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Inclusive Education Based on Islamic Values: A Case Study at Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliyah Awaliyah Syamtalira Aron, North Aceh

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ABSTRACT

Inclusive education is a vital approach to ensuring equitable access to learning opportunities for all students, including those enrolled in non-formal Islamic educational institutions. Yet, the consistent role of Islamic Religious Education teachers in applying inclusive principles within madrasah diniyah remains insufficiently explored. This study adopts a qualitative methodology with a case study design, conducted at Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliyah Awaliyah (MDTA) Syamtalira Aron in North Aceh. Participants included *asātīzah* (teachers), *santri* (students), and institutional administrators, selected through purposive sampling. Data were gathered via in-depth interviews, non-participant observations, and document analysis, and analysed using the Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña model, comprising data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Credibility was ensured through triangulation of sources and methods. Findings indicate that teachers at MDTA Syamtalira Aron consistently implement inclusive education despite facing challenges such as limited infrastructure, insufficient training, and inconsistent parental support. Inclusive practices are evident in adaptive teaching strategies, personalized support for students with learning difficulties, and the integration of Islamic values—including tawhid (oneness of God), justice, compassion, brotherhood, and empathy. Inclusive education at MDTA not only improves access to learning but also contributes to students' moral development and encourages teachers to enhance their professional competence. Conceptually, this study frames inclusive education from an Islamic perspective as a synthesis of pedagogical strategy and spiritual values. Practically, it offers a contextual implementation model for madrasah diniyah operating with limited resources.

Keywords: *Inclusive Education, Islamic Values, Madrasah Diniyah, Islamic Religious Education*

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ABSTRAK

Pendidikan inklusif merupakan pendekatan penting untuk menjamin akses pembelajaran yang adil dan setara bagi seluruh peserta didik, termasuk mereka yang berada di lembaga pendidikan Islam non-formal. Namun, peran konsisten guru dalam menerapkan prinsip inklusif di madrasah diniyah masih belum banyak dikaji secara mendalam. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus yang dilaksanakan di Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliah Awaliyah (MDTA) Syamtalira Aron, Aceh Utara. Partisipan penelitian terdiri dari ustaz/ustazah (guru), santri (siswa), dan pengelola lembaga yang dipilih melalui teknik purposive sampling. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi nonpartisipan, dan analisis dokumen, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan model Miles, Huberman, dan Saldaña yang mencakup tahapan kondensasi data, penyajian data, serta penarikan dan verifikasi kesimpulan. Kredibilitas data dijaga melalui triangulasi sumber dan metode. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa guru di MDTA Syamtalira Aron secara konsisten menerapkan pendidikan inklusif meskipun menghadapi keterbatasan sarana, pelatihan, dan dukungan orang tua. Praktik inklusif tercermin dalam strategi pembelajaran yang adaptif, pemberian perhatian khusus kepada santri yang mengalami kesulitan belajar, serta integrasi nilai-nilai Islam seperti tauhid, keadilan, kasih sayang, persaudaraan, dan empati. Pendidikan inklusif di MDTA tidak hanya meningkatkan akses belajar, tetapi juga berkontribusi pada pembentukan akhlak santri dan mendorong guru untuk meningkatkan kompetensi profesional mereka. Secara konseptual, penelitian ini memandang pendidikan inklusif dalam perspektif Islam sebagai sintesis antara strategi pedagogis dan nilai-nilai spiritual. Secara praktis, hasil penelitian ini menawarkan model implementasi yang relevan bagi madrasah diniyah yang beroperasi dengan sumber daya terbatas.

Kata Kunci: *Pendidikan Inklusif, Nilai Islam, Madrasah Diniyah, Pendidikan Keagamaan Islam*

INTRODUCTION

Education plays a strategic role in shaping the quality of human resources and realizing national aspirations. (Amalia & Kurniawati, 2021). In today's educational landscape, inclusivity has become a central imperative to ensure equitable access for all learners—regardless of their social, economic, cultural, physical, or intellectual backgrounds. Inclusive education is grounded in the principles of justice, equality, and respect for diversity. As emphasized by UNESCO (2009), it involves responding to the varied needs of learners by promoting participation and reducing exclusion.

Teachers serve not only as conveyors of religious knowledge but also as moral and social agents who foster a supportive, respectful, and inspiring learning environment. Within the framework of Islamic education, teachers (*asātizah*) are viewed as role models who embody the values of *rahmatan lil 'ālamīn* (mercy to all creation). Al-Attas (1999) asserts that the ultimate goal of Islamic education is to cultivate civilized individuals through the internalization of spiritual and ethical values. This aligns with the Islamic principles of *'adl* (justice) and *ukhuwwah*

insānīyah (human brotherhood), which serve as foundational pillars for implementing inclusive education in an Islamic context.

Previous studies have explored inclusive education from various perspectives. [Hanaa & Evani \(2022\)](#) examined how teachers accommodate students with special needs, while [Syaifudin \(2021\)](#) highlighted the importance of teacher training in fostering inclusive practices. [Karya \(2022\)](#) addressed policy-level challenges in inclusive schools, and [Wardhani \(2020\)](#) investigated madrasah teachers' perceptions of students with special needs. While these contributions are valuable, they primarily focus on general classroom settings or institutional policies. The consistent role of Islamic education teachers in cultivating inclusive practices remains underexplored.

In this regard, Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliyah Awaliyah Syamtalira Aron, a traditional Islamic educational institution, faces distinct challenges in implementing inclusive principles. As a non-formal religious education unit, MDTA provides foundational Islamic instruction to primary school-aged children. The term "*diniyah takmiliyah*" combines *diniyah* (دينية), meaning "religious", and *takmiliyah* (تكميلية), meaning "complementary", signifying its role in supplementing formal education with deeper guidance in faith, worship, ethics, and Qur'anic literacy.

MDTA Syamtalira Aron serves students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds, including children of farmers, small traders, and migrant families. Key challenges include limited inclusive infrastructure, insufficient teacher training, and a prevailing institutional culture that favors homogeneity. These conditions underscore the need for consistent strategies by educators to ensure that inclusive Islamic values are meaningfully embedded in everyday teaching practices.

National policy frameworks have affirmed the importance of inclusive education. Regulation No. 70/2009 by the Ministry of National Education guarantees every child's right to equal educational services. Similarly, Regulation No. 13/2014 by the Ministry of Religious Affairs recognizes *madrasah diniyah* as an integral component of the Islamic education system, committed to expanding access and improving quality. These policies should serve as guiding references for educators (*asātīzah*) in fulfilling their dual roles as teachers and exemplars of inclusivity.

This study seeks to address the existing gap by examining how *asātīzah* consistently implements inclusive education at MDTA Syamtalira Aron. It aims to provide a nuanced understanding of their strategic role, the challenges they encounter, and the pedagogical approaches they employ. Specifically, the research

explores: 1) the consistency of *asātīzah* in applying inclusive education principles; 2) the challenges they face; and 3) the strategies they adopt to sustain inclusive practices.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative approach using a case study design to explore the consistency of *asātīzah* in applying inclusive education principles at Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliyah Awaliyah Syamtalira Aron (hereafter referred to as MDTA Syamtalira Aron). This approach was chosen for its suitability in examining social phenomena from the participants' perspectives within a specific contextual setting (Moleong, 2017). As Creswell (2014) notes, qualitative case studies enable researchers to investigate systems, individuals, or processes in depth and within defined boundaries.

Research participants were selected through purposive sampling, based on their direct involvement and relevance to the implementation of inclusive education. The sample included 1) *asātīzah* as the primary agents in planning and delivering inclusive instruction; (2) *santri* (students), to capture their learning experiences within an inclusive environment; and (3) MDTA administrators, to provide managerial insights into institutional support.

Data collection was conducted through three main techniques: 1) In-depth interviews were carried out in a semi-structured format with *asātīzah*, *santri*, and MDTA administrators. These interviews focused on the teachers' efforts to maintain inclusive practices, the challenges they encountered, and the strategies they employed. 2) Non-participant observation was conducted during classroom sessions. Observed elements included teacher-student interactions, particularly with students with special needs, classroom management, use of instructional media, and student responses to the inclusive learning environment. 3) Document analysis involved reviewing learning records, institutional archives, and photographs of classroom activities. These materials served as supporting evidence to triangulate and enrich the findings from interviews and observations.

Data analysis followed the Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña (2014) model, which was applied iteratively throughout the research process. The analysis included 1) Data condensation: selecting, focusing, and simplifying data from interviews, observations, and documentation. 2) Data display: organizing the data into narratives, matrices, and thematic categories to facilitate interpretation. 3) Conclusion drawing and verification: identifying emerging patterns, relationships, and trends, and validating them against field data. To ensure the credibility of the findings, the study employed both source triangulation (cross-checking

information from teachers, students, and administrators) and methodological triangulation (combining interviews, observations, and document analysis).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of Inclusive Education by *Asātīzah* at MDTA Syamtalira Aron

However, in practice, it is often misunderstood as being synonymous with special education for children with disabilities. The findings at Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliyah Awaliyah (MDTA) Syamtalira Aron reveal that *asātīzah* have begun to implement inclusive principles in their daily teaching routines. One *ustāz* pays particular attention to *santri* who struggle with reading classical texts or frequently arrive late. As he explained:

“Some students are slow to grasp Arabic readings. I make sure they don’t feel left behind—I usually call them after class for slower, guided instruction.”
(Interview, *Ustāz* 1, 2024)

This reflects the teacher’s commitment to adapting instructional methods to ensure all students remain engaged. Teachers employ various strategies—such as icebreakers, educational games, and group discussions to capture the attention of less active learners. One *santri* shared:

“When studying with *ustāzah*, there are games or stories in between, so it’s never boring. If someone is slow, they’re not scolded—they’re helped.”
(Interview, *Santri* 2, 2024)

These findings demonstrate that inclusivity at MDTA Syamtalira Aron is not merely rhetorical but enacted through tangible practices: offering additional support to struggling students and using diverse teaching methods to foster participation. Such practices align with the principles of differentiated instruction (Tomlinson, 2014) and active learning Baepler et al. (2023), which effectively increases the involvement of students with diverse abilities. This reinforces Amalia & Kurniawati (2021) view that inclusiveness must be realized through adaptation of methods, not just policies.

The example of teachers who are patient and do not punish slow students also reflects the Islamic values of *rahmah* (compassion) and *'adl* (justice). Thus, the consistency of the *ustāz* in MDTA Syamtalira Aron can be understood as an Islamic value-based inclusive education practice that combines adaptive pedagogical strategies and moral exemplars.

The Contribution of Inclusive Education to Moral Development

Field data indicate that inclusive education at MDTA Syamtalira Aron significantly contributes to the moral development of students. Teachers serve as

role models for discipline and courtesy, which are then emulated by the *santri*. As noted by the MDTA manager:

“We often see children imitating their teachers’ behavior—arriving on time and greeting others politely. That’s a direct result of inclusive religious instruction.” (Interview, MDTA Manager, 2024)

Beyond shaping attitudes, inclusive interactions also nurture empathy among students. Those with stronger academic abilities often assist peers who face learning difficulties. This phenomenon resonates with Bandura's (1977) social learning theory, which posits that prosocial behavior is cultivated through everyday social interactions.

Nonetheless, these practices are not without challenges. Teachers acknowledged constraints such as overcrowded classrooms, limited facilities, and diverse social backgrounds. One *ustāẓah* remarked:

“It’s sometimes hard to manage the class due to the large number of students and basic facilities. But we keep trying to ensure every child feels cared for.” (Interview, *Ustāẓah* 2, 2024)

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that inclusive education at MDTA Syamtalira Aron plays a vital role in shaping students’ moral character through role modelling, social engagement, and the creation of an empathetic learning environment. Instructional patterns that emphasize fairness and compassion enable *santri* to internalize positive behaviors such as discipline, respect, and mutual care. This process aligns with Bandura’s theory, which underscores the importance of observation and social experience in moral development.

Despite facing infrastructural limitations and social diversity, inclusive education at MDTA continues to foster a religious and empathetic culture among students, making it a resilient and contextually grounded model of moral education within an Islamic framework.

Inclusive Education Values in Islamic Religious Education Learning

The analysis reveals that *asātīẓah* (teachers) at MDTA Syamtalira Aron not only deliver religious content, such as the Qur’an, Hadith, *‘Aqīdah Akhlāq*, Jurisprudence, Islamic Cultural History, Arabic Language, Worship Practices, and Qur’anic Literacy, but also embed Islamic values into their daily inclusive teaching practices. This integration positions inclusive education not merely as a pedagogical approach, but as a form of spiritual embodiment aligned with the teachings of the Qur’an, Hadith, and classical Islamic scholarship. These values serve as ethical guidelines for teachers in treating *santri* with fairness, compassion, and respect for diversity.

A concrete example can be seen in the Qur’anic Reading and Writing (BTQ) sessions, where teachers assess students’ reading abilities while also nurturing

rahmah (compassion) by encouraging slower readers, so they do not feel marginalized. In *Aqīdah Akhlāq* classes, students are taught to praise one another with kind words, reflecting the practice of *ta'dīb* in social interaction. During breaks, students are invited to maintain cleanliness in the classroom and madrasah environment as an expression of trust and cooperation. These simple yet consistent practices demonstrate how inclusive education at MDTA Syamtalira Aron becomes a living process of internalizing Islamic values—not only cognitively understood but actively practiced.

Theoretically, these findings reinforce [UNESCO's \(2009\)](#) view that inclusive education is not solely about access, but about cultivating an environment where diversity is embraced as a strength. Value-based education theory ([Halstead & Taylor, 2000](#)) further supports the idea that religious values can serve as a foundation for inclusivity. In the Islamic tradition, [Al-Attas \(1999\)](#) defines education as *ta'dīb*, the cultivation of civilized individuals through the internalization of knowledge and spiritual values. The practices observed at MDTA Syamtalira Aron exemplify this concept, where inclusivity is realized through both pedagogical adaptation and moral exemplification.

These findings are also supported by previous studies. [Rahman et al. \(2024\)](#) emphasized the pivotal role of teachers in shaping students' moral and social character. [Misrina et al \(2024\)](#) found that the consistency of religious educators as role models fosters the internalization of tolerance and compassion among *santri*. [Paramansyah & Parojai \(2024\)](#) argued that inclusive education in religious institutions strengthens students' social character by positioning Islamic values as cultural capital. Thus, the case of MDTA Syamtalira Aron not only affirms global theories of inclusiveness but also enriches them with the transcendental dimension of Islam, making teacher consistency a central driver of value-based inclusive education.

To illustrate how Islamic values are operationalized in inclusive practices at MDTA, field observations and interviews identified various applications in daily learning activities. Teachers consciously use the teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith as moral frameworks in their interactions with students, both inside and outside the classroom. These values serve as foundational principles in cultivating a learning environment that is equitable, compassionate, and respectful of individual differences. The following table summarizes the relationship between inclusive values, Islamic foundations, and observed teacher practices:

Table 1. Inclusive Values in Learning at MDTA Syamtalira Aron

Inclusive Value	Islamic Foundation	Teacher Practice at MDTA Syamtalira Aron
Tawhid & Equality	QS. Al-Hujurat: 13	All students are treated equally, regardless of background.
Tolerance	QS. Al-Kafirun: 6; Al-Ghazali	Teachers train students not to mock peers with different abilities.
Justice	QS. An-Nahl: 90; Ibn Khaldun	Extra time is given to students who struggle with learning.
<i>Rahmah</i> (Compassion)	QS. Al-Anbiya: 107	Teachers are gentle and ensure students feel valued.
Empathy & Care	HR. Bukhari-Muslim	Students are encouraged to help one another in class.
Human Dignity	QS. Al-Isra: 70	All students are respected, regardless of limitations.
Cooperation	QS. Al-Ma'idah: 2	Group work and mutual support are promoted among students.
Trust & Responsibility	QS. Al-Ahzab: 72	Teachers emphasize discipline and personal responsibility in learning.

Source: Research Findings

Table 1 demonstrates how teachers consistently align Islamic values with inclusive principles. These practices are not only responsive to students' diverse needs but also reflect religious teachings that emphasize equality, justice, compassion, and human dignity. Therefore, inclusive education at MDTA Syamtalira Aron represents a meaningful integration of contemporary pedagogical approaches with deeply rooted Islamic traditions.

Challenges and Barriers in Implementing Inclusive Education at MDTA Syamtalira Aron

Observations and interviews reveal that the implementation of inclusive education at MDTA Syamtalira Aron faces several persistent challenges. These include both structural and cultural barriers:

1. Limited Facilities and Infrastructure

Many students continue to study on terraces or in open spaces, using mats as seating. As one teacher noted:

"There aren't enough tables and chairs, so some children have to sit outside. They often struggle to concentrate when studying in the heat." (Interview, *Ustāz* 3, 2024)

2. Uneven Teacher Training

Teachers expressed the need for specialized training to address student diversity:

“We learn from experience; there’s no formal training on inclusive education. So, we often have to adapt on our own.” (Interview, *Ustāzah* 2, 2024)

3. Inconsistent Parental Support

Some parents remain sceptical about the benefits of inclusive education:

“If all children are grouped, I worry that my child won’t receive enough attention.” (Interview, Parent, 2024)

4. Social Stigma and Stereotypes

Students with different abilities are sometimes teased by their peers. One *santri* shared:

“Some kids mock those who read slowly, but *ustāzah* always steps in to correct them.” (Interview, *Santri* 1, 2024)

5. Rigid Evaluation and Curriculum

The current evaluation system emphasizes uniform standards, making it difficult to assess individual progress. Teachers also noted that the Islamic education curriculum is dense and challenging for students with varying abilities.

These findings align with previous research by [Syaifudin \(2021\)](#), [Salabi \(2023\)](#), and [Judijanto et al. \(2025\)](#), which highlight that inclusive education challenges are often rooted in structural limitations (facilities, training, curriculum) and cultural factors (parental attitudes, social stigma).

Strategies for Overcoming Challenges

Despite these obstacles, MDTA Syamtalira Aron has adopted several practical and context-sensitive strategies:

1. Mobilizing Local Resources

To address facility shortages, the community contributes through donations of mats, blackboards, and books—often coordinated by the parents and *gampong* (village) leaders.

2. Enhancing Teacher Competence

In the absence of formal training, teachers engage in peer learning by sharing experiences with neighbouring madrasahs. This informal exchange serves as a valuable form of professional development.

3. Raising Parental Awareness

Regular meetings with student guardians are held to explain the benefits of inclusive education, helping to reduce parental doubts and foster support.

4. Combating Stigma

Teachers actively promote Islamic values such as *rahmah* (compassion) and *'adl* (justice) in classroom interactions, helping to reduce stigma and encourage respectful behavior among students.

5. Adopting Flexible Assessment

Teachers have begun implementing process-based assessments that value student effort and participation, rather than relying solely on standardized test scores.

These strategies reflect the principles of the “Whole School Approach” (UNESCO & UNICEF, 2024), which emphasizes the involvement of all stakeholders—teachers, students, parents, and the broader community—in creating an inclusive learning environment. (Wahib et al., 2023). In MDTA Syamtalira Aron, this principle is implemented through collaboration with the surrounding *dayah* (*pesantren*), support from *gampong* officials, and the involvement of the parents.

Although the *asātizah* at MDTA Syamtalira Aron have tried to consistently apply the inclusive principle, various real challenges still arise in the field. These challenges are not only structural, such as limited facilities, but also cultural, such as social stigma among students and the doubts of some parents. However, field findings show that madrasah teachers and managers do not give up but rather develop adaptive strategies in accordance with the local context and the Islamic values they espouse. For more details, a summary of the challenges and strategies taken can be seen in the following table:

Table 2. Challenges and strategies for inclusive education at MDTA Syamtalira Aron

Challenge	Teacher Strategy	Field Description
Limited facilities (small classrooms, lack of furniture)	Community donations of mats, blackboards, and books	<i>“Some children sit outside due to a lack of tables and chairs.” (Ustāz 1)</i>
Lack of formal training on inclusion	Peer learning across madrasahs, self-directed adaptation	<i>“We adjust ourselves because there’s no official training.” (Ustāzah 2)</i>
Uneven parental support	Guardian meetings to promote inclusive understanding	<i>“I worry my child won’t get enough attention.” (Student’s parents)</i>
Student stigma and stereotypes	Integration of Islamic values (<i>rahmah</i> , <i>'adl</i>), direct reprimand to students who ridicule	<i>“Some mock their peers, but ustāzah immediately intervenes.” (Santri 3)</i>
Einflexible valuation & curriculum	Process-based assessment, varied instructional methods	Teachers assess engagement and effort, not just test scores

This table illustrates how, despite facing complex limitations, *asātīzah* at MDTA Syamtalira Aron remains committed to inclusive principles. Their strategies are modest yet contextually grounded, drawing on community support, Islamic ethics, and adaptive pedagogy. Inclusive education here is not merely aspirational; it is a lived reality rooted in local wisdom and the dedication of educators as agents of transformation.

To conclude, the relationship between challenges, teacher strategies, and Islamic values that sustain inclusive education at MDTA Syamtalira Aron can be visualized through an integrative framework. This framework clarifies how teachers maintain their commitment to inclusivity despite limited resources and social constraints.

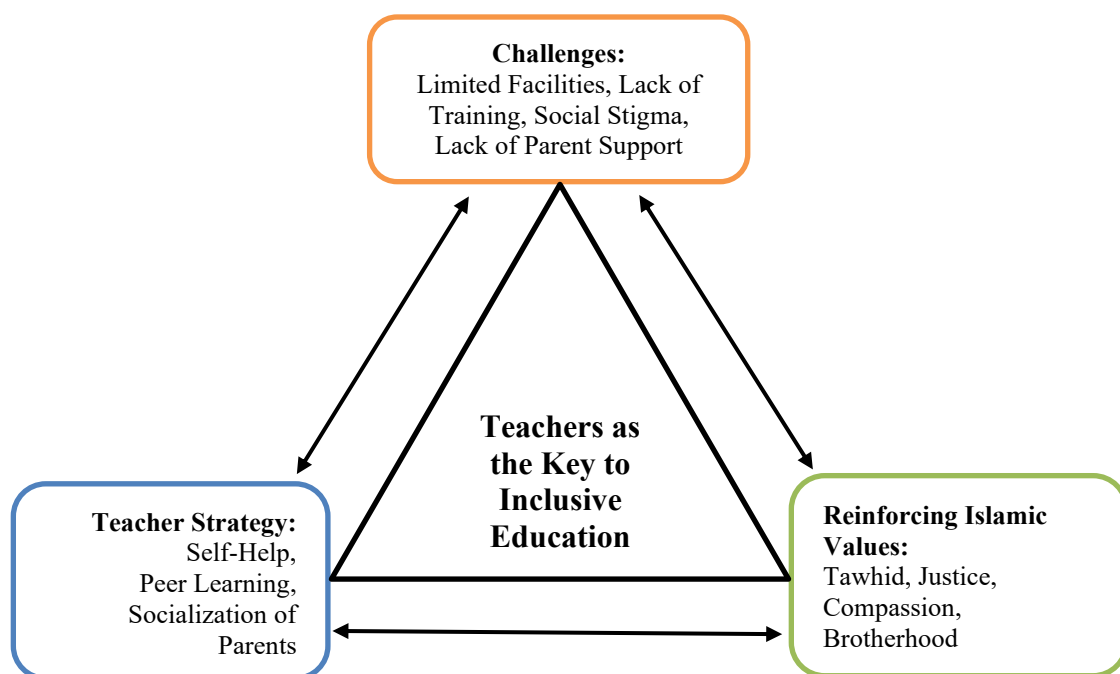


Figure 1: Integrative Framework of Inclusive Education at MDTA Syamtalira Aron

This triangular model illustrates the interconnected components that support inclusive education in a non-formal Islamic setting. At the center is the teacher, positioned as the key agent of transformation. The three corners represent (1) structural and cultural challenges, (2) adaptive teacher strategies, and (3) reinforcing Islamic values. Together, these elements form a holistic framework for sustaining inclusive practices rooted in faith and local wisdom.

The top corner of the triangle highlights the challenges faced in the field, including limited facilities, lack of formal training, social stigma, and inconsistent parental support. These obstacles reflect both structural and cultural realities that influence the effectiveness of inclusive education.

The bottom-left corner represents teacher strategies, which include self-help initiatives, peer learning across madrasahs, parental engagement, and the integration of Islamic values into pedagogy. These strategies demonstrate the teachers' contextual responsiveness and commitment to inclusivity despite resource limitations.

The bottom-right corner emphasizes the Islamic values that reinforce inclusive practices: *tawhid* (oneness), *'adl* (justice), *rahmah* (compassion), and *ukhuwwah* (brotherhood). These values serve as moral and spiritual foundations that guide teacher behavior and shape the learning climate.

This framework affirms that inclusive education in MDTA Syamtalira Aron is not merely a technical adaptation, but a value-driven process rooted in Islamic ethics and community-based resilience. It positions teachers as central agents who bridge pedagogical innovation with spiritual integrity.

CONCLUSION

This study affirms that the consistency of Islamic Religious Education teachers plays a pivotal role in realizing inclusive education at Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliah Awaliyah (MDTA), Syamtalira Aron, North Aceh. Through adaptive strategies, teachers are able to foster a learning environment that is welcoming, equitable, and respectful of diversity—despite facing limitations in infrastructure, professional training, and prevailing social stigma.

Inclusive practices at MDTA are evident not only in the adaptation of teaching materials and methods but also in the exemplary conduct of teachers who embody and instill core Islamic values such as *tawhid*, justice, compassion, brotherhood, and empathy. These values serve as both pedagogical tools and moral foundations in shaping inclusive learning experiences.

The findings demonstrate that inclusive education at MDTA is not merely a normative ideal, but a lived reality within Islamic Religious instruction—albeit one that continues to encounter structural and cultural challenges. Teachers' consistency has proven effective in integrating self-help initiatives, engaging with parents, and reinforcing Islamic ethics to overcome these barriers.

Conceptually, this research confirms that inclusive education from an Islamic perspective aligns with the broader framework of social and spiritual justice, positioning teachers as central agents of transformation. Practically, the insights from this study offer a valuable reference for other madrasah diniyah seeking to develop inclusive education strategies that are grounded in Islamic values and tailored to their local contexts.

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