

Adaptive Islamic Religious Education Learning for Quality Inclusive Education in Public Universities

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ABSTRACT

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The Islamic Religious Education Study Program (IRE) at Public Universities faces challenges in realizing inclusive learning, especially for students with visual impairments. Based on empirical data, the main obstacles for students with visual impairments include limited mobility orientation in the campus environment, difficulty accessing teaching materials, limited exam time, and a lack of opportunities to participate in student organizations. This article develops a simple adaptive learning by emphasizing these four aspects. The results show that strengthening mobility orientation skills, providing accessible teaching materials, increasing exam time, and supporting student organization participation can increase the involvement, independence, and learning achievement of students with visual disabilities

INTRODUCTION

Inclusive education has become an urgent global agenda as efforts to ensure that no one is left behind in access to education. Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 explicitly calls for implementing inclusive and equitable quality education for all. Education is believed to unleash the potential of every individual and open opportunities for them to contribute to society. However, the reality still shows a gap: millions of children and adolescents worldwide have not received a decent education.

Indonesia's commitment to inclusive education has been pledged through various regulations. The 1945 Constitution guarantees the right of every citizen to education, and the government has issued policies such as Permendiknas No. 70 of 2009, which requires inclusive education services in regular schools. In fact, Law No. 8 of 2016 concerning Persons with Disabilities has been passed to protect the right to education for every individual. This policy was then strengthened by Permenristekdikti No. 46 of 2017, which explicitly requires providing inclusive education services in the university environment, including equal access to learning for visually impaired students. (Harris et al., 2023)

However, implementing inclusive education in the field still faces severe challenges. Until now, only a few educational institutions have succeeded in adopting a fully inclusive approach. Data from the Ministry of Education and Culture in 2022 shows that only around 35% of schools claim to implement inclusive education, even with diverse quality and resources. Various obstacles, such as social stigma against people with disabilities, inequality of supporting infrastructure, limited funding, and lack of teacher training in inclusive teaching methods, still hinder the achievement of education for all.

Not all higher education institutions have adequate support systems regarding assistive technology and teaching staff who understand the special needs of blind students. (McCarthy & Shevlin, 2017). Islamic universities in Indonesia still face a gap between inclusive education regulations and practices. Although the policy already exists, its implementation is weak, with limited physical facilities, academic support, and disability literacy in the campus environment. To realize full inclusion, it is necessary to strengthen policies involving all stakeholders and transform institutional culture based on Islamic values of justice and equality. Continuous reform and public education are key to building an inclusive campus culture for all students, including people with disabilities. (Rismawati)

Educational institutions should be safe and supportive spaces for people with disabilities to develop. Realizing this, it is necessary to create an adaptive learning model in the IRE department that explicitly accommodates the needs of visually impaired students. The adaptive model focuses on four main aspects: strengthening mobility orientation skills in the campus environment, providing teaching materials in an accessible format, adjusting evaluation policies, such as increasing the duration of exam time, and facilitating the active involvement of students with disabilities in student organizations or activities. The results of the initial trial show that this kind of adaptive measure positively impacts the engagement, independence, and learning achievement of visually impaired IRE students. They become more confident in their activities on campus, more independent in accessing knowledge, and able to compete healthily in academic assessments. In addition, support for organizing provides space for students with disabilities to hone soft leadership and communication skills, while eroding social stigma among other students.

Public universities' Islamic Religious Education Study Program should be a pioneer in equitable higher education by creating an inclusive and adaptive IRE learning model. This initiative not only contributes to the achievement of SDG 4 on inclusive and equitable quality education but also strengthens the role of religious education as an agent of social justice. This model manifests Islamic values of compassion and social justice in educational practice. Hopefully, this transformative effort will inspire other academic institutions to take similar steps, so that the vision of education for all can be realized in Indonesia. Inclusive and adaptive Islamic religious education in higher education will be concrete proof that 'no one is left behind' in achieving learning rights and opportunities, in accordance with the mandate of the constitution, religious norms, and global commitment.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Studies on inclusive education and learning adaptation for people with disabilities have proliferated in the last two decades. The concept of inclusivity in education emphasizes the right of every individual to equal learning opportunities without discrimination. According to Beazidou, inclusivity demands accepting students with physical or cognitive differences and a paradigm shift in curriculum design, pedagogical approaches, and academic culture to appreciate diversity truly. (Beazidou, 2024) This

principle is in line with Bombardelli's view that the success of inclusive education is highly determined by the readiness of institutions and educators to adapt methods and create a learning environment that is friendly to all. (Bombardelli, 2020)

In higher education, the main challenge lies in the limitations of facilities, access to learning resources, and lecturers' adaptive ability in managing students' different needs. Cifuentes-Faura and Faura-Martínez point out that universities that successfully implement inclusive education have three key elements: supportive institutional policies, adequate technological and human resources, and flexible learning support systems. Their findings underscore the importance of a collaborative approach between campus actors—lecturers, students, and administrators—in building a sustainable, inclusive ecosystem. (Cifuentes-Faura & Faura-Martínez, 2024)

Islamic Religious Education (IRE) has a strategic position in realizing inclusive education because of its universal and humanistic values. Islam teaches that science is the right of all human beings regardless of physical or social conditions. In the tradition of classical Islamic education, inclusive examples such as halaqah-based learning provide space for all groups to learn together in an egalitarian manner. The concepts of rahmatan lil 'alamin, 'adl, and musawah are the theological foundations that affirm the equality of human beings before God and the moral responsibility to create a just society. Thus, applying adaptive religious education is pedagogically relevant and manifests Islamic spiritual values, emphasizing compassion and respect for human dignity.

Various studies show that religious education significantly strengthens the identity and psychological well-being of students with disabilities. Zulkifli emphasized that teaching the Qur'an and spiritual values to children with special needs contributes considerably to forming their independence and confidence. (Zulkifli et al., 2022) These results reinforce the urgency of IRE learning, which not only focuses on cognitive aspects but also supports environmental adaptation and the development of independence of students with disabilities. Moreover, there is still a lack of Islamic religious education services—such as effective teaching of the Qur'an—in special schools or institutions for the visually impaired, making the presence of visually impaired IRE students an essential representation for a more inclusive future of Islamic education. (Aly & Bustomi, 2022)

Applying adaptive learning models in IRE is rarely studied in the context of state universities in Indonesia. Most previous research has focused more on inclusive education at the primary and secondary school levels. Therefore, developing the Adaptive Islamic Religious Education Learning Model is relevant as an effort to expand good practices of inclusivity to the university level. This model would emphasize four main aspects of adaptation: strengthening mobility orientation skills, providing accessible teaching materials, flexibility in exam times, and support for the social participation of students with disabilities in organizations. Through this approach, it is hoped that IRE learning in state universities will become an academic space for

knowledge transfer and a forum for character building, independence, and respect for humani

METODOLOGI

This research began with a descriptive qualitative approach to obtain a basic understanding of the learning experience of blind students and the form of adaptation carried out by lecturers in learning Islamic Religious Education (IRE) in higher education. This stage is essential for in-depth capturing of the field's realities, needs, and challenges. The initial findings will then be the basis for developing learning designs using the ADDIE model, so that the resulting design is theoretical and departs from real needs and factual context in the higher education environment.

The research was carried out at the Islamic Religious Education Study Program, State University of Jakarta (UNJ), one of the pioneers in implementing inclusive education in the public university environment. The research participants comprised six active visually impaired students and three lecturers who interacted directly in the learning process. The participants were selected using the purposive sampling technique, which selects informants with the best understanding of research problems.

Data was collected through three main techniques: 1) Needs analysis to identify obstacles and needs of students with disabilities in learning activities, both in terms of physical and academic access, 2) Classroom observation, to observe the interaction between lecturers, students with disabilities, and non-disabled students, as well as how adaptive strategies are applied in real learning situations. 3) In-depth interviews with visually impaired students and lecturers to explore perceptions, experiences, and impacts of implementing adaptive learning strategies.

Data analysis was carried out using the Miles & Huberman interactive model, which includes three stages: 1) Data reduction – selecting and focusing relevant information according to the research objectives; 2) Data display, presenting data in the form of narratives and thematic matrices; and 3) Conclusion drawing/verification – drawing conclusions based on the pattern of findings that emerge.

Sources and methods are used to ensure the consistency of findings from various perspectives and maintain the validity of the data. This research focuses on four main aspects of learning adaptation: 1) orientation and mobility (OM) or mobility orientation training in the campus environment; 2) provision of accessible learning materials; 3) flexibility of time in exams and evaluations; and 4) support for the social participation of students with disabilities in student organizations. The validity of the findings is maintained through member checking and peer debriefing between researchers to ensure that the interpretation of the data is in accordance with the reality of the participants.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Mobility Orientation as the Foundation of Independence

The study's results show that blind students face the main challenges regarding mobility in the campus environment. Some participants admitted they still needed assistance going to the classroom, laboratory, or campus mosque. This condition creates high dependency and reduces their confidence.

In response, the IRE Study Program of the State University of Jakarta developed an Orientation and Mobility (OM) program, which was carried out at the beginning of semester 123. Senior students with disabilities and volunteers facilitated this activity, including materials on introducing campus safe lanes, the use of canes, and mobility exercises on public transportation such as TransJakarta and KRL. After training, students showed a significant improvement in navigational ability and confidence.

These findings align with Kamali and Ashori's research, which confirms that OM training improves the quality of life and psychological well-being of visually impaired students. (Kamali & Ashori, 2023) In the context of IRE, mobility independence also directly impacts students' ability to actively participate in academic and spiritual activities on campus, such as congregational prayers, group discussions, and organizational activities. Thus, OM has a technical function and a means of strengthening religious values, responsibility, and self-reliance.

Accessibility of Teaching Materials and Learning Adaptation

Limited access to these teaching materials directly impacts the learning of Islamic Religious Education (PAI). When PAI material is given in PDF format that is not screen reader-friendly, blind students have difficulty understanding the religious concepts discussed, such as faith, worship, morals, or the study of Islamic texts. In fact, IRE emphasizes the value of equality, justice, and respect for human dignity. The unavailability of materials for visually impaired students shows a gap between Islamic teachings on inclusivity and ongoing learning practices. For this reason, the provision of IRE teaching materials in an accessible format is an essential part of the application of Islamic values that respect the right to education for every individual without discrimination.

To answer this challenge, the IRE Study Program implements an internal policy that requires lecturers to provide teaching materials in a disability-friendly format—for example, Word files, digital documents with readable text, or audio recordings. Lecturers also participate in inclusive pedagogical training to increase sensitivity and adaptability.

The observations showed a positive change in classroom interactions: lecturers were more communicative, provided clear verbal instructions, and facilitated interactive discussions that actively involved students with disabilities. In addition, exam time was extended to provide an opportunity to understand and write answers with digital aids. This simple adaptation has proven to be effective in increasing the academic participation of visually impaired students. These findings are consistent with research by Thomas and Cooke & Lowe, which shows that an inclusive learning environment

enhances students' sense of belonging and engagement. (Cooke & Lowe, 2025; Thomas, 2016).

This positive change aligns with Islamic Religious Education's values and learning objectives (PAI). When lecturers are more communicative, provide clear verbal instructions, open interactive discussion rooms, and adjust exam times for visually impaired students, these practices reflect the principles of ta'ādul (justice), ta'āwun (caring), and ikram al-insān (honoring human beings) in Islam. This simple adaptation not only increases the academic participation of students with visual disabilities but also shows that PAI can be an example in implementing inclusive values through learning practices that provide equal access for all students.

Social Activities and Organization as the Foundation of Independence, Social Participation, and Leadership Strengthening

The inclusivity of IRE learning does not stop at the academic aspect. Blind students are encouraged to participate in social activities and organizations such as IRE Social Impact, Study Program Student Leadership Training, and faculty religious activities.

This involvement increases the communication skills, responsibility, and social solidarity of students with disabilities. They are no longer positioned as aid recipients, but as active contributors to building an inclusive academic culture. One of the students with disabilities in the Islamic Religious Education Study Program showed that limitations are not a barrier to achievement. Through the opportunity to be involved in student organizations, he is not only active in various social and community activities. Still, he is also trusted to be a mentor for other non-disabled students. This proves that inclusion that is given real space can give birth to inspiring contributions and examples. These findings reinforce Steer & Gale's view that religious education can be a means of social empowerment for people with disabilities. (Steer & Gale, 2014) With active involvement in organizations, students develop their capacity and revive Islamic values of togetherness (ukhuwah) and social responsibility (fard kifayah).

Contribution to SDG 4: Inclusive and Equitable Quality Education

Implementing the adaptive learning model in the IRE Study Program has been proven to directly impact the achievement of SDG 4.5 (elimination of education access gaps) and SDG 4.7 (education for sustainable development) indicators.

First, in terms of accessibility, visually impaired students can now access all lecture materials through digital platforms that are compatible with screen readers. Second, in terms of academic participation, there has been an increase in the attendance and involvement of students with disabilities in the teaching and learning process. Third, from the social side, they play an active role in organizational activities and become an integral part of the campus academic community.

Religious values remain the central pillar in the character development of blind students, as seen in Islamic parenting applied in social institutions such as orphanages

for the blind. This approach successfully forms a positive, independent, and responsible person. (Mahfud et al., 2023)

CONCLUSIONS

The study results show that the adaptive learning model of Islamic Religious Education (IRE) can answer the challenges of inclusive learning in state universities, especially for students with visual impairments. Four key components—mobility orientation, accessibility of teaching materials, evaluation flexibility, and social participation—effectively increase the independence, academic engagement, and self-confidence of blind students.

This adaptive approach provides technical solutions and reinforces humanistic Islamic values like justice, compassion, and equality. By applying learning centred on the needs of students with disabilities, religious education is no longer exclusive but a means of empowerment and affirmation of human dignity. Thus, this model supports the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG).

Based on these conclusions, the following recommendations were prepared, 1) Strengthening Lecturer Capacity: Universities need to organize training of trainers (ToT) on orthopedagogy and adaptive teaching so that lecturers have competence in managing inclusive classes; 2) Institutional Policy: An official policy is needed at the faculty and university level that ensures the availability of accessible teaching materials, mobility support facilities, and adaptive evaluation mechanisms for students with disabilities; 3) Inclusive Curriculum Integration: The IRE curriculum needs to include the values and practices of inclusivity as an integral part of learning, so that prospective religious educators have a fair, empathetic, and transformative perspective; 4) Collaboration and Replication: This adaptive learning model can be replicated in other universities through cooperation between study programs, disability institutions, and national disability communities to expand its social impact.

By implementing these measures, universities realize their commitment to SDG 4 and strengthen Islamic Religious Education's role as a moral foundation for creating an inclusive, just, and civilized society.

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The main output of this research is an adaptive IRE learning model that other universities can replicate to build an inclusive learning system. Practically, the research results are expected to be a reference for policymakers at the faculty and university levels in compiling guidelines for educational services for students with disabilities. Theoretically, this research expands the discourse on integration between Islamic values, social justice, and pedagogic innovation in the context of inclusive higher education.

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