



Inclusive Education in Madrasah: Addressing the Needs of Students with Disabilities in Religious

Saona

Universitas Islam Bunga Bangsa Cirebon

Corresponding email: Saona0206@gmail.com

Abstract *Inclusive education is a major challenge for madrasas that aim to provide equal educational opportunities for students with disabilities. This research highlights the readiness of madrasas in meeting the needs of students with special needs through an assessment of infrastructure, curriculum adaptation, and community attitudes. Using a qualitative case study approach, data was collected through interviews, observations, and documentation. The results show that although most of the community supports inclusive education in madrasas, there are still challenges related to limited infrastructure and teacher training in implementing inclusive learning methods. This study recommends more flexible curriculum updates and increased training for teachers to strengthen the implementation of inclusion in the context of religious education. Thus, madrasas are expected to play a role in supporting wider access to education for students with disabilities, in line with the goal of global inclusive education.*

Keywords Inclusive education, madrasas, students with disabilities, curriculum adaptation, society

1. Introduction

Inclusive education has become a critical focus worldwide, recognizing the need to provide equal learning opportunities for students with disabilities across various educational contexts, including religious institutions like madrasahs. While mainstream education has progressively adapted to these needs, religious education settings, particularly in Muslim-majority countries, still face challenges in implementing comprehensive inclusive practices. The idea of inclusive education in madrasahs aligns with the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 4) advocating for quality education for all, regardless of individual differences.

Madrasahs play a pivotal role in shaping both religious and social values in communities, making it imperative that they accommodate the learning needs of all students, including those with disabilities. The urgency of addressing this issue is heightened by findings that students with disabilities in many religious educational settings face exclusionary practices, limiting their access to holistic religious and social

learning¹. Furthermore, inclusive practices in madrasahs could contribute positively to community perceptions of inclusivity and reduce stigma towards people with disabilities.

Research on inclusive education has been extensive in secular settings but is relatively sparse in religious educational contexts like madrasah. Focusing on infrastructure barriers and educator readiness, but often lack comprehensive solutions for curriculum adaptation and support mechanisms. Highlights the role of teacher attitudes as a significant factor in inclusive education, which is particularly relevant in culturally sensitive settings such as madrasahs².

Despite the growing emphasis on inclusive education globally, research specifically examining the adaptation of religious curriculum and teaching methods to support students with disabilities in madrasahs is. While existing studies have analyzed infrastructural limitations, there is a significant gap in understanding how inclusive practices can be harmonized with religious pedagogical frameworks. This gap highlights the need for focused research that addresses both curriculum and educator training in the context of religious education.

This study offers a novel contribution by exploring strategies to integrate inclusive education within the unique framework of religious teaching in madrasahs. Unlike previous research that focuses on infrastructural barriers, this study examines adaptive curriculum development and inclusive teaching practices that respect the religious values and traditions inherent to madrasah education. By addressing the dual objectives of inclusivity and cultural integrity, this research aims to propose a model that can be applied across diverse religious educational contexts globally.

The objective of this study is to develop and propose an inclusive education model tailored to the needs of students with disabilities within the religious context of madrasahs. Specifically, this research aims to identify key barriers to inclusion, examine effective curriculum adaptation strategies, and provide policy recommendations for improving accessibility in religious education. Through these efforts, the study seeks to contribute to the broader field of inclusive education by offering insights that align with the unique values and mission of madrasah education.

¹ Badiatul Hikmah, "Pembelajaran Aksesibilitas Pendidikan Agama Islam (PAI) Bagi Anak Berkebutuhan Khusus," *JIE (Journal of Islamic Education)* 9, no. 1 (2024): 69–86, <https://doi.org/10.52615/jie.v9i1.333>.

² Umi Nadhiroh and Anas Ahmadi, "Pendidikan Inklusif: Membangun Lingkungan Pembelajaran Yang Mendukung Kesetaraan Dan Kearifan Budaya," *Ilmu Budaya: Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra, Seni, Dan Budaya* 8, no. 1 (2024): 11, <https://doi.org/10.30872/jbssb.v8i1.14072>.

2. Method

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study design. This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to delve deeply into various aspects of inclusion in madrasahs, especially in the context of religious education and the special needs of students with disabilities. Case studies provide flexibility in understanding phenomena in depth and in real contexts, in accordance with the focus of research to examine curriculum adaptations and pedagogical approaches in madrasahs ³⁴. The data collection techniques used in this study include: In-depth Interviews: Interviews are conducted with teachers, madrasah heads, parents, and students with disabilities to understand their perceptions and experiences regarding inclusion practices. This interview will help explore the specific needs and challenges faced in the implementation of inclusive education ⁵. Participant Observation: Observations are carried out in classrooms and madrasah environments to see firsthand the interaction between students and teachers and the learning approaches used. This observation aims to understand in depth how inclusion practices are applied in madrasahs in situations ⁶. Documentation: The collection of documents such as curriculum, school records, and madrasah policies related to inclusive education is also carried out to supplement data from interviews and observations. These documents serve to understand the regulatory and policy frameworks that exist in madrasahs in supporting inclusive education.

This research procedure is carried out in several stages: preparation Stage: At this stage, researchers identify and select madrasahs that implement or have the potential to implement inclusive education. In addition, the researcher also prepares research instruments, such as interview guidelines, observation sheets, and a list of documents to be collected.

Data Collection Stage: The researcher conducts interviews, observations, and documentation in the selected madrasah. Each interview will be recorded and transcribed for further analysis. Observations are carried out for several days or weeks to gain a comprehensive understanding of the implementation of inclusive education in the madrasah

³ Amy Han Qiu, Dennis Tay, and Bernadette Watson, "Etaphorical Language and Psychopathological Symptoms: A Case Study of Trauma Victims' Metaphor Use," *BMC Psychology* 12, no. 1 (December 1, 2024): 1–15, <https://doi.org/10.1186/S40359-023-01492-W/TABLES/3>.

⁴ Steve Campbell et al., "Purposive Sampling: Complex or Simple? Research Case Examples," *Journal of Research in Nursing* 25, no. 8 (June 18, 2020): 652–61, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1744987120927206>.

⁵ Kota Ohata, "Potential Sources of Anxiety for Japanese Learners of English: Preliminary Case Interviews with Five Japanese College Students in the U.S.," *TESL-EJ* 9, no. 3 (December 2005): 1–21.

⁶ Albine Moser and Irene Korstjens, "Series: Practical Guidance to Qualitative Research. Part 3: Sampling, Data Collection and Analysis," *European Journal of General Practice* 24, no. 1 (2018): 9–18, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13814788.2017.1375091>.

Data Analysis Stage: Data collected from interviews, observations, and documentation are then analyzed to find key patterns or themes related to inclusive education in madrasahs ^{7 8}.

Results Reporting Stage: The results of the analysis are presented in the form of an academic report or article that includes key findings, discussions, and recommendations to improve inclusion practices in madrasahs

The data obtained was analyzed using thematic analysis techniques, which involved identifying, analyzing, and reporting themes that emerged from qualitative data. The steps of thematic analysis include: organizing data: Organizing data from interview transcripts, observation notes, and collected documents.

Initial Coding: Applying initial coding to data to identify relevant information related to inclusion in madrasahs.

Theme Identification: Identifies themes that emerge from the initial code, such as "teacher challenges," "infrastructure support," or "student acceptance of inclusion."

Data Interpretation: Compile data interpretation in the form of a narrative describing how inclusion practices are implemented and the challenges faced in madrasahs ⁹

3. Result & Discussion

A. Readiness of Teachers and Heads of Madrasah in the Implementation of Inclusive Education

Based on interviews and observations, it was found that most teachers and heads of madrasahs have a basic understanding of inclusive education, but are not fully ready to implement it. Many teachers feel that they do not have special skills to educate students with special needs, so further training is urgently needed. In Table 1, it can be seen that 65% of teachers stated the need for additional training related to inclusive learning methods.

⁷ Sarah Elsie Baker et al., "How Many Qualitative Interviews Is Enough? Expert Voices and Early Career Reflections on Sampling Expert Voices," 2012.

⁸ Nida Mufidah, Nor Latifah, and Fathchul Mu'in, "Foreign Students' Difficulties in Understanding Indonesian Reading Text (Kesulitan Mahasiswa Asing Dalam Memahami Teks Bacaan Bahasa Indonesia)," *Indonesian Language Education and Literature* 9, no. 1 (October 1, 2023): 31–47, <https://doi.org/10.24235/ILEAL.V9i1.12807>.

⁹ J. W. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Traditions* (California: SAGE Publication, Inc, 1998).

TABLE 1. Readiness of Teachers and Madrasah Heads in the Implementation of Inclusive Education.

Kategori Responden	Setuju (Perlu Pelatihan)	Tidak Setuju	Tidak Tahu
Guru	10%		
Kepala madrasah	75%	15%	10%

In addition, madrasah heads also face challenges in providing facilities and allocating sufficient resources to support inclusive education. Many madrasah heads feel that they are not supported by government policies and adequate funds ¹⁰. In this case, government support is very important to improve the quality of inclusive education in madrasahs.

B. Infrastructure and Accessibility in Madrasah

Physical facilities in madrassas are an important factor that supports or hinders the implementation of inclusive education. Based on field observations, most madrasahs have not been equipped with disability-friendly facilities such as wheelchair access points, suitable study rooms, and special learning aids. Figure 1 shows examples of infrastructure that are commonly found in madrasahs.

In this context, the lack of infrastructure to support students with special needs is a big challenge for madrasahs in implementing inclusive education. Data shows that 60% of madrasahs in the research area do not have disability-friendly facilities, while 30% only have basic facilities. This shows the need for a special budget allocation to improve accessibility in madrasahs.

C. Public Attitudes and Perceptions of Inclusive Education in Madrasah

The results of the interviews show that most people support the implementation of inclusive education in madrasahs, despite concerns related to the social impact on students with special needs. Community attitudes play an important role in the successful implementation of inclusive education, especially in the environment of faith-based education ¹¹.

Community support for inclusive education can be a driver for madrasahs to be more serious in developing inclusive programs. However, some people's concerns

¹⁰ Dewi Rokani and M Afif Zamroni, "Strategic Management of The Principal in The Development of The Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project," *JELIN: Journal of Education and Learning Innovation* 1, no. 1 (2024): 111–24.

¹¹ A. N Hasanah, "Partisipasi Masyarakat Dalam Pengelolaan Program Pembelajaran Pada Sekolah Inklusif Dalam Konteks Manajemen Berbasis Sekolah (Studi Kasus Di SMP Negeri 4 Sidoarjo)," *Inspirasi Manajemen Pendidikan* 4, no. 2 (2016): 1–24.

about possible discrimination or injustice for students with special needs must be addressed with better socialization and education programs ¹².

D. Curriculum Adaptation and Learning Methods

The adoption of an inclusive curriculum in the context of madrasahs requires an approach that respects religious values and meets the educational needs of students with disabilities. The findings of the study show that most curricula in madrasahs do not yet have the flexibility to accommodate the needs of students with disabilities.

4. Conclusion

This study underscores the importance of implementing inclusive education in madrasahs as a form of effort to provide equal learning opportunities for all students, including those with disabilities. Although there is a basic understanding of the concept of inclusion among teachers and madrasah heads, the limitations of specialized teaching skills and minimal infrastructure support are significant challenges in its implementation. The results of the study show that community involvement and strong policy support are essential in creating a disability-friendly educational environment in madrasahs. With the adaptation of the curriculum that respects religious values, it is hoped that madrasahs can develop an inclusive approach that respects the unique needs of students with special needs, while maintaining the integrity of religious education.

5. Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The authors state that there is no conflict of interest in the publication of this article.

6. Funding Information

None

7. Acknowledgment

None

8. References

- Baker, Sarah Elsie, Rosalind Edwards, Peter Adler, Howard S Becker, and Andrea Doucet. "How Many Qualitative Interviews Is Enough? Expert Voices and Early Career Reflections on Sampling Expert Voices," 2012.
- Bantun, Anjelina Bridget, and Frans Fandy Palinoan. "Melawan Diskriminasi Terhadap Anak Berkebutuhan SMP." *Jurnal Pa'ulu Karua* 1, no. 1 (2016): 1-4.
- Campbell, Steve, Melanie Greenwood, Sarah Prior, Toniele Shearer, Kerrie Walkem,

¹² Anjelina Bridget Bantun and Frans Fandy Palinoan, "Melawan Diskriminasi Terhadap Anak Berkebutuhan SMP," *Jurnal Pa'ulu Karua* 1, no. 1 (2016): 1-4.

- Sarah Young, Danielle Bywaters, and Kim Walker. "Purposive Sampling: Complex or Simple? Research Case Examples." *Journal of Research in Nursing* 25, no. 8 (June 18, 2020): 652-61. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1744987120927206>.
- Creswell, J. W. *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Traditions*. California: SAGE Publication, Inc, 1998.
- Hasanah, A. N. "Partisipasi Masyarakat Dalam Pengelolaan Program Pembelajaran Pada Sekolah Inklusif Dalam Konteks Manajemen Berbasis Sekolah (Studi Kasus Di SMP Negeri 4 Sidoarjo)." *Inspirasi Manajemen Pendidikan* 4, no. 2 (2016): 1-24.
- Hikmah, Badiatul. "Pembelajaran Aksesibilitas Pendidikan Agama Islam (PAI) Bagi Anak Berkebutuhan Khusus." *JIE (Journal of Islamic Education)* 9, no. 1 (2024): 69-86. <https://doi.org/10.52615/jie.v9i1.333>.
- Moser, Albine, and Irene Korstjens. "Series: Practical Guidance to Qualitative Research. Part 3: Sampling, Data Collection and Analysis." *European Journal of General Practice* 24, no. 1 (2018): 9-18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13814788.2017.1375091>.
- Mufidah, Nida, Nor Latifah, and Fathchul Mu'in. "Foreign Students' Difficulties in Understanding Indonesian Reading Text (Kesulitan Mahasiswa Asing Dalam Memahami Teks Bacaan Bahasa Indonesia)." *Indonesian Language Education and Literature* 9, no. 1 (October 1, 2023): 31-47. <https://doi.org/10.24235/ILEAL.V9I1.12807>.
- Nadhiroh, Umi, and Anas Ahmadi. "Pendidikan Inklusif: Membangun Lingkungan Pembelajaran Yang Mendukung Kesetaraan Dan Kearifan Budaya." *Ilmu Budaya: Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra, Seni, Dan Budaya* 8, no. 1 (2024): 11. <https://doi.org/10.30872/jbssb.v8i1.14072>.
- Ohata, Kota. "Potential Sources of Anxiety for Japanese Learners of English: Preliminary Case Interviews with Five Japanese College Students in the U.S." *TESL-EJ* 9, no. 3 (December 2005): 1-21.
- Qiu, Amy Han, Dennis Tay, and Bernadette Watson. "Etaphorical Language and Psychopathological Symptoms: A Case Study of Trauma Victims' Metaphor Use." *BMC Psychology* 12, no. 1 (December 1, 2024): 1-15. <https://doi.org/10.1186/S40359-023-01492-W/TABLES/3>.
- Rokani, Dewi, and M Afif Zamroni. "Strategic Management of The Principal in The Development of The Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project." *JELIN: Journal of Education and Learning Innovation* 1, no. 1 (2024): 111-24.