

Beyond Physical Limits: Exploring Inclusive Islamic Education for Children with Physical Disabilities at SLBN 1 Sleman, Indonesia

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Abstract

Education is a universal right, extending crucially to children with special needs. This study investigates the characteristics and development of Islamic education services for children with physical disabilities at SLB Negeri 1 Sleman, Yogyakarta. The research aims to understand the implementation of teaching methodologies currently employed at the school. Utilizing a qualitative case study approach, data was collected through observation, interviews, and documentation, followed by rigorous analysis to draw comprehensive conclusions. The findings reveal that students at SLB Negeri 1 Sleman, Yogyakarta, exhibit distinct individual differences and characteristics. The school has effectively provided various educational services and a commendable infrastructure. While educators at the institution have encountered challenges in teaching children with disabilities, they have also successfully identified and implemented solutions. Evaluation and assessment practices primarily involve individualized assessments. Notably, the learning process has yielded instances where educators found inspiration, and students, in turn, demonstrated increased motivation and enthusiasm for learning Islamic Religious Education (PAI).

Abstrak

Pendidikan merupakan hak fundamental bagi setiap individu, termasuk anak berkebutuhan khusus. Realitas ini menuntut eksplorasi mendalam tentang bagaimana pelayanan pendidikan Islam diimplementasikan bagi anak tunadaksa, khususnya di SLB Negeri 1 Sleman Yogyakarta. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menggali karakteristik unik serta pengembangan layanan yang telah diterapkan di sekolah tersebut. Menggunakan metode kualitatif studi kasus, data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi, kemudian dianalisis untuk menarik kesimpulan yang komprehensif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa siswa di SLB Negeri 1 Sleman Yogyakarta memiliki ciri khas dan perbedaan individual yang signifikan. Sekolah ini telah berupaya menyediakan layanan pendidikan serta sarana prasarana yang memadai untuk menunjang kebutuhan

mereka. Para pendidik dihadapkan pada berbagai tantangan dalam mendidik ABK, namun mereka juga telah berhasil menemukan solusi inovatif untuk mengatasinya. Proses evaluasi dan penilaian dilakukan melalui asesmen individual yang disesuaikan. Menariknya, selama proses pembelajaran, para pendidik menemukan berbagai inspirasi yang tidak hanya memotivasi mereka, tetapi juga berhasil menumbuhkan semangat dan motivasi belajar PAI pada siswa.

Keywords: Islamic education, characteristics, children with special needs, educational services

INTRODUCTION

Education, in its myriad forms, often serves as our primary lens for understanding and shaping reality (González-Moreira et al., 2021; Viphindrartin & Bawono, 2021). It is both a promise and a challenge, a field where our fundamental assumptions about truth, value, and even the meaning of existence are tested and reshaped. In this context, religious education, particularly Islamic religious education, occupies a central position, not merely as an additional subject, but as a foundational element for character formation and spiritual orientation. We believe the narrative that Islamic religious education should commence at an early age—as underscored by Faridah (2024) who highlights its role in shaping a child's future—holds intrinsic truth. However, perhaps it's more useful to delve deeper into why this foundation is so crucial: not just as a determinant of one's life path, but as an antidote to spiritual shallowness amidst the often meaningless currents of modernity that frequently neglect the transcendent dimension of humanity. It would be ironic if, amidst the clamor of information, we failed to instill noble values that could guide individuals through the complexities of life.

The universal declaration in Article 31, Paragraph 1 of the 1945 Constitution, stating that "Every citizen has the right to education," is a constitutional luxury we often take for granted (Al-Nashshar, 2023). This right, in essence, transcends boundaries of status, race, ethnicity, religion, or social class. It is a promise of total inclusivity. Yet, behind this noble narrative of equality lies a more complex, and often poignant, reality: how do we ensure this right is meaningfully fulfilled for children with special needs (ABK)? ABK, as Khoirin Nida (2024) points out, are individuals who grow and develop with unique characteristics, often accompanied by significant physical, emotional, or mental differences. Categories such as visually impaired (*tunanetra*), hearing impaired (*tunarungu*), intellectually disabled, motorically disabled, socio-emotionally disordered, and even those with extraordinary talents and intellectual giftedness, are our attempts to comprehend this spectrum of diversity. However, such classifications can also be a double-edged sword, potentially limiting rather than liberating, if not accompanied by a deep understanding of the intrinsic

potential each individual possesses. Acknowledging that many ABK possess exceptional talents not commonly found in typical children, as highlighted by Seviarica et al. (2023), leads us to an essential question: is our education system, especially religious education, truly capable of recognizing, appreciating, and developing these hidden potentials, or does it inadvertently limit their horizons?

Here lies the ideological tension and subtle contradiction worth exploring. If education determines the future, then what about the future of those who are "different"? The educational experience for ABK often mirrors systemic failures to adapt to human diversity. Aprilia Irin et al.'s (2025) research, highlighting the minimal variety of learning methods and rigid evaluations—focused solely on written and unwritten forms—is a clear reflection of this problem. The greatest irony we perhaps overlook is that amidst the rhetoric of inclusivity, our pedagogical practices often fail to accommodate the cognitive and affective diversity inherent in ABK. Furthermore, while Kristiyanto et al. (2025) examined the development of Islamic education learning activities through classroom activities (KBM), extracurriculars like Qur'anic reading and writing (BTQ), and the integration of Islamic culture with art, these ideas have not fully addressed the development of specific methods relevant and sensitive to the unique needs of ABK. The question is no longer merely "how to teach," but "how to teach in a way that humanizes and empowers every individual, regardless of their physical differences?"

Therefore, the urgency of this research—focusing on the characteristics and development of Islamic education services for children with physical disabilities at SLB Negeri 1 Sleman Yogyakarta—becomes even more apparent and pressing. This is not merely an attempt to fill a methodological gap, but an authentic exploration of how we can create alternative narratives that are inclusive and empowering within religious education. We need to shift from a paradigm of "teaching what we know" to "learning how every soul learns"(Sotillos, 2022). Perhaps more important than merely implementing methods is a deep understanding of how Islamic education can become a space that humanizes, fosters dignity, and does not humiliate, for those who have been marginalized by the mainstream system. By understanding the implementation of methods applied at SLB Negeri 1 Sleman, we hope to provide robust guidance and considerations for the development of Islamic education services that are more sensitive, responsive, and socially just in other schools, ensuring that the promise of education—including religious education—truly becomes a right that can be enjoyed and empower every individual, without exception, and pave the way for recognizing diversity as a strength, not a weakness.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative case study method, a robust approach that allows for an in-depth analysis of specific phenomena (Priya, 2021). Through this lens, we aim to thoroughly examine the characteristics and development of Islamic education services for children with physical disabilities at SLB Negeri 1 Sleman Yogyakarta, which serves as our primary research focus. This method enables a nuanced exploration, carefully considering the inherent complexities and specific limitations of the research problem. Data collection in this study will primarily utilize three key techniques: observation, in-depth interviews, and meticulous documentation (Moleong, 2014). The data gathered from these diverse sources will then be systematically compiled and subjected to rigorous analysis. The primary subjects involved in this research include the Islamic education (PAI) teachers and the students with physical disabilities at SLB Negeri 1 Sleman, Yogyakarta, whose experiences and perspectives are central to understanding the phenomenon.

The subsequent phase involves a comprehensive analysis of the collected research data. The data analysis technique for this study is adapted from the established theoretical framework of Miles and Huberman (Miles et al., 2024; Miles & Huberman, 2014), which delineates the process into three interconnected stages: data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. (1) Data Condensation. In this initial stage, the vast amount of raw data will undergo a careful selection process, focusing on what is relevant and pertinent to the research objectives. This serves to reduce unnecessary information, distilling the core insights from the observations, interviews, and documents. (2) Data Presentation. Following condensation, the refined data will be presented in a coherent narrative form. This narrative aims to illuminate patterns, themes, and significant findings in a clear and accessible manner, allowing for a holistic understanding of the subject matter. (3) Conclusion Drawing. The final stage involves drawing meaningful conclusions based on the synthesized and presented data. This iterative process will involve verifying, confirming, or revising initial understandings as the analysis unfolds, ultimately leading to robust and well-supported insights into the Islamic education services provided for children with physical disabilities at the studied institution.

RESULTS

SLB Negeri 1 Sleman Yogyakarta is one of the special education institutions designed to meet the needs of children with special needs. The school's mission is to provide support and learning tailored to the individual characteristics of each child. Children with disabilities, including students at SLB Negeri 1 Sleman Yogyakarta, each have their own differences and characteristics. Their characteristics differ depending on

the cause of the disability, especially children who experience LO (Learning Outcomes). This will also be automatic with the child's cognition which will be far below.

According to the interviewed teachers, learners who have physical disabilities mostly also have cognitive disabilities, but it depends on each individual so that the character of each disabled child is different from other disabled children. For example, if a learner has physical and motor barriers in the hand, but if a lot of stimulus is given, if God wills, the learner's hand can be used to eat. However, there are no specific characteristics seen in teaching and learning activities. As for cognitive characteristics, they can arise due to the effects of LO. But for conditions suffered from birth can affect IQ. So if educators provide material to children with disabilities, it can be done by modifying learning.

The most effective learning method for students with disabilities in SLB Negeri 1 Sleman Yogyakarta in understanding PAI material is the memorization method. To develop children's motor skills, it can be done by sticking or selecting cards. So that educators try as much as possible to avoid writing or copying methods. Each learner also uses their learning techniques, there are learners who use *problem solving* or *inquiry* methods, while educators need to adjust and modify according to students' abilities (Putra et al., 2021). SLB Negeri 1 Sleman Yogyakarta also provides several services such as learning media to help students with disabilities in learning PAI, for example *puzzles*. Meanwhile, the infrastructure provided by the school is books and *Chromebooks* to support teaching and learning activities.

The biggest challenges that teachers face when teaching PAI to students with disabilities at SLB Negeri 1 Sleman Yogyakarta include students often forgetting, educators must recognize the characteristics of each child, the differences in each child so that they must be adapted to the conditions of each child, and the reading of hijaiyah letters that are not in accordance with the rules so that the correction process takes quite a long time. While the solution that has been applied by the school is that educators try to apply several methods, styles, and media to overcome these challenges to find methods that are suitable for each student. If you have found a suitable method, then the method will be continued by educators (Lestari et al., 2024).

The curriculum system in special education is different from regular education. The curriculum used does not have to be in phase. Evaluation and assessment used by educators at SLB Negeri 1 Sleman Yogyakarta in assessing the development of students in PAI learning is by using assessment. The assessment is carried out at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end. Before starting the learning, the educators have prepared the planning for the learning, including the Learning Objective Achievement Criteria . The criteria for assessing students refer to the Learning Objective Achievement Criteria. The Learning Objective

Achievement Criteria has been derived from the previous Learning Objectives. The order of the assessment is LO, Learning Objectives, Learning Objective Achievement Criteria, so that if students have fulfilled Learning Objective Achievement Criteria, it means that the assessment has been achieved. However, if it has not been achieved, the educator will repeat and add learning, for example enrichment.

The things that inspire you the most when teaching students with disabilities are things that make students comfortable, such as things that do not involve students' motor skills, such as activities that involve oral communication and delivery of learning that is little by little and not immediately a lot. Then the child's interest in learning. If this has been done then next the learners will be asked to write, but the writing activity is still quite difficult for them. Therefore, it will only be continued with pasting activities. Then to motivate students to remain enthusiastic in learning PAI, namely when students have memorized prayer readings and prayers, it can be a separate motivation for them and later there will be its own wisdom behind it.

DISCUSSION

1. Learner characteristics

Every child with a disability is different depending on the cause of the disability, including students at SLB Negeri 1 Sleman Yogyakarta. Learners who experience this usually also experience cognitive lagging. This statement is in line with what is conveyed by Khoirin Nida (2018) that every child with special needs has different characteristics in each child. Different patterns of improvement in cognitive, affective and psychomotor abilities are produced by the level of difficulty contained in each of the developmental characteristics of children with disabilities. This depends on the mentoring process during the dynamics of their education.

2. Learning method

Children with special needs have a unique way of developing and cannot be underestimated and must receive education like other children. Children with special needs require special education services and unique strategies and methods tailored to their needs. Some effective learning methods for children with special needs include communication, task analysis, direct teaching, prompts and collaborative learning. It is important for teachers to choose effective teaching strategies and methods for children with disabilities so that children get good and useful learning (Siburian et al., 2023). This statement is in line with the results of research conducted at SLB Negeri 1 Sleman Yogyakarta, namely the most effective method applied to students with disabilities in understanding PAI material, namely by memorization. In addition, to develop motor skills, it can be done by sticking or selecting cards. Educators try as much as

possible to avoid writing or copying methods. Educators in the school are also painstaking and good at communicating with their students so as to create a good learning atmosphere.

3. Service development

The form of education services for children with special needs is a type of segregated education, a system of education services that is separate from the education system for children in general. Education for children who need special support with a segregation system is education that is provided specifically separate from education for children in general, for example Sekolah Luar Biasa or Sekolah Dasar Luar Biasa, Sekolah Menengah Pertama Luar Biasa, Sekolah Menengah Atas Luar Biasa (Agustin & Wijaya, 2023). The results of interviews with teachers at SLB Negeri 1 Sleman Yogyakarta stated that the implementation of services at the school was appropriate. The school provides services such as learning media to help students with disabilities in learning PAI, for example *puzzles*. While the infrastructure provided by the school is books and *Chromebooks* that can be utilized by educators to support teaching and learning activities (Astati, 2025).

4. Challenges and solutions

Based on interviews with PAI teachers at the research target schools, it was found that some of the biggest challenges he experienced when teaching PAI to students with disabilities included students often forgetting the material taught, challenges about the competence of teachers who must recognize the characteristics of each child so that learning must be adapted to their conditions and characteristics, as well as the reading of hijaiyah letters that are not in accordance with the correct rules so that it has an impact on the learning time needed to be quite long. Konza (2025) validates these conditions with his statement. According to him, supporting the education of children with disabilities requires developing teacher skills and teaching models. Teacher training in children with disabilities training is also a factor that can influence the attitude of the person concerned (Zakiyah et al., 2022).

In addition, the need for parental support for the education of children with disabilities also affects their success. In SLB Negeri 1 Sleman Yogyakarta, especially in PAI learning, parents of students with disabilities are very supportive and help them, for example, after school, these students also participate in Quran recitation activities in their respective home environments. Then if there is memorization, the learner will convey it to his parents. This is in accordance with Konza's (2008) discussion of the role of parents. The point is that when parents provide full support to children with special needs, they actually help children reach their maximum potential. In dealing with children with special needs, not only parents but also the community plays an important role. Parents and society are the closest environment and play an important role. When

parents and the community accept the child's shortcomings and provide support, it can encourage the child to further develop their potential. Therefore, parents must be given insight into the learning rights of all children, including children with special needs (Ramadhana, 2024).

Based on some of the challenges above, the solution applied by PAI teachers in the target schools is to try to apply several methods, styles, and media to overcome these challenges to find methods that are suitable for each learner. If they have found a suitable method, then the method will be continued by the teacher.

5. Evaluation and assessment

In accordance with the field data obtained, the way the PAI teacher (research subject) conducts evaluation and assessment is by conducting an assessment based on the Special Education curriculum system adapted to the condition of the students. The teacher also mentioned that the LO used does not have to match the phases as in the regular education system.

6. Inspiration and motivation

According to the interviewees, the things that inspire teachers the most when teaching students with disabilities are things that make the students comfortable, such as things that do not involve the students' motor skills. This is in accordance with the multisensory principle which states that the learning approach is carried out by involving many senses of the child. This approach can help learners utilize other senses that are still functioning (Handajani, 2016)

Then to motivate students to remain enthusiastic in learning PAI, namely when students have memorized prayer readings and prayers, it can be a separate motivation for them and later there will be its own wisdom behind it. This is in accordance with the theory of Power Psychology which states that by repeating memorization, children will be able to continue to remember this (Handajani, 2024).

CONCLUSION

Based on this description, it can be concluded that every child with disabilities has their own differences and characteristics, including students at SLB Negeri 1 Sleman Yogyakarta. The challenges faced by teachers at the school include students often forgetting, educators must recognize the characteristics of each child, the differences in each child so that they must be adjusted to their conditions, and the reading of hijaiyah letters that are not in accordance with the rules. The solution that has been applied by the school is that educators try to apply several methods, styles, and media that are suitable for students. Evaluation and assessment used by teachers at SLB Negeri 1 Sleman Yogyakarta in PAI learning is by using *assessment* carried out at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end. The

most inspiring thing when teaching students with disabilities is something that can make students comfortable and children's interest in learning.

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CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors assert the absence of any conflict of interest. We affirm that the manuscript is original and is not presently under review by any other publisher.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The literature sources for this study—articles, research papers, research articles, and scientific forum proceedings—are all free from copyright infringement.

DISCLAIMER

The views and assumptions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of any affiliated agency of the authors.

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