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Religion and Disability: Internalizing Disability-Friendly Values at Al-Mustaqim Mosque Yogyakarta

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Article History	Abstract
Received May 14, 2025	<p><i>This study explores how Al Mustaqim Mosque in Yogyakarta is redefining the role of religious spaces through its commitment to social justice and disability inclusion. By using a qualitative approach, blending personal interviews with disabled worshipers, hands-on observation, and policy review, this research looks at how a mosque truly transforms into a welcoming environment for everyone. The findings show that inclusion isn't just about one thing; it's a blend of physical tools (like ramps and Braille Qurans), staff empathy (through literacy training), and inclusive messaging in sermons and social media. Together, these elements empower elderly and disabled congregants to participate actively in community life. However, the study notes that staying consistent is a challenge. To keep the momentum going, the mosque needs more regular disability-themed content and clearer ways for worshipers to share their feedback. To bridge this gap, the researcher proposes a practical model: scheduling regular inclusive sermons, creating direct feedback channels, and inviting people with disabilities to help write religious outreach materials. By connecting theory with real-world practice, this study proves that true inclusion happens when physical access, management heart, and religious storytelling work as one. Ultimately, this research offers a replicable roadmap for other institutions to follow, ensuring that people with disabilities are not just guests, but active leaders in creating fair and equitable places of worship.</i></p>
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INTRODUCTION

The conceptualization of disability-friendly mosques has been a subject of discourse among contemporary scholars, who have proposed conceptual frameworks and implementation strategies. Nursyamsi, Ramadhan, Palani, and Yazid underscore the significance of adherence to physical standards, such as the provision of ramps, accessible toilets, and navigation signs, as indispensable criteria for categorizing mosques as disability-friendly (Nursyamsi et al. 2021). Conversely, Putri, Khoiriyani, and Syaifullah have proposed an expanded definition of the concept, encompassing the readiness of non-physical services, including staff training, inclusive da'wah modules, and standard operating procedures, as critical indicators of the effectiveness of disability-friendly mosques (Putri, Khoiriyani, and Syaifullah 2022). Rahayu (2023) posits that integrating individuals with disabilities within mosques necessitates a twofold approach: first, empowering this demographic, and second, cultivating community awareness. This approach, as Rahayu contends, is essential for ensuring that mosques serve not only as physical access points but also as catalysts for social transformation. Widjaja's (2023) study examines spatial adaptations and child-friendly educational programs as integral components of inclusive mosques, emphasizing the needs of children with disabilities. Concurrently, Yang, Brown, and Kotbungkair have proposed a participatory approach that involves people with disabilities in the evaluation and redesign process, as well as facilitation, to ensure the sustainability and relevance of disability-friendly initiatives (Yang, Brown, and Kotbungkair 2023).

The five views share a common emphasis on the importance of integrating physical and social aspects, but differ in their prioritization and mechanisms of implementation. Nursyamsi et al. (2021)

and Widjaja (2023) emphasize the importance of accessible infrastructure, while Putri et al. (2022) and Rahayu (2023) highlight the need for organizational development and community empowerment. Yang et al. (2023) introduced a participatory co-design dimension that integrates physical, social, and digital storytelling elements. So, it can be said that the concept of a disability-friendly mosque is a mosque that is built and designed by meaningfully involving people with disabilities, which then also provides a sense of security and comfort, both in terms of infrastructure, social, and organizational needs, and empowerment of the disabled community and the community in the mosque area.

The concept of disability-friendly mosques is fundamentally derived from the idea of disability friendliness or inclusivity, as reflected in various international documents that affirm the right of persons with disabilities to obtain accessible public services and physical facilities. One such international document is the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), which emphasizes that state parties are obligated to ensure that persons with disabilities have access to physical accessibility and appropriate accommodations in various public spaces, including places of worship, so that they can practice their faith and worship without obstacles. Similarly, universal human rights declarations (e.g., Article 18 of the UN Declaration of Human Rights and Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights) guarantee freedom of religion and worship to all persons, including persons with disabilities. Indeed, this concept has been incorporated into the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Specifically, Goal 10 emphasizes reducing inequality and promoting socioeconomic and political inclusion for all, including individuals with disabilities.

Furthermore, Goal 11 advocates for cities and human settlements to be inclusive and accessible. The provision of safe, resilient, and sustainable access to affordable and accessible transportation and public spaces for vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities, is of paramount importance. This commitment entails the establishment of facilities that facilitate easier access to and within houses of worship for persons with disabilities (Rahayu 2023; Redaksi LPCR 2023; N. Safitri 2023; United Nations 1948, 1966, 2006, 2015).

Moreover, the notion of disability-friendly has been formally incorporated at the national level in Indonesia through Law No. 19/2011. Subsequently, its principles were adopted in Law No. 8/2016 on Persons with Disabilities. This legislative act formally endorses the principle of equitable opportunities and the inherent human rights of persons with disabilities across all facets of life. It further stipulates the state's obligation to ensure accessibility and provide reasonable accommodation, thus forming an integral component of the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities (DPR RI 2016; Republic of Indonesia 2011). The Government of Indonesia has promulgated a technical regulation, the Minister of Public Works and Public Housing Regulation (Permen PUPR) No. 14 of 2017, which stipulates requirements for building facilities to ensure accessibility for persons with disabilities. The Ministry of PUPR emphasizes its commitment to the construction of public facilities that provide comfort, safety, and security for persons with disabilities, in accordance with the Law on Persons with Disabilities and prevailing building regulations (Kementerian PUPR Republik Indonesia 2017).

In addition, the disability-friendly concept has been incorporated at the local level, as evidenced by the DIY Government's

formulation of Regional Regulation Number 5 of 2022, which pertains to the Respect, Protection, and Fulfillment of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. In addition, the DIY Government established the Regional Action Plan for Persons with Disabilities 2024-2027 through Governor Regulation No. 7 of 2025. These Governor Province Regulations acknowledge the inclusion of persons with disabilities within the DIY population and affirm their entitlement to the full enjoyment of their human rights. This encompasses enhancing facilities and services to foster an inclusive environment, including in places of worship such as mosques. Therefore, it can be posited that regulations ranging from international to local levels are sufficiently robust to facilitate the implementation and enforcement of the concept of disability-friendly mosques (Majelis Ulama Indonesia Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta 2023; Pemerintah Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta 2022, 2025).

However, the realization of the concept of disability-friendly mosques still faces significant challenges. It is stated through data that it is estimated that around 10-15% of Indonesia's population are people with disabilities, but accessibility in mosques is still minimal (Ferdhi et al. 2022). As a center of religious and social activities, mosques should be an open and welcoming space for all, but in reality, many mosques in many places are still designed with multi-story structures, steep stairs, and lack supporting facilities such as ramps or special toilets (Maftuhin 2014, 2019). This problem has become even more crucial since the enactment of Law No. 8 of 2016 on Persons with Disabilities, which requires places of worship to provide accessibility amid the phenomenon of increasing global awareness of inclusiveness in public spaces, including houses of worship (Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia 2023; Nursyamsi et al. 2021; Putri et al. 2022; Rahayu 2023; United Nations 2024)

Moreover, the implementation of policies in the field is often constrained. For instance, the Ministry of Religious Affairs' policy No. 463/2024 on Disability-Friendly Mosques has not been implemented thoroughly. According to data from the Ministry of Religious Affairs' Mosque Information System, there are 690,510 mosques and mushalas throughout Indonesia. However, only 3% of these facilities are managed inclusively with disability-friendly amenities, even though approximately 28 million Indonesians are individuals with disabilities who require equal access to religious services (Tempo 2025), and around 28 million Indonesians are people with disabilities who need equal religious services (Sosial 2023). The charity-based paradigm still dominates, placing people with disabilities as objects of compassion rather than subjects of equal rights (UNICEF 2022). Bashiti & Uhim (2016) found that 72% of mosques in urban areas lack permanent ramps for people with disabilities, while Woodall (2024) noted that only 15% of mosque administrators have received training in inclusive services.

A similar phenomenon can be observed in Yogyakarta, a cultural hub and a prominent destination for religious and educational tourism in Indonesia. This strategic location offers a valuable opportunity to study the transformation of mosques from conventional places of worship to inclusive diplomacy spaces (Arrozy 2016). However, in Yogyakarta, Anam et al. (2021) reported that 80% of mosques in North Tamantirto have not provided sign language interpreters for deaf worshippers (Kumparan 2021). Recent findings reported in the DIY show indicate that 78% of mosques in the province have not met non-physical accessibility standards. These standards include the availability of sign language interpreters and inclusive da'wah modules. However, 65% of these mosques have installed basic ramps (Pangestu 2024; Tempo 2023).

Indeed, the research conducted by Arif Maftuhin in three prominent mosques in Yogyakarta reveals that none of these religious structures fully meet accessibility standards. This shortcoming is primarily attributable to the unfriendly nature of their architectural designs and limited awareness of the significance of inclusive design (Maftuhin 2019).

In fact, 92% of mosque administrators in Yogyakarta admitted that they had never received training in inclusive communication (Maftuhin 2019; Tempo 2023). On the other hand, cultural resistance to architectural adaptation, recorded in 41% of cases, and the notion that disability is a "test of God" (found in 33% of respondents) only exacerbate the exclusivity of worship spaces (Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia 2023; Pangestu 2024). Furthermore, although many universities in the region have disability studies programs, their application in religious practice in the community is still not optimal (Ferdhi et al. 2022). Indeed, a longitudinal study revealed that the participation of people with disabilities in mosque activities can increase their social capacity by 27% (H. H. Safitri 2023). Despite these challenges, sporadic initiatives have emerged in response to these barriers. For instance, the Al Mustaqim Mosque in Parangtritis has implemented slip-resistant ramps, made Braille copies of the Qur'an available, and conducted disability service training for mosque personnel (Redaksi LPCR 2023). Conversely, the case study of the Nurul Kalam Grand Mosque in Pemalang demonstrates that the integration of physical facilities with a social approach, manifested through thematic da'wah programs and multi-party involvement, is effective in fostering inclusion awareness among worshippers (Safitri 2024). However, these initiatives have not been supported by an integrated communication strategy to

sustainably strengthen the inclusive narrative.

In accordance with the aforementioned description, researchers have expressed interest in conducting research entitled "Religion and Disability: The Dynamics of Internalizing the Disability-Friendly Concept at Al-Mustaqim Mosque Yogyakarta." The necessity of people with disabilities, such as Muslims, to carry out religious law, especially prayers, and public awareness of this phenomenon is the first step in the existence of the Disability Friendly Mosque Concept. However, various challenges remain in realizing this concept. The objective of this research is to examine the dynamics of internalizing the idea of disability-friendliness at the Al-Mustaqim mosque, which has been designated a Disability-Friendly Mosque. The study will also explore the communication strategy employed by the Al-Mustaqim Mosque to construct disability-friendly narratives and values for the general public.

Literature Review

The majority of extant research focuses on architectural aspects and dimensions as indicators of mosque inclusiveness, emphasizing compliance with physical standards such as the installation of ramps or accessible toilets (Maftuhin 2019; Tirta 2022). An analysis of the accessibility design of the Nurul Kalam Grand Mosque in Pematang, conducted by Safitri (2024), reveals that while the infrastructure meets established standards, there is a conspicuous absence of adequate communication strategies to facilitate physical interaction with individuals with disabilities. Bashiti & Uhim (2016) have indicated that the unsuitability of mosque infrastructure frequently originates from a lack of consultation with the disabled community. This series of studies lends further credence to the notion that physical aspects are indispensable yet insufficient for

ensuring inclusive narratives and values. It underscores the need to examine how communication processes shape and reinforce accessibility (Bashiti and Uhim 2016; Maftuhin 2019; Safitri 2024; Tirta 2022).

In the domain of social management, Tarigan's study (2021) examines the social acceptance of disabled worshipers in North Sumatra, while Rahmi's (2023) study explores the dynamics of stigma and community perceptions of people with disabilities. The disability-friendly mosque HR training program in Bantul, as reported by Anam et al. (2021), demonstrated that inclusivity can be enhanced through managerial capacity, as noted by Kumparan (2021). Woodall (2024) underscored the significance of internal mosque policies and practices in fostering inclusive participation for individuals with disabilities. However, the extant literature has focused exclusively on operational and managerial aspects, neglecting to delineate communication strategies that facilitate the development of inclusive narratives. Furthermore, some recent studies have begun to adopt the "relational inclusion" framework and co-cultural communication theory to understand intergroup dialogue in shaping inclusive discourse. Safitri (2023) and Tirta (2022) emphasize the significance of culturally sensitive social interactions, while Woodall (2024) underscores the pivotal role of mosque management communication. However, strategic reviews of the dynamics of value internalization and the role of mosques in building inclusive narratives, as well as the production and dissemination of disability-friendly messages by local information networks, are limited.

The discrepancy between academic discourse and reality in the aforementioned field demonstrates a potential for resolution through the implementation of a transformative communication approach.

This study makes significant conceptual and methodological contributions through an interdisciplinary approach that combines social practice theory (Shove, Pantzar, and Watson 2012) and Social Construction of Reality (Berger and Luckmann 1966; Gergen 2025) in looking at the dynamics of internalization of disability-friendly values, as well as using the Communication Infrastructure theory (Ball-Rokeach, Kim, and Matei 2001; Smith, Kim, and Matei 2024) in analyzing the production and articulation of inclusive narratives in religious spaces. Contrary to the prevailing approach in previous studies, which have approached the topic of disability-friendly mosques from a purely architectural perspective, this research underscores the shifting symbolic meanings and religious praxis that undergo deconstruction and reconceptualization in response to demands for inclusivity and the human rights of people with disabilities in the contemporary landscape of modern society. By situating cultural negotiation at the core of the analytical framework, this study posits that the disabled community does not merely passively receive or internalize sacred discourse but rather actively engages in reproducing it and asserting equal spiritual space.

This study utilizes a critical analysis of Al-Mustaqim Mosque's communication strategy to demonstrate the efficacy of local information networks in facilitating social transformation. The analysis shows how these networks can serve as effective vehicles for fostering collective awareness of the values of diversity, accessibility, and social justice. The documentation of narrative practices, community participation, and the resulting social responses demonstrates that, in this context, mosques can function as strategic and transformative actors in inclusive diplomacy. Consequently, this research contributes to the theoretical and practical expanses of the study of international

relations, religious communication, and rights-based social development. It also offers a practical model for policymakers and managers of places of worship to formulate inclusive, justice-based communication strategies.

Accordingly, this research endeavors to address this significant academic lacuna by posing and subsequently investigating two fundamental questions: First, what communication strategy does Al Mustaqim Mosque employ to support the disability community? Secondly, the impact of the Disability Friendly Mosque on the community's awareness of inclusive values warrants examination. This problem formulation is expected to reveal effective participatory communication practices in a religious context. By focusing on Al Mustaqim Mosque as a case study, this research is likely to contribute an adaptive and applicable inclusive communication model, provide operational guidelines for mosque administrators, strengthen advocacy for the right to worship for people with disabilities, and serve as a reference for standard inclusive communication policies in places of worship.

Conceptual Framework

This research employs Social Practice theory and draws on the social construction of reality to examine the dynamics of the internalization of disability-friendly values undertaken by Al-Mustaqim Mosque in Yogyakarta. Social Practice theory, as proposed by Shove, Pantzar, and Watson (2012), posits that social practice is the outcome of a dynamic interplay among three primary components: material, competence, and meaning. These elements collectively influence the manner in which individuals engage with their environment, including the adoption of disability-friendly practices at Al-Mustaqim Mosque (Fakriah 2022; Gagnon, Augustin, and Cukier 2022; Hyysalo 2016; Williams et al. 2023).

Material elements encompass physical infrastructure, including access ramps, tactile pathways, specialized toilets, and audio-visual devices that facilitate the full participation of worshipers with disabilities in worship. The quality and availability of these facilities are pivotal in determining the extent to which inclusive practices can be implemented (Ferri 2025; Hanun, Siregar, and Meidiana 2023). The competency element encompasses the knowledge, skills, and capabilities of mosque actors, including imams, administrators, and volunteers, in implementing accessibility standards. This implementation may be achieved through disability literacy training and congregational feedback mechanisms, which shape the behavior of implementers until they become established practices (Naamy 2023; Suhardi, Nurazizi, and Iftadi 2024).

The meaning element is associated with the values, symbols, and narratives embedded in sermons, signage, and da'wah literature. Inclusive discourse affirms that people with disabilities are an integral part of the ummah. Consequently, inclusive practices are not only technical but also religious and cultural (Fakriah 2022; Ferri 2025; Naamy 2023). The efficacy of internalization depends on the integration of these three components, which collectively constitute a collaborative process. Therefore, this research employs five indicators, namely (1) the intensity and quality of mosque facilitation and accessibility (material), (2) the frequency and effectiveness of disability-related training (competence), (3) the consistency and coverage of inclusive narratives in da'wah materials (meaning), (4) the integration of the three elements in bundles of practice, and (5) the direct participation of worshipers with disabilities in practice evaluation (Study 2025; Suhardi et al. 2024; Williams et al. 2023).

The theoretical structure of this research framework is further supported by Berger and Luckmann's Social Construction of Reality Theory (1966), as revised in Fraser's study (2025), which proposes a typology of four reality construction processes: instantiating, realizing, aspiring, and missing. This theory proposes a typology of four reality construction processes: instantiating, realizing, aspiring, and missing. This process enables researchers to examine how inclusive narratives are externalized through taking practices, objectified into symbols and institutions, and then internalized by the congregation as spiritual and social guidance. Moreover, Zander's study (2024) emphasizes the need to understand the critical side of the social construction of disability, revealing how the reality of disability can be resisted or negotiated in religious practice. Therefore, in this research, we use Fraser and Turcan's four typologies of reality construction processes to examine their impact on awareness of disability-friendly values within the community and among worshipers at Al Mustaqim Mosque. Operationally, this research will use the following indicators: (1) the ratio of accessible facilities (ramps, signage, Braille) vs. total mosque facilities, (2) the number and type of accommodation requests facilitated, (3) the frequency of disability themes in sermons and mosque media, and (4) changes in the level of participation of disabled worshipers in routine activities.

To further elucidate the intricacies of the communication strategy in question, this research employs the theoretical framework of Communication Infrastructure Theory (CIT), as initially developed by Ball-Rokeach et al. (2001), where local communication infrastructure including storytelling network (STN) and Communication Action Context (CAC) become the foundation for the formation of a sense of belonging and participation of

citizens in the community (Nah, Metoyer, and Ball-Rokeach 2021). STNs are defined as dynamic networks of individuals, organizations, and local media entities that facilitate the exchange of community narratives. CACs, on the other hand, encompass physical and social environments, including public spaces, digital infrastructure, and local institutions that either enable or impede the development and functionality of STNs (De Meulenaere et al. 2020). Research in various contexts, for example, in public health studies, demonstrates that the openness of CAC through local social media access and physical facilities significantly increases citizen engagement in community initiatives (Turner and West 2019).

Moreover, the implementation of CIT within the mosque context underscores the micro-meso-macro role of this theory. In research on adapting mosques to accommodate individuals with disabilities, the mosque's function can be segmented into distinct roles, including a micro-level component involving personal interaction between mosque staff and disabled worshippers. At the meso level, the mosque forms partnerships with institutions that serve individuals with disabilities. It also utilizes digital and traditional media to disseminate inclusive da'wah narratives. In its macro role, the mosque itself serves as an agent for inclusive da'wah narratives (De Meulenaere et al. 2020). Consequently, researchers can use these three roles to address prior research questions. Furthermore, at the micro level, direct engagement through interviews and discussions fosters contextual insights. The meso level is measured by formal collaboration with NGOs or inclusive schools. In contrast, the macro level is assessed by the frequency and variety of inclusive content on websites, social media, and other media used by mosques. These indicators enable researchers to evaluate the effectiveness of Al Mustaqim Mosque in

establishing an inclusive communication framework for individuals with disabilities.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research employs a qualitative, descriptive approach to provide an in-depth account of the dynamics of internalizing disability-friendly concepts within the Al-Mustaqim Mosque, recognized as a Disability-Friendly Mosque. The study also examines the mosque's communication strategy in developing disability-friendly narratives and values for its community. The research endeavor commences with a preliminary phase, during which researchers meticulously prepare research materials by systematically reviewing a wide range of pertinent literature, documents, and articles. These articles address disability-friendly mosques, communication strategies, and international norms for disability-friendly practices. This literature review encompasses both primary and secondary sources, drawn from indexed journals published within the past decade. In light of the findings, the researcher developed a conceptual framework that integrates theories regarding the dynamics of internalizing norms or values. The framework draws upon Social Practice Theory, as proposed by Shove, Pantzar, and Watson (2012), and is further reinforced by Berger and Luckmann's Social Construction of Reality Theory (1966), as revitalized in Fraser and Turcan's study (2025), as well as Communication Infrastructure Theory (CIT), pioneered by Ball Rokeach (2001b).

The researcher then designed data collection procedures, employing in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and a comprehensive literature review. Primary data sources were obtained through interviews with key informants, namely EY, the Takmir of Al-Mustaqim Mosque, and HBS, who were interviewed face-to-face on two occasions: on April 24, 2025, at the Al-Mustaqim Mosque, and on April 25, 2025,

at the HBS Office. In-person interviews were conducted on April 24, 2025, with the caretakers of Al-Mustaqim Mosque, identified as F and H, and with security officers, identified as FLS. These interviews were conducted at Al-Mustaqim Mosque on April 25, 2025. Additionally, on May 2, 2025, interviews were conducted with worshippers with disabilities, identified as L and Y, also at Al-Mustaqim Mosque. For further details, please refer to the following table:

Additionally, researchers conducted direct observations and documentation at Al-Mustaqim Mosque for one week, from April 24, 2025, to May 4, 2025. These observations were recorded using a previously compiled observation checklist comprising four aspects of observation: physical infrastructure, social interaction, media and narrative, and the participation process.

Table 1. Informant Detail

Informant Code	Role/Position	Gender	Place of Residence	Education Level	Estimated Age	Frequency of Mosque Visits	Additional Notes
EY	Mosque Takmir	Male	Resident of the Al-Mustaqim Mosque neighborhood	Bachelor's Degree (S1)	40–50 years	Five daily prayers	Key informant; interviewed on 24 April 2025
HBS	Takmir/Disabled Committee Member	Male	Resident of the Al-Mustaqim Mosque neighborhood	Bachelor's Degree (S1)	40–50 years	Five daily prayers	Person with disability; interviewed on 24–25 April 2025
F	Marbot (Mosque caretaker)	Male	Lives inside the mosque	Senior High School	20–25 years	Five daily prayers	Has not attended formal disability training; interviewed 24 April 2025
H	Marbot (Mosque caretaker)	Male	Lives inside the mosque	Senior High School	20–25 years	Five daily prayers	Learns through practice when assisting disabled worshippers
FLS	Security Officer	Male	Resident of the Al-Mustaqim Mosque neighborhood	Senior High School	25–30 years	According to the duty schedule	Frequently assists worshippers with disabilities
L	Disabled Worshipper	Male	Resident of the Al-Mustaqim Mosque neighborhood	Not disclosed	25–30 years	Irregular; only at certain times	Utilizes accessible facilities during worship
Y	Disabled Worshipper	Female	Resident of the Al-Mustaqim Mosque neighborhood	Not disclosed	40–50 years	Irregular; only at certain times	Interviewed on 2 May 2025

Sources: Proceeded by Authors, 2025

The researchers also observed how mosque facilities were used correctly by all worshippers, particularly those with various disabilities. The availability of specialized equipment, such as Braille copies of the Qur'an, facilitated access for blind worshippers, as did other assistive devices for individuals with sensory disabilities.

In addition, secondary data were collected through relevant official documents, reports, and indexed journal articles. These reports were obtained from the local administration and Muhammadiyah, the primary support organization for this mosque. Indexed journal articles were accessed via Scopus, Google Scholar, and JSTOR to verify and complement the interview findings. This data collection technique was designed to produce a comprehensive picture of the dynamics of internalizing the disability-friendly concept within Al-Mustaqim mosque, specifically as a Disability-Friendly Mosque, and to examine Al-Mustaqim Mosque's communication strategy in building disability-friendly narratives and values within the mosque community.

The final stage of the research involves qualitative data analysis using thematic analysis techniques, in which the collected data are categorized and interpreted according to the conceptual framework developed. This analytical technique enables researchers to discern patterns, themes, and relationships among key variables concerning the internalization of values and norms, as well as the communication strategies employed by Al Mustaqim Mosque regarding the concept of a disability-friendly mosque. The results of the analysis are expected to empirically reveal the dynamics of the internalization of disability-friendly concepts within the Al-Mustaqim mosque, which aims to become a Disability-Friendly Mosque, and to examine the Mosque's communication strategy for building disability-friendly narratives and

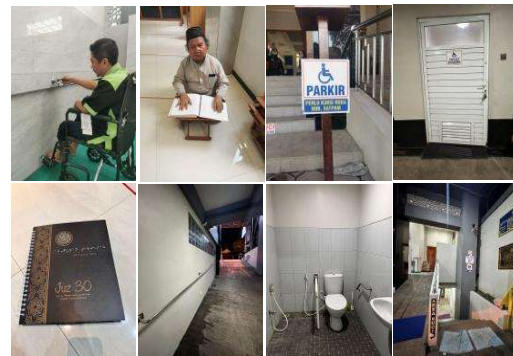
values within the mosque community. Using a systematic, multidimensional approach, this research offers novel insights into the mosque's role as a tool for disseminating information on disability-friendliness.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Dynamics of Internalization of Disability-Friendly Values in Al-Mustaqim Mosque Community

The internalization of disability-friendly values at Al-Mustaqim Mosque, Yogyakarta, involves a complex process in which the dimensions, from the material to the symbolic, are interrelated. For example, social practice theory emphasizes the dynamic configuration between material elements, competencies, and meanings in daily practice (Williams et al. 2023). In the material realm, the Al-Mustaqim Mosque has provided accessible ramps, handrails, special toilets for people with disabilities, universal signage, and Braille copies of the Al-Qur'an. The results of observations conducted from April 24 to May 2, 2025, indicate the availability of ramps for mosque entry, handrails, accessible toilets for individuals with disabilities, and Braille copies of the Al-Qur'an. This can be seen in the following figure:

Figure 1. Disability Friendly Facilities



Source: processed by Authors, 2025

This facility is designed to accommodate worshippers with special needs, allowing them to worship comfortably. According to the informant, L, a security officer, the facility is designed to be accessible to individuals with disabilities. Al-Mustaqim is "made as comfortable as possible" for wheelchair users and deaf people. Safitri (2024) noted that ramps, guiding blocks, toilets, and special ablution access are characteristics of a genuinely inclusive mosque. However, Rahayu⁽²⁰¹⁹⁾ found that many other mosques still do not meet accessibility standards. Thus, the material components of this mosque play a practical and symbolic role, demonstrating an inclusive commitment and shaping disability-friendly worship routines (Shove et al. 2012). An interview with Mr. HBS, the disabled caretaker of the mosque, revealed his belief that "the mosque should be accessible to everyone, regardless of physical condition." Thus, this facility embodies an inclusive commitment and serves as a symbol.

Furthermore, the competency aspect is shown through the capacity building of mosque administrators and volunteers. Interviewees mentioned special training (Figure 2) involving external organizations to equip staff with knowledge about disabilities. For example, Mr. HBS stated that, before the mosque's inauguration, the NGO Ciqal conducted training on "how to serve the disabled... how to serve the blind, how to serve the speech impaired." Mas H, as a *marbot*, stated that he had not received formal training and had learned directly by assisting disabled worshippers: "We are prepared and ready to help... pushing" wheelchair users.

Figure 2. Specialized Training for Mosque Managers



Source: Processed by Authors, 2025

This learning-by-doing practice demonstrates that competence develops through experience (Williams et al. 2023). Nevertheless, expanding disability literacy training and educational narratives are essential. According to Stafford et al. (2024), intensive training and congregational feedback mechanisms can strengthen inclusive practices and transform change managers' attitudes from viewing disability rights as mere technical obligations to viewing them as deeply held values.

In the realm of symbolic meaning, inclusive values are integrated into the mosque's identity. Interviewees emphasized that people with disabilities are full members of the congregation. Mr. HBS noted that "everyone should pray," so the mosque must support the accessibility of all worshippers. He emphasized that, according to religious teachings, the wheelchair should be considered holy, equating it with a sacred road. These statements demonstrate a shift in perception, evolving from viewing disability as a burden to recognizing the equal right to worship. Mr. HBS explicitly states that "people with disabilities have the same right to worship" and adds that "they are also our brothers who want to join the congregation." This

inclusive approach aligns with the human rights framework. For instance, Naamy (2023) demonstrates that Indonesia's legal protections emphasize the right to worship for individuals with disabilities. These egalitarian and fraternal values constitute a new religious orientation in which the mosque is a symbol of social justice as well as a spiritual space.

The practice of collective narratives is manifested in how the community tells stories and communicates. The Al-Mustaqim Mosque uses social media, notice boards, and community networks to spread inclusive values. Mr. HBS explained that the mosque socialized disability services through its official Instagram account and Google Maps (Figure 3) to share stories about the mosque's commitment to accessibility.

Figure 3. Social Media and Mosque Maps



Source: Instagram dan Google Maps, 2025

This approach operationalizes the concept of community storytelling networks in communication theory (Ball-Rokeach et al. 2001; Sereno and Li 2022), wherein inclusive narratives become part of daily discussions among takers, volunteers, and worshippers. Consequently, the phenomenon of "collective narratives" reinforces the norms of inclusivity within these communities. These narratives serve as a reminder to the congregation that all individuals, including those perceived as "physically abnormal," possess equal rights and should be treated accordingly. Community support has also increased;

RT/RW administrators and *Muhammadiyah* organizations have expressed their support for this initiative, perceiving it as a source of regional pride and a means of enhancing the mosque's image.

The dynamics that occur in the process of internalizing disability-friendly values at Al-Mustaqim Mosque can also be seen through the perspective of the social construction of reality, where the internalization of disability-friendly values goes through four key processes (Fraser 2025). The instantiation of inclusive facilities is realized through initiatives such as the renovation of the mosque in 2020, which was designed as a disability-friendly mosque. The realization that additional facilities are not only beneficial but also necessary is often prompted by the congregation's direct experience with these facilities. Initially perceived as "unnecessary," the benefits of these facilities become evident through their practical application, thereby dispelling the initial assumption. It is noteworthy that installing these facilities eliminates operational challenges within the mosque, underscoring their necessity and value.

The aspiration underlying this initiative is reflected in the hope that other mosques will emulate this model. Mr. HBS posited that all mosques should emulate Al-Mustaqim's approach to ensure mosque accessibility for all individuals. With regard to the absent process or elements that are still absent from the collective narrative, namely optimal inclusive communication, Researchers' observations demonstrate, for instance, the absence of a specific disability theme in the khutbah, suggesting that the formal discourse continues to lack dedicated space. Consequently, the establishment of an inclusive reality has not been adequately socialized until the entire process is executed consistently (Berger and Luckmann, 1966; Fraser, 2025).

Consequently, the comprehensive practice also manifests as assemblages of practices comprising collaboration of material elements, competencies, and meanings in the process of internalizing the value of inclusion that has occurred in the Al-Mustaqim mosque in Yogyakarta (Hyysalo 2016; Shove et al. 2012). A consensus emerged among all interviewees that the mosque should aspire to be a "truly inclusive house of worship" for individuals with disabilities. As noted by Mr. HBS, Mr. L, and other disabled worshippers, the success of this initiative has fostered a new culture in which administrators and non-disabled worshippers exhibit empathy and a willingness to assist, consistent with the religious value of solidarity.

The mosque's reputation is further bolstered by its widespread recognition and community esteem, as evidenced by its reputation as one of the most esteemed mosques in the region. This recognition highlights the internalization of inclusive values in its daily practices, fostering a sense of communal pride and cohesion. This implementation is considered successful and is expected to serve as a model for other mosques. In essence, through the unity of material elements, competencies, meanings, and shared narratives, Al-Mustaqim Mosque transforms the concept of inclusivity from a discourse to a social habit embedded in the community. Nevertheless, to maintain and deepen inclusion, it is recommended that thematic da'wah modules be incorporated, that the frequency of disability themes in sermons be increased, and that formal mechanisms for participation and feedback among disabled worshippers be established. It is anticipated that this model will serve as a paradigm for other mosque managers in achieving genuinely inclusive houses of worship.

Mosque Communication Strategies in Supporting the Disability Community

Al-Mustaqim has been recognized as a disability-friendly mosque in Yogyakarta. This mosque has positioned itself not only as a mosque in general but also as an inclusive communication center for people with disabilities. This approach aligns with the Communication Infrastructure theory (Ball-Rokeach et al. 2001; Nah et al. 2021), which highlights the importance of local media networks and volunteers as key conduits for community engagement. The mosque utilizes social media and digital footprints as primary mechanisms of socialization, including an active Instagram account and Google Maps, to disseminate information on disability services. An analysis of interview data reveals a paucity of formal announcements. Information is disseminated through Instagram posts and pilgrims' reviews on religious media. In this particular instance, the mosque has emerged as a "model" for both the Muhammadiyah and the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Consequently, the mosque's inclusive narrative has been widely disseminated, thereby shaping the community's collective consciousness. A recent study corroborates the notion that collaboration between local media outlets, community organizations, and digital narratives can facilitate the development of "neighborhood storytelling networks," which have been shown to promote social engagement (Adikata 2025; Fakriah 2022; Hanun et al. 2023). Therefore, the CIT emphasizes that integrating communication channels (both offline and online) is a strategic imperative for facilitating the inclusion of people with disabilities within the broader community.

Moreover, the mosque's external strategy encompasses the use of social media and the dissemination of visually appealing narratives. According to mosque

administrators, information regarding disability services is disseminated through social media and digital maps. According to Mr. HBS, information regarding disability services is disseminated via Instagram and Google Maps. For instance, the mosque caretaker frequently shares videos and narratives on Instagram Stories that depict disabled worshipers engaged in prayer. Nonetheless, the frequency of inclusive content remains inadequate, with fewer than two uploads per month and, in some cases, a complete absence of uploads. The dearth of disability-specific thematic khutbahs further underscores a conspicuous lack of consistent Communication Action Context. This is notable given the prevailing literature's emphasis on the significance of content continuity in fostering citizen participation (Ball-Rokeach et al. 2001; Smith et al. 2024).

Nonetheless, Al-Mustaqim's social media accounts serve a dual purpose: they both announce technical developments and serve as a vehicle for the formation of an inclusive narrative. This narrative asserts that "all worshipers, including those who are physically 'abnormal,' also have the same right to worship." This approach, as evidenced by the mosque's utilization of social practice, serves to establish a novel social norm that underscores the notion that disability should not be regarded as a spiritual impediment. This perspective aligns with the tenets of the Social Practice approach, wherein visual narratives function as catalysts for the internalization of inclusive practices (Hyysalo 2016). Even though interviews with mosque administrators in the case of Mr. HBS indicated that inclusive messages have not been routinely disseminated and that there are no specialized da'wah materials for individuals with disabilities, Mr. HBS maintains his position that "people with disabilities have the same right to worship." From a social constructionist perspective,

this message gradually shifts the congregation's perception of the mosque, transforming it from an exclusive to an inclusive space that acknowledges the rights of individuals with disabilities.

Indeed, the mosque serves as a symbolic paradigm of inclusivity. The Al-Mustaqim Mosque has been recognized as a model of a disability-friendly mosque. It has been visited by administrators from the Persyarikatan Muhammadiyah (Muhammadiyah) and officials from the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Its existence has been highlighted in religious media coverage. Mr. HBS, the mosque administrator, has stated that the mosque has been designed to be accessible to people with disabilities since the renovation. This symbolic construction suggests that the image of the mosque is shaped not only by physical facilities but also by public recognition and positive narratives. Recent studies have demonstrated that awareness campaigns and strong relationships with key stakeholders are essential for promoting social support for inclusive spaces. At Al-Mustaqim, collaboration with external networks, such as Lazismu (Muhammadiyah's humanitarian organization) and local RT/RW leaders, has been instrumental in enhancing community awareness and engagement. Concrete support has been demonstrated by residents and organizations that provide wheelchairs or make donations in response to the needs of disabled worshipers. This collaborative effort with religious and local institutions fosters the development of a mutually supportive communication infrastructure. The mosque disseminates success stories of inclusivity through various media channels, while the external network bolsters these narratives through concrete actions, including the donation of equipment and financial resources.

In addition to the mosque's external communication strategy, its internal aspects

emphasize enhancing the competence of its human resources. The interview revealed that the mosque management had invited Cikal NGO to provide training to security officers on disability services. Mr. F stated during the interview that the training focused on serving individuals with disabilities, including the blind, the speech-impaired, and others. This training program is designed to enhance staff members' competencies in addressing the diverse needs of individuals, including the acquisition of fundamental sign language skills that facilitate interaction with deaf individuals. Consequently, mosque caretakers report increased feelings of preparedness when assisting people with disabilities during worship. The marbot has stated that they are "prepared and ready to help...pushing" the wheelchairs of worshipers and accompanying blind individuals during prayer. This training approach aligns with the tenets of Social Practice theory, which underscores the significance of competence in implementing inclusive practices.

Nevertheless, there is still a need for training augmentation. For instance, some staff members have not been exposed to disability literacy or complete sign language, resulting in reliance on routine experience in certain services. Continuous improvement is essential to ensure the effective implementation of inclusive practices. This process should be driven by institutional commitment rather than individual initiatives, thereby fostering a more systemic and sustainable approach.

In terms of material principles, the mosque has built accessible physical infrastructure to support inclusive communication. This commitment to inclusivity is exemplified by the renovation, which included the installation of ramps, handrails, accessible toilet doors, and braille Qur'an copies, among other measures, to ensure accessibility for

individuals with diverse physical and cognitive abilities. The caretaker asserts that the fundamental amenities include ramp access and readily accessible lavatory faucets, prioritizing ramp access and subsequently lavatory access. This phenomenon is illustrated in the accompanying figure:

Figure 4. Ablution Place and Ramp at the Mosque



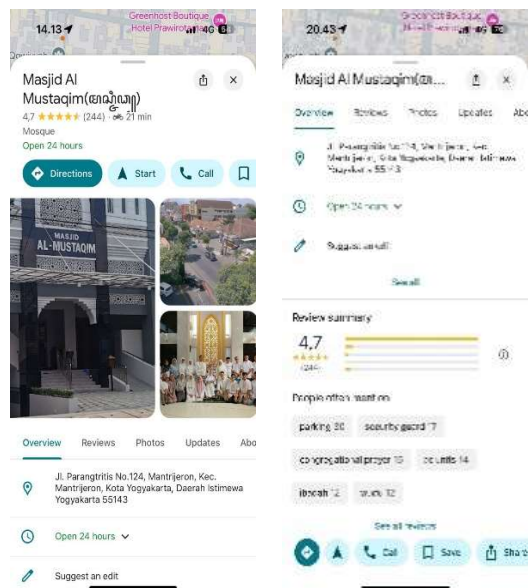
Source: Instagram dan Google Maps, 2025

As posited by Shove et al. (2012), the aforementioned elements are all consequences of inclusive practices. This is because they allow disabled worshipers to worship without physical barriers. The provision of wheelchairs for mobility purposes was particularly noteworthy, as the administrator underscored their significance by stating, "Wheelchairs are supposed to be holy," and facilitated their entry into the mosque. Field observations and interviews indicate that the integration of physical (facilities) and logistical (staff education) components has contributed to the mosque's notable physical openness. The only remaining challenge is refining the details, such as the stair gradient. However, this amalgamation of material elements has effectively shaped inclusive, habitual daily practices.

The mosque's efforts to cultivate inclusive discourse are evident in its use of various media, including notice boards and internal communication channels, where narratives and values are meticulously crafted. For instance, the *marbot's* recommendation, "They are also our brothers who want to join the congregation," underscores the concept of

inclusion as a manifestation of religious empathy. The congregation's awareness of the inclusion of people with disabilities as active participants in the spiritual community is enhanced through the utilization of inclusive da'wah language. This phenomenon aligns with the theory of Social Construction of Reality (Berger and Luckmann 1966; Muse 2025), which posits that symbolic interactions shape social reality. The dissemination of the message "equal rights" and "everyone worships" has gradually transformed the collective perception of mosques as accessible to all members of the community. The community's response further underscores this commitment, as residents express pride in their mosque's recognition as "one of the best" for facilitating worship for individuals with disabilities. The mosque's image as an inclusive institution is further reinforced by positive reviews on Google Maps (Figure 5) and religious media coverage. In essence, the mosque's symbolic communication practices, such as inspirational narratives of worshipers and testimonials, influence public perceptions, thereby fostering inclusivity as a cultural norm.

Figure 5. Positive Reviews on Google Maps



Source: Instagram dan Google Maps, 2025

However, the absence of formal feedback channels, as evidenced by the lack of a dedicated suggestion box and the direct delivery of feedback to the recipient, hinders continuous evaluation. As Rahmi's study (2023) asserts, the importance of feedback channels in the development of inclusive *dakwah* modules cannot be overstated. The integration of individuals with disabilities in the co-creation process, as outlined by Yang et al. (2023), is strongly recommended to ensure the contextualization and participatory nature of narratives and policies. Therefore, based on the findings, the integrated communication strategy must include the following: (1) an inclusive da'wah module involving disabled figures as narrators; (2) a social media content calendar with a minimum of two thematic posts per month; and (3) a digital/physical feedback channel specifically for disabled worshipers. This approach aligns with the findings of (2022), who emphasized the importance of non-physical services in evaluating the effectiveness of inclusivity.

Nevertheless, the integration of both external and internal components establishes a robust and inclusive communication ecosystem. The mosque's approach to developing an inclusive community information technology (CIT) infrastructure is evidenced by the use of social media, institutional networks, enhanced staff capabilities, and integrated physical facilities. In accordance with the findings of Syarifuddin and Al Haddar (2023), which highlight the importance of awareness campaigns and collaborative advocacy in establishing an inclusive society, Al-Mustaqim Mosque not only facilitates physical access but also promotes awareness of inclusive values within its precincts. The interviewee's assertion that "the mosque should be accessible to everyone, regardless of physical ability" indicates the mosque's success in serving as a paradigm of justice-based, inclusive communication. This success has a

motivating effect, encouraging other mosques to adopt similar measures to ensure the equal enjoyment of worship by people with disabilities. A comprehensive review of available data, including observations and interviews, suggests that Al-Mustaqim Mosque has successfully integrated the three elements of social practice—material, competence, and meaning—within its strategic communication. This approach is significant in establishing a novel image of the mosque as an inclusive space, wherein a shared awareness of diversity, accessibility, and social justice in the local community is cultivated.

CONCLUSION

Research on the internalization of disability-friendly values at Al-Mustaqim Mosque in Yogyakarta reveals that inclusive practices are fostered through the integration of accessible facilities, capacity-building initiatives for managers, and the promotion of equal religious values for people with disabilities. The provision of ramps, special toilets, Braille *mushafs*, and mobility aids enables worshippers with disabilities to participate fully in worship. These efforts are reinforced by disability literacy training and managers' direct experience serving congregants, which fosters empathetic attitudes and social acceptance. At the same time, changing religious views that people with disabilities have the same right to worship encourage the emergence of inclusive narratives in the mosque environment. Although most of the value construction process has been completed, aspects of strengthening communication, such as sermons on disability and formal feedback mechanisms, still require consistency to ensure the sustainability of inclusive practices.

The mosque's communication strategy demonstrates that inclusive narratives are disseminated through digital

media, the Muhammadiyah community network, and testimonials from disabled congregants, thereby raising public awareness. This communication infrastructure builds social support from local residents and religious institutions, while strengthening the mosque's image as a model of inclusion in Yogyakarta. Collaboration with disability support organizations also helps improve managers' competence, although the program's continuity still needs improvement. To strengthen the inclusive communication ecosystem, the mosque needs to establish a regular content calendar, establish a dedicated feedback channel, and develop preaching materials in collaboration with people with disabilities. In this way, Al-Mustaqim not only provides physical access, but also builds collective awareness of diversity and social justice, making it a strategic reference for the development of inclusive practices in places of worship.

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