

Mediatizing Islam for The Deaf: Challenging Barriers and Reconfiguring Religious Access in East Java

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Abstract

Deaf people face serious challenges in the context of Islamic religious learning. Inappropriate Islamic religious teachings result in an incomplete understanding of the teachings that must be practiced in daily life. In some cases, this incomplete understanding leads to behavior that is inappropriate or even contradictory to Islamic religious teachings. This study aims to identify various problems faced by deaf people and the strategies for mediatizing Islamic religious teachings to optimize their acceptance of these teachings. This study was conducted in East Java. The method used was qualitative, with data collection techniques involving interviews, observation, and documentation. This study finds that the fundamental problems faced by deaf people include cultural issues, psychological issues, family parenting patterns, negative stigma, and unsupportive policies. Possible mediatization strategies include using a humanitarian approach to convey religious messages, creating a system that supports the acceptance of Islamic religious materials, optimizing the role of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, and optimizing the role of Islamic community-based organizations. The solution should be implemented according to a disability-centred paradigm, which encompasses both social and religious dimensions. Religious experience involving the body, sign language, and media constitutes a lived and embodied Islamic approach for Deaf people.

Keywords: *Challenging Barriers, Deaf People, Islamic Religious Teachings, Mediatization Islam, Religious Access*

Introduction

Islam was revealed to humanity without discrimination. However, Muslims have unique social, cultural, economic, political, and physical conditions. This reality raises complex issues related to how Islamic religious teachings are understood and implemented in life. The *tafsir* and

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implementation of Islamic religious teachings are not singular but rather diverse.¹ The approach used influences the type of understanding produced.² The diversity of Islamic practices is an important aspect of life that needs to be understood constructively. This perspective opens space for active and creative efforts to find solutions to various problems related to Islam. This argument is closely linked to the perspective that the implementation of Islamic law in Indonesia requires either indigenization or, alternatively, universalization.³

One important issue to consider is the implementation of Islamic religious teachings for people with disabilities. In the context of contemporary democratic and just life, this aspect receives relatively little attention. As part of society, people with disabilities have the same rights as other citizens.⁴ However, reality shows that their existence is often marginalized.⁵ Various negative stigmas are also often applied to them, including from the perspective of Islamic religious teachings. Through the Quran, God grants freedom to diverse individuals—including people with disabilities—to be themselves.⁶ Physical appearance is not the standard for determining a person's Islamic credentials. The Quran grants people with disabilities the freedom to change their destiny and explore their full potential in education, social, economic, political, and other aspects of life, while guaranteeing their rights.⁷

The problem is, it is not easy for people with disabilities to change their destiny and explore their full potential independently. Their physical limitations present a barrier to such empowerment.⁸ From this perspective, broad social support is necessary. In the context of education, social support is a key factor in the academic success of students with disabilities.⁹ By regulation, people with disabilities, including the deaf, have a strong foundation to receive a good education.¹⁰ In the context of learning, various efforts have been developed that enable deaf people

¹ Muhammad Rofiq Muzakkir, *Studi Islam Dan Masyarakat Muslim Kontemporer, Dari Neo-Tradisionalis, Liberal, Sampai Dekolonial* (Yogyakarta: Suara Muhammadiyah, 2025).

² Abdullah Saeed dan Ali Akbar, "Contextualist Approaches and the Interpretation of the Qur'an," *Religions* 12, no. 7 (Juli 2021): 527, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel12070527>.

³ Rüdiger Lohker, "Fiqh Reconsidered: Indigenization and Universalization of Islamic Law in Indonesia," *Interdisciplinary Journal for Religion and Transformation in Contemporary Society* 7, no. 1 (Juli 2021): 188–208, <https://doi.org/10.30965/23642807-bja10011>.

⁴ Anna Lawson dan Angharad E. Beckett, "The Social and Human Rights Models of Disability: Towards a Complementarity Thesis," *The International Journal of Human Rights* 25, no. 2 (Februari 2021): 348–79, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13642987.2020.1783533>.

⁵ Prince Peprah dkk., "Cyberbullying Victimization and Suicidal Ideation among In-School Adolescents in Three Countries: Implications for Prevention and Intervention," *BMC Psychiatry* 23, no. 1 (Desember 2023): 944, <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12888-023-05268-9>.

⁶ Sarah Saleem Binmahfooz, "Understanding Disability in Islam: An Overview of the Current Research and Evidence," *Majallah al-'Ulum al-Mutaqaddimati li al-Shibbah al-Nafsiyyati wa al-Tarbiyyati al-Khassah*, advance online publication, 1 April 2024, <https://doi.org/10.21608/jasps.2024.281483.1076>.

⁷ Sri Handayana, "Difabel dalam Alquran," *INKLUSI* 3, no. 2 (Desember 2016): 267, <https://doi.org/10.14421/ijds.030206>.

⁸ Chika Riyanti dan Nurliana Cipta Apsari, "Gambaran Aktualisasi Diri Penyandang Disabilitas Fisik yang Bekerja," *Focus : Jurnal Pekerjaan Sosial* 3, no. 1 (Agustus 2020): 40, <https://doi.org/10.24198/focus.v3i1.28483>.

⁹ Widia Sri Ardias, Luqmanul Hakim, dan Fikratul Aqila, "Social Support and Self-Adjustment of Students with Disabilities at State Universities in Padang / Dukungan Sosial dan Penyesuaian Diri Mahasiswa Disabilitas Universitas Negeri di Kota Padang," *Psikoislamika: Jurnal Psikologi dan Psikologi Islam* 17, no. 2 (Desember 2020): 75–85, <https://doi.org/10.18860/psikoislamika.v17i2.10326>.

¹⁰ Mukhanif Yasin Yusup, "Pondok Pesantren dan Penerimaan Penyandang Disabilitas sebagai Upaya Menciptakan Keadilan bagi Kelompok Rentan," *At-Thariq: Jurnal Studi Islam dan Budaya* 2, no. 01 (Mei 2022), <https://doi.org/10.57210/trq.v2i01.142>.

to maximize their potential development.¹¹ Some deaf people have also made various efforts to ensure they have equal rights as citizens, including the right to education. The *Akar Tuli* Community in Malang has conducted various activities to raise awareness of disabilities in the city. These efforts have been intensive. The goal is to ensure equal existence and opportunities for deaf people.¹² The Indonesian Movement for the Welfare of the Deaf (*Gerakan untuk Kesejahteraan Tunarungu Indonesia*, GERKATIN) does the same thing, providing social support to deaf people so that they can unravel the various problems they face and find solutions.¹³

Studies linking people with disabilities with Islam were conducted by Maftuhin, who focused on the relationship between Islamic law, disability, and women with case studies in Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama.¹⁴ Aisyah and Maftuhin conducted a study on UIN Sunan Kalijaga's contribution to disability issues. Their commitment to being an inclusive university was demonstrated by the establishment of the Center for Disability Studies and Services (*Pusat Studi dan Layanan Difabel*, PSD) in 2007, which was renamed the Center for Disability Services (*Pusat Layanan Difabel*, PLD) in 2013.¹⁵ Meanwhile, extensive studies have been conducted on the mediatization of Islamic religious teachings. For example, some studies focus on media such as social media.¹⁶ Others focus on more specific platforms, including Instagram,¹⁷ Utama,¹⁸ TikTok,¹⁹ SMS,²⁰ or link mediatization with public morality and commodification.²¹ There is limited study linking the mediatization of Islamic religious teachings and disability. Some of these studies discuss people with disabilities, media, and social health information.²² Most studies discuss Islam and mediatization.²³

¹¹ Iva Atika dkk., "Science Education Practices for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Students in Indonesia," *Spesialna Edukacija i Rehabilitacija* 22, no. 3 (2023): 201–20, <https://doi.org/10.5937/specedreh22-41397>.

¹² Wama Yahya dan Ucca Arawindha, "Gerakan Sosial Akar Tuli Dalam Mengadvokasi Hak Tuli di Kota Malang," *Bravijaya Journal of Social Science* 2, no. 01 (2022), <https://doi.org/10.21776/ub.bjss.2022.002.01.6>.

¹³ Maulidina Sekar Jannati, "Dukungan Sosial Gerakan untuk Kesejahteraan Tunarungu Indonesia (GERKATIN) Terhadap Penyandang Tuli," *EMPATI: Jurnal Ilmu Kesejahteraan Sosial* 8, no. 1 (Juli 2020): 60–68, <https://doi.org/10.15408/empati.v8i1.14688>.

¹⁴ Arif Maftuhin, "Islamic Law, Disability, and Women in Indonesia: The Cases of Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah," *Journal of Disability & Religion* 28, no. 1 (Januari 2024): 13–27, <https://doi.org/10.1080/23312521.2023.2255860>.

¹⁵ Liana Aisyah dan Arif Maftuhin, "Kontribusi UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta dalam Studi Disabilitas di Indonesia," *Panangkaran: Jurnal Penelitian Agama dan Masyarakat* 3, no. 2 (Agustus 2020): 71, <https://doi.org/10.14421/panangkaran.2019.0301-05>.

¹⁶ Lilik Qurrata A'yun, *Mediatisasi Ajaran Islam Di Media Sosial Akun @Ngajigusbaba Tentang Mudahnya Ajaran Islam*, 3, no. 3 (2023).

¹⁷ Izmy Khumairoh, "Instadakwah: Redefinisi Kesalehan Perempuan Muslim di Bandung Lewat Mediatisasi Ajaran Agama Islam di Instagram" (Universitas Gadjah Mada, 2018), <https://etd.repository.ugm.ac.id/penelitian/detail/160653>.

¹⁸ Dika Satria Utama, "Mediatisasi Ajaran Islam Di Media Sosial Instagram Akun @Shiftmedia.Id Dalam Hijrah Anak Muda" (Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta, 2020).

¹⁹ Mira Fitri Shari, "Bentuk Mediatisasi hadis berupa Video," *Jurnal Moderasi*, advance online publication, 27 Desember 2021, <https://doi.org/10.14421/jm.2021.12.04>.

²⁰ Moch Fakhruroji, "Maintaining Indonesian Muslim Identity through Islamic Study Groups," *Komunitas* 11, no. 1 (Maret 2019): 1.

²¹ Arie Setyaningrum Pamungkas, "Mediatisasi Dakwah, Moralitas Publik dan Komodifikasi Islam di Era Neoliberalisme," *MAARIF* 13, no. 1 (Juni 2018): 55–75, <https://doi.org/10.47651/mrf.v13i1.12>.

²² Nhamo Anthony Mhiripiri dan Ratidzo Midzi, "Fighting for Survival: Persons with Disabilities' Activism for the Mediatization of COVID-19 Information," *Media International Australia* 178, no. 1 (Februari 2021): 151–67, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1329878X20967712>.

²³ Hazim Hazim dan Nurul Musdholifah, "Mediatization of Islam; The Case of The Indonesian Muslims In Hungary," *The Journal of Society and Media* 5, no. 1 (April 2021): 42, <https://doi.org/10.26740/jsm.v5n1.p42-57>; Md. Sayeed Al-Zaman, "Social Mediatization of Religion: Islamic Videos on YouTube," *Heliyon* 8, no. 3 (Maret 2022): e09083, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2022.e09083>.

Moreover, studies on the mediatization of Islam for the Deaf consistently emphasizes texts, elite authority, and a rational-positivistic framework. Studies on the deaf and Islam have not yet utilized the perspective of lived and embodied religions. Their daily experiences, particularly in obtaining religious knowledge, should to serve as a source of knowledge and a standard for truth. Their experiences involve the sensory body and media collectively to prevent the dominant role of text and individual interpretation.

To date, no studies have focused on the mediatization of Islamic religious teachings for deaf people, particularly with the approach of lived Islam based on their religious experiences. This is where this study finds significance and explains its novelty. Furthermore, this study is important because Islamic religious teachings are not merely to be examined theoretically but also implemented in daily life. However, not all groups are able to implement them. One group facing challenges related to Islamic religious teachings is people with disabilities, particularly deaf people. This study focuses on two areas: first, the problems faced by deaf people in receiving information about Islamic religious teachings; second, the mediatization strategies that can be implemented to maximize the delivery of religious messages to deaf people.

Mediatization is generally defined as an effort to transform media (including new media) into a tool for conveying messages or information. Mediatization connotes the use of various tools, both conventional and digital, for the purpose of transferring information or, to some extent, for indoctrination. Several studies on religious discourse use mediatization to describe the role of media in the distribution of religious knowledge. In this context, mediatization is not related to efforts to bridge the accessibility barriers faced by deaf people in matters of religion. On the other hand, previous scholars have focused more on the dynamics of accessibility for deaf people in physical terms, such as places of worship, public facilities, or other inclusive spaces. Accessibility to information, however, has received little attention. Several studies have demonstrated the use of sign language in public information services, such as information on television and official information releases by institutions and agencies.

Sign language, as a supporting medium for conveying information to deaf people, has not fully met their needs. The lack of sign literacy among deaf people is a significant factor contributing to this information gap. While gaps still exist in general contexts, transferring religious knowledge to them is far more complex. Religious content is not as easily conveyed as other types of content. A study on the development of the Friendly Sign Language Initiative Method and Technology for Qur'an translation has been conducted by UMMI scholars at the *Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia*. This study focuses on reading the Quran and understanding its contents for deaf people. One prominent approach used is the *maqāshidi* approach, in which translators formulate Qur'anic verses that are difficult to translate in simpler forms.²⁴

This study is based on the argument that mediatizing Islamic religious teachings is important for deaf people to maximally receive the messages conveyed. Mediatizing is an effort to bridge the flow of a message between communicating parties.²⁵ The communication model for deaf people is specific because it relies more on visualization to capture, understand, interpret, and give meaning

²⁴ Nor Aziah Daud, Nazean Jomhari, dan Nur Izzaidah Abdull Zubi, "Fakih: A Method to Teach Deaf People 'Reading' Qur'an," conf. paper presented pada Proceedings: The Second Annual International Qur'anic Conference, 2012.

²⁵ Nick Couldry dan Andreas Hepp, "Conceptualizing Mediatization: Contexts, Traditions, Arguments: Editorial," *Communication Theory* 23, no. 3 (Agustus 2013): 191–202, <https://doi.org/10.1111/comt.12019>.

to messages. The process of receiving messages is not always smooth due to interference.²⁶ Smooth communication and optimal message reception are important aspects to consider. Mediatization is an effort to optimize the communication process and message reception.

Method

This study on the mediatization of Islamic religious teachings for deaf people is qualitative in nature. Data were obtained through a series of interviews with parties closely connected to deaf people. Intensive interviews were conducted with the management of the Disability Care Pioneers (*Pelopori Peduli Disabilitas*, PPDiS) in Situbondo, the management and volunteers of the TPQLB of the Indonesian Spirit of Da'wah Foundation (*Yayasan Spirit Dakwah Indonesia*) in Tulungagung, the Quran Learning House for the Deaf Community (*Yayasan Rumah Quran Sahabat Tuli*) in Kediri, and the founder and da'wah activists of the *Sabilillah* Inclusive Islamic Boarding School (*Pondok Pesantren Inklusi Sabilillah*) in Probolinggo. They are individuals who have competence in this topic due to their involvement in activities related to people with disabilities, including deaf people. Their knowledge and experience in the field of disability serve as important capital in providing information.

Observations were conducted by attending Islamic religious learning activities organized by the disability community. The Indonesian Spirit of Da'wah Foundation (*Yayasan Spirit Dakwah Indonesia*) in Tulungagung, for example, offers Qur'anic learning activities for people with disabilities, packaged as Qur'anic lessons. The learning takes place on weekends. Important documents related to the topic were collected, sorted, and selected for analysis based on relevance to the topic. Data analysis employed the Miles, Huberman, and Saldana model, which divides data analysis into several stages: data collection, data condensation, data presentation, and drawing conclusions.²⁷

This study employs a postmodern framework that prioritizes the critique of meta-narratives. The lived religion approach referenced in the introduction also serves as a framework for interpreting the results. The unique perspective of Deaf individuals as primary informants is crucial for data analysis. This methodology is implemented to prevent the generation of knowledge influenced by a top-down approach stemming from dominant power dynamics or the entrenched stigma of majority tyranny.

Result

Language Acquisition and the Mediatization of Sign-Language-Based Islamic Religious Teachings

Fundamentally, language or communication is guided by the principle of mutual understanding, in line with the arbitrary nature of language itself. The communication process between the communicator and the communicant does not always require strict adherence to standardized grammatical rules. As long as both parties can understand each other's meaning, the communication process is considered complete. Therefore, from the perspective of Systemic Functional Linguistics, language elements are understood not only through linguistic structures but also through the social conditions and cognition of the communicators. This means that people

²⁶ Nadine Hauthal, Markus F. Neumann, dan Stefan R. Schweinberger, "Attentional Spread in Deaf and Hearing Participants: Face and Object Distractor Processing under Perceptual Load," *Attention, Perception, & Psychophysics* 74, no. 6 (Agustus 2012): 1312–20, <https://doi.org/10.3758/s13414-012-0320-1>.

²⁷ Matthew B. Miles, A. Michael Huberman, dan Johnny Saldana, *Qualitative Data Analysis* (SAGE, 2014).

will not necessarily comprehend the language used by their interlocutors if they rely solely on literal linguistic meaning.²⁸

This situation requires particular attention when communication involves deaf people. Their hearing impairments vary in degree. Individuals with hearing impairments are generally divided into two groups: those who cannot hear at all (deaf) and those who can still hear but with minimal auditory capacity (hard of hearing). According to Christine,²⁹ levels of human hearing ability can be measured in decibels (dB). Zero dB indicates optimal hearing; 0–26 dB is still within the normal range; 27–40 dB reflects difficulty hearing distant sounds; 41–55 dB requires hearing aids and speech therapy; 56–70 dB is categorized as moderately deaf; 71–90 dB is severely deaf; and above 91 dB is classified as profoundly deaf. In other words, deaf people have different levels of hearing.

Deaf people face challenges in receiving information due to several factors. The Age of Acquisition (AoA) of sign language is crucial in addressing these barriers. Early introduction to sign language improves a child's linguistic performance, whereas delayed language access negatively affects their communication development.³⁰ Early stimulation from those around them is also essential for facilitating language acquisition. A study by A. Kruythoff-Broekman shows that weaknesses in expressive or receptive language skills are often caused by insufficient stimulation.³¹

Another dominant factor affecting the ability of deaf people to absorb information is limited communication modalities and access. Many parents do not have sign language skills, a condition that leads to language deprivation or the absence of sufficient and comprehensible linguistic input.³² Additionally, learning processes in schools sometimes rely predominantly on spoken language or audiovisual tools without the support of sign language. This situation can hinder the abilities of deaf people.³³

This negative condition significantly affects phonological production skills. Components such as handshape, movement, and location in signs are influenced by the age at which sign language is acquired. Children who acquire sign language late make more errors in producing these signed phonological parameters.³⁴ The mediatization of religion,³⁵ including the mediatization of Islamic religious teachings, refers to the process by which religious teachings and practices are shaped, conveyed, and transformed through various media, both conventional and digital. Its role is crucial in the acquisition of religious information for deaf people. The mediatization of Islamic

²⁸ Michael Alexander Kirkwood Halliday, *An Introduction to Functional Grammar* (Hodder Arnold, 1994); Suzanne Eggins, *Introduction to Systemic Functional Linguistics: 2nd Edition* (A&C Black, 2004); J. R. Martin, Y. J. Doran, dan Giacomo Figueredo, *Systemic Functional Language Description: Making Meaning Matter* (Routledge, 2021).

²⁹ Jelyna Christine, *Pemerolehan Bahasa Anak Tunarungu*, 3 (November 2016): 95–104, <https://doi.org/10.30870/jppaud.v3i2.4616>.

³⁰ Julia Krebs dkk., "Age of Sign Language Acquisition Has Lifelong Effect on Syntactic Preferences in Sign Language Users," *International Journal of Behavioral Development* 45, no. 5 (September 2021): 397–408, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0165025420958193>.

³¹ A. Kruythoff-Broekman dkk., "Parent-implemented early language intervention programme for late talkers: parental communicative behaviour change and child language outcomes at 3 and 4 years of age," *International journal of language & communication disorders* 54 3 (Mei 2019): 451–64, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1460-6984.12451>.

³² Krebs dkk., "Age of Sign Language Acquisition Has Lifelong Effect on Syntactic Preferences in Sign Language Users."

³³ Tom Humphries dkk., "Ensuring Language Acquisition for Deaf Children: What Linguists Can Do," *Language* 90, no. 2 (Juni 2014): e31–52, <https://doi.org/10.1353/lan.2014.0036>.

³⁴ Shai Lynne Nielson dan Rachel I. Mayberry, "Production of Real Signs but Not Pseudosigns Affected by Age of Acquisition in American Sign Language," *Memory & Cognition* 53, no. 5 (Juli 2025): 1356–79, <https://doi.org/10.3758/s13421-024-01656-y>.

³⁵ Stig Hjarvard, "The Mediatization of Religion: A Theory of the Media as Agents of Religious Change," *Northern Lights: Film & Media Studies Yearbook* 6, no. 1 (Juni 2008): 9–26, https://doi.org/10.1386/nl.6.1.9_1.

religious teachings can take the form of distributing explanations of Islamic religious teachings, including *tafsir*, *fiqh*, hadith understanding, and other key Islamic topics. At a minimum, these should include aspects of faith, sharia, and transactions.

The advent of new media has introduced new patterns and forms of mediatization of religion. This development has the potential to significantly alter the content delivered.³⁶ To some extent, mediatization can change how Muslims practice their religion. Mediatization—an aspect of agency, particularly through new media channels—can also be linked to religious authority. Mediatized preaching content does not always originate from accurate sources or qualified experts.³⁷ This study discusses the general domain, not the mediatization of religion specifically for deaf people.

In the context of inclusion, da'wah for deaf people is conducted using different, non-verbal media. The da'wah of the deaf community, Indonesian Deaf Islamic Study Circle (*Majelis Ta'lim Tuli Indonesia, MTTI*) in South Jakarta, uses various media to bridge the mediatization gap. A case study by Jordan Taeza outlines the strategies used, including sign language interpreters and visual media.³⁸ These two elements are considered deaf-friendly media. However, F. Pavani and Valerio Leonetti focus only on the strategic domain. Their description of the community does not cover the dynamics of how deaf people receive (accept) information or the various factors that influence this reception.³⁹

In studies on the practice of learning to read the Qur'an through gestures, several findings indicate that scholars have focused on the domain of implementation or application. Bayu Pamungkas and Hermanto⁴⁰ describe the stages of learning hijaiyah sign letters at the Darul A'shom Islamic Boarding School, a Special Islamic Boarding School for the Deaf in Yogyakarta. Sasongko and Nurodin Usman's study⁴¹ examines the management of Sign Language Qur'an learning using the tilawah and kitabah methods. The study by Khodijah Fitria Nurulloh⁴² follows a similar orientation. Likewise, the study by Salmah Febriani, Deddy Ilyas, and Ratu Balqis⁴³ also emphasizes the implementation of Sign Language Qur'an learning by adding practical methodological steps. In the area of technology development, there is a study by Fajrin Nur Utami and Umniy Salamah that

³⁶ Hanung Sito Rohmawati, Zulkifli, dan Nashrul Hakiem, "Mediatization and Hypermediation in Digital Religion and the Transformation of Indonesian Muslim Religious Practices through Social Media Usage," *Jurnal Sosiologi Agama* 18, no. 2 (Januari 2025): 133–50, <https://doi.org/10.14421/jsa.2024.182-01>.

³⁷ D. I. Ansusa Putra dan Agus Firdaus Chandra, "Mediatization Of Islamic Doctrine In A New Era of Digital Indonesia: The Case of Ḥadīth on Dajjāl," *Jurnal Theologia* 30, no. 2 (Desember 2019): 177–96, <https://doi.org/10.21580/teo.2019.30.2.4327>.

³⁸ Jordan Taeza, "The Effectiveness of Sign Language in Media Accessibility: Bridging the Communication Gap for the Hearing Impaired," *Journal of Cultural Analysis and Social Change*, advance online publication, 30 Desember 2025, <https://doi.org/10.64753/jcasc.v11i1.4046>.

³⁹ F. Pavani dan Valerio Leonetti, "On the Coexistence of Captions and Sign Language as Accessibility Solutions in Educational Settings.," *Audiology research* 16 1 (Januari 2026), <https://doi.org/10.3390/audiolres16010020>.

⁴⁰ Bayu Pamungkas dan Hermanto Hermanto, "Tahapan Belajar Al Qur'an Menggunakan Huruf Hijaiyah Isyarat bagi Anak dengan Hambatan Pendengaran," *Jurnal Pendidikan Kebutuhan Khusus* 6, no. 1 (April 2022): 34–41, <https://doi.org/10.24036/jpkk.v6i1.621>.

⁴¹ M. Sasongko dan Nurodin Usman, "Analysis of The Quran Isyarat Learning Management at The Magelang Deaf Education Foundation," *Al Ulya: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, advance online publication, 30 April 2025, <https://doi.org/10.32665/alulya.v10i1.3559>.

⁴² Khodijah Fitria Nurulloh, "The Application of the Qur'anic Sign Language Method," *Journal of Multi-Disciplines Science (ICECOMB)*, advance online publication, 28 Juli 2024, <https://doi.org/10.59921/icecomb.v2i2.41>.

⁴³ Ina Salmah Febriani, Deddy Ilyas, dan Ratu Balqis, "The Urgency Of Learning Quranic Sign Language Using HATI Method For Students Of Islamic Education Department UIN SMH Banten," *Ulumuddin: Jurnal Ilmu-ilmu Keislaman*, advance online publication, 30 Juni 2024, <https://doi.org/10.47200/ulumuddin.v14i1.2506>.

explores the development of AR (Augmented Reality) technology for *hijaiyah* letters in Signed Arabic and Sign System for Bahasa Indonesia (*Sistem Isyarat Bahasa Indonesia*, SIBI).⁴⁴

The majority of these studies focus on of Sign Language Qur'an learning, in the simplest sense—how technology is developed and how methods are implemented. Few studies focus on how the meaning of the Quran is mediated for the benefit of deaf people, with the exception of Saifullah and Nurjanah's study,⁴⁵ which focused on the hermeneutical translation process of Qur'anic verses. Unfortunately, this study was based on digital data obtained using netnography.

The Problem of Conveying Messages to Deaf People

Deaf people are an integral part of society. Their presence gives rise to a unique culture. They communicate with each other and with other communities using sign language. Communication with deaf people is not always smooth. One reason is that sign language is not always understood by all deaf people. Language is a part of culture that does not simply emerge on its own but is intertwined with various social elements. One reason sign language is not immediately understood by all deaf and or speech-impaired people is the cultural factors that shape the language.

Formally, there are two official sign languages in Indonesia: SIBI (*Sistem Isyarat Bahasa Indonesia*) and BSINDO (*Bahasa Isyarat Indonesia*, or Indonesian Sign Language). Although both are used by deaf people, they are not always understood by all because each has its own characteristics. These official sign languages were developed based on the experiences of deaf people and the unique characteristics of different communication cultures. Many deaf people do not understand these official sign languages because they are more familiar with the sign language they have used since childhood. This language is often referred to as their mother tongue. Mother-tongue sign language, which is also a distinct cultural feature for deaf and speech-impaired people, is another issue that cannot be ignored. The mediatization of Islamic religious teachings is even more challenging. Islamic content is typically based on religious texts in Arabic. Furthermore, there are various explanations of sharia provisions that are not easily understood in simple language but require complex clarification. In this situation, mediatization is carried out by simplifying the sign-language introduction for deaf people while still adhering to the core message of Islamic religious teachings.

Our field data show that public awareness is low. This low level of awareness leads to a limited understanding of inclusion. Consequently, attention to deaf people remains very restricted. In the Islamic context, stigma against deaf people is reflected in the implementation of *taklif* (Islamic religious obligations). Some consider deaf people to be exempt from *taklif*. This has resulted in the granting of *rukhsah* (leniency) in fulfilling these religious obligations. In some cases, deaf people are regarded as not required to fulfill *taklif* and are exempt from religious guidance because they are considered not *mukallaf* (legally responsible Muslims). This assumption is not always accepted by deaf people. It is not a pleasant one for them. They do not want pity. They also want to practice their religious obligations like everyone else. Deaf people in Tulungagung are

⁴⁴ Fajrin Nur Utami dan Umniy Salamah, "Augmented Reality Application of Hijaiyah Letters in Arabic Sign Language and Indonesian Sign Language (SIBI)," *Jurnal RESTI (Rekayasa Sistem dan Teknologi Informasi)*, advance online publication, 3 April 2019, <https://doi.org/10.29207/resti.v3i1.693>.

⁴⁵ Muhammad Saifullah dan Ratna Aryati Nurjanah, "The Hermeneutics of Qur'anic Translation into Sign Language: A Study of Inclusive Pedagogy by the Qur'an Indonesia Project," *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-ilmu Al-Qur'an dan Hadis*, advance online publication, 14 Mei 2024, <https://doi.org/10.14421/qh.v25i1.5240>.

highly enthusiastic about participating in sign-Quran recitation using a method that is very friendly to them.

This stigma comes not only from laypeople but also from religious leaders. Not all religious leaders are fully aware of the existence and conditions of deaf people. Ironically, several Islamic religious study initiatives come instead from disability activists whose understanding of the Islamic religion is limited. The effects of this stigma are significant. Deaf people are deprived of the stimulus needed to absorb religious information and to experience what it means to be religious followers capable of carrying out various ritual practices. Therefore, the ideal orientation of Islamic *fiqh* applicable to people with disabilities, including deaf people, is an adaptive and flexible *fiqh* shaped according to their lived experience.

The unsupportive situation faced by deaf people is further exacerbated by non-inclusive parenting styles. Typically, the parenting style provided to deaf people is permissive, which negatively impacts their development. This approach leads to a high level of dependency. They cannot be independent because of limited access to information from their immediate environment. Disability activists explain that the most pressing need for deaf people is to become resilient and independent in their daily lives. Therefore, supportive parenting aims to foster independence and appropriate skills. They are not required to possess the same abilities as the general public (people without disabilities). The same principle applies to the mediatization of Islamic religious teachings. They are introduced to religious insights in accordance with their levels and abilities. In this regard, the dissemination of religious understanding developed from the principles of *maqāshid* sharia becomes highly relevant. Religious provisions for deaf people are no longer based on rigid formal provisions but on the substantive implementation of religious messages. These substantive messages are more welcoming to people with disabilities.

Supportive parenting also serves to counteract cultural gaps that may, to some extent, lead to deviations from religious practices. People with disabilities who are not internalized with Islamic values from an early age will develop their own traditions and culture, which may conflict with mainstream norms. Our informant explained that the culture of people with disabilities is unique and not always positive: “*They engage in activities freely, which sometimes violate religious teachings. This is because they have not properly received religious messages*”.⁴⁶ For example, they may consider interaction between men and women acceptable even if they are not married. In this context, they are not entirely at fault, as this condition arises from the gap in the mediatization of Islamic religious teachings by the agents closest to them.

Physically, deaf people are no different from the general public. They appear physically complete; however, their hearing is impaired or even non-functional. This reality is not always understood or acknowledged by deaf people themselves, which eventually becomes a psychological burden. The less-than-positive treatment of deaf people by society also contributes to the development of psychological problems. This condition, as emphasized by Luluk Ariyantiny, is caused by communication barriers. Messages that do not reach deaf people represent a complex issue because they have far-reaching implications. In the context of Islamic religious teachings, many deaf people are completely unaware of basic *taklif*. “*They do not know about prayer, ablution, fasting, impurity, and other fundamental matters*”.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ Santoso, “Interview,” (Situbondo), 22 September 2025.

⁴⁷ Luluk Ariyantiny, “Interview,” (Situbondo), 22 September 2025.

The initiatives undertaken by activists like PPDiS, by providing a platform for individuals to articulate their narratives, aim to establish Deaf impairments as not merely recipients but as active contributors in the formulation of religious viewpoints and practices adapted to their need. Current developments involve the imposition of religious provisions about worship, grounded in interpretations by scholars who exhibit limited responsiveness to disability. Religious perspectives are fundamentally grounded in sacred scriptures and authoritative religious figures.

The Gap between Policy and Practice in Society

In terms of regulations, the Indonesian government, through the Ministry of Religion, has supported the rights of people with disabilities through legislation. These rights are regulated in Law Number 8 of 2016 and Law Number 19 of 2011, which ratifies the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Specifically for deaf people, the most visible concern of the Ministry of Religious Affairs is the provision of the Sign Language Qur'an.⁴⁸ The Training of Trainers program has been conducted for volunteer teachers in various regions, but improvements are still needed. Based on the data in this study regarding the distribution of the Sign Language Qur'an and qualified human resources, it is still limited in certain regencies or municipalities. In the Kediri Residency, for example, only two Qur'anic educational institutions for the deaf have access to these resources. Findings from the survey also indicate that the learning process predominantly originates from grassroots initiatives. Therefore, to obtain these resources, a formal request must be submitted to the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Furthermore, efforts to disseminate access to the Sign Language Qur'an are supported by third parties. One of the more extensive contributors is charitable institutions such as Dompot Dhuafa or the National Board of Zakat for the Republic of Indonesia (BAZNAS). The data in this study also indicate that the implementation of various activities and learning programs is largely funded privately. This is the situation the researchers found across the regencies or municipalities in the Besuki Residency, which includes Banyuwangi, Bondowoso, Jember, and Situbondo.

These conditions, when compared with good practices in Malaysia, show no significant difference. The distinction lies in Malaysia's more detailed regulations, implemented from the national or royal level down to the regional level. Through JAKIM (Department of Islamic Development Malaysia), this program receives support from the royal family.⁴⁹ Activities such as ToT (Training of Teachers) and various training programs to prepare competent human resources are conducted regularly and continuously. This overview focuses solely on literacy access to the Qur'an. Literacy, in the simplest sense, refers to the ability to read the Qur'an using sign language only. This literacy pertains to language acquisition rather than understanding meaning, which requires higher-level skills. This effort is actually quite effective in meeting the needs of deaf people in accessing their Qur'an, although it is relatively new compared to the Braille Qur'an for the visually impaired, which has been available since the 1970s.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Pamungkas dan Hermanto, "Tahapan Belajar Al Qur'an Menggunakan Huruf Hijaiyah Isyarat bagi Anak dengan Hambatan Pendengaran."

⁴⁹ Khairul Farhah Khairuddin, Susie Miles, dan Wendy McCracken, "Deaf Learners' Experiences in Malaysian Schools: Access, Equality and Communication," *Social Inclusion* 6, no. 2 (Mei 2018): 46–55, <https://doi.org/10.17645/si.v6i2.1345>.

⁵⁰ Primi Rohimi dan Zahrotun Nufus, "Al-qur'an braille sebagai media dakwah kepada penyandang DSN dan untuk meningkatkan literasi Islam," *Islamic Communication Journal* 6, no. 1 (Juni 2021): 77–90, <https://doi.org/10.21580/icj.2021.6.1.7743>.

In other words, Islamic *fiqh* literacy, Qur'anic tafsir, hadith understanding, and general Islamic religious teachings for deaf people have not been optimally mediated. Existing efforts are mostly self-supporting Islamic boarding schools founded by volunteers before the government regulation was enacted. The most prominent example is the Darul Ashom Islamic boarding school for deaf people in Sleman, Yogyakarta. This does not deny the government's support; rather, it shows that community initiatives emerged earlier than the regulation and its various policy derivatives.

Mediatization Strategy

The gap in religious knowledge among deaf people is significant. Most deaf people lack access to Islamic religious teachings. One underlying factor is the lack of attention from religious leaders. Awareness of their religious needs in the East Java context largely emerges through empowerment initiatives led by disability activists, not all of whom possess sufficient understanding of the Islamic religion. Unfortunately, these initiatives have not received a positive response from residents with family members with disabilities. Rural communities, where inclusive literacy remains limited, are often suspicious of empowerment initiatives, perceiving them as attempts to exploit the vulnerabilities of people with disabilities.⁵¹

The gap in access to Islamic religious teachings for deaf people is stark compared to access to general knowledge. In villages, general knowledge can be obtained through education in special education schools, both public and private, or through regular schools with an inclusive curriculum. Islamic religious educational institutions, such as madrasas with an inclusive curriculum, remain very rare. The researchers identified only a few in Probolinggo, Tulungagung, Kediri, and Lamongan, which, when compared to the needs of the community, remain insufficient.

One parent of a student who enrolled their son in Islamic religious learning at the TPQLB of the Indonesian Spirit of Da'wah Foundation in Tulungagung explained that they were willing to travel a long distance because such institutions are still limited. The researchers also obtained similar information during interviews with teachers at the SLB PGRI Kedungwaru in Tulungagung. They explained that one additional curriculum component for deaf students is the instillation of Islamic values. The principal emphasized this component because the need for Islamic religious teachings surpasses other educational needs. The researchers also observed that although the school is a formal institution for students with disabilities, its Islamic religious environment is evident, such as the habit of reading the Qur'an, the habit of worship according to students' abilities, and the observance of Islamic religious holidays.⁵²

Referring to the experience of disability activists from the Disability Care Pioneers in Situbondo, bridging this gap was carried out through collaboration with various Islamic boarding schools and religious leaders. Religious leaders hold a crucial role in the community. Involving them in mediatization is a strategic step because *kiai* patronage in East Java remains dominant.⁵³ However, not all religious leaders are aware of disability inclusion. Even among those who are aware, limitations remain in mediatizing Islamic religious content for deaf people. One potential solution is synergistic collaboration between disability activists and religious leaders.

⁵¹ Luluk Ariyantiny, "Interview."

⁵² Santoso, "Interview," (Tulungagung), 22 Oktober 2025.

⁵³ Yon Machmudi, "Modernization and Changes in Kiai-Santri Relations in Three Pesantrens in Java," *ISLAMICA: Jurnal Studi Keislaman* 16, no. 1 (September 2021): 58–79, <https://doi.org/10.15642/islamica.2021.16.1.58-79>.

Involving religious leaders is a means of building community trust. Building community trust is the gateway to carrying out the long-term mission of mediatizing Islamic religious teachings for deaf people. This trust fosters willingness and openness. This approach is what disability activists at the Disability Care Pioneers in Situbondo have applied in mediatizing Islamic religious teachings for deaf people. They collaborate with several large Islamic boarding schools, such as Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Islamic Boarding School, Sukorejo, Situbondo.

In addition to religious leaders and Islamic boarding school figures, Islamic community-based organizations (CBOs) are another driving force that can bridge the gap in religious knowledge. While religious leaders and figures operate more culturally, these Islamic CBOs function structurally. Islamic CBOs represent the community and also have networks with stakeholders and regional leaders. On one hand, Islamic CBOs can operate from the grassroots level, and on the other, they can access policies that are otherwise reserved for actors in positions of power.

At the national level, several initiatives have been carried out by Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah; however, the movement to provide access to religious knowledge for deaf people remains inconsistent.⁵⁴ The data in this study indicates that grassroots movements remain dominant in efforts to support and provide access for deaf people. Several Islamic boarding schools and small-scale Islamic religious educational institutions have emerged in various regions of East Java, such as the Qur'an Learning House for the Deaf Community in Kediri, the TPQLB of the Indonesian Spirit of Da'wah Foundation in Tulungagung, and similar institutions.

Based on observations during data collection, the researchers identified a good practice that may serve as a pilot model in mediatizing Islamic religious teachings for deaf people. This practice is known as equal tutoring. The term is inspired by peer counseling, a common counseling model. This practice was not found in a religious institution, but in a special needs school in Kedungwaru, Tulungagung (SLB PGRI Kedungwaru). Equal here does not refer to equality in age, but to equality in shared experience—specifically, the lived experience of disability. The teachers who serve as agents in this mediatization process are individuals with disabilities. They possess deeper practical knowledge compared to general teachers (teachers without disabilities). Informants stated that general teachers learn extensively from teachers with disabilities because many practical dynamics related to disability are not available in inclusive education training programs during their studies. This equal tutoring model can be strengthened and positioned as a medium for transferring knowledge among teachers with disabilities and also for developing study-based practices by general teachers. According to informants, general teachers who do not communicate with teachers with disabilities often encounter misinterpretations and misconceptions. Therefore, the presence of teachers with disabilities is essential in bridging gaps in religious knowledge.

This approach aligns with what the Ministry of Religious Affairs implemented when compiling the Sign Language Qur'an. Those involved in the compilation included not only professionals, disability activists, and religious leaders, but also deaf people. Their input and suggestions were crucial because the Sign Language Qur'an relates directly to their lived experience. Full understanding requires engagement with the world of those who will use the material.

⁵⁴ Luthfiyah Trini Hastuti dkk., "Peran Organisasi-Organisasi Kemasyarakatan Islam dalam Pemberdayaan Penyandang Disabilitas di Kota Surakarta," *Al-Ahkam Jurnal Ilmu Syari'ah dan Hukum* 7, no. 2 (Desember 2022): 147–61, <https://doi.org/10.22515/alahkam.v7i2.5570>.

The Indonesian Women's Ulema Congress (*Kongres Ulama Perempuan Indonesia*, KUPI) and the founder of mubadalah.id initiated the *murunah fiqh* concept, which is highly relevant to the equal tutor-based learning model. While equal tutors in current practice are mostly limited to Qur'anic learning, this model is highly promising and appropriate for the mediatization of fiqh for deaf people. In accordance with the principle of *murunah* proposed by Faqihuddin Abdul Qadir and KUPI, deaf people should obtain religious knowledge from individuals within the deaf community rather than exclusively from teachers without disabilities. This perspective necessitates a paradigm shift in the implementation of *fiqh*—from viewing deaf people as *mukallaf* who receive *rukhsah* to recognizing them as complete *mukallaf*. This approach is grounded in the concept of *taghayyuri al-abkām bi at-taghayyuri al-amkinah wal-azminah wa al-ahwāl al-badaniyah*, meaning that shifts in Islamic law are influenced not only by changes in time and place but also by varying biological conditions.⁵⁵

The obstacles experienced by deaf people in absorbing information and acquiring language require shared awareness that learning must be substantive. Substantive learning in this context means that instruction should not merely follow formal standardized procedures, but must also emphasize the essence and meaning of what is conveyed. Even when deaf individuals master sign language, they may not fully absorb information from learning content. This challenge becomes greater when the learning content relates to Islamic religion, because many topics and concepts are complex and difficult to understand without additional support.

As an illustration, findings from the survey indicate that many deaf women still lack understanding of the menstrual process. In addition, information on how to perform ablution remains limited. This lack of understanding is caused by restricted access to information from family members, peers, or close social circles. Furthermore, Islamic religious institutions that provide intensive guidance remain limited, leaving many deaf individuals with minimal understanding of the Islamic religion they practice.

Substantive learning can bridge the gap in knowledge for deaf people. Deaf people require a simple yet compelling delivery of understanding of the Islamic religion. Topics related to ablution, for example, must first be clearly understood and summarized substantively before being delivered effectively. The key principle is creating Islamic religious content that is accessible. Accessible in this context means content that can be easily understood and comprehended.

The Ministry of Religious Affairs has developed a policy on inclusive education, based on Ministerial Regulation No. 1 of 2024 concerning Appropriate Accommodations for Students with Disabilities in Educational Units under the Ministry of Religious Affairs. This regulation provides a strong foundation for implementing inclusive education. In the context of mediatizing Islamic religious teachings, the regulation must be translated operationally into concrete implementation so that Islamic religious teachings can be accepted, understood, and practiced by deaf people. As stated in the document, inclusive education has been implemented in various educational units under the Ministry of Religious Affairs. This policy is essential because it forms the basis for implementing education that is open and nondiscriminatory. Students with disabilities must be given equal opportunities to acquire Islamic religious knowledge, similar to other students.

⁵⁵ Faqihuddin Abdul Kodir, "4 Fondasi Utama Fiqh al-Murunah," Aktual, *Keadilan dan Kesetaraan Gender - Mubadalah*, 25 Oktober 2025, <https://mubadalah.id/4-fondasi-utama-fiqh-al-murunah/>; Faqihuddin Abdul Kodir, "Fiqh al-Murunah, Gagasan Baru yang Terinspirasi dari Dua Tokoh NU dan Muhammadiyah," Aktual, *Keadilan dan Kesetaraan Gender - Mubadalah*, 24 Oktober 2025, <https://mubadalah.id/fiqh-al-murunah-gagasan-baru-yang-terinspirasi-dari-dua-tokoh-nu-dan-muhammadiyah/>.

Discussion

Deaf people face complex challenges in their daily lives. Physically, they are no different from the ordinary people. The primary barrier they experience is impaired or non-functioning hearing. This physical condition has personal implications, particularly psychological ones. Socially, relationships with others also face challenges. This situation also applies to Islamic religious learning. The issue is how to convey Islamic religious teachings optimally so that they gain knowledge, develop awareness, and have the willingness to practice Islamic religious teachings properly. Differentiated learning is essential for optimal knowledge delivery.⁵⁶

Islamic religious teachings encompass complex aspects. This complexity necessitates expertise across academic disciplines. On one hand, religious leaders typically possess a sufficient foundation in religious knowledge. They understand Islam not only from a textual and formalistic, or even populist, perspective, but also from a deep, contextual, and interdisciplinary perspective. On the other hand, religious leaders are also expected to possess sufficient knowledge of disability issues, including how to mediatize these teachings for individuals with special needs, such as the deaf. Facts in the field demonstrate a persistent disparity in human resources capable of mediatizing these issues. For example, religious leaders may possess high enthusiasm but lack sufficient knowledge related to disability. At the same time, many disability activists lack sufficient understanding of the Islamic religion, and even when they do, their understanding does not reach a strong foundational level. It is important to note that in the context of mediatizing Islamic religious teachings for the deaf community, the approach must not be merely descriptive but must be methodical and based on *ijtihad* reasoning (intelligible interpretation).⁵⁷ In other words, *da'wah* activists, *ustadz*, *kyai*, or similar roles are expected to conduct *ijtihad* based on Islamic legal sources in ways that are adaptive and inclusive for deaf individuals.

Deaf people need special treatment in Islamic religious learning. Learning will be successful when the material presented is well received, understood, and contextualized.⁵⁸ Learning success is influenced by many interrelated factors. Among the factors that influence learning success are teachers, students, media, methods, and a supportive environment. If any of these factors are lacking, learning will encounter obstacles. One such obstacle is the lack of appropriate learning methods. In the case of learning for deaf people, they experience suboptimal outcomes due to inappropriate learning methods.⁵⁹ The phenomenon of deaf people reflects the need for an objective understanding of their condition. This understanding can form the basis for developing preventive and curative measures. Mediatizing Islamic religious teachings is an effort to bridge the gap between the ideals of Islamic religious teachings and the lived experience of deaf people.

The position of deaf people in learning is quite unique. This condition is crucial for considering the need to create a comfortable learning environment to achieve learning objectives. Teachers need to consider all aspects of learning comprehensively. For example, appropriate

⁵⁶ Marlina Marlina, Arisul Mahdi, dan Yeni Karneli, "The Effectiveness of the Bisindo-Based Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy Model in Reducing Social Anxiety in Deaf Women Victims of Sexual Harassment," *The Journal of Adult Protection* 25, no. 4 (September 2023): 199–214, <https://doi.org/10.1108/JAP-10-2022-0024>.

⁵⁷ Y. Sopyan, *Legal Protection and the Problem of Accessibility for Diffable: A Comparative Study between Islamic Law and Indonesian Law*, 18, no. 2 (2020): 253–84, <https://doi.org/10.21093/mj.v18i2.1994>.

⁵⁸ Rohmat Mulyana, Opik Taupik Kurahman, dan Reza Fauzi, "Professional Development for Islamic Religious Education and Madrasah Teacher," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 9, no. 1 (Juni 2023): 55–66, <https://doi.org/10.15575/jpi.v0i0.23511>.

⁵⁹ Fachrurrozi Fitriyani Novita Cahya, Rahma Fazriyah, "Learning Methods Based on Deaf Children's Learning Styles," *ALACRITY: Journal of Education*, 4 Februari 2024, 75–80, <https://doi.org/10.52121/alacrity.v3i3.202>.

methods are essential. Observations suggest that appropriate methods emphasize visualization, the use of sign language, and demonstration.

The learning process necessitates effective communication. Communication is successful when the message is well received by the participating parties. In this context, the message must be mutually understood by all parties. Effective communication actualizes basic human needs as social beings.⁶⁰ Communication will not be effective if one party does not understand or if the message is not conveyed due to barriers. Deafness is one such barrier to message delivery. There are many important aspects to consider for an optimal strategy for mediatizing Islamic religious teachings, such as sufficient knowledge of how to teach Islam.⁶¹

This study finds that culture is a determining factor influencing the lives of deaf people. One cultural element that also has a significant influence on the mediatization process is negative stigma.⁶² In many regions in Indonesia, a large number of deaf people receive limited attention, including limited accessibility to sources of religious knowledge.⁶³ Many people still view them as *liyan* (others). Their condition is also considered a family curse, making families reluctant to involve them in various activities or learning processes. Some families feel ashamed of their condition and existence, so they keep them at home and avoid social interaction with the public. On the other hand, public awareness of their existence as fellow human beings with equal potential remains quite low. This external factor significantly influences the success or failure of their acceptance process within society. A society with a high awareness of their potential can support them in increasing resilience amidst various life challenges. A society with inclusion awareness also strives to find various alternatives that support the empowerment of the potential of deaf people.

In addition to technical issues, field data indicates the shift from a voluntary to an advocacy paradigm to remove obstacles for the deaf. We aren't obliged to regret them; yet, it is essential to attentively consider their perspectives. Their proficiency in assimilating and applying Islamic teachings is essential for developing Islamic legal products for them. Islamic legal *ijtihad*, deemed closed regarding disability, is an imperative that must be executed by qualified religious authorities.

The apparent stagnation of religious interpretations strongly suggests the necessity of a new, pro-people, and responsive legal framework. The research conducted by Mohammad M. I. Ghaly indicates that the interpretation of religious texts regarding disability remains confined to past contexts and focuses on a narrow range of issues.⁶⁴ In today's context, many issues remain unaddressed and undiscussed. For example, the diversity of types of Deaf disabilities at the beginning of Islam was not as complex as today, while the existing norms explain situations that are local or temporal in nature. The need for a legal foundation is universal, regardless of context.

⁶⁰ Thomas Knaus, "Making in media education: An activity-oriented approach to digital literacy," *Journal of Media Literacy Education* 14, no. 3 (Desember 2022): 53–65, <https://doi.org/10.23860/JMLE-2022-14-3-5>.

⁶¹ Ns. Mardiyanti dan Luh Putu Suta Haryanthi, "Challenges on Learning Islam among Deaf Muslim in an Indonesian Context: Deaf Teachers Perspective," *IIUM Medical Journal Malaysia* 17, no. 1 (Juli 2018), <https://doi.org/10.31436/imjm.v17i1.1017>.

⁶² Matthew J. Schuelka, Alisha M. B. Braun, dan Christopher J. Johnstone, "Beyond Access and Barriers: Inclusive Education and Systems Change," *FIRE: Forum for International Research in Education* 6, no. 1 (Januari 2020), <https://doi.org/10.32865/fire202061198>.

⁶³ Sopyan, *Legal Protection and the Problem of Accessibility for Diffable: A Comparative Study between Islamic Law and Indonesian Law*.

⁶⁴ Mohammad M. I. Ghaly, "Writings on Disability in Islam: The 16th-Century Polemic on Ibn Fahd's 'al-Nukat al-Ziraf,'" *The Arab Studies Journal* 13/14, no. 2/1 (2005): 9–38, JSTOR.

This is what some scholars then see as the background for the need to conduct nuanced *fiqh ijtihadi* based on the spirit of *murunah* (flexibility).⁶⁵

In sum, studies on the mediatization of Islamic religious teachings for deaf people are relatively limited. Some existing studies focus on specific aspects, such as psychology, physical health, social relations, policy, or other dimensions. The findings of this study demonstrate the need for a more objective understanding from all parties. Systematic and comprehensive steps are also needed to enable deaf people to understand and apply Islamic religious teachings in their daily lives. These efforts need to involve all relevant parties. The combination of various mutually supportive factors allows the mediatization of Islamic religious teachings to provide a more comprehensive understanding that is accepted and implemented in daily life.

Conclusion

The seemingly benign physical condition of deaf people actually harbors a substantial problem: impaired access to conveying and receiving religious teachings. This is where the mediatization of Islamic religious teachings becomes crucial so that deaf people can learn, understand, and apply Islamic religious teachings in their daily lives. Implementing the mediatization of Islamic religious teachings requires the readiness of all relevant parties. Practically, implementation depends on the readiness of teachers, policy support, and the involvement of various stakeholders. This study is limited to the mediatization of Islamic religious teachings for deaf people and does not specifically address the practicalities of Islamic religious learning, its implementation in various educational institutions, and the sociological dynamics of daily life. These dimensions are interconnected and influence one another. Nevertheless, the findings of this study provide important information regarding the reality of deaf people and their relationship to the understanding and implementation of Islamic religious teachings in everyday life.

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⁶⁵ Kodir, "4 Fondasi Utama Fiqh al-Murunah."

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