

IMPLEMENTATION OF RELIGIOUS LEARNING FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS THROUGH ONLINE APPLICATIONS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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ABSTRACT

Religious education contains values that are one of the building blocks of student character education. This study will reveal and explain the experience of teachers in carrying out religious learning for children with special education needs through online applications. This qualitative research uses a narrative approach. The sampling technique used purposive sampling. The participants of this study were ten teachers of Islamic religious education from two junior high schools in Yogyakarta. Data was collected through in-depth interviews using the interview protocol instrument. Most of the technical interviews were conducted using a question form via WhatsApp and answered with voice notes. While others can be interviewed directly after getting permission from the school. Data analysis used narrative analysis techniques with data reduction stages, themes determination, description, and data interpretation. The results of the study found that the application of religious learning to children with special education needs was classified on two main themes, namely the form of application of learning through online applications and the obstacles faced by teachers. The application of teacher competency learning in using online learning applications and teacher experience has an important role in its success. Obstacles faced by teachers include students' abilities, infrastructure, and limited learning facilities. Some aspects support the success of religious learning for children with special education needs, namely full support from parents, government support, schools, and good communication.

Keywords: *Implementation, Religious Learning, WhatsApp, Instagram, Support, Facilities*

1. INTRODUCTION

Education has an important role in human life. Although in general the condition of the community is still affected by COVID-19, in the world of education, especially in Indonesia, it has adjusted to new normal conditions. This adjustment relates to the learning system that has been carried out in a blinded manner, which combines direct and online learning [1]. By the provisions of the Constitution of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia, it is stated that the state guarantees education for every Indonesian people. This means that every

citizen has the right to get a proper education [2]. The basic concept of national education is to systematically develop children's abilities in the form of learning either in formal or informal schools. The conditions in the field were not as easy as imagined. Schools and teachers as educators who directly teach subjects in class have many learning obstacles, especially learning models for children with special education needs. Learning strategies, curriculum, learning media, and other facilities that support the smooth implementation of classroom learning are still limited [3].

On the other hand, it turns out that not all people get a proper education. This limitation could be due to the lack of access to education and the lack of individual abilities due to the limited intelligence level of children with special education needs. The category of children with special education needs has its type. Some children are categorized as autistic children [4], slow learners [5], and special education needs [6]. Autistic children are children who have difficulties in interacting with other people. Autistic children are not without the ability to communicate, it's just that they have limitations in the communication process [7]. In general, autistic children tend to limit themselves and are more interested in their world, thus ignoring social contact with the wider community [8]. In this condition, parents have an important obligation and role in assisting their development at home [9].

This situation creates a separate problem in the world of education. On the one hand, education must be provided to all communities, on the other hand, some limitations become obstacles in the implementation of education. Coupled with the COVID-19 pandemic, which is still ongoing, the problem is even more complex. By the national education system law no. 20 of 2003, the formula for this condition has been sought, namely the existence of special education or inclusive schools for children who have special education needs. Another provision of this special law explains that schools must accommodate the interests of children with special education needs in their acceptance and learning. This is also reinforced in Article 5 paragraph 2 concerning the National education system which states that residents who have physical, emotional, mental, intellectual, and or social disabilities have the right to obtain special education [10].

Another obstacle faced in inclusive schools is the assumption that children with special education needs cannot be mixed with children in the learning process [11]. Inclusive schools must provide special assistance and facilities to support the smooth process of education for children with special education needs. In contrast to ordinary schools, inclusive schools must adapt to the conditions of students. Special education for children with special education needs is almost the same as education in general. But the curriculum part needs to be specially designed [12]. Not only the curriculum but the professionalism of a teacher is also needed in the learning process [13]. Teachers are the main source of knowledge for children with special education needs. Teachers must have a high

level of creativity and have an open heart and be patient in carrying out the learning process [14].

Not only general material, religious material as a process of character education is also very important for children with special education needs, so that religious education becomes a mandatory material that must be given [15]. Religious education is the main basis that will foster abilities and strengthen children's character. Religious education is given by the beliefs held by the child or student [16]. Learning materials also influence the methods and strategies used by teachers [17]. Islamic religious education is education that is carried out by Islamic teachings through guidance and care for students so that later children can understand, appreciate, and practice the teachings of the Islamic religion that they have believed thoroughly, and make their religious teachings their way of life for the safety and welfare of life in this world and the hereafter.

Religious education is also intended to increase spiritual potential and shape students to become human beings who believe and fear God Almighty and have noble character [18]. Noble morals include ethics, character, and morals as the embodiment of religious education. Increasing spiritual potential includes the practice, understanding, and inculcation of religious values. The practice of these values in individual or collective social life [19]. Increased potential and deep understanding of religious teachings will affect individual attitudes and behavior in everyday life, including children with special education needs. The main problem that will be raised in this study is the implementation of religious learning carried out by teachers in inclusive schools for children with special education needs through online applications. This condition is based on the problem of teachers in the teaching and learning process who must make special learning strategies so that children with special education needs can also receive the subject matter by the established curriculum. In addition to the main problems above, it is also known that the global conditions that are experiencing the COVID-19 pandemic have made the learning system limited [20]. In recent times, along with the easing of COVID-19, schools have also started to conduct direct learning, although it is limited to a rotating system where students take part in online learning, while others follow directly [21].

By the understanding and background of the problems mentioned, this study has several formulations of the problems discussed, namely how the process of implementing Islamic religious

education learning for children with special education needs at the junior high school level in Indonesia and the obstacles faced in the process of implementing the learning. The main objective of this research is to know the implementation of methods and strategies in the learning process of religious education given to children with special education needs in junior high schools through online applications. The theoretical benefit of this research is to provide additional knowledge references about the application of religious education to children with needs during the pandemic by using online media. The expected practical benefits are as an evaluation material for policymakers, the government in formulating a policy on religious education, and the use of technology tools that can help especially religious education for children with special education needs and related agencies, namely inclusive schools that organize learning process.

Through this research, it can provide massive insight into the application of learning strategies in students with special education needs which is integrated with technological advances. Especially now that the world of education is still being affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has caused educators to have to rack their brains to create learning patterns that are as effective as face-to-face learning patterns. Especially for students with special education needs require different treatment from other students in doing the learning. Furthermore, this research also provides new treasures for teachers at special schools in carrying out religious learning that is integrated with online applications on smartphones and the internet. The findings in this study can also provide a new paradigm in developing new learning patterns for students with special education needs that integrate online applications after the COVID-19 pandemic ends. Religious learning, which is usually carried out face-to-face by transforming religious knowledge and religious values, is currently being carried out during the COVID-19 pandemic remotely by integrating it into online applications. Of course, this research study also provides more opportunities for students with special education needs to adapt and master technological advances that help in facilitating their daily activities, especially in learning. In addition, to achieve the goals of religious education and the character of students with special needs, comprehensive abilities are needed which include aspects of competence, experience, creativity, communication, family support, government support, and many other factors. This strong demand in realizing character

education based on the values of religious teachings requires comprehensive cooperation from the government, schools, teachers, parents, and the wider community. For teachers, this research can be a simple reference in dealing with children with special needs at school. For schools, this research can also be a source of correction in improving the quality of school policies. For parents, it can be used as learning material in educating and providing religious education for their children.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. The Basic Concept of Islamic Religious Education

The aim of contemporary religious education is not only to change the socio-cultural and knowledge base of students but also to be able to solve the moral and ethical problems of modern science [22]. The process in religious education is the instilling of faith and piety in each individual and shaping human morals so that the individual has a personality and noble character according to the religion of Islam [23]. Inclusive teachers who teach for children with special education needs are one of the important elements in success in character education [24]. Therefore, inclusive teachers must be equipped with comprehensive abilities such as pedagogic, personality, professional and social competencies will also affect the use of methods and strategies in the implementation of learning [25].

Learning is generally defined as a learning and teaching process in which there is an interaction between two parties in the transfer and exchange of knowledge. Not only teachers who are a source of knowledge, but students can also be used as information providers. In the learning process, a teacher must understand his position, understand, and appreciate the nature of learning and its application [26]. Good learning will produce good output as well. Likewise, learning for children with special education needs. Even though they have limitations, it is hoped that the appropriate methods and strategies can make them have the expected competencies. The basic competencies desired in this study are specifically emphasized on the ability of students to read and write and perform routine worship activities such as prayer.

2.2. The Urgency of Religious Education for Children with Special Education Needs

The learning process for children with special education needs in practice is slightly different from the learning process for children. This difference is specifically due to the ability of children with special education needs in cognitive, language, and communication aspects as well as their psychomotor abilities [27]. Children with special education needs have basic characteristics in the ability to absorb and concentrate which are below the average child in general. Although, children with special education needs have special characteristics based on their category [28]. On the other hand, children with special education needs must also get the same subject matter as other children. No exception is religious education which is the main and important subject matter as part of the cultivation and development of student character. The emergence of problems regarding general character and nature as experienced by children with special education needs encourages teachers to identify methods and strategies that will be used in the learning process [29]. Therefore, it can be understood that the ability of teachers in teaching children with needs is an important priority and must be balanced with skills in good communication and creativity.

The essence of religious education for children with special education needs is generally carried out because of the state's obligation to provide education for the entire community. The state must form a generation that has character by the goals and ideals of the state [30]. In addition, religious education for children with special education needs can also specifically equip them with adequate and comprehensive abilities to face their next life. Another goal that is no less important is with religious education, the moral values contained in religious teachings will be taught and practiced by students to form a personal character that is tough, moral, has a high work ethic, and is responsible for attitudes and behavior based religious values [31].

2.3. The Urgency of Online Application Technology in Religious Learning for Children with Special education needs

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the world of education still uses online learning as a learning base. This kind of learning model requires technology in the educational process [32]. As is known, e-learning based learning is learning that utilizes information and communication

technology. Not only devices that are electronic-based learning such as videos, films, slides, LCD projectors, but also utilize internet facilities as a basis for learning through online applications [33]. In general, online applications used to support learning are very diverse. There is Edmodo, google classroom, and others that are simpler and easier, namely google meet, zoom, and WhatsApp group [34]. Each teacher uses the application according to the benefits and ease of access. For areas that have network problems, there are usually three online applications that are often used, namely, zoom, google meet, and WhatsApp [35].

These online applications certainly have advantages and disadvantages. But in principle, all of them try to provide adequate facilities in communication and education [36]. Zoom and goggle meet applications have similarities. Both are a result of technology that combines images, videos, and text that can be done simultaneously. This alias can also accommodate many participants. In addition, there is a feature that can provide space for discussion in the form of a chat [37]. But the obstacles faced when using this application are the stability of the network and signal. As for WhatsApp, although it is a simpler online application, access is easier. Besides, this application can also send video images and text. Even though it has the same features as other apps, WhatsApp can't accommodate many participants [38]. These applications are certainly very supportive of the learning process during the pandemic. Because of the online learning policy, teachers also use applications like this. The demand for the use of information technology is the basis that learning must continue to be carried out [39]. The ability and skills of teachers in using technology tools are needed to support achievement of learning objectives during the pandemic.

3. METHOD

3.1. General Background and Participant

This research technically uses a qualitative research type with a narrative approach. Narrative research focuses on what the individual experiences and rewrites it in the form of a complete narrative chronology [40]. This study aims to reveal and explain the experiences of teachers, school principals, and parents as research subjects in carrying out religious learning for children with special education needs at the junior high school level in Yogyakarta Indonesia. Given the

importance of existing research subjects, in this study participants will focus on key informants who have intense relationships and interactions with the research theme, children with special education needs. The sampling technique used is purposive sampling where the subjects are selected by the provisions that have been made [41]. The participants used in this study amounted to 12 people consisting of class teachers, principals, and parents of students or students. The determination of the criteria and the number of research subjects is based on the consideration of complete information from the teachers, principals, and parents that can be obtained. The research participants were all subjects who were in two junior high schools based on inclusive schools that accepted children with special education needs in the Yogyakarta region of Indonesia. The complete number and criteria of participants can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Participant's criteria

Initial	Profession	Gender	Total
GA	Teacher	Female	1
NH	Teacher	Female	1
IS	Teacher	Female	1
ST	Teacher	Male	1
SA	Teacher	Male	1
YM	Teacher	Male	1
HC	Teacher	Male	1
EL	Teacher	Female	1
HP	Teacher	Male	1
DF	Teacher	Male	1
US	Teacher	Female	1
YI	Teacher	Female	1
Total			12

Based on the participant information above, the characteristics of the participants vary from gender, profession, and location. Initially, the number of participants who will be asked for information is targeted at 15 people. Conditions in the field indicate that 12 people are willing to participate, while the rest with certain considerations cannot become participants and provide information.

3.2. Instruments and Procedures

The implementation of this research gradually begins by asking for prior approval from the school and the designated participant candidates. The

second step then agrees with the subject or participant to carry out the interview. Interviews conducted in this study were carried out in two ways, namely online and in person. For participants who were willing and could not be met in person, they agreed to provide information by answering voice messages or voice notes after the list of questions was given. Some of the participants who provided information indirectly were mostly parents of students. Meanwhile, those who can conduct direct interviews, teachers, and principals, are carried out in schools with an agreement on days and times as well as strict procedures during the pandemic. The data collection time is about 45 minutes for each participant.

Interviews were chosen as a data collection technique because they wanted to explore in-depth and complete information from research participants. The interview instrument is an interview protocol that has been prepared in advance. Several questions were given to explore research data related to the teacher's materials and strategies in carrying out classroom learning. The principal was asked for data and information about the policies implemented and implemented by the school in providing religious learning to children with special education needs. One of the important questions in collecting this data is how the teacher designs religious learning for children with autism and what steps the teacher takes when facing obstacles during the implementation of learning.

3.3. Data Analysis

This study uses analytical techniques with stages of data reduction, data presentation, and interpretation of field data [42]. The data reduction stage is carried out by classifying the data first. After the data is sorted, the next step is to determine the theme and coding. At this stage, the main themes were chosen from the results of interviews which were widely informed by the participants. The research data that has been separated is then described into a big theme. The final stage is that all themes are analyzed and interpreted in the form of a complete narrative as the result of the study [43]. The procedure for classifying data and connecting the main themes is the most important factor in the analysis and concluding comprehensively. Systematically, the analysis model can be described in Figure 1.

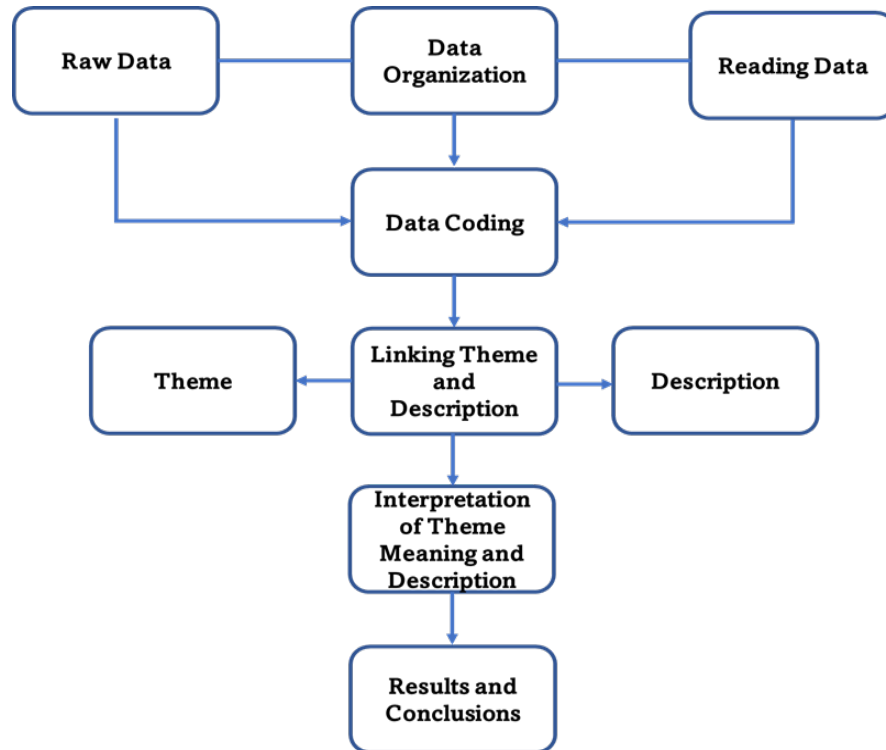


Figure 1: Data analysis procedure

Based on Figure 1, it is known that data analysis techniques are an important part of research as a data analysis knife. Starting from the collection of raw data which is then organized and separated according to the themes obtained. The part that is no less important is in connecting the theme with an appropriate description and matching the description of the information from the research subjects. In the final stage, namely the interpretation of the meaning of the data, the analytical ability and the researcher's knowledge of the themes carried will determine the result or conclusion. Good and in-depth data interpretation skills will lead to complete and valid results.

4. RESULT

The results showed several important findings were obtained. Especially in the process of implementing religious learning for children with special education needs in inclusive schools. Besides, there are also findings of strengths and weaknesses in the process of implementing teaching and learning.

4.1. Forms of Applying Religious Learning through Online Applications for Children with Special education needs

The teaching and learning process for children with special education needs in inclusive schools has been staged in its implementation. First, the teacher designs or plans the implementation of learning by making learning implementation plans, making materials, implementing learning, and finally evaluating learning outcomes. This procedure must be carried out to simplify and speed up implementation learning because, in inclusive schools, normal students and students with special education needs are made into one class.

One class teacher (GA) who oversees religious education explained that “*The teacher before carrying out the lesson must make a lesson plan first. the goal is to facilitate the provision of material in class because in our class there are several children with needs who join other children. They need a bit of a different learning model. So later after we finish, we will provide additional discussion for them*”. The above conditions illustrate that each student has different abilities, especially children with special education needs. Teachers with their creativity are required to be able

to design and develop teaching materials according to the abilities of each student. Most of these teacher innovations are obtained based on long teaching experience, not because of a special educational background from the inclusive school department. This was also agreed by one of the principals (HC) who said that *“Many of the teachers in our school are not graduates of special inclusive schools. But we as school leaders often provide training and development of learning strategies through training or seminars and workshops. This activity is also supported by the education office, which regularly invites schools to take part in the training it holds. Especially during a pandemic that uses online learning, teachers must understand and be able to use online applications, such as zoom, google meet and the simplest is WhatsApp”*.

For children with special education needs, religious learning is prioritized on learning to spell Arabic letters, reading the Quran, and writing simple verses of the Quran. One of the important and effective media in religious learning for children with special education needs is the learning media. Children are more interested in picture media. Colorful pictures of Arabic letters are examples of the learning media used. In addition to the written form of colorful and discontinuous pieces of the Quran verses, which are usually used by students to learn to write Arabic. It was revealed by one of the religious teachers (NH) that *“This kind of learning model for children with special education needs is considered fun. Because they are limited in ability and have low concentration power, so teachers must prepare a lot of interesting learning media and can strengthen their concentration. Well, during this pandemic we usually provide pictures and videos that are shared via WhatsApp group”*.

In addition to teaching reading and writing materials, teachers also provide character education

to students with special education needs. One example is to strengthen in prayer. All students are accustomed to performing the *Dhuha* prayer in the morning, with no exception for children with special education needs. Although they are limited, with the refraction that is done, children with special education needs begin to understand religious values according to their abilities. As stated by one of the religious teachers (IS) that *“For students who have their turn to enter, there is something that remains to be done, namely the habit of carrying out the Dhuha prayer in congregation with the distance and health protocols that have been set. This custom is intended to teach them to worship in the spirit. Although it is still limited and not perfect, with the enthusiasm and routines carried out students begin to understand the teachings of their religion”*.

Character education is also provided for children with special education needs by providing direct explanations to students. For example, they are taught to apologize when they make a mistake. This good habit does not only happen at school but also at home. As stated by one of the parents of students (YI) whose child is a child with special education needs that *“When my child is at home when he makes a mistake, he can apologize, even though sometimes we don't ask. I think this is one of the results of religious education in schools because it has been taught and practiced in schools as well”*.

The implementation of religious learning for children with special education needs in general according to field data is grouped into three important aspects. First, the teacher teaches students about spelling, reading, and writing Arabic writing, especially about the verses of the Quran. The purpose of learning to spell, read and write is so that students can remember and understand the lesson. Although it takes a long time, this strategy is the best way to train students' memory and movement skills because it is done repeatedly.

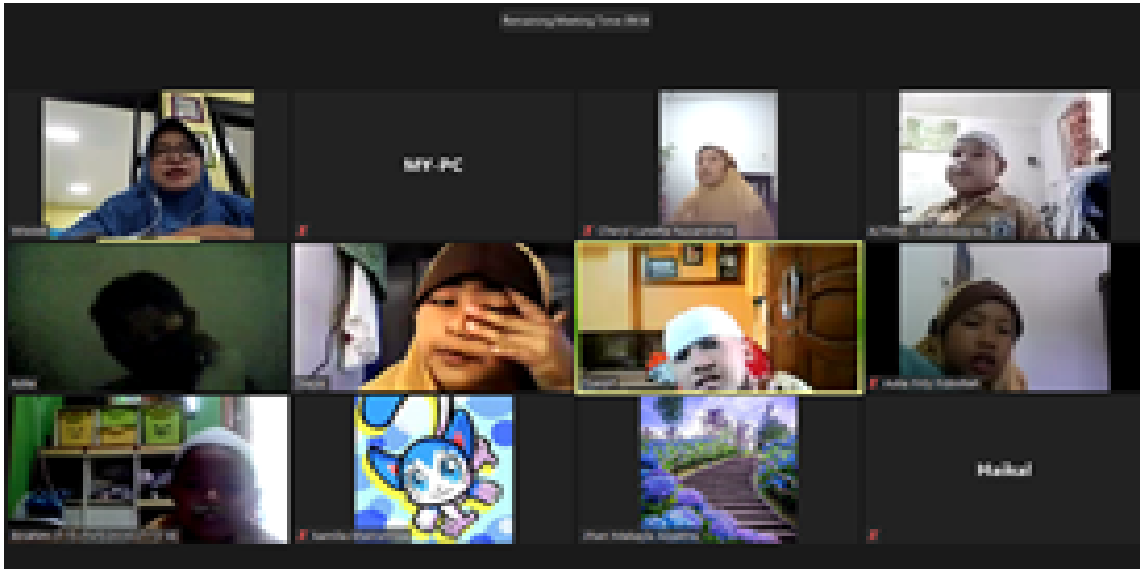


Figure 2: Learning Quran online with the Zoom app

Second, teachers provide education about character development, especially those related to worshipping God and worship in the form of students' interpersonal relationships. This character education is considered important so that later students with special education needs will also interact with other people, especially in the school environment and more broadly in the family and community environment. Third, to find out the success of the learning that has been carried out, the teacher also makes an evaluation. Especially for students with special education needs, the teacher makes a personal progress report in the form of a special report card. The progress of each student will be reported according to the level of achievement. For students who do not meet the minimum standards, the teacher will provide special

additional learning in the form of providing re-teaching materials.

Based on the results of data collection through interviews, it can be concluded that important points regarding the implementation and implementation of religious learning for children with special education needs can be drawn. Starting from planning the lessons that will be carried out by the teacher, implementing learning to spell, reading, and writing Arabic, instilling character values by practicing the implementation of worship regularly, and teaching how to interact with other people. Specific points in application and implementation of religious learning for students with special education needs can be seen in Figure 3.

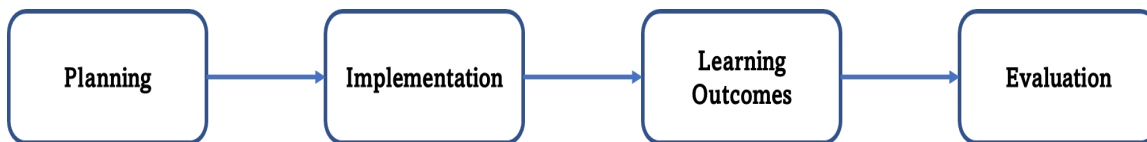


Figure 3: Religious learning flow

4.2. Obstacles in the Implementation of Religious Learning through Online Applications for Children with Special education needs

The teaching and learning process in inclusive schools certainly experiences obstacles in addition

to the existing supporting factors. Based on field findings, it can be identified the obstacles faced by teachers. First, the ability of students with special education needs both cognitively, affectively, and psychomotor. Students with special education needs have a slightly lower level of ability than normal students. This limited ability is one aspect of the

obstacles faced. Students with special education needs have different digestibility and reasoning power. Second, the ability to concentrate and communicate. Students with special education needs generally have low concentration. This ability influences the style of communication and interaction. They tend to be alone or don't have much contact with other friends.

Third, the competence of teachers who are specifically related to their educational background. Most of the teachers who teach at inclusive schools are not graduates of special inclusive schools. So that they do not have the appropriate degree in education. This is also a serious obstacle. Teachers are required to independently learn self-taught with the provision of long teaching experience. Creativity and innovation as well as the spirit of the teacher is also factor in the success of teachers in increasing their competence. Fourth, learning infrastructure and facilities. In online learning, the equipment needed is a laptop, cellphone, internet network, and quota. Not all students have all these requirements. This fourth obstacle is experienced by schools, both public and private. Preparation of facilities that require no small amount of money makes the school and especially teachers must be able to deal with it so that learning continues and is at the expected target age. It was strengthened by the results of an interview with one of the teachers who stated that *"We usually in lesson planning also think about the means or in this case the media. Schools are usually limited in facilities. Moreover, for learning for students with special education needs, suitable media and according to students' abilities are needed. This is sometimes a problem. Even though so far we have been able to overcome it by making simple tools or media that we are capable of and approximately can be applied to students"*.

Besides the obstacles faced by teachers and schools, there are other findings related to the supporting aspects of religious education such as

children with special education needs. Among these findings are the understanding of parents, the length of teaching teachers, and school policies. Parents of students with needs have a high understanding of the condition of their children. This is one aspect that makes it easier for schools, especially teachers, to identify students' abilities. Most parents tell their children's condition openly. This two-way communication allows schools to implement learning well in addition to the trust from parents to submit their education at school.

Another supporting aspect is the experience of teachers who have been teaching for more than ten years. This long working period makes the skills and competencies of teachers increase based on their teaching experience. This encourages teachers to be creative in learning when facing problems. The last supporting aspect is the existence of appropriate school policies, where inclusive-based schools provide convenience and equal opportunities to students with special education needs. The school intensely evaluates the implementation of the learning that has been carried out. No less important is the intensive communication with parents. These are some of the aspects that make religious learning in inclusive schools run well, although there are still many limitations faced.

The implementation of the teaching and learning process of course also cannot be separated from the obstacles faced. The findings of this study illustrate that several obstacles still occur in the implementation of religious learning for children with special education needs. There are two main obstacles faced, namely internal and external factors. Internal factors are more related to the abilities and skills of students, while external factors are more related to factors outside students, namely the school and the surrounding environment. An overview of the obstacles faced by teachers during the implementation of learning can be seen in Figure 4.

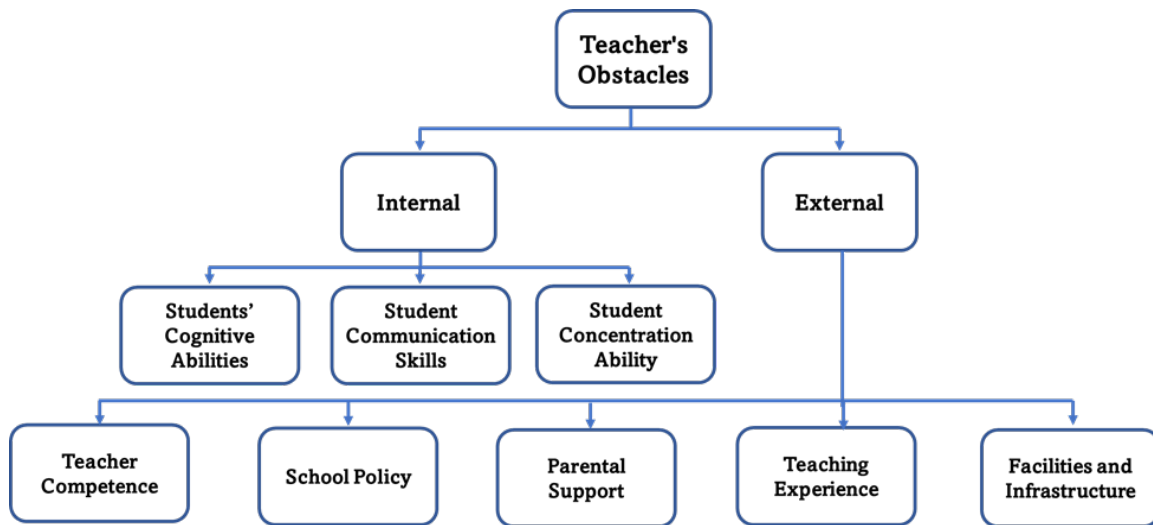


Figure 4: Learning obstacles for children with special education needs

5. DISCUSSION

Religious education is a compulsory subject for all students in Indonesia. The cultivation of religious values is also one of the goals of character education in general [44]. Character education is carried out to equip students to face the next real-life after they graduate [45]. One of the problems faced by modern society is the existence of characters who have left a lot of religious values and societal norms in legal, social, and other aspects [46]. Compliance and legal compliance, harmonious relations between communities are one of the goals of character education for modern society [47]. This opinion is in sync with the results in the field that character education given through religious values is one way to instill and strengthen the character of students. The findings in the field show that with religious education, students' attitudes and behavior can be directed and controlled according to their understanding of good behavior and attitudes according to religion. Previous research supports these findings which state that religious education in schools will shape and develop students' character.

In line with the research findings, several important aspects need to be considered by teachers, schools and not forgetting the government. Religious education for children with special education needs during the COVID-19 pandemic requires many mutually sustainable aspects. Aspects of facilities and infrastructure as a basic requirement for learning using online applications. Teacher competence, aspects of government policy, curriculum aspects, school aspects, and family aspects are many factors that support the success of

religious education for students with special education needs [48]. The aspect of teacher competence is the most important in the learning process. Pedagogic abilities, especially skills in using online media, personality, professional and social skills are expected to be mastered by teachers. The skills of designing and designing learning, implementing learning with online features, and evaluating are basic competencies that teachers must possess. Teacher competence affects how to teach and implement learning. Good teacher competence will direct teachers to provide optimal and dynamic teaching. As explained in other studies that competent teachers in their fields will have a major influence on the achievement of learning objectives. Teacher competence will also improve the quality and quality of education in general [49].

Government policies in providing facilities for the continuity of education in inclusive schools need to be further strengthened. The provision of educational facilities and needs in inclusive schools for children with special education needs greatly supports their success and fluency [50]. Besides that, a curriculum that favors students who have limited abilities also needs to be made proportionally [51]. Students with special education needs also have the right to receive a proper education. The existence of a comprehensive policy makes it easier for teachers and schools to design learning to achieve specific learning objectives and general goals, namely improving the quality and quality of national education. The findings in the field illustrate that although the policies in education made by the government have accommodated the interests of the community, the availability of other facilities and facilities also

needs to be improved. The availability of facilities will facilitate the implementation of intensive and sustainable education.

No less important is the participation of parents in supporting education for their children in inclusive schools [52]. Parents are ideally open and always communicate intensively with their child's condition. Many parents of children with special education needs are not aware of the need for and importance of education, especially religious education for their children. The research findings also show that although parents have started to open and realize the importance of education for their children, there are still many parents who still close themselves off and even think that their children have no problems related to their condition. The attitude of parents like this will harm parents and especially students themselves. Recent research states that the open and cooperative attitude of parents affects the implementation of learning and the success of education for children with special education needs [53]. This transparency of information will make it easier for the school to investigate the abilities and weaknesses of students. Complete information about the condition of the child also makes it easier for teachers to design their learning strategies. The result is that students follow the lesson well like other students and get a proper and complete education.

Furthermore, in the era of openness and wide access to information, parents need to provide information access to students with special education needs. This means that many parents have started to care about digital literacy skills in students with special education needs with intense guidance [54]. Students with special education needs also have more abilities in the field of abstract art if they are nurtured and facilitated to express it [55]. They are sometimes able to visualize abstract things that are in their minds into works of art that are rarely thought of. Many of students with special education needs participated and won prestigious events in the art world at national and international levels [56]. What needs to be facilitated and improved from students with special education needs is about cognitive literacy and daily activity literacy. Everyone's life needs to be developed and nurtured from an early age by parents and a proactive environment [57]. This is done with the aim that students with special education needs have a high quality of life and ideals.

Through this research, it can provide massive insight into the application of learning strategies in

students with special education needs which is integrated with technological advances. Especially now that the world of education is still being affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has caused educators to have to rack their brains to create learning patterns that are as effective as face-to-face learning patterns. Especially for students with special education needs require different treatment from other students in doing the learning. Furthermore, this research also provides new treasures for teachers at special schools in carrying out religious learning that is integrated with online applications on smartphones and the internet. The findings in this study can also provide a new paradigm in developing new learning patterns for students with special education needs that integrate online applications after the COVID-19 pandemic ends. Religious learning, which is usually carried out face-to-face by transforming religious knowledge and religious values, is currently being carried out during the COVID-19 pandemic remotely by integrating it into online applications. Of course, this research study also provides more opportunities for students with special education needs to adapt and master technological advances that help in facilitating their daily activities, especially in learning. In addition, to achieve the goals of religious education and the character of students with special needs, comprehensive abilities are needed which include aspects of competence, experience, creativity, communication, family support, government support, and many other factors. This strong demand in realizing character education based on the values of religious teachings requires comprehensive cooperation from the government, schools, teachers, parents, and the wider community. For teachers, this research can be a simple reference in dealing with children with special needs at school. For schools, this research can also be a source of correction in improving the quality of school policies. For parents, it can be used as learning material in educating and providing religious education for their children.

6. CONCLUSION

The results of this study can be concluded that the application of religious learning to children with special needs is carried out through online learning applications and the experience of the teacher has an important role in its success. Obstacles faced by teachers include the ability of students, infrastructure, and limited learning facilities. Several aspects support the success of religious learning for children with special needs, namely full support from parents, government support, schools,

and good communication. Religious learning provided by teachers with competence and experience has made a great contribution. This can be seen from several indicators of student success in absorbing and receiving subject matter. Students' ability to read the letters of the Qur'an has been achieved. Students can also write, although not as expected. The habit of praying is also ingrained in the hearts of children, so they already have good habits in worship. The results of religious education can also be reflected in the behavior of students with special needs, where they can interact and establish relationships with other friends even in the family and community environment. Students with special educational needs can behave by the education that has been taught. This research can be a simple guide, especially for teachers in implementing the religious learning model in inclusive schools. Schools can also be a reference in determining policies related to learning for children with special needs.

7. LIMITATIONS

Research with its basic concept which is always looking for the truth is impossible to be perfect. There are still shortcomings and weaknesses experienced. Likewise, this research still has many shortcomings and limitations. In terms of the theme of this research, it is still limited to discussing children with special needs in general. This type of research needs to be strengthened by other types of research such as quantitative. In the aspect of research subjects, it is necessary to develop more subjects that can strengthen more complete information. Further research that is carried out more deeply and comprehensively can be a glimmer of hope for the perfection of the research that has been carried out. This study also has limitations in the feasibility test of instruments and data. That is, further researchers need to strengthen the feasibility test which includes validity and reliability testing of qualitative data through data triangulation.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of the study recommend that to achieve the goals of religious education and the character of students with special education needs, comprehensive abilities are needed which include aspects of competence, experience, creativity, communication, family support, government support, and many other factors. This strong demand in achieving character education based on the values of religious teachings requires comprehensive cooperation from the government,

schools, teachers, parents, and the wider community. For teachers, this research can be a simple reference in dealing with children with special education needs in school. For schools, this research can also be a source of correction in improving the quality of school policies. Finally, for parents, it can be used as learning material in educating and providing religious education for their children.

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