



ADAPTIVE RELIGIOUS SKILLS: HOW TEACHER ACTUALIZE *RUKHSAH* IN TEACHING ISLAMIC PRAYER TO STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES?

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Abstract: This study aims to analyze the strategies employed by Islamic Education teachers in teaching *Shalat* to students with special needs in Special Education Schools (SLBs) in Samarinda. Inclusive education for students with disabilities requires specific strategies that accommodate their cognitive and physical challenges in religious education, particularly in the practice of *Shalat*. A qualitative phenomenological approach was used, gathering data through observations, documentation, and interviews with teachers and school principals. The study found that individualized strategies, such as repetition, visual aids, peer tutoring, and structured programs like *Shalat Dhuha*, are essential in supporting students' participation in prayer. Key challenges identified include difficulties in memorizing prayers, limited teacher resources, and space constraints in prayer rooms. However, the study also highlighted the importance of community involvement, particularly parents, and the use of adaptive materials like videos and digital applications. This research contributes to the field of inclusive Islamic education by offering insights into effective teaching methods for students with disabilities. It recommends continued teacher training in adaptive pedagogies and the need for systemic changes to support inclusive education

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INTRODUCTION

Philosophy of Education reveals the essence of education as a means of humanizing individuals without any discrimination, thus extending to those with physical, intellectual, or sensory limitations (Ball et al., 2024; Roth et al., 2022). This includes education in Islamic religious studies and moral teachings, as well as the need for equality and the adjustment of specific needs for students (Aderibigbe et al., 2023; Riaz et al., 2023). Such understanding must be expressed through in-depth and critical studies, particularly in Special Education Schools (SLB). Since prayer (*Sholat*) is obligatory for Muslims, Islam offers various allowances (*rukhsah*) for those facing challenges. The Quran clearly states that Allah commands: "When

you have finished the prayer, remember Allah while standing, sitting, or lying on your sides. But when you are secure, establish the prayer as usual. Surely, prayer is a prescribed duty for the believers at specific times" (Q.S. An-Nisa 4:103).

In the Hadith, it is narrated: "Command your children to pray when they reach the age of seven, and discipline them for it when they reach the age of ten, and separate them in their beds" (H.R. Abu Dawud, No. 418). Moreover, in another narration, it is stated: "Pray standing, and if you are unable, pray sitting, and if you are still unable, pray lying on your side" (H.R. Bukhari, No. 1050). These teachings from the Quran and Hadith emphasize the importance of prayer, while also providing flexibility in its practice, especially for those facing physical limitations.

Article 10 of Law No. 8 of 2016 (Siregar et al., 2024) on Persons with Disabilities states that individuals with disabilities are entitled to quality education at all levels and types. Additionally, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology Regulation No. 48 of 2023 (Bartolo et al., 2023) provides guidelines on reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities in formal early childhood, primary, secondary, and higher education institutions. This ensures that religious education activities, including the practice of prayer as one of the pillars of Islam, are accessible and facilitated, reflecting the value of disability-friendly services. The theoretical foundation for these provisions is supported by the Universal Design for Learning (UDL), which ensures that materials, goals, methods, and assessments are designed to be accessible and meaningful to students (Cumming & Rose, 2022; Willis et al., 2023). UDL emphasizes the importance of media choices, multimodal access, and flexible strategies in the learning process in SLBs.

Educational scholars such as (Pedro & Peña-Hita, 2025; Tacoronte-Sosa & Peña-Hita, 2025) have highlighted the need to accommodate diverse learning needs in special school, advocating the Strategic Instruction Model (SIM), which focuses on systematic intervention, visual-verbal reinforcement, and explicit teaching. Differentiated Instruction (DI), as proposed by (Alam & Mohanty, 2023; Avdiu & Ahmedi, 2024), also offers an alternative strategy, particularly for students with additional learning needs. In SLBs, concrete examples of these strategies may include prayer videos, repetitive movement exercises, and visual aids. Moreover, (Erasto et al., 2024) offers tailored strategies for different disabilities in the learning process, such as individualization, cooperative learning, and behavior modification for the visually impaired, while using gestures, facial expressions, and sign language for the hearing impaired.

Sari et al., (2025) and Shodiqoh et al., (2025) conducted research on Islamic psychotherapy for children with special needs, including the practice of prayer, and found that it led to orderly behavior when the call to prayer was heard. Similarly, Carter & Boehm, (2019) and Kirani et al., (2024) discovered six characteristics in the religious development of children with intellectual disabilities: unreflective, egocentric, anthropomorphic, imitative, ritualistic verbalization, and wonderment. These traits do not prevent students from

learning the movements of prayer, although this research on prayer instruction in SLBs focuses on the strategies teachers employ for each specific disability.

According to the Education Data Center, Samarinda has 11 SLBs: 9 private and 2 public. These include SLBN Pembina Province of East Kalimantan, located in Samarinda Utara District, and SLB Negeri Samarinda in Sungai Pinang District. Both schools provide Islamic religious education, with a particular focus on prayer. One of the teachers at the elementary school level (*Tuna Grahita* class) mentioned, "I teach Islamic Education in all classes, and we have two teachers for this subject. We have prayer material, and I am the Imam for every *Dhuha* prayer session in the congregation. For class C, which has more challenging students, I need to be extra patient, as they have fluctuating emotions. While they can follow the movements, memorizing long prayers is difficult."

Teachers' use of adaptive strategies in selecting methods demonstrates a concrete realization of religious moderation studies. However, this research focuses on clearly highlighting the value of moderation in teaching prayer to children with special needs. Based on these observations, this research will adopt a qualitative, phenomenological approach to describe the experiences of both teachers and students. Data will be collected through three main methods: observation, documentation, and interviews. These data will be analyzed using interactive techniques, supplemented by triangulation methods to ensure validity.

The aim of this research is to analyze the strategies used by Islamic Education teachers in teaching prayer, the methods employed, and the challenges faced in teaching prayer at SLB in Samarinda. The results of this research can serve as a reference for curriculum development at higher education institutions, especially in the faculties of education or *tarbiyah* programs, as well as in Islamic education teacher training. Furthermore, this study can inform the development of a prayer curriculum and modules tailored for students with various disabilities.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopts a qualitative research design with a phenomenological approach to explore and describe the lived experiences of Islamic Education teachers and school leaders in teaching prayer (*Shalat*) to students with special needs in Special Education Schools (SLBs). The phenomenological approach enables an in-depth understanding of the practices and strategies teachers employ in these unique educational settings, particularly in inclusive education (Alhazmi & Kaufmann, 2022; Englander & Morley, 2023). By using this design, the study aims to uncover the meanings and practices related to the teaching of *Shalat*, which are significant for understanding how to address the specific needs of students with disabilities.

The research is conducted in two Special Education Schools (SLBs) located in Samarinda, East Kalimantan. The first location is SLB Negeri Pembina Provinsi Kalimantan Timur, situated on Jalan Padat Karya in Sempaja Utara, Samarinda Utara, and the second location is SLB Negeri Kota Samarinda, located on Jalan Pelita No. 16, Sungai Pinang Dalam, Sungai Pinang, Kota Samarinda. These schools were selected for their active role in providing religious education,

particularly in teaching students with special needs to pray. The distinctive characteristics and experiences of both schools in teaching religious practices make them ideal settings for investigating the pedagogical approaches and challenges educators face in SLBs.

Data for this study are collected through three primary methods: observation, documentation, and interviews (Chand, 2025; Morgan, 2022). Observations are made during *Shalat Dhuha* sessions held in the schools' designated prayer rooms (*Mushalla*). The observations focus on the entire prayer education process, from the lesson opening to the core activities and evaluation. Documentation, including lesson plans (RPP), teaching materials, and other relevant resources, is reviewed to understand how *Shalat* education is facilitated in SLBs. Additionally, in-depth interviews are conducted with three Islamic Education teachers and two school principals to gather insights on the strategies, challenges, and solutions they employ in teaching *Shalat* to students with special needs.

The data collected through observation, documentation, and interviews will be analyzed using an interactive data analysis technique (Daryanes et al., 2023; Du et al., 2023). This includes several stages: data collection, data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The analysis will focus on identifying themes and patterns in the strategies, challenges, and effectiveness of teaching *Shalat* in SLBs. Triangulation of data will also be employed to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings. This process involves cross-referencing data from multiple sources to corroborate and validate the results.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Student Demographics and Educational Levels

The student demographics of SLB Negeri Samarinda and SLBN Pembina Kalimantan Timur reflect a diverse range of disabilities, including visual, hearing, intellectual, physical, and developmental disabilities. In total, SLBN Pembina has 241 students: 7 non-Muslim and 234 Muslim, while SLB Negeri Samarinda has 164 students: 6 non-Muslim and 158 Muslim. These students are distributed across different educational levels: SD (Elementary School), SMP (Junior High School), and SMA (Senior High School). The data highlights that various disabilities present distinct challenges in teaching, especially in religious education, particularly the teaching of *Shalat*. These students require tailored learning approaches that address their specific needs and disabilities within Islamic religious education. To better illustrate the diversity of students across both schools and educational levels, the following table provides a breakdown of the number of students with various disabilities by grade level. This table serves as a foundational reference for understanding the demographic makeup of students and the scope of educational challenges in teaching *Shalat*.

Table 1. Prayer Material Learner Student Data

Deprivation	SLB N Samarinda			SLBN Pembina Kaltim			Amount
	4 SD	7 SMP	10 SMA	4 SD	7 SMP	10 SMA	
A-Blind	0	0	1	0	1	0	2
B-Deaf	4	2	5	2	7	6	26
C-Mentally Disabled	4	9	10	8	4	11	46
D-Physically Disabled	0	0	0	3	2	3	8
P-Down Syndrome	3	2	2	0	1	0	8
Q-Autistic	1	3	2	3	6	7	22
Total	12	16	20	16	21	27	112

From interviews with two key informants, a teacher of Islamic Education and a principal, it was revealed that teaching *Shalat* to students with disabilities presents multiple challenges. The teacher stated, "For students with hearing impairments, the physical movements of *Shalat* are easy to learn, but memorizing the prayers is still difficult. For intellectual disabilities, we focus more on repetition and individual attention, as the physical actions are generally manageable, but reading remains a challenge." This statement highlights the struggle to balance practical *Shalat* movements with memorization, particularly for students with hearing and intellectual disabilities.

The principal further emphasized, "We have adapted our approach for each disability. For the visually impaired, we use tactile methods, and for students with autism, we rely on visual aids and structured routines." This highlights the individualized approaches needed to teach *Shalat*, underlining that the success of teaching religious practices to students with diverse disabilities depends on the flexibility and adaptation of teaching methods. The principal's observation underscores the need for different strategies for each disability type to ensure inclusivity.

The observations conducted in both schools reveal a pattern of varied approaches based on the disability type. For students with hearing impairments, visual aids such as picture sequences and sign language were used to support the learning of *Shalat*. In contrast, for students with intellectual disabilities such as autism and Down syndrome, structured routines and minimal distractions were key strategies to maintain focus during the prayer lessons. Additionally, video materials were used extensively, particularly for students with cognitive impairments, to reinforce both physical movements and recitations of *Shalat*. These observations underscore the importance of tailored strategies and multimodal learning aids in teaching *Shalat* to students with special needs.

The findings clearly demonstrate that teaching *Shalat* to students with disabilities in SLBs requires significant adjustments to accommodate their diverse needs. The use of visual aids, tactile methods, repetitive practice, and structured routines is crucial in enabling students to engage with the prayer process. Furthermore, individualised approaches, such as adapting instructional methods based on disability type and using specialised media, are essential to ensuring that all students, regardless of disability, can participate in religious education. This

reinforces the need for inclusive and flexible teaching strategies that meet the varied educational needs of students with special needs.

The data show a clear pattern: teaching strategies for students with disabilities in SLBs are highly individualised and adaptive. For example, students with visual impairments are taught through tactile methods and peer tutoring, while those with hearing impairments rely on visual aids and sign language. Students with intellectual disabilities, such as Down syndrome and autism, benefit from repeated practice, simplified materials, and structured routines. The use of visual and auditory media plays a significant role in facilitating the learning of *Shalat*, especially for students who struggle with memorisation and focus. The use of varied strategies highlights the teaching process's adaptability in SLBs, which is vital for accommodating the diverse needs of students with disabilities.

Table 2. Influence of Ideal Strategies for Teaching *Shalat*

Informant Position	Interview Excerpt	Indicator
IRE Teacher	"For students with hearing impairments, the physical movements of <i>Shalat</i> are easy to learn, but memorizing the prayers is still difficult."	Challenges with memorisation, focus on physical actions
IRE Teacher	"For students with intellectual disabilities, we focus more on repetition and individual attention to ensure they grasp the physical actions, although reading remains difficult."	Use of repetition and individual attention for understanding movements
Principal	"We have adapted our approach for each disability. For the visually impaired, we use tactile methods, and for students with autism, we rely on visual aids and structured routines."	Tailored approach based on disabilities, visual and tactile methods used
Principal	"The students with disabilities respond well to the adaptations we've made, especially when we provide additional support and structured routines."	Structured routines and support for effective learning

The table illustrates the various strategies and methods used by teachers and school leaders to accommodate students with different disabilities in teaching *Shalat*. The key indicators in the table reflect the use of tailored approaches, such as repetition, individual attention, tactile aids, and structured routines. The teachers and principals agree that visual aids and peer tutoring are particularly beneficial for students with hearing impairments, while students with intellectual disabilities require consistent practice and attention. These strategies demonstrate the importance of adapting teaching methods to the type of disability to ensure effective learning outcomes for all students.

Challenges in Teaching *Shalat*

The teaching of *Shalat* to students with disabilities presents a range of challenges, especially in the areas of memorization and recitation of prayers. Disabilities such as hearing impairment, intellectual disabilities (including *Tunarungu*, *Tunagrahita*, Down Syndrome, and Autism), and physical limitations necessitate specific teaching strategies that are tailored to each student's unique needs. While the physical movements of *Shalat* may be more easily adapted for

some students, memorization and recitation prove to be particularly difficult. These challenges highlight the importance of designing specialized approaches that address both the physical and cognitive components of prayer education.

In interviews with two key informants, a teacher of Islamic Education and a principal, both revealed that students' disabilities create significant barriers in learning *Shalat*. The teacher explained, "For students with hearing impairments, they can easily perform the physical movements of *Shalat*, but when it comes to memorizing the prayers, it becomes a challenge. Similarly, students with intellectual disabilities struggle with memorizing long prayer recitations, even though they can perform the physical aspects of the prayer." This statement reveals that while the physical actions of *Shalat* may be relatively easy to teach, the cognitive demands such as memorization are particularly difficult for these students. The teacher's comment underscores the necessity of developing strategies that specifically target these cognitive barriers, including the use of repetition and alternative memory aids.

The principal provided further insight, stating, "We have implemented a series of visual aids and frequent practice to assist in memorization. For students with intellectual disabilities, we use shorter prayers, repeating them frequently. For those with hearing impairment, we rely more on visual cues and minimal spoken instructions." This response highlights how the school adapts its methods based on the type of disability, focusing on the need for both repetition and visual or tactile aids to overcome memorization challenges. The principal's comments indicate that effective teaching strategies must take into account the individual limitations of students while ensuring that they can participate in the prayer process.

The teaching of *Shalat* follows a structured process in both schools, where students first learn the physical movements and then gradually work on memorizing the prayer recitations. For students with physical disabilities, such as those with Tunarungu, the physical movements can be mastered relatively quickly, but the recitation remains a struggle due to their limited ability to hear and replicate sounds accurately. In contrast, students with intellectual disabilities, such as Down Syndrome and Autism, often have difficulty focusing on and retaining the long prayers required for *Shalat*. As a result, these students often require repeated practice and the use of various learning aids, such as visual cues, repetition, and simplified versions of the prayers.

During the observational sessions at both Special School, it was noted that the use of visual aids, such as picture cards and videos, significantly helped students with hearing impairments in understanding the movements and sequence of *Shalat*. However, despite these visual aids, the challenge of memorizing prayer recitations remained. In the case of students with intellectual disabilities, the teachers used simplified versions of prayers and focused more on repetition. The observations also revealed that teachers frequently used peer tutoring and group work to support students with autism and Down Syndrome, particularly in the memorization of prayers. These observations show that, while physical movements can be taught through visual and hands-on methods,

cognitive challenges related to memorization require more complex and individualized strategies.

To better illustrate the specific strategies, media, and solutions employed by teachers for each disability, the following table summarizes the approaches used in teaching *Shalat* to students with diverse needs. It provides a clear overview of the tailored strategies that address the challenges faced by students with hearing impairments, intellectual disabilities, physical disabilities, and autism. The table also highlights the key media utilized, such as visual aids, videos, and tactile methods, as well as the solutions put in place to overcome the barriers to effective prayer education.

Table 3. Strategies, Media, and Solutions for Teaching *Shalat*

Disability	Strategy	Media	Challenges & Solutions
A. Tunanetra	Individual approach, audio description, touch support	Audio learning, movement sound guides, peer tutors	Cannot see the movements, needs detailed touch; memorization challenges
B. Tunarungu	Visualization of movements, repetition, small group practice	Sequence pictures of <i>Shalat</i> movements, silent video with text, sign language	Difficulty understanding recitations, communication barriers; use of symbols, repetition
C. Tunagrahita	Concrete and repetitive strategy, routine, affective approach	Animated videos, visual movement posters, <i>Shalat</i> sequence cards	Short attention span, weak memory, forgets sequence; repetition, rewards, simplified material
D. Tunadaksa	Adjustment of movements, flexibility in position (Rukhsah)	Modified movement videos, seating aids, visual guides	Physical limitations in standing/bowing/prostrating; modified movements, emotional support
P. Down Syndrome	Familiarization strategy, positive reinforcement, patient and consistent approach	Simple videos, audio aids, prayer cards	Slow to receive instructions, lack of focus, difficulty memorizing recitations; repetition, short activities, more attention
Q. Autism	Visual prayer schedule, structured routine, repetition, minimal distractions	Picture cards, posted schedules, animated videos	Lack of focus, repetitive behavior/tantrums when distracted; quiet class structure, short learning times, consistent activities

The findings show that the primary challenge in teaching *Shalat* to students with disabilities lies in overcoming the difficulties they face with memorization and recitation of the prayers. While the physical movements can be adapted through visual aids, repetition, and tactile methods, the cognitive challenges, particularly for students with intellectual disabilities or hearing impairments, require specialized approaches. The use of repetition, peer support, visual aids,

and simplified prayers has been identified as crucial for overcoming these challenges, ensuring that all students can participate in the religious education process.

From the data, a clear pattern emerges indicating that the success of teaching *Shalat* depends heavily on individualized strategies tailored to each student's disability. For students with hearing impairments, visual aids and minimal verbal instructions are most effective, whereas students with intellectual disabilities benefit more from repetitive practice and the simplification of prayer recitations. The data also reveals that peer support and group practice are frequently used to support students with autism and Down Syndrome. This pattern shows that a flexible, adaptive teaching approach is necessary to accommodate the varying needs of students with different disabilities, especially when it comes to learning the complex process of *Shalat*.

Table 4. Influence of Ideal Strategies for Teaching *Shalat*

Informant Position	Interview Excerpt	Indicator
IRE Teacher	"For students with hearing impairments, they can easily perform the physical movements of <i>Shalat</i> , but when it comes to memorizing the prayers, it becomes a challenge."	Challenges with memorization, focus on physical actions
IRE Teacher	"For students with intellectual disabilities, we focus more on repetition and individual attention to ensure they grasp the physical actions, although reading remains difficult."	Use of repetition and individual attention for understanding movements
Principal	"We have implemented a series of visual aids and frequent practice to assist in memorization. For students with intellectual disabilities, we use shorter prayers, repeating them frequently."	Use of visual aids and repetition for memorization
Principal	"For students with hearing impairments, we rely more on visual cues and minimal spoken instructions."	Visual cues and minimal verbal instructions for students with hearing impairments

The table above shows how different strategies and teaching aids are employed based on the disability type. The key indicators from the interviews suggest that visual aids and repetition are essential for helping students with hearing impairments and intellectual disabilities memorize *Shalat* recitations. The use of simplified prayers, peer tutoring, and individual attention are emphasized for students with Down Syndrome and Autism. These strategies align with the broader theme of individualized instruction and highlight the importance of adapting teaching methods to meet the diverse needs of students with special needs.

Support Programs, Strategies, and Solutions

The implementation of support programs, such as regular *Shalat Dhuha* sessions in both SLB Negeri Samarinda and SLBN Pembina Kalimantan Timur, plays a significant role in providing crucial practice for students with disabilities. These programs serve as opportunities for students to engage in prayer

collectively, which not only supports their religious education but also promotes social interaction and a sense of community. Additionally, adaptive teaching strategies are employed to accommodate the diverse needs of students, including visual aids, repetition, and peer tutoring. Despite challenges such as limited resources, small prayer room spaces, and varied levels of student ability, teachers have successfully modified their teaching strategies. They also use tailored media and collaborate with parents and co-teachers to provide the necessary support for students to engage in prayer practices effectively.

Table 5. Interview Excerpts and Data Summary

Interview Excerpt	Indicator	Informant
"We have a weekly <i>Shalat Dhuha</i> program every Friday for our students, where they perform the prayer in congregation. This routine helps them stay engaged with religious practice."	Routine program for consistent practice	IRE Teacher, SLBN Pembina
"On Tuesdays, we gather all students for <i>Shalat Dhuha</i> as part of our weekly routine. It's crucial for engaging students with special needs in a structured religious activity."	Routine engagement, weekly structure	IRE Teacher, SLB Samarinda
"Given the limited space in the Mushalla, we use a combination of video demonstrations and peer tutoring to ensure all students can follow along."	Space limitations, video and peer support	IRE Teacher, SLB Samarinda
"Collaborating with parents has helped reinforce the learning at home. Parents help by providing support for memorization and encouraging regular practice."	Collaboration with parents, home support	Principal, SLB Negeri

The table above presents key insights from the interviews with informants in both schools. The data reveals that regular *Shalat Dhuha* programs play a central role in providing structured prayer practice for students. The indicators show that these programs, held weekly (Fridays at SLBN Pembina and Tuesdays at SLB Samarinda), help maintain consistent engagement with religious activities, which is essential for reinforcing the practice of *Shalat* for students with special needs. The teachers emphasize the importance of routine and structure in religious practice, which helps students with disabilities to adapt and participate meaningfully.

In addition, space limitations in the prayer rooms (Mushalla) are a notable challenge, as indicated by the teacher from SLB Samarinda. However, the teacher compensates for this by using visual aids, videos, and peer tutoring. These solutions reflect the adaptive nature of teaching strategies that aim to overcome environmental and resource challenges. The principal also points out that collaborating with parents has been a significant factor in reinforcing students' learning and ensuring that they continue to practice at home, highlighting the importance of community involvement in religious education.

During the observations, it was clear that the teachers adapted their strategies to meet the needs of students with different disabilities. For instance, in SLB Negeri Samarinda, the *Shalat Dhuha* session on Tuesdays was conducted in a small prayer room, where teachers used videos and demonstrations to guide the students in performing the prayer. Additionally, peer tutoring was actively

encouraged, with older or more capable students assisting their peers. The students were able to participate meaningfully, even though the space was limited. Teachers also ensured that the students were calm and focused before the session began, maintaining an orderly environment for prayer. The involvement of co-teachers and the use of visual and audio media ensured that all students, regardless of their disability, could follow along with the prayer.

The findings clearly demonstrate that support programs like the weekly *Shalat Dhuha* sessions are essential in providing students with regular practice in religious activities. The adaptations made by the teachers, such as the use of videos, peer tutoring, and collaboration with parents, significantly contribute to overcoming the challenges posed by limited resources, space constraints, and diverse student needs. The routine nature of these programs ensures that students engage consistently in prayer practices, which reinforces their learning and participation in the religious community.

The data indicates a consistent pattern of adaptation and flexibility in teaching strategies. Teachers regularly incorporate visual aids, video demonstrations, and peer tutoring to support students in learning *Shalat*. The involvement of parents is also a key strategy, as they reinforce the learning at home. Despite challenges such as limited space and resources, these strategies ensure that students with different disabilities can successfully engage with the religious practice of *Shalat*. The pattern highlights the importance of structured routines, adaptive teaching methods, and community involvement in creating an inclusive and supportive learning environment.

Table 6. Influence of Ideal Strategies for Teaching *Shalat*

Informant Position	Interview Excerpt	Indicator
IRE Teacher	"We have a weekly <i>Shalat Dhuha</i> program every Friday for our students, where they perform the prayer in congregation. This routine helps them stay engaged with religious practice."	Routine program for consistent practice
IRE Teacher	"On Tuesdays, we gather all students for <i>Shalat Dhuha</i> as part of our weekly routine. It's crucial for engaging students with special needs in a structured religious activity."	Routine engagement, weekly structure
IRE Teacher	"Given the limited space in the Mushalla, we use a combination of video demonstrations and peer tutoring to ensure all students can follow along."	Space limitations, video and peer support
Principal	"Collaborating with parents has helped reinforce the learning at home. Parents help by providing support for memorization and encouraging regular practice."	Collaboration with parents, home support

The table clearly reflects the strategies used by the teachers and principals to support students in their learning of *Shalat*. The consistent use of weekly programs, visual aids, and peer tutoring demonstrates the commitment to engaging all students, regardless of disability, in regular religious practice. Additionally, the collaboration with parents helps bridge the gap between school and home, reinforcing learning outside of the classroom. The table further

highlights the importance of adapting teaching strategies to the specific challenges faced by students, ensuring that they receive the necessary support to engage with religious education.

Discussion

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the student demographics, challenges, and strategies employed in teaching *Shalat* to students with disabilities in Special School. These findings are consistent with previous literature, which emphasizes the importance of adapting teaching strategies to accommodate the diverse needs of students with disabilities (Aderibigbe et al., 2023; Mahmood et al., 2025). The data on student demographics in both schools reveals a wide range of disabilities, including visual, hearing, intellectual, and physical impairments, highlighting the need for specialized educational strategies (Jin et al., 2025; Khan et al., 2024). This aligns with the assertion by (Pandia & Drew, 2023) that a tailored, individualized approach is essential in effectively teaching students with disabilities, especially in religious education such as *Shalat*. However, while the findings reflect the individualized strategies used, they also underscore the challenges related to the heterogeneity of student needs, particularly in terms of cognitive and motoric abilities (Goyibova et al., 2025; Z. L. Wang & Chen, 2025).

In terms of teaching challenges, the study highlights the difficulty of memorizing and reciting prayers, especially for students with intellectual disabilities, such as Down syndrome and autism. These challenges are in line with the findings of (Henry et al., 2022; Septiaji & Rahmawati, 2025), who emphasize that students with intellectual disabilities require considerable repetition and attention. The findings of this study reveal that teachers in both SLB schools face difficulties in balancing the physical aspects of *Shalat* with the cognitive demands of memorization. This supports the work of (Karimah et al., 2025; Ratnawulan et al., 2023), who argue that collective reinforcement strategies, such as group prayer sessions, can significantly enhance the spiritual understanding of students with special needs. However, the findings also highlight the need for continuous adaptation and flexibility in teaching methods, as students' cognitive abilities vary greatly (Fuchs et al., 2023; J. Wang & Jou, 2023).

The strategies employed by teachers in both schools, including repetition, peer tutoring, and the use of visual aids, are consistent with the literature that advocates for multimodal teaching methods. (Boza-Chua & Andrade-Arenas, 2022; Herrera et al., 2023) emphasize the importance of using mobile applications and digital tools to assist students with hearing impairments, which aligns with the use of video demonstrations and digital aids observed in this study. Moreover, the use of structured, routine programs such as *Shalat Dhuha* aligns with (Abu-Rasheed et al., 2023; Thamrin et al., 2024) recommendation to incorporate contextual learning strategies that cater to students' individual needs. The findings from this study contribute to the growing body of knowledge on inclusive education, particularly in Islamic religious education, by demonstrating that

personalized teaching methods and community-based religious programs can significantly enhance students' engagement and learning outcomes.

Despite the positive impact of these strategies, the study also reveals significant challenges, such as the limited number of teachers, inadequate space in prayer rooms (Mushalla), and the difficulty some students face in memorizing prayers. These challenges are consistent with the findings of (Arif et al., 2025; Nurmaliyah et al., 2023), who identified teacher shortages and infrastructural limitations as primary obstacles in special education. (Aderibigbe et al., 2023; Morrissey et al., 2025; Riaz et al., 2023) further emphasize the gap in the national curriculum's adaptability for students with disabilities. This study confirms that the absence of a fully adaptive curriculum continues to hinder the effectiveness of religious education in SLBs, suggesting the need for systemic reforms and enhanced teacher training, as recommended by (Kristian, 2024; Poncini, 2023). These issues are further compounded by the mental and emotional challenges students face, as discussed by (Dalgaard et al., 2022; Reeves et al., 2022), who note that without structural interventions, students with disabilities are at risk of exclusion, even in inclusive settings.

The solutions implemented in the schools, such as the use of video materials, regular prayer programs, and the involvement of parents, demonstrate the importance of collaborative efforts in overcoming the challenges of teaching *Shalat*. This aligns with the recommendations of (Altındağ Kumaş & Sardohan Yildirim, 2024; Geduld, 2024), who stress the need for parental involvement in reinforcing learning at home. Additionally, the study highlights the value of adaptive learning materials, such as multimedia tools and interactive digital applications, which have been shown to enhance motivation and retention for students with autism and intellectual disabilities (Derbissalova et al., 2024; Sari et al., 2025). The practical implications of these findings suggest that teachers should receive ongoing training in adaptive pedagogies, and that schools should invest in more inclusive learning environments, both in terms of resources and space, to better meet the needs of students with disabilities.

CONCLUSION

The most significant finding from this research is the recognition that teaching *Shalat* to students with disabilities requires a tailored, individualized approach that considers both the cognitive and physical challenges of students. The study reveals that strategies such as repetition, visual aids, peer tutoring, and the use of structured, routine programs, such as *Shalat Dhuha*, are crucial in providing consistent religious education to students with diverse disabilities. These findings highlight the importance of flexibility in teaching methods, as well as the essential role of collaboration with parents and co-teachers in reinforcing learning outside the classroom. The lessons learned from this study underscore the necessity of inclusive, adaptive strategies to ensure that all students, regardless of their disabilities, can fully engage with religious practices.

The strength of this study lies in its contribution to the field of inclusive Islamic education. By focusing on the specific challenges faced in teaching *Shalat*

to students with special needs, this research provides practical insights into effective strategies and the necessary adjustments to traditional teaching methods. It also contributes to the broader discourse on the implementation of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) in religious education, offering a model that could be adapted for similar educational contexts. However, this research has limitations, such as the relatively small sample size and the focus on only two schools in Samarinda, which may not fully represent the diverse needs and strategies in other SLBs across the country. Future research could explore a larger, more diverse sample of schools and investigate the long-term impact of these adaptive strategies on the religious and educational outcomes of students with disabilities. Additionally, examining the perspectives of parents and the broader community could provide further insights into the success and challenges of implementing inclusive education in religious settings.

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