

Normative Analysis Of Maternity Leave Policy Implementation For Women Workers' Rights In Bali

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Abstract

Purpose: This study aimed to analyze the effectiveness of the maternity leave policy in Bali in safeguarding women workers' rights and to identify the normative challenges encountered in its implementation.

Methodology: This study adopts a normative legal approach, focusing on literature studies and secondary data analysis, including an examination of relevant legislation, doctrines, and legal principles concerning maternity leave.

Results: The findings indicate that while the maternity leave policy has a strong legal foundation, its implementation in Bali remains suboptimal, especially in the informal sector, where compliance with the regulation is low because of insufficient socialization and monitoring mechanisms. The implementation of the maternity leave policy in Bali requires strengthening through more effective socialization and monitoring, particularly in the informal sector, to ensure that women workers' rights are fulfilled in accordance with existing regulations.

Conclusion: Maternity leave in Bali is legally protected but poorly implemented, especially in informal sectors. It supports women's health but does not solve wage inequality or unequal domestic roles. Stronger enforcement and shared caregiving are key to achieving true gender equality.

Limitations: This study is limited to a normative approach with a focus on Bali; therefore, its findings may not be fully generalizable to other contexts.

Contribution: This study provides insights for local policymakers on the importance of enhancing maternity leave policy implementation, particularly to support female workers' rights in Bali.

Keywords: *Bali, Maternity Leave Policy, Normative Legal Research, Policy Implementation, Women Workers' Rights.*

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1. Introduction

Maternity leave is a fundamental right granted to female workers as a form of legal protection. This right is explicitly regulated in Law No. 13 of 2003 concerning Employment, which allows female workers to take 1.5 months of leave before childbirth and 1.5 months after childbirth while still receiving full wages (Presiden Republik Indonesia, 2003). This regulation is reinforced by Government Regulation No. 78 of 2015 on Wages, ensuring that maternity leave does not reduce workers' financial entitlements (Presiden Republik Indonesia, 2015). The policy aims to safeguard maternal and child health, provide sufficient recovery time, and support the long-term productivity of female workers. In Bali, this policy holds significant relevance given the substantial contribution of women to the local economy. According to data from the Bali Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS) in 2023, women constitute

46% of the total workforce in the region (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2024). Despite having clear regulations, the implementation of maternity leave policies in Bali faces significant challenges, particularly in the informal sector. This sector, encompassing small and medium enterprises (SMEs), the tourism industry, and domestic workers, employs the majority of women but often fails to provide adequate protection. A survey conducted by Istiarti (2012) in Bali, Central Java, and Lampung revealed discrepancies between knowledge, attitudes, and practices regarding the implementation of maternity leave among 300 female workers across six companies. While the majority of respondents were aware of their entitlement to three months of mandatory maternity leave, many incorrectly believed that employers were not obligated to provide full pay during the leave period. Most workers reported receiving their full salary; however, approximately one-quarter received reduced wages. Some companies shortened the leave period to less than three months and paid only around 80% of the workers' salaries, citing high costs as a reason. Additionally, the process of applying for maternity leave often required significant time, particularly in companies with labor unions. Female employees had to submit requests to the Human Resources (HR) department about one to two weeks before their leave, accompanied by documents such as a medical certificate, ID card, family card, and marriage certificate.

Challenges in implementation are also evident in the formal sector in Bali. A study by Putri (2021) revealed that many small and medium-sized enterprises lack awareness or compliance regarding their legal obligations to provide maternity leave. This is attributed to insufficient dissemination of regulations and minimal oversight by local governments (Hafezi, 2021). In Bali's dominant tourism industry, these issues are exacerbated by the high mobility of female workers and contractual employment practices that often neglect workers' rights.

The low level of awareness about maternity leave policies among both workers and employers further exacerbates the situation. A study by Adi Putra, Poetri Paraniti and Pidada (2023) found that approximately 70% of female workers in Indonesia's informal sector are unaware of their rights to maternity leave. This phenomenon is also prevalent in Bali, where female workers in the informal sector often lack access to information or complaint mechanisms if their rights are violated. Cultural factors also play a role, as female workers may hesitate to take leave out of fear of losing their jobs or due to societal pressures to continue working despite health limitations (Mwosi *et al.*, 2024).

Furthermore, the maternity leave policy, designed to support the well-being of mothers and children, has not been fully integrated with other protective measures, such as health insurance or social assistance programs. In Bali, with its tourism-based and culturally driven economy, effective oversight of this policy's implementation requires synergy between local governments, businesses, and civil society organizations. Without such efforts, gaps in the protection of female workers' rights will persist, limiting the benefits of the well-designed policy.

These challenges reveal a disparity between the regulations and their practical implementation. While maternity leave policies aim to protect female workers and promote family welfare, normative and structural obstacles hinder the realization of these goals, particularly in an economy like Bali's. Therefore, a normative study is crucial to evaluate the effectiveness of this policy and identify strategic measures to enhance its implementation. This research aims to provide recommendations to policymakers, companies, and society to improve legal protection for female workers in Bali.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Regulations on Maternity Leave in Indonesia

Maternity leave is a right regulated in Law No. 13 of 2003 on Labor, which grants female workers protection. Specifically, Article 82, Paragraph 1 provides that female workers who have been employed for six consecutive months are entitled to three full months of maternity leave. This right is essential for ensuring the well-being of both mothers and children, as well as preventing undue work demands during pregnancy. While this law is in place, the implementation and understanding of maternity leave rights vary across sectors, particularly in Bali. The province's economy is heavily dominated by the

informal sector, including tourism, where compliance with these legal entitlements remains inconsistent (Presiden Republik Indonesia, 2003).

In Bali, while the regulations regarding maternity leave are relatively clear, many female workers in the tourism sector still do not receive their rights. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) that dominate the region's economy often lack awareness of their obligation to provide maternity leave, potentially violating basic workers' rights. This gap in enforcement can lead to discrimination and inadequate protection for female workers, particularly in informal employment settings (Anadza and Pasopati, 2021).

Research by Apriani, Washliati and Aminah (2023) sheds light on the broader issue of workplace discrimination against female workers, despite existing legal protections. Their study, conducted at PT. Giken Precision Indonesia, shows that the company complies with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, implementing non-discriminatory policies. However, female workers often still face unfair treatment and discrimination in the workplace. This highlights the need for better enforcement of existing laws and increased awareness among both employers and workers. A more robust legal framework and its effective implementation are essential to ensuring the safety and well-being of female workers (Nosike *et al.*, 2024).

The economic implications of insufficient maternity leave are also significant. A study by Siregar *et al.* (2021) found that the economic cost of not breastfeeding in Indonesia could range from US\$1.5 billion to US\$9.4 billion annually. This issue is particularly critical in the informal sector, where half of Indonesia's 33.6 million working women are employed. These women, especially in sectors like tourism, often do not have access to formal maternity protections. The study suggests that providing maternity leave through cash transfer programs for women working in the informal sector would require an estimated annual financing of between US\$175 million and US\$669 million, a figure that represents less than 0.5% of Indonesia's GDP. Such a program could significantly contribute to improving breastfeeding rates and public health outcomes, highlighting the economic attractiveness of extending maternity benefits to informal sector workers.

Given these challenges, the role of the provincial government in Bali is crucial. The government must be more proactive in educating both employers and employees about their rights concerning maternity leave. Effective awareness campaigns are necessary to ensure that these rights are understood and implemented across all sectors. Additionally, the government should work toward stronger enforcement mechanisms to prevent violations and ensure that maternity leave benefits are granted fairly to all female workers, including those in the informal sector.

2.2 Women Workers' Rights

The protection of women workers' rights, particularly their right to maternity leave, is crucial to ensuring the well-being of mothers and children and promoting gender equality in the workforce (Ulep *et al.*, 2021). In Indonesia, maternity leave is a legally recognized right under labor law; however, its implementation often falls short of expectations. Many women, particularly in the informal and tourism sectors, are not granted their maternity leave due to a lack of awareness or disregard for the law by employers.

A study by Shabrina and Indriati (2023) explores the policies and practices regarding maternity and paternity leave in Indonesia, with a focus on the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Indonesia. The study outlines the legal framework for maternity leave, including the duration of leave and the benefits provided to employees. It also compares paternity leave policies and examines how these policies are implemented within the UNDP. The research identifies the challenges in implementing maternity and paternity leave in Indonesia and offers recommendations for improving these policies to better support employees and promote gender equality in the workplace. The study emphasizes the importance of aligning these policies with international standards to create a more inclusive and supportive work environment (Francis, Anene and Chike, 2021).

Despite legal protections, gender inequality in the workplace persists, particularly when it comes to maternity leave. Women, especially those who are pregnant or married, often face discrimination due to deep-rooted societal stereotypes that view them as less productive than their male counterparts. Consequently, many women hesitate to request maternity leave, fearing job loss or rejection at work. This reflects a broader issue in which women's rights are not always respected or fully understood, even within organizations that should be leading by example.

Therefore, it is essential that women workers' rights, including maternity leave, are clearly understood and enforced. Both local governments and workers' organizations need to strengthen their mechanisms to protect women workers' rights to maternity leave, ensuring that these rights are not undermined by discrimination or fear of job loss. By improving awareness and enforcing these rights, we can foster a more equitable and supportive work environment that benefits both employees and employers.

2.3 Implementation of Maternity Leave Policy in Bali

Bali has unique social and economic characteristics, with a significant portion of its population employed in the tourism sector. Many female workers are engaged in various roles, ranging from housekeeping to front desk positions. However, the implementation of maternity leave policies in Bali's tourism sector faces several challenges, particularly in ensuring that all workers, including those in the informal sector, are granted their rights.

A study by Oceanio (2022) examines maternity leave policies in three Southeast Asian countries: Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand, and their impact on gender equality in the workplace. The research analyzes the legal frameworks, duration of leave, and the benefits provided to mothers during maternity leave in each country. Specifically, in Indonesia, the study highlights the legal right to three months of maternity leave but also points out the challenges women face in securing equal pay and job security during and after their leave. In Malaysia, the study compares the shorter 60-day leave policy, discussing the financial support provided and its implications for women in the labor market. Meanwhile, Thailand's policy, which offers 90 days of paid maternity leave, is assessed for its effectiveness in promoting gender equality from both economic and social perspectives.

While some larger companies in Bali, particularly in the hospitality and tourism sectors, have started to pay more attention to maternity leave policies, this is often limited to employees with long-term contracts. This highlights a gap in compliance with labor regulations between large and small businesses. Therefore, it is crucial for the local government of Bali to strengthen monitoring and ensure that maternity leave policies are consistently enforced across all sectors. Additionally, more intensive outreach is needed to inform both employers and workers in the informal sector about their rights, ensuring that women's rights to maternity leave are adequately protected.

2.4 Challenges in Implementing Maternity Leave

Several key challenges in implementing maternity leave in Bali are related to cultural, economic, and institutional factors. The ILO Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183) sets the minimum standards for ensuring maternity protection for female workers, while the ILO Maternity Protection Recommendation, 2000 (No. 191) advocates for additional measures to enhance these protections. Key components of maternity protection include the duration of maternity leave, the amount and source of maternity leave cash benefits, as well as provisions for breastfeeding breaks and adequate facilities. Maternity protection is defined as the existence of national laws or regulations that govern the length of maternity leave, the remuneration provided, and the source of cash benefits, in line with the provisions outlined in ILO Convention No. 183.

Effective management of complications during late pregnancy, childbirth, and the early neonatal period has the potential to significantly reduce maternal mortality rates, stillbirths linked to antepartum and intrapartum factors, and early neonatal deaths. Therefore, it is crucial to direct careful and comprehensive attention to the quality of both preventive and curative healthcare services during this critical and vulnerable period (Setyonaluri *et al.*, 2022).

A study by Aliffian *et al.* (2024) discusses the legal framework governing maternity leave in Indonesia. It explains the duration and conditions under which female workers can take maternity leave, as well as the challenges faced in its implementation. The main obstacles include a lack of awareness and compliance issues. Furthermore, the article highlights the impact of maternity leave policies on the well-being and job security of female workers. These policies aim to provide protection and support for female workers during pregnancy and after childbirth. However, many workers do not fully receive their rights due to various challenges. To address these issues, the article offers several recommendations for improving the implementation of maternity leave regulations. One recommendation is to increase awareness and understanding of female workers' rights through educational campaigns and training. Additionally, stricter supervision is needed to ensure compliance with existing regulations.

Another significant issue in the implementation of maternity leave policies is the lack of clear reporting procedures. Female workers who feel that their rights are not being met often do not know how to report the issue to the authorities, which exacerbates the injustice they face (Machado, Neto and Szerman, 2024). Thus, it is essential to provide an accessible reporting mechanism for workers. There is a clear need to improve the monitoring system to ensure that maternity leave policies are properly enforced. The local government must take a more proactive approach in engaging employers and workers in discussions about labor rights and offer stronger support to female workers who encounter issues with maternity leave.

3. Methodology

This research adopts a normative legal approach, focusing on the study of legal norms governing the implementation of maternity leave policies for female workers in Bali. The research type is normative legal research, conducted through library research or secondary sources, examining legislation, government policies, and scholarly literature related to the rights of female workers. The primary data sources include Law No. 13 of 2003 on Manpower, Government Regulations, Bali Regional Regulations, and policy documents related to the implementation of maternity leave in the public and private sectors. Data collection is carried out through library research to extract information from relevant written sources. Data analysis is performed using a descriptive-analytic approach, where the researcher identifies and evaluates the implementation of maternity leave policies in Bali, compares them with national and international standards, and analyzes the protection of female workers' rights. The aim of this research is to determine the extent to which maternity leave policies are implemented in Bali, their effectiveness in safeguarding the rights of female workers, and the factors influencing the policy's implementation. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of more responsive policies that address the needs of female workers in Bali.

4. Result and discussions

4.1 Regulations on Maternity Leave in Indonesia

The maternity leave policy in Indonesia is grounded in a robust legal framework, primarily regulated under Law No. 13 of 2003 on Employment, and further supplemented by Government Regulation No. 78 of 2015 concerning Wages. According to these regulations, female workers are entitled to a minimum of three months of maternity leave, with full pay during the first 1.5 months, and paid leave for the remaining period based on the applicable wage standard. This legal framework ensures that women's rights are protected in the workplace, granting them sufficient time to recover physically and emotionally after childbirth, while also safeguarding their role in the workforce.

However, although the regulations are clear, their implementation across Indonesia is uneven. In certain regions, particularly in rural and remote areas, the enforcement of maternity leave rights remains inadequate. The imbalance in implementation can be attributed to several factors, such as the limited capacity of local labor offices, lack of comprehensive monitoring mechanisms, and the absence of proper education on workers' rights. This regulatory gap is especially evident in the informal sector, where many workers do not have access to the full spectrum of labor rights due to the informal nature of their employment.

Moreover, the implementation of maternity leave policies often faces resistance from employers, particularly in small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and the informal sector, where labor laws are not as strictly enforced. Some employers view the cost of providing maternity leave as burdensome, particularly in industries with high turnover rates and seasonal labor demands, such as in the tourism sector, which is prevalent in Bali. Thus, despite the comprehensive legal framework, the actual practice of granting maternity leave is far from universal, and enforcement mechanisms need strengthening to ensure that these rights are fully upheld.

The government has introduced several initiatives to address these challenges, including socialization programs for employers and workers, but there is still a significant gap between policy and practice. Effective enforcement of maternity leave policies requires better collaboration between labor offices, business associations, and workers' organizations, as well as the establishment of accessible channels for reporting non-compliance. Moreover, improvements in legal literacy among workers, particularly those in the informal sector, are essential to ensure that they can claim their rights effectively.

Thus, although the maternity leave policy in Indonesia is legally sound, its application remains inconsistent across different sectors and regions. Strengthening the implementation of this policy requires increased attention from all stakeholders to ensure compliance and to address the challenges faced by women workers, particularly in Bali.

4.2 Women Workers' Rights

Women workers in Indonesia, including those in Bali, have long struggled to gain equal treatment in the workplace. Despite the existence of regulations that aim to provide gender equality, women continue to face significant barriers to accessing their rights. Women's rights in the workplace are stipulated in several key pieces of legislation, including the aforementioned Law No. 13 of 2003 on Employment, which mandates equal pay for equal work and prohibits gender-based discrimination. However, the extent to which these rights are recognized and protected varies significantly depending on the sector and region.

In the formal sector, women generally have better access to labor protections, including maternity leave. However, workers in the informal sector, which constitutes a large proportion of the labor force in Bali, often do not enjoy the same benefits. This disparity is due to the lack of formal contracts, limited oversight, and weak enforcement of labor laws in informal employment settings. Consequently, many women working in Bali's informal economy such as in the tourism and hospitality sectors are unaware of their rights or unable to exercise them.

Furthermore, the enforcement of women's rights at work is complicated by entrenched gender stereotypes and societal norms (Pandey, 2024). Women in many cultures, including Balinese society, are often expected to prioritize family duties over professional obligations. This cultural expectation can discourage women from asserting their rights, such as the right to maternity leave, out of fear of losing their jobs or being stigmatized. Additionally, women in leadership positions or decision-making roles remain rare, further perpetuating the gender inequality present in the workplace.

The government's efforts to promote gender equality through policies and legal reforms must be accompanied by active socialization and awareness-raising campaigns targeting both employers and workers. These initiatives should focus on educating women about their rights, particularly regarding maternity leave, and encourage them to assert those rights without fear of reprisal. Furthermore, employers should be incentivized to create more inclusive and supportive work environments that recognize and address the unique needs of female workers, especially in sectors where women are heavily represented.

The fulfillment of women workers' rights, including maternity leave, depends not only on legislative frameworks but also on creating a conducive environment where these rights are respected and upheld. For women in Bali, this means tackling both legal and social barriers to ensure full protection of their rights in the workplace.

4.3 Implementation of Maternity Leave Policy in Bali

The implementation of maternity leave policy in Bali presents both opportunities and challenges. Bali, as a province that relies heavily on tourism, has a significant number of women employed in sectors such as hospitality, retail, and service industries. These industries often employ a large informal workforce, which creates difficulties in enforcing labor laws, including the provision of maternity leave. One of the main challenges in Bali is the low level of compliance with maternity leave regulations among employers in the informal sector. Many employers in this sector are not fully aware of their obligations under the law or may choose to disregard these regulations due to the perceived economic burden. In contrast, larger businesses, particularly those in the formal sector, are generally more compliant with the maternity leave policy. However, the informal sector, which constitutes a significant part of Bali's economy, remains a gap in ensuring women's access to their maternity leave rights.

Furthermore, there is a lack of comprehensive monitoring and enforcement mechanisms. The provincial labor office in Bali faces challenges in reaching out to small businesses, especially in rural areas, where informal employment is more prevalent. The monitoring of maternity leave implementation is often ad hoc, relying on worker complaints rather than regular inspections. As a result, many women in Bali, particularly those in vulnerable positions such as part-time workers or domestic helpers, do not fully benefit from the legal protections provided by maternity leave regulations.

To address these challenges, the government of Bali has undertaken some initiatives, such as socialization programs aimed at increasing awareness of workers' rights. However, these efforts have not been entirely successful in reaching all employers, particularly those in the informal sector. Additionally, the socialization process tends to focus more on large businesses and has not adequately addressed the specific needs and challenges faced by informal workers. In conclusion, while the maternity leave policy is well-established in Bali, its implementation remains inconsistent. A more targeted and inclusive approach is required to ensure that all workers, regardless of their employment status, can benefit from this important right.

4.4 Challenges in Implementing Maternity Leave

The implementation of maternity leave policies in Bali faces several significant challenges, including low employer awareness, insufficient monitoring mechanisms, lack of worker knowledge, economic uncertainty, and deeply rooted cultural norms. Many employers, especially in the informal sector, are unaware of their legal obligation to provide maternity leave or view it as a financial burden that could negatively affect their business operations. This is particularly problematic in sectors like tourism, which experiences seasonal fluctuations. In such industries, employers often prioritize short-term financial stability over compliance with legal requirements.

These challenges are further compounded by the lack of an effective monitoring system. In Bali, many informal sector workers do not have legal contracts, making it difficult for government agencies to ensure compliance. Monitoring maternity leave is often reliant on complaints from workers, which places women in vulnerable positions, especially those who lack access to formal legal resources or support.

In addition to these employer and monitoring challenges, the lack of awareness among workers about their rights is another significant barrier. Many women, particularly those in informal or low-wage jobs, are unaware that they are entitled to maternity leave under Indonesian law. This lack of awareness is exacerbated by insufficient efforts to educate workers about their rights, particularly in sectors where the workforce is predominantly female and low-paid.

While maternity leave provides women with necessary time to recover from childbirth and care for their newborns, it does not directly address the broader issue of income inequality between men and women (Petit *et al.*, 2021). In many countries, including Indonesia, women continue to earn significantly less than men. According to the World Economic Forum (2021), women globally earn 37% less than men on average, and in Indonesia, this gap is 23% (UN Women, 2021). This persistent wage disparity

presents a major barrier to achieving true gender equality. Maternity leave, although essential for supporting women during childbirth, does not resolve the systemic issues of income inequality.

In addition to these financial inequalities, women also face a "double burden," balancing professional responsibilities with family duties. Research by del Rey, Kyriacou and Silva (2021) shows that women often have less leisure time compared to men due to this disproportionate division of labor at home. Fraser (1994) argues that increasing women's leisure time is dependent on men's involvement in domestic tasks. While maternity leave provides women with a brief respite, the larger solution lies in the equal sharing of family responsibilities. Policies such as paternity leave could encourage men to take a more active role in child-rearing, thus contributing to greater gender equality in both the workplace and at home.

Currently, paternity leave in Indonesia is limited to just two days under Article 93 of the Manpower Law (Presiden Republik Indonesia, 2003), and while other countries like Malaysia and Thailand offer slightly longer leave, it remains insufficient in promoting gender equality. Extending paternity leave would help to balance domestic responsibilities, ensuring both partners contribute equally to family care and reducing the disproportionate impact on women's leisure and recovery time.

Despite its importance in supporting women's health and family life, maternity leave does not address the broader issue of respect equality in the workplace (Bütikofer, Riise and Skira, 2021). Respect equality means recognizing women not just as workers but as individuals with familial and biological responsibilities. Maternity leave acknowledges this role by providing women with time to recover and care for their children. However, as Fraser (1994) notes, achieving respect equality requires treating male and female workers with equal dignity and without discrimination.

Income inequality, which remains a persistent issue despite legal provisions for maternity leave, continues to be a significant challenge. Although maternity leave provides essential protection during childbirth, it does not solve the systemic wage disparity that women face. Research by the World Economic Forum (2021) shows that women globally earn 37% less than men, and in Indonesia, the gap is 23% (UN Women, 2021). These statistics highlight that women still face significant financial inequality, even with the legal entitlement to maternity leave. Therefore, reforms in wage policies and improved enforcement of equal pay laws are necessary to address the broader issue of income equality. Economic uncertainty, particularly in key industries like tourism, also plays a crucial role in how employers perceive maternity leave. During times of economic downturn or low demand, employers may be more resistant to granting maternity leave in an effort to minimize operational costs. This is especially true in Bali, where tourism is a major contributor to the local economy, and employers may feel pressured to prioritize financial stability over legal obligations.

Finally, deeply entrenched cultural norms present additional challenges. In certain areas of Bali, there is a cultural expectation that women should prioritize family responsibilities over asserting workplace rights. This cultural perspective can prevent women from claiming their right to maternity leave, especially if they fear losing their jobs or facing discrimination.

In conclusion, the implementation of maternity leave in Bali faces numerous challenges, including low employer awareness, weak monitoring mechanisms, insufficient worker education, economic uncertainty, and cultural barriers. Addressing these challenges requires a multifaceted approach that includes stronger enforcement, better socialization of workers' rights, and a shift in societal attitudes towards gender equality in the workplace.

5. Conclusions

In conclusion, while the legal framework for maternity leave in Bali is robust, its implementation remains suboptimal, particularly in the informal sector. Many women, especially those in small enterprises or rural areas, face challenges in accessing their maternity leave benefits due to insufficient socialization, lack of awareness, and inadequate monitoring mechanisms. As a result, compliance with the regulation is often low, limiting women workers' ability to fully exercise their rights. Additionally,

maternity leave, although essential for women's health and well-being, does not address broader issues of income inequality. Despite legal protections, women continue to earn significantly less than men, with gender-based wage gaps still prevalent in Indonesia and other Southeast Asian countries. This systemic income inequality persists even as maternity leave provides temporary relief for women, highlighting the need for further reforms in wage policies and gender equality in the workforce.

Furthermore, while maternity leave provides women with greater leisure time to care for their children, this benefit is still constrained by the broader issue of the unequal division of domestic labor. For leisure time equality to be achieved, men must take on a more active role in caregiving, which can be encouraged through policies such as paternity or parental leave. Maternity leave also plays an important role in fostering respect equality, by recognizing women's unique biological roles and supporting their right to participate in the workforce without discrimination. To ensure the full effectiveness of maternity leave policies and achieve gender equality, it is essential to strengthen policy implementation, improve compliance, and address the deeper structural issues of wage disparity and unequal domestic labor distribution. These changes will help ensure that both women and men can equally share in the benefits of maternity leave and contribute to a more balanced and equitable society.

Limitations

This study is limited to a normative approach with a focus on Bali, and therefore, its findings may not be fully generalizable to other contexts.

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