and from a limited number of EWDs. We took such an approach because some EWDs did not consent to get interviewed. While such a limitation may have, to a small degree, affected the overall study findings, the study nonetheless benefited from the views of those EWDs who participated; the views of which may have been corroborated by the views of owners/managers and EWoDs. Nonetheless, we call for further studies that largely draw insights from the PWDs about the ethical orientation of businesses in the industry with regard to the inclusion of PWDs. Considering that we only focused on the ethics of justice and ethics of care to provide the theoretical foundation for our study, we also call for further research to draw upon utilitarianism or consequentialism and virtue theories to understand how hospitality businesses can respond to the moral questions regarding the employment of PWDs.

Research involving human participants

All procedures performed in this study involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of Breda University of Applied Sciences and the Netherlands Code of Conduct for Research Integrity.

Informed consent

Informed consent was obtained from all participants in this study.

CRediT authorship contribution statement

Andrew Ngawenja Mzembe: Conceptualization, Data curation, Formal analysis, Investigation, Methodology, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing. Viachaslau Filimonau: Formal analysis, Methodology, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing.

Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare no potential conflicts of interest.

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Participant Category	Interview Questions						
Businesses that employ PWDs	Organisational-Related Questions	Institutional-Related Questions					
	 Why does your organisation employ people with disabilities? Where do your employees with disabilities come from? What are their backgrounds in terms of restaurant work? What are the key selection criteria you use? Or What are you looking for when you recruit a person with disabilities? What is turnover rate in terms of people with disabilities? What are the reasons why employees with disabilities leave (or not leave) your restaurant? What training programmes/ mentoring do you have for the employees with disabilities and those that do not have? How do your employees without disabilities react when working with colleagues with disabilities or vice versa? How do your clients or customers react when they are served by an employee with disabilities? How is the job performance of employees with disabilities assessed and evaluated as compared to employees who are not disabled? What are the key challenges when employing and managing employees with disabilities? What are the opportunities you see when employing and managing employees with disabilities? 	 What are some of the organisations that you work with in the integration of people with disabilities into the workforce? How do these organisations influence your work with people with disabilities? (This could involve government providing financial and technical support; recruitment agencies) How effective are these organisations in helping you employee and manage people with disabilities? 					
Businesses that do not employ PWDs	managing people with disabilities? Organisational-Related Questions	Institutional-Related Questions					
Employees with disabilities	Would you please tell me about the background of your business? What are some of the reasons for not employing PWDs? Personal and Organisational-Related Questions	- What kind of help or assistance would you require to employ people with disabilities?					
Employees without disabilities	 How did you find out about the position you have been employed for? What kind of support are you offered by your co-workers and supervisors? What are some of the challenges you face in your job? How is your performance of the job assessed and rewarded? Where do you want to be after this position? Personal and Organisational-Related Questions What is your view on the employment of PWDs? What are your views on the performance of a colleague with disabilities? What kind of support have you provided to a colleague with disabilities? What kind of support do you receive from your supervisors to help you work effectively with colleagues with disabilities? 						

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