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The Partnership of Shadow Teachers with Elementary Students with Disabilities: An Islamic Education Perspective

Zulkipli Lessy[1], Yuli Kuswandari[1], Haresh Dalvi[2]
[1] Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, Indonesia
[2] Grand Valley State University, Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA

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Corresponding Author:
Zulkipli Lessy, Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, Indonesia
zulkipli.lessy@uin-suka.ac.id,

ABSTRACT

Elementary students with disabilities faced intensified academic, social, and psychological barriers after the coronavirus pandemic. This study explores the approaches used by 12 shadow teachers in partnering with students with disabilities in 10 elementary schools in Yogyakarta, consisting of five urban and five rural schools. Using an exploratory qualitative design, data were collected through three rounds of in-depth interviews, a focus group discussion, and supporting observations and documentation. Participants were recruited voluntarily through a shadow teacher WhatsApp group and snowball referrals. Data were analyzed by repeatedly listening to digital recordings, checking them against verbatim transcripts, verifying field notes with a research assistant, and comparing participants' accounts to identify themes. The findings show that shadow teachers functioned as consultants, facilitators, motivators, and mediators who simplified course content, supported social competence, encouraged self-confidence, and negotiated barriers created by school policy, family poverty, stigma, and limited assessment. From an Islamic education perspective, inclusive schooling requires not only technical accommodation, but also ethical care, compassion, and affirmative recognition of students who are socially marginalized.

INTRODUCTION

This study investigated the perceptions of 12 shadow teachers on inclusive education, their attitudes toward students with disabilities, and their teaching approaches at 10 elementary schools in Yogyakarta Province, five located in urban areas and five located in rural areas. From 25 shadow teachers identified through a WhatsApp group of a shadow teacher association and snowball referrals, 12 voluntarily agreed to participate. These teachers worked in schools officially or practically involved in inclusive education, which made their experiences relevant to the focus of this study.

We investigated how the shadow teachers have helped the students with different abilities, to overcome new or intensified academic, physical, personal or social, and psychological barriers. Also shown in the interview sessions was some discussed how school policies have hampered the students. Particularly, the barriers include the school to measure the ability of students with only one standard, given the fact that all students have a variety of abilities. Another impediment is the school environments insufficiently

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facilitate the students with different needs such as for socialization with peers and fulfillment of personal needs. Moreover, the students also encountered difficulties due to prior coronavirus restrictions affected their psychological well-being, included but not limited to stress, truancy, or boredom (Sihombing & Fatra, 2021). Due to these conditions, some lack interest in coursework which resulted in learning loss (Azza, Fauji, & Anshori, 2024; Suyadi, Selvi, Sibawaihi, Umy, & Muassomah, 2023). There were also social barriers such as the lack of social support, poor school environments, and lack of availability of parents especially those from broken-home families for child nurturing (Daulay, 2024; Agriani, 2023; Haryanti, 2018; Sihombing & Fatra, 2021; Sutton, 2021).

Shine of ABC News (2021) reported that many elementary school students potentially suffered from emotional distress due to the length of the pandemic and its effects may go throughout the post-pandemic time. Shine (2021) confirmed that severe distress can yet triple in five or more years, when looking back to compare a survey conducted in 2016. Those prior results had found that 45% of female students and 28% of male students had been affected. Recently, there were 40% of elementary students experiencing mid-level to high-level emotional distress (Shine, 2021). This research confirmed the statistics because students with disabilities in the research have shown symptoms and the causes may refer to distress. Furthermore, their choice of education had only limited alternatives of attending a favorite school, and that they ended up in a marginalized school.

In Yogyakarta, the post-coronavirus era has proven problematic for students of the elementary schools because many still remember how restricted they felt and how they found the difficulty in meeting their basic needs, such as education (Adi et al., 2021). Thus, it may raise concerns to track the approaches teachers employed that have shifted from conventional to unusual practices such as the competence-based curriculum to meet students' dynamics. One of the special concerns for students with disabilities is problems connected to family lives they bring in the school environment. An overall result of this study contends the shadow teachers significantly had provided accommodation yet modification their students needed to facilitate two ways of communication, strengthen understanding, and encourage them to catch up with everyday lessons. But many of them face real challenges as their family did not support them in some case. If the family living condition reflects a daily earning that is 'from hand to mouth,' children might be trapped in poverty that bars them from seeking good time to play with peers and happy engagement with the family. Some in this study even are very poor so that schooling is not their priority. This situation happens especially to those who live with a standard of living below the poverty line, or those who live in improper house, poor quality of food and leisure time, and lack of space for individuals in the family. The study found this situation occurs in Yogyakarta City where many students and their family live in small alleys and near creek banks. For a normal growth, children should have a livable environment to ease psychological burdens they suffer (Sutton, 2021).

Children are born with differing abilities and some have capacities below 'normal' (Batshaw et al., 2019; J M Kauffman & Badar, 2020). Therefore, they must strive to compete with their fellow students in school. This study not only investigated students with different physical abilities, but also those with psychological issues in learning or in interacting with peers and social environments. The shadow teachers reported some have physical and mental impairments such as Down Syndrome, cerebral palsy, intellectual disabilities, or autism, and thus they encounter difficulties during their school day. This study not only focused on these four aspects but also on a wider perspective of disability. Some students live with Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD), and the minority

are indicated as abnormally genius. Our preliminary readings regarding students with different abilities in the province have shown many such students are misplaced in a classroom where teachers lack the capacities or the techniques needed to guide them. Indeed, this especially true that some resource teachers put aside some responsibilities for the shadow teacher. They think that their main task is to teach the subjects to only meet with the curriculum target. As a result, a conflicting issue surrounding the responsibilities is resolved without a clear-cut job description between the resource teacher and the shadow teacher.

This study is significantly needed considering the fact that legal acts on rights of persons with disabilities to education have been issued, and the acts oblige the school system to adopt inclusivity (Lessy, Assegaf, et al., 2021). However, many schools are not well-prepared to work with students with special needs and different abilities, while this research investigated the issue. Previous research has found that many such children were not placed in adaptive settings because the enrollment processes failed to recognize the needs of the children. Indeed, at the beginning, the enrollment process is not made for mental assessment of the student to be the basis for a placement. This research revealed also that new students of the elementary level do not take assessment; therefore, their disability conditions are unknown mostly in the first year of their schooling. These students are usually encouraged to enhance their capacities to compete with other students in general (Cacciattolo & Burke, 2026). To create a balanced situation that both students with disabilities and regular students experience is nevertheless impossible because students with high abilities and with all senses for learning can accomplish assignments faster, whereas students with disabilities and special needs need extra efforts yet additional accommodations from their peers and both shadow and resource teachers to minimize the learning obstacles (Strnadová et al., 2021).

Also in this research study, the term 'inclusive education for students with learning barriers' has been defined as the learning opportunities within mainstreaming environments as preparation for self-development and gaining social skills. Learning barriers due to sensory impairments need interactive support to enable students with disabilities to meet their academic goals (Henley et al., 2002). Learning barriers also is defined as to include the presence of a significantly reduced ability to understand simple and complex information, or to acquire new skills, with a reduced ability to cope independently, and when such impediment had started before adulthood and left a lasting diminution in development (Vaughn & Bos, 2012). The definition contends that the teachers must pay special attention to diversity and to special needs of students as they think differently and thrive in a constantly changing society. Thus, there is a recognition of a complexity of problems of a person (Rufo & Causton, 2022). The significance of this study is also notable amid the increasing numbers of students with special needs, for example may involve ADD, ADHD, dyslexia, or cerebral palsy. Thus, we ought to respond by helping teachers and educators to meet such needs. Without such support early in life, many students may have little hope of developing their capacity to contribute to society, and they very often are confronted by barriers to meaningful employment, home ownership, creating a family and raising children, enjoying a rewarding social life, and even exercising their right to vote.

The term 'learning disability' refers to a condition where students are disabled because some parts of their functionality are limited, but often these limitations have nothing to do with intelligence or capacity to succeed and all that is needed are certain accommodations to be made available. Some of them are being traditionally excluded and marginalized (Kalyanpur, 2022). Olson and Platt (1996) maintained that students with a

special need frequently have "problems in academic areas, social interactions, motivation, and transition to adult roles" (p. 4). In many schools in the United States, such students are referred to as "having learning disabilities or specific learning disabilities" (p. 4). For example, some may have concerns organizing their materials to prepare for an exam or to write a report. When students struggle with fine motor skill disorder, they are nonetheless capable of understanding communication during a lecture, but they can have trouble with writing a paper in a timely manner, due to compromised motor skills. Also, some need help from their peers as note-takers. This aid is considered helpful, but the concern is that it may sometimes be difficult to read some assistant individuals' handwriting. Our system of education tends to integrate those having learning disability with those having physical and intellectual disability. We shall state that these three terms are different. The learning barrier has been defined (Henley et al., 2002); physical disability is seen as a condition of physical handicap, whereas intellectual disability is related to brain development (Arthur-Kelly, 2022). The primary objective of this research study thus is to investigate deeply about learning disability at elementary school level to contribute to building more inclusive schooling.

A previous study reveals that about 4 in 5 children with special needs or with disabilities live in developing countries. At all ages, levels of both moderate and severe disability are higher in low- and middle-income countries (Qureshi et al., 2020). Therefore, the government and academics should have special attention on this concern so those with special needs can fulfill their basic needs as well as their education. Indonesia has formulated policies and implemented strategies to optimize inclusive education, but we perceive that there should be a greater focus on adaptations for students with learning disability or physical barriers to fully participate in general education. There are no exact numbers of elementary school children with disabilities or with special needs. However, the number has been predicted to grow fast.

This research investigated the knowledge and experiences of the shadow teachers, in the aforementioned schools, and about their interactions with students, and how they perceive difficulties encountered amid new teaching methods. It was also explored effectiveness of their teaching methods with the students. Barriers that include physical, psychological, and social-economic issues were addressed during the interviews with the shadow teachers.

The research investigated whether and how primary schools' shadow teachers both in the urban or rural areas of Yogyakarta Province have been responsive to the needs of students with disabilities in particular during the post-coronavirus pandemic. Another objective is to study whether the teachers had certain prepared approaches to work with the students with disabilities and to assist them to cope with coursework and with social impediments at school. These two objectives led us to conduct this research at 10 public elementary schools in Yogyakarta.

This study was guided by the assumption that contemporary schooling requires more adaptive approaches because children's behavior, learning environments, and the use of technology have changed significantly. Accordingly, the study explored: (1) shadow teachers' preparation in selecting approaches and interaction methods for students with disabilities, and (2) their adaptable guiding methods, including home visits, to serve students who experience physical, psychological, social, or educational barriers. The interviews also explored effective and ineffective ways through which shadow teachers involved students with different abilities in classroom tasks and assignments.

Part of our study is that we asked question about the classrooms, playgrounds, and other relevant facilities, plus stories and accounts of their family situations, to gain ideas

about the settings relevant to academic behaviors and to socialization. In the situation of schooling, we focused on these places to embrace a frank picture of students' milieu. The focus is to report the findings related to approaches of the shadow teachers use in interaction with students with disabilities, and on the one hand, the teachers' policies in adapting their approaches toward the students. This study reveals how difficult circumstances may have led to finding effective ways of guiding the students with disabilities so that they can engage in physical growth and psychological development following the education, and especially Islamic educational values.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study used an exploratory qualitative design informed by constructivist inquiry. The design was selected because the study sought to understand how shadow teachers interpreted their role, built partnerships with students with disabilities, and responded to academic, social, physical, and psychological barriers in inclusive elementary schools. The emphasis was placed on teachers' lived accounts, reflective explanations, and situated practices rather than on measurement or hypothesis testing. Participants were 12 shadow teachers from 10 elementary schools in Yogyakarta Province. Six teachers came from five urban schools, namely SD NKR, SD NSJ, SD NS, SD Negeri Mendungan 1, and SD NG. The other six teachers came from five rural schools, namely SD NKM, SD NKT, SD NB, SD NKG, and SD BM. The participants were recruited through a WhatsApp group of shadow teachers and snowball referrals. From 25 teachers identified in the initial list, 12 voluntarily agreed to participate and had sufficient availability for the research process.

Data were collected from July to September 2023 through in-depth interviews, a focus group discussion, and supporting observations and documentation. Each participant was involved in three interview sessions conducted on Saturdays according to mutually agreed schedules. The interviews explored teachers' knowledge of inclusive education, their experiences in assisting students with disabilities, their strategies for adapting instruction, and their reflections on school policy and family support. The focus group discussion was used to consolidate key issues that emerged across the interviews. Data analysis was conducted through four iterative procedures: repeatedly listening to digital recordings, checking the recordings against verbatim transcripts, verifying field notes with a research assistant, and comparing similarities and differences across participants' accounts to generate themes. The analysis also considered relevant documents and observation notes to strengthen the interpretation of teachers' narratives. The names of informants are presented as allowed by the authors, while the interpretation remains focused on professional practices rather than personal judgment.

This study adhered to ethical principles throughout the research process to ensure the protection of participants' rights, dignity, privacy, and confidentiality. Prior to data collection, the researcher explained the purpose, objectives, procedures, and scope of the study to all participants. Participation was entirely voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from each participant before conducting interviews or other data collection activities. Participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without facing any negative consequences. To maintain confidentiality and anonymity, participants' identities and personal information were protected. Pseudonyms or identification codes were used in the presentation of research findings, and all collected data were used solely for academic and research purposes.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Shadow Teachers Defining Inclusion

The term 'inclusion' has a variety of definition. It reflects how it is used in myriad of contexts. Inclusive education is defined as an open environment for a child to learn, and the school accepts the child fully regardless of the background, either religion, skin color, political affiliations, culture, or tribe. For the purpose of the question asked, the research has interviewed the shadow teachers and their conclusive opinions which are summarized as below.

Giyati asserted that inclusive education is to teach the children in the regular classroom so that they can freely engage in academic activities teaching; on the other hand, the teaching is conditioned according the ability of the children. The help of the shadow teacher is to achieve the learner's objective. Lilik Nugroho sees the same vein of the terminology mentioned as he mentioned inclusion is where the school serves all children of different backgrounds and variety of disabilities. Another shadow teacher, Erna Novitasari, has looked through the subject of teaching as she mentioned that inclusion is where the children can learn the same subject other children also learn without discrimination.

With regard to Bandura's theory of the social learning, when it comes to the milieu of school, social interactions are the influential factor for students to change their behavior. Learning in a social environment can affect one's attitude. The theory of social learning of Bandura has been widely adapted by educators as they see that competition among the students has the negative meaning for making everyone to progress. Instead, collaboration and partnership are a better means for them to infuse positive changes (Woodruff, 2019). So, a student with a disability can be influenced by supportive attitudes the class has given to him or her, such as empathy, help, assistance, and accepting distinction in other people that for some reason can be influential. On the other hand, the presence of the student with disability can affect the atmosphere, lightening other students besides him or her that the environment everyone sees like a rainbow shining colors as everyone should accept.

According to Dida, inclusion means everyone is not the same, so that if a method we use for everyone it means we do not recognize the uniqueness of each. For example, there is someone who can learn computer and mathematics formulas faster than the other in the classroom and also the language; but for typical persons who do not like such formulas, they want direct practices. This means that many people have commonalities but everyone has uniqueness. Each has a typical character; thus, the school cannot hold only one method to meet their needs. In other words, everyone should receive treatment like teaching based on their ability.

Inclusion that Enhancing Social Competence

With regard to how teachers strengthen students' social competence, Teacher Giyati has mentioned:

> *Social competence is necessary because, in fact, anyone does not want his or her child to be constructed to have a disability. It has once happened to a father who rejected a claim that his child living with a disability.*
>
> *This has occurred to a child (Zaki) in the school. He has been motivated to boost his ability to perform Jathilan dance, because with his talent, he can show his skills."*

Accordingly, students with disabilities are able to socialize; the it is potential of the shadow teachers to enhance their social capacity. It happens to a student, named Rini, with a disability, which according to Ibu Giyati Rini was born in a poor family. She is a

temperamental person due to family causes. Poverty and abandonment are significant to change her behavior. As a result, she has suffered slow learning. The teacher, Giyati, often has modified approaches to motivate her to behave well. Giyati once has told classmates of one student with a disability, "What happens if you were this such person? You must understand." This means that bullying and other kinds of discrimination are not acceptable and are not found in the school. In conclusion, social competence of the students with disabilities must be developed by changing the perspective of environment and friendship about how people look at the persons with disabilities. The social perspective of disability as it was defined as people in society feel being disabled because of society sees them to have problems rather than opportunities. From this view we can say there is distinction between those who live with disabilities and those who without disabilities due to society presume that everybody in society is equal in terms of rights and needs. The social model of disability can eradicate discrimination and create egalitarian society (Lessy, Kailani, et al., 2021). Also, the model perceives that persons are disabled by obstacles in their environment, not by their disability or difference. It suggests that disability can be caused by the public's attitudes to difference (Aas, 2020).

An interesting finding reveals that a fourth grade student could not wear himself the cloth, including his short pants. Sometimes, he even could not tie his shoe lace himself. In the school, the shadow teacher, Octavia, teaches him life skills that can enable him to be independent. For this teacher, it is a kind of challenge she should adopt in her strategies of how to deal with the student with a disability. Social competence is one that must be implanted so students can grow healthy and thus can adapt with the social condition. At the very least, the student can fulfill his everyday tasks without being dependent on the other. It is a responsibility that must be shared between the resource teacher and the shadow teacher although the issue always becomes an endless debate mainly of the limits and interventions. Octavia said:

> *Generally, the parents do not accept if they know that their children are being recommended to a special school like the special education school. Things behind the rejection are stigma and societal negative view of the special school. But, for some reason, the special school might be best for certain children with severe disabilities as they can develop their competence that is not getting attention from the resource teacher.*

Giyati meanwhile added, in many cases the issue of the success for a child with disability is much more dependable on parent's acceptance toward the situation of the child. There are still parents who want their children with disabilities to attend a mainstream school. In accordance with this, Giyati contended that once a parent of one student stated, "I came to the school because I want my child to go to a regular school".

Giyati replied that she did not agree with the parent said because Giyati perceived that if there is a perception to still hold a child in the mainstreaming classroom with considering deficiencies, this might become an obstacle for the child, as he or she may have many coursework. Meanwhile, Dida offers some insightful thought that teachers should have reached true objectives of children according to their necessities, especially when working with those who are with disabilities.

> *I partner with them in the classroom, and I should partner with one of grade 4, who has low IQ and who lags behind the fellow students in the class. In general, the student cannot catch up the process properly. Dida, accordingly, should lower her standard material when teaching the students, and the procedure she might take is by pulling out the student with a disability to the corner of the classroom for a gentle briefing, like one*

who has hyperactivity, emotional disruption, such as excessive anger and crying or yelling.

Such a pulling out has been applied by the shadow teacher amid the progressivity of regular students in their learning due to the objective of the pulling out is to explain the course contents being taught, and because children with disabilities need extra encouragement to receive explanations from the shadow teacher. It is generally of personal as they were tutored in order to understand what the source teacher has taught in the class.

Teacher Dida exemplifies that children with emotional disruption are being grouped in order to be pulled out for some time and then they are allowed again to integrate into the classroom. It depends on the ability of the child with a disability, that if children have lower scores on the exam, they will have a remedy at the end of the semester. In her strategy, Dida should separate two children with disabilities in one classroom, because their tendency is to socialize only among them and being exclusive to the others.

A shadow teacher, Lilik, mentioned encouragement and motivation he could give to his students with disabilities so that they could achieve for their life. Lilik stated that if a student with a disability completed his SLB, he should prioritize to engage in the competition he is participating in it. Fortunately, the student could win the national sculpture design. Through the participation, he did not only acquire skills, but also sharpen his skills and work ethic. He remembers what her shadow teacher said that if one is nurtured based her passion, she could develop progressively. The positive effects of winning the competition is that the children's motivation is hiking, because only certain persons with unique sculpture talent with new innovation that could be a national winner. Thus, what the shadow teacher mentions is something that beyond his mind. This is true as after his successful education, he received many job offerings, and the one he has now is as finishing coordinator in a wood manufacturer and as a consultant in a number of wood shops.

Implementing Inclusiveness in School

One of the approaches to include the students in the inclusive classrooms is the shadow teacher must act properly. Example of this is shown by how the shadow teacher situated herself as not being powerful person before the student. Instead, she sits behind in a relative distance with the student. This will allow her to monitor the student. After the resource teacher finished the class hour, she approaches her and discusses of matters the student with a disability encountered. The matters they are talking about can range from class related problems to personal to family. The student with a disability successfully changes his behavior accordingly if there are changes in situations related to his or her daily affairs, and they may be economy, attitude, depression, or mental stress. *According to Ibu Giyati:*

In the school, there are two children who are lagging behind their peer students. Thus, the school provided the inclusion room to facilitate their learning. Even if this who are intellectually slow, they can take tests. The function of the shadow teachers is to motivate them.

The teachers should show their empathy, and should counter the oppressor that say, "you should be empathetic if you were if their position as (Rini)?"

Those with a slow learning should be supported environmentally. A lower level of parent education does not help their children.

In practice, the school helps the students with abilities with books, shoes, uniforms, and stationery.

Overcoming Barriers and Meeting the Needs

In order to help students with disabilities to lift up barriers, the shadow teachers, such as Giyati teaching at SD N Kalimenur, suggested that her efforts are somehow difficult to conduct because many students are in the classroom which can up to 15 students. The resource teachers therefore must pay and share their attention to everyone, and this is impossible to do. Giyati further stated that despite the barriers, they guide the students with their full efforts they could give.

One of the challenges in terms of barriers faced by the shadow teacher is lack of comprehensive assessment of students early in the academic year. It is therefore an impediment for the shadow teacher when he or she comes for making whole evaluation of a student. The teacher cannot determine the student whether or not a student have a disability without prior psychologist assessment.

A shadow teacher named Octavia asserted that did not find any student with a matter of literacy, such as reading competence until she realizes as when the students are in their third year of the schooling. She suddenly comes across by the reality that many students cannot write and read. Discussions then were held among the resource teachers, the shadow teachers, and the psychologist to have an assessment so that they know the causes and which of the students are placed in the category of disability. At the end of semester, Octavia found some second-grade students could not yet write and read. The school began to require the Regency's Education and Culture Department to do a comprehensive assessment on the issue. The result was that some students indeed suffered mental retardation.

Early in the beginning nine students were assessed, and at the end two were diagnosed to be mentally retarded persons, and the other six were slow learners. This is result from the assessment team to do evaluation. Octavia further mentioned that the problems related to disability at school were discussed by key stakeholders to find out a better solution, and the school has to consult the problem with the administrative regency office (Kantor Dinas) and together with some nearest schools including special schools.

In relation to the teaching process, a teacher at the SDN Karanggayam has suggested the resource teacher to teach is a slow manner, and this would give the students flexibility when they learn, especially those who with mental retardation as when they are in the classroom. The following is a twist reported from the shadow teacher: There is a student named Febri, and he is a slow learner. His reading pace is slow. Therefore, the method I use is to repeat the reading many times.

Besides, types of children in the school are various, so we need to adopt many methods of teaching. Essentially, this way is to facilitate the children by grouping into moderate, those who are struggling, and those who cannot follow the teaching at all. Another student named Sabiya, who also suffers a slow learning, which she is cognitively slow but is strong in terms of her psychological state where she is braver enough than her above classmate. In terms of reading, she encounters the difficulty, as to read she only spells like "ba – ca". She could read but could not write letters. Some words she found it to spell such as "ma - kan" (to eat). … because there many types of the children's disabilities; thus, the teachers should perform different methods of teaching too. As it is different with urban schools, a school in the suburb like the one in Karanggayam has not yet made assessment as a foundation for student placement. Therefore, it is not surprising as many students do not know early their genuine abilities.

Again, Teacher Giyati also contended:

We have three students with a slow learning ability, they are limited in their cognitive thinking. The shadow teachers have helped them by motivating them so they want to learn more.

Children with disabilities (such as Keysa) cannot be forced to learn as it might be difficult for them. Such a child is not similar to other children who are able. Indeed, many parents are not aware changes occur in the children with disabilities are not happen in their regular students.

When comparing the children at special schools or public elementary school, those children with disabilities can learn in inclusive schools.

As when a father if Titik (a student) passed away, she stared without goal as she was blank. I (the teacher) suggested she was disturbed as she could see ghost. I then invited her, "let's recite the Qur'an Surah An-Naas. And short after she looked better."

Included one barrier is the school policy that suggests the role of the shadow teacher as a complement, yet not essential element in the curriculum. This has raised some negative perception among the resource teachers. To encounter this negativity, a shadow teacher once in the class commenting her position as if the resource teacher feels uneasiness of her presence in the classroom: "I am here not as a supervisor; I came by ringing a mandate."

In one interview, a teacher, Dida, notably mentioned that the shadow teacher should support the students with disabilities in order to lift up barriers of being disabled constructed by society. Dida noted:

The teachers received students with disabilities. As teachers, we are aware and we noted who need help. Our understanding is a kind of our responsibility. If there is a teacher finds whether a student is active or inactive in class, they must be aware by reporting the case to the school principal, so the principal will consult with a psychologist for conducting an observation, and further assessment is made to determine whether the student should stay or is recommended to a special school.

Support for overcoming barriers does not only come from the teacher but also from parents as they established a WhatsApp group. There are activities they conduct for supporting the socialization of their children in the school, and avoiding social barriers, such as exclusivity of social friendship. By the establishment of the group, parents sometimes meet in a flea market they made by selling a variety of goods. Their activity is supported by their children also. The goods sold, such as clothes, shoes, bags, kitchen utensils, jackets, sweaters, and stationery have been used for their philanthropic activities to social agencies, such as home cares for aging adults, children with disabilities, or youth orphanages.

According to Shadow Teacher Lilik, one method to eliminate stigma against a child with a disability and his or her family is by getting rid of name that is attached to the school "Extraordinary School" (Sekolah Luar Biasa) because this is a stigma by naming it. Due to the stigma, many parents are not willing to enroll their children to Extraordinary School. If they do not do, they will keep their children home. At the teaching process, as continued by Lilik, children with disabilities should be well treated. Either the source or shadow teacher should tell the regular students about the life of students with disabilities, and these students should be accommodated and helped. Such condition is an examination to all stakeholders whether or not they should help those with disabilities.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that shadow teachers play a central role in supporting elementary students with disabilities in both urban and rural inclusive schools in Yogyakarta. Their

partnership with students does not only involve academic assistance, but also emotional support, social mediation, life-skill guidance, and communication with resource teachers and parents. These roles became more urgent after the coronavirus pandemic because many students experienced learning loss, reduced confidence, disrupted routines, and weakened family support.

The findings also indicate that the effectiveness of shadow teacher support is shaped by several structural barriers: delayed assessment, unclear division of responsibility between resource teachers and shadow teachers, family poverty, social stigma, and limited institutional recognition of shadow teachers' work. These barriers show that inclusion cannot be reduced to placing students with disabilities in regular classrooms. Inclusive education requires systematic accommodation, early identification, collaborative school policy, and family-school partnership.

From an Islamic education perspective, the presence of shadow teachers reflects an ethical commitment to care for students who are vulnerable, marginalized, and often misunderstood. Islamic educational values can strengthen inclusive practice when they are translated into compassion, justice, dignity, and concrete support for students with disabilities. Future studies should include the voices of students, parents, school leaders, and resource teachers to provide a more complete account of inclusive education practices.

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