



Family-based adaptive Islamic religious education for children with special needs: An integrative literature review on character development

Mashdaria Huwaina^a, Maisuhetni^{b,*}, Syamsul Huda^c, Andika Eko Prasetyo^d

^a Prodi Pendidikan Luar Biasa, Universitas Muhammadiyah Lampung, Bandar Lampung, Lampung 35132, Indonesia

^b Prodi Pendidikan Luar Biasa, Universitas Muhammadiyah Lampung, Bandar Lampung, Lampung 35132, Indonesia

^c Prodi Pendidikan Agama Islam, Universitas Islam Negeri Syekh Wasil Kediri, Kediri, East Java 64127, Indonesia

^d Department of Applied Linguistics, The University of Melbourne, Tin Alley, Melbourne Victoria 3052, Australia

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Adaptive Islamic,
Character development,
Children with special
needs,
Family involvement,
Inclusive education,
Religious Education.

ABSTRACT

Family involvement plays a crucial role in supporting the learning process and character development of children with special needs, particularly in Islamic Religious Education. However, existing studies tend to discuss parental involvement in special education in general, while limited attention has been given to how families support adaptive Islamic Religious Education for children with special needs in home-based contexts. This study aims to synthesize the forms, strategies, challenges, and implications of family involvement in adaptive Islamic Religious Education for the character development of children with special needs. This research employed an integrative literature review by examining scholarly articles, books, and educational policy documents published between 2015 and 2025. The data were analyzed using thematic content analysis to identify recurring patterns related to family roles, adaptive learning strategies, barriers, and character outcomes. The findings indicate that families contribute through three main roles: learning companions, advocates, and home-based religious educators. Effective strategies include daily worship habituation, individualized guidance, visual and concrete learning media, emotional support, and collaboration between parents and teachers. The review also reveals several challenges, including limited parental knowledge of adaptive religious education, caregiving stress, time constraints, and insufficient school-family collaboration. These findings suggest that family-based adaptive Islamic Religious Education can support the development of religious, moral, social, and emotional character among children with special needs when implemented consistently and collaboratively. This study contributes to the development of a conceptual framework for inclusive Islamic Religious Education that positions families as active partners in character formation.

1. Introduction

Education for children with special needs requires a learning environment that is not only accessible at school but also consistently supported at home. Children with special needs often experience diverse barriers in communication, cognition, social interaction, emotional regulation, and behavioral adaptation. These conditions require educational practices that are flexible, individualized, and responsive to each child's developmental characteristics. In this context, the family plays a fundamental role as the first and most continuous educational environment. Family members, particularly parents, are not merely responsible for providing care, but also for creating daily learning experiences that strengthen children's academic, social, emotional, moral,

and spiritual development [1, 2].

In the field of inclusive and special education, family involvement has been widely recognized as an important factor in supporting the development of children with special needs. Parents can contribute as learning companions, advocates, emotional supporters, and collaborators with teachers. Their involvement helps bridge the gap between school-based instruction and home-based practice. For children with special needs, such continuity is particularly important because learning outcomes are often achieved through repetition, routine, concrete experiences, and consistent reinforcement. When families are actively involved, children are more likely to experience structured learning support that corresponds to their needs and abilities [3–5].

* Corresponding author.

E-mail address: maisuhetniramdani@gmail.com (Maisuhetni).

Islamic Religious Education is one of the essential components of education in Muslim communities because it does not only transmit religious knowledge but also develops moral awareness, spiritual habits, and social character. In the Indonesian educational context, Islamic Religious Education aims to guide learners to understand, internalize, and practice Islamic values in daily life. However, for children with special needs, religious learning cannot always be delivered through conventional approaches. Abstract religious concepts, verbal explanations, text-based materials, and uniform teaching methods may not be fully accessible to children with cognitive, sensory, communication, or behavioral challenges. Therefore, Islamic Religious Education for children with special needs requires adaptive strategies, such as simplified materials, visual support, concrete media, individualized guidance, repeated practice, emotional reinforcement, and collaboration between teachers and families [6, 7].

The role of families becomes particularly important in adaptive Islamic Religious Education because many religious values are internalized through daily routines at home. Practices such as praying, reciting short verses, saying daily supplications, showing respect to others, developing patience, maintaining cleanliness, and practicing honesty are not limited to classroom instruction. These values are learned through repeated experiences in family life. Parents can model religious behavior, guide children step by step, provide concrete examples, and reinforce positive habits according to the child's developmental capacity. In this way, the family functions as a living environment where Islamic values are practiced and transformed into character [8–10].

Despite the importance of family involvement, many families face challenges in supporting Islamic Religious Education for children with special needs. Some parents have limited knowledge of adaptive religious learning strategies. Others experience caregiving stress, limited time, lack of confidence, or insufficient guidance from schools. In many cases, communication between teachers and parents remains weak, resulting in discontinuity between school-based Islamic Religious Education and home-based religious habituation. These challenges indicate that family involvement should not be understood merely as parental responsibility, but as part of a broader collaborative system involving families, teachers, schools, and inclusive education policies [3, 11].

Previous studies have discussed parental involvement in special education, family support for children with special needs, and character education in general. However, the specific discussion of family-based adaptive Islamic Religious Education for children with special needs remains relatively limited. Existing studies often focus on parental involvement in academic learning or general developmental support, while fewer studies examine how families support religious learning and character formation in home-based contexts. In addition, the relationship between adaptive Islamic Religious Education, family roles, and character development among children with special needs has not been sufficiently synthesized. This gap highlights the need for a literature-based study that integrates findings on family involvement, adaptive religious education, inclusive learning strategies, and character development [12, 13].

This study aims to synthesize the forms, strategies, challenges, and implications of family involvement in adaptive Islamic Religious Education for the character development of children with special needs. Specifically, this study seeks to answer the following research questions:

- What roles do families play in supporting Islamic Religious Education for children with special needs?

- What adaptive strategies are used by families to facilitate religious learning at home?
- What challenges do families face in implementing Islamic Religious Education for children with special needs?
- How does family involvement in adaptive Islamic Religious Education contribute to the character development of children with special needs?

The novelty of this study lies in its effort to position the family as an active agent in adaptive Islamic Religious Education rather than as a passive supporter of school-based learning. This study proposes that family involvement should be understood through three interrelated roles: the family as a learning companion, the family as an advocate, and the family as a home-based religious educator. These roles provide a conceptual basis for developing inclusive Islamic Religious Education that is responsive to the needs of children with special needs and oriented toward character formation [6, 14, 15].

This study contributes theoretically and practically to the field of Islamic education and inclusive education. Theoretically, it expands the discussion of parental involvement by linking it with adaptive religious education and character development. Practically, it provides insights for parents, Islamic Religious Education teachers, special education teachers, and schools in designing collaborative strategies that support children with special needs both in school and at home. By emphasizing family-based adaptive Islamic Religious Education, this study offers a conceptual foundation for strengthening religious, moral, social, and emotional character among children with special needs through consistent and collaborative learning practices.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Research design

This study employed an integrative literature review design to synthesize existing scholarly works on family involvement in adaptive Islamic Religious Education for children with special needs. An integrative literature review was selected because this approach allows the researcher to examine, compare, and synthesize theoretical, empirical, and policy-based sources related to a particular educational issue. In this study, the integrative review was used to identify major themes concerning family roles, adaptive religious learning strategies, challenges faced by families, and the implications of family involvement for character development among children with special needs.

The focus of this review was not merely to summarize previous studies, but to develop a conceptual understanding of how families contribute to Islamic Religious Education in home-based and inclusive educational contexts. Therefore, the review process emphasized thematic synthesis rather than statistical aggregation [4, 16].

2.2. Data sources and search strategy

The data were collected from scholarly articles, books, and educational policy documents published between 2015 and 2025. The main databases and search engines used in this review were Google Scholar, DOAJ, Garuda, and ScienceDirect. These databases were selected because they provide access to both national and international publications related to Islamic education, special education, inclusive education, parental involvement, and character education.

The literature search was conducted using combinations of Indonesian and English keywords. The main keywords included: "family involvement," "parental involvement," "children with

special needs,” “special education,” “inclusive education,” “Islamic Religious Education,” “adaptive religious education,” “character education,” “pendidikan agama Islam,” “anak berkebutuhan khusus,” “peran keluarga,” “keterlibatan orang tua,” and “pendidikan karakter.” Boolean operators such as AND and OR were used to combine search terms and broaden or narrow the search results. Examples of search strings used in this study included:

“parental involvement” AND “children with special needs” AND “character education”
 “family involvement” AND “Islamic Religious Education” AND “inclusive education”
 “adaptive religious education” AND “special needs children”
 “pendidikan agama Islam” AND “anak berkebutuhan khusus”
 “peran keluarga” AND “pendidikan karakter” AND “ABK”.

2.3. Inclusion and exclusion criteria

The selection of literature was guided by predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria (Table 1). These criteria were used to ensure that the sources analyzed were relevant to the research objectives and had academic credibility [17, 18].

Table 1
Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
Publication year	Sources published between 2015 and 2025	Sources published before 2015
Topic relevance	Studies discussing family involvement, parental involvement, Islamic Religious Education, special education, inclusive education, or character development	Studies unrelated to children with special needs, religious education, family roles, or character development
Type of source	Peer-reviewed journal articles, academic books, conference papers, and official educational policy documents	Opinion articles, blogs, non-academic websites, and unpublished materials without clear academic credibility
Language	Sources written in English or Indonesian	Sources in other languages that could not be adequately interpreted
Educational context	Studies related to formal education, home-based learning, inclusive education, religious education, or special education	Studies focusing on clinical intervention without educational relevance
Accessibility	Sources with accessible abstracts, full texts, or sufficient bibliographic information	Sources with incomplete bibliographic information or inaccessible content

2.4. Literature selection procedure

The literature selection process was conducted in several stages. First, relevant sources were identified using the selected databases and keyword combinations. Second, duplicate records were removed. Third, the titles and abstracts were screened to determine their relevance to the research focus. Fourth, the full texts of potentially relevant sources were examined based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Finally, the selected sources were analyzed thematically [3, 6, 16]. The selection process is presented in Fig. 1. The numbers in the selection flow should be completed based on the actual search results obtained during the literature identification and screening process.

2.5. Data extraction

Data were extracted using a thematic matrix to organize information from each selected source (Table 2). The extracted information included the author and year of publication, research focus, educational context, type of children with special needs discussed, family roles, adaptive learning strategies, challenges, and implications for character development [19–21].

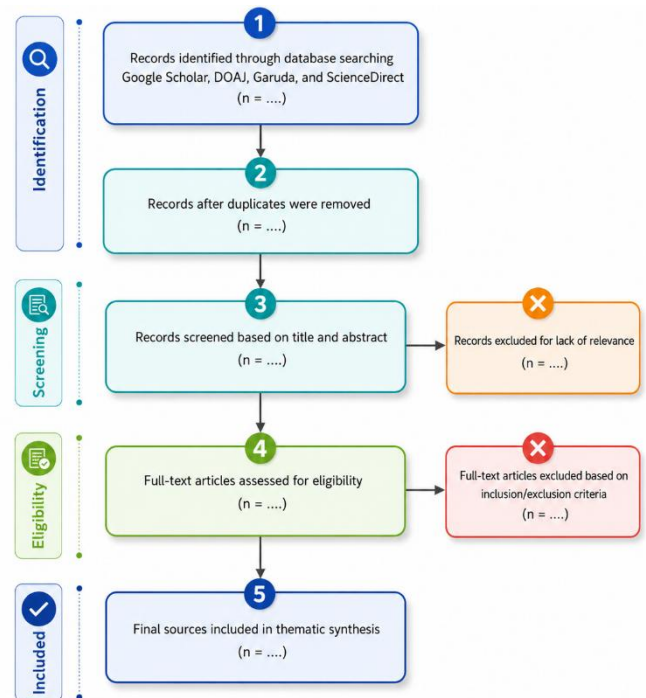


Fig. 1. Literature selection flow. The figure presents the stages of literature identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and final inclusion for thematic synthesis. The number of records should be completed based on the actual search and selection process.

Table 2
Data extraction matrix

Author/Y ear	Research Focus	Educational Context	Type of Special Needs	Family Role	Adaptive Strategy	Character-Related Implication
Author A (Year)	Parental involvement	Inclusive education	General special needs	Learning companion	Visual support and repetition	Improved discipline and participation
Author B (Year)	Religious education	Home-based learning	Autism/intellectual disability	Home-based educator	Daily worship habituation	Strengthened religious routines
Author C (Year)	Character education	Special education	General special needs	Advocate	Parent-teacher collaboration	Better emotional and social development

This matrix helped the researcher identify similarities, differences, and recurring patterns across the reviewed sources [3, 6, 16].

2.6. Data analysis

The data were analyzed using thematic content analysis. The analysis consisted of four main stages. First, the selected literature was read repeatedly to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the content. Second, relevant information was coded based on the research questions. Third, similar codes were grouped into broader themes. Fourth, the themes were interpreted to construct a conceptual synthesis of family-based adaptive Islamic Religious Education for children with special needs [7]. The thematic analysis produced four major themes:

1. family roles in Islamic Religious Education for children with special needs;
2. adaptive strategies used by families in home-based religious learning;
3. challenges faced by families in supporting Islamic Religious Education;

- 4. implications of family involvement for religious, moral, social, and emotional character development.

The interpretation of these themes was guided by concepts from inclusive education, parental involvement, adaptive learning, and character education. This enabled the study to connect practical family roles with broader theoretical discussions on inclusive Islamic education and character formation [6, 14, 15].

2.7. Trustworthiness of the review

To enhance the trustworthiness of the review, several strategies were applied. First, the study used multiple databases and search engines to obtain a broader range of literature. Second, clear inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied to ensure the relevance and credibility of the selected sources. Third, data were organized using a data extraction matrix to maintain consistency during analysis. Fourth, the synthesis was conducted thematically to identify recurring patterns rather than relying on isolated findings from individual studies [19–21].

Although this study did not involve field data collection, its trustworthiness depended on the transparency of the literature selection process, the clarity of the analytical procedure, and the relevance of the selected sources to the research objectives.

2.8. Ethical considerations

This study was based entirely on published literature, academic books, and official documents. Therefore, it did not involve human participants, personal data, or direct intervention. Ethical considerations were addressed by accurately representing the ideas of previous authors, avoiding plagiarism, and ensuring proper citation of all sources used in the review.

3. Results and discussion

3.1. Overview of thematic findings

The thematic analysis of the reviewed literature indicates that family involvement plays a central role in supporting Islamic Religious Education for children with special needs (Table 3). The findings show that the family does not only function as a supportive environment, but also as an active educational agent that helps children understand, practice, and internalize religious values in daily life. Across the reviewed sources, four major themes emerged: family roles in adaptive Islamic Religious Education, home-based adaptive learning strategies, challenges faced by families, and the implications of family involvement for character development [14, 22, 23].

The synthesis suggests that Islamic Religious Education for children with special needs requires more than conventional religious instruction. It requires adaptive practices that consider the child's cognitive, emotional, social, communicative, and behavioral characteristics. In this context, families become important partners because many religious values are not only taught formally at school but also practiced repeatedly at home through daily routines, direct modeling, emotional reinforcement, and consistent habituation [24].

3.2. Family roles in adaptive islamic religious education

The first major finding shows that families play three interconnected roles in supporting Islamic Religious Education for children with special needs: learning companion, advocate, and home-based religious educator. These roles are not separate functions, but mutually reinforcing dimensions of family involvement [20, 21, 25].

As learning companions, parents help children understand Islamic Religious Education materials through direct assistance and individualized support. Children with special needs may require repeated instruction, simplified explanations, visual prompts, and concrete examples to understand religious concepts. For example, religious practices such as prayer, daily supplications, cleanliness, respect, honesty, and patience can be introduced through step-by-step guidance rather than abstract explanation. This form of accompaniment is essential because children with special needs often need more time and more structured support to process and practice learning materials [16, 26, 27].

The role of the family as a learning companion is closely related to the idea that children learn effectively when assistance is provided within their developmental capacity. Parents can offer scaffolding by breaking down religious activities into smaller, manageable steps. For instance, instead of teaching prayer as a complete ritual at once, parents may begin by introducing simple movements, short recitations, or daily prayer routines. Through gradual assistance, children are given opportunities to develop religious understanding and practice at their own pace.

Table 3
Thematic synthesis of family involvement in adaptive Islamic Religious Education

Main Theme	Sub-theme	Description	Character-Related Implication
Family roles	Learning companion	Parents assist children in understanding religious materials through simple explanations, repetition, and direct guidance.	Supports religious understanding, attention, and learning discipline.
Family roles	Advocate	Parents communicate with teachers and schools to ensure that children receive appropriate religious learning support.	Encourages participation, confidence, and educational inclusion.
Family roles	Home-based religious educator	Families continue religious learning at home through worship routines and moral habituation.	Strengthens religious habits, moral behavior, and social responsibility.
Adaptive strategies	Visual and concrete media	Religious concepts are introduced using pictures, symbols, stories, audio-visual materials, and real objects.	Helps children understand abstract religious values more concretely.
Adaptive strategies	Individualized guidance	Learning activities are adjusted to the child's ability, type of special need, and developmental stage.	Promotes emotional security, motivation, and self-confidence.
Challenges	Limited parental knowledge	Some parents lack understanding of adaptive religious education methods.	May reduce consistency and effectiveness of home-based religious learning.
Challenges	Weak school-family collaboration	Limited communication between teachers and parents creates discontinuity between school and home learning.	May limit the internalization of religious and character values.

The second role is the family as advocate. In this role, parents act as representatives of the child's educational needs. They communicate with teachers, request appropriate adjustments, and ensure that Islamic Religious Education is delivered in ways that are accessible to the child. Advocacy is particularly important because children with special needs may not always be able to express their learning difficulties clearly. Parents often understand the child's behavior, preferences, strengths, and limitations more deeply than other educational actors. Therefore, communication between parents and teachers is necessary to design suitable learning strategies [14, 22, 23].

The third role is the family as a home-based religious educator. This role emphasizes the continuation of religious learning beyond the classroom. Islamic Religious Education is not limited to formal lessons; it is closely connected to everyday practices and moral behavior. Families can create a religious learning environment by modeling positive behavior, guiding worship routines, telling moral stories, and reinforcing Islamic values in daily interactions. Through consistent habituation, religious values become part of the child's lived experience rather than merely theoretical knowledge. These three roles indicate that family involvement is an essential component of adaptive Islamic Religious Education. The family provides continuity between formal instruction and daily practice, making religious education more meaningful and accessible for children with special needs.

3.3. Adaptive strategies used by families

The second major finding concerns the adaptive strategies used by families to support Islamic Religious Education at home (Table 4). The reviewed literature indicates that effective family-based religious learning depends on the ability of parents to adjust teaching methods to the characteristics of each child [28, 29].

One important strategy is daily worship habituation. Religious values are more easily internalized when they are practiced consistently in daily routines. Parents can guide children to engage in simple religious activities such as saying prayers before and after activities, practicing greetings, maintaining cleanliness, showing respect to family members, and participating in worship according to their ability. For children with special needs, repetition and routine are essential because they provide predictability and reduce confusion. When religious practices are repeated regularly, children gradually develop familiarity and confidence.

Another strategy is individualized guidance. Children with special needs are diverse, and each child may require different forms of support. Children with autism, for example, may benefit from structured routines, visual schedules, and predictable instructions. Children with intellectual disabilities may need simplified language, concrete examples, and repeated practice. Children with hearing impairments may require visual explanations, gestures, or sign-supported communication. Therefore, a uniform approach is not sufficient. Family-based Islamic Religious Education must be flexible and responsive to individual learning needs.

Visual and concrete media also play an important role. Religious concepts are often abstract, such as sincerity, patience, faith, obedience, and responsibility. These concepts may be difficult for children with special needs to understand if they are taught only through verbal explanation. Families can use pictures, cards, symbols, videos, storybooks, prayer movement illustrations, and concrete objects to help children connect religious values with real-life situations. For example, the value of cleanliness can be taught through direct practice of washing hands, organizing personal belongings, or preparing for prayer [14, 22, 23].

Table 4
Adaptive strategies for family-based Islamic religious education

Type of Special Need	Possible Learning Barriers	Suggested Family-Based Strategy	Example of Practice
Autism spectrum disorder	Difficulty with social communication, routine changes, and abstract concepts	Visual schedule, structured routine, repetition, step-by-step instruction	Using prayer movement cards and repeating the same daily worship routine
Intellectual disability	Limited cognitive processing, difficulty understanding complex concepts	Simplified language, concrete examples, repeated practice	Teaching short supplications through repetition and direct modeling
Hearing impairment	Limited access to verbal instruction	Visual media, gestures, written prompts, sign-supported communication	Explaining moral stories using pictures and written keywords
Attention or behavioral difficulties	Short attention span, impulsivity, emotional instability	Short learning sessions, positive reinforcement, emotional support	Giving praise after the child completes a simple religious task
General learning difficulties	Difficulty retaining information and applying concepts	Routine-based learning, parental modeling, daily habituation	Practicing greetings, honesty, cleanliness, and respect in family interactions

Emotional and motivational support is another significant strategy. Children with special needs may experience frustration, anxiety, or low motivation when learning activities are difficult. Parents can provide encouragement, praise, rewards, and emotional reassurance to create a safe learning environment. Positive reinforcement helps children associate religious learning with meaningful and pleasant experiences. This approach is important because character development is closely linked to emotional security and supportive relationships [24].

Collaboration between parents and teachers is also a key strategy. Families need guidance from teachers, particularly Islamic Religious Education teachers and special education teachers, to understand how religious learning can be adapted at home. Schools can provide simple modules, visual materials, communication books, or regular consultation sessions with parents. Such collaboration ensures that religious learning at school and home is consistent.

3.4. Challenges faced by families

Although family involvement is crucial, the review also reveals several challenges that may limit the effectiveness of adaptive Islamic Religious Education at home. The first challenge is limited parental knowledge of adaptive religious education. Some parents understand the importance of Islamic Religious Education but do not know how to adjust religious materials and activities to the needs of children with special needs. As a result, learning activities may become too difficult, too abstract, or inconsistent with the child's developmental capacity.

The second challenge is caregiving stress. Parenting children with special needs often requires additional emotional, physical, and financial resources. Parents may experience fatigue, anxiety, frustration, or uncertainty about how to support their child's learning. This condition may affect the consistency of home-based religious education. When parents are under stress, it may be difficult to maintain patience, routine, and positive reinforcement.

The third challenge is limited time. Many parents have work responsibilities and household duties that reduce their availability for structured learning activities at home. Family-based Islamic Religious Education requires consistency, but consistency is difficult to maintain when parents have limited time and energy. Therefore, adaptive religious education at home should not be designed as a heavy academic burden. Instead, it should be integrated into simple daily routines that are realistic for families.

The fourth challenge is insufficient school-family collaboration. In many cases, communication between teachers and parents remains limited. Parents may not receive clear guidance on how to continue Islamic Religious Education at home, while teachers may not fully understand the child's home context. This lack of collaboration can create a gap between school-based learning and family-based habituation. To address this issue, schools need to develop structured communication with parents and provide practical guidance for adaptive religious learning at home [19–21].

The fifth challenge is the lack of accessible learning resources. Some families do not have access to appropriate religious learning materials for children with special needs. Many Islamic Religious Education materials are still text-based, abstract, and designed for typically developing learners. Therefore, there is a need for adaptive materials that are visual, simple, inclusive, and suitable for diverse learning needs.

3.5. Implications for character development

The findings suggest that family involvement in adaptive Islamic Religious Education has important implications for the character development of children with special needs. Character development in this context includes religious, moral, social, and emotional dimensions. These dimensions are closely related because religious learning is not only aimed at knowledge acquisition but also at the formation of habits, attitudes, and behavior.

First, family involvement supports religious character. Through daily worship habituation, children gradually become familiar with religious practices. Even when children cannot fully understand complex theological concepts, they can still develop religious awareness through routine, modeling, and participation. For example, saying simple prayers, following prayer movements, greeting others politely, and maintaining cleanliness can become meaningful expressions of religious character [19–21].

Second, family involvement contributes to moral character. Moral values such as honesty, patience, responsibility, respect, and compassion can be introduced through everyday family interactions. Parents play an important role in modeling these values. Children with special needs often learn more effectively from concrete examples than from verbal instruction alone. Therefore, when parents consistently demonstrate moral behavior, children have opportunities to observe, imitate, and gradually internalize these values.

Third, family involvement supports social character. Religious learning at home can encourage children to interact positively with family members and others. Activities such as greeting, sharing, helping, apologizing, and showing respect can strengthen social behavior. For children with communication or social interaction difficulties, these practices need to be taught gradually through repetition and positive reinforcement.

Fourth, family involvement supports emotional development. A supportive family environment helps children develop emotional regulation, confidence, and motivation. When parents provide patience,

encouragement, and appreciation, children are more likely to feel secure in learning. Emotional security is important because children with special needs may become easily frustrated when facing learning challenges. Positive family involvement can reduce anxiety and increase the child's willingness to participate in religious activities.

However, the contribution of family involvement to character development should not be understood as automatic. Its effectiveness depends on several conditions, including parental knowledge, consistency of practice, the suitability of learning strategies, the child's type of special need, and the quality of school-family collaboration. Therefore, adaptive Islamic Religious Education must be developed as a collaborative system rather than as an isolated family responsibility.

3.6. Conceptual synthesis: family-based adaptive islamic religious education

Based on the thematic findings, this study proposes a conceptual synthesis of family-based adaptive Islamic Religious Education for children with special needs. The synthesis consists of five interrelated components: understanding the child's needs, adapting religious materials, implementing home-based habituation, strengthening emotional support, and building school-family collaboration. The first component is understanding the child's needs. Families and teachers must identify the child's abilities, limitations, interests, communication style, and behavioral characteristics. This understanding becomes the basis for selecting appropriate religious learning strategies [19–21].

The second component is adapting religious materials. Islamic Religious Education materials should be simplified, visualized, and contextualized. Abstract concepts should be connected to concrete daily experiences. For example, the concept of cleanliness can be linked to handwashing, preparing for prayer, and keeping personal spaces tidy.

The third component is implementing home-based habituation. Religious and moral values should be practiced consistently through daily routines. Habituation helps children with special needs develop familiarity and stability in learning religious values. The fourth component is strengthening emotional support. Families need to create a positive learning atmosphere through patience, encouragement, praise, and empathy. Emotional support is essential to maintain children's motivation and reduce learning-related stress. The fifth component is building school-family collaboration. Teachers and parents need to share information, coordinate strategies, and evaluate children's progress together. Collaboration ensures continuity between classroom instruction and home-based practice [30].

Table 5

Conceptual framework of family-based adaptive Islamic religious education

Component	Main Focus	Practical Application	Expected Outcome
Understanding the child's needs	Identifying abilities, barriers, and learning characteristics	Observing behavior, communication style, and learning response	More appropriate religious learning support
Adapting religious materials	Making PAI accessible and meaningful	Simplifying content, using visual media, and providing concrete examples	Improved understanding of religious values
Home-based habituation	Building religious and moral routines	Practicing prayers, greetings, cleanliness, honesty, and respect	Strengthened religious and moral character
Emotional support	Creating a safe and motivating learning environment	Giving praise, encouragement, patience, and positive reinforcement	Improved confidence and emotional regulation
School-family collaboration	Ensuring continuity between school and home	Parent-teacher communication, shared learning plans, and guidance	More consistent character development

This conceptual synthesis highlights that the success of Islamic Religious Education for children with special needs depends on the interaction between adaptive strategies and supportive relationships. The family is not simply an extension of school instruction, but a central environment where religious and moral values are practiced in real-life situations.

The findings of this review strengthen the argument that Islamic Religious Education for children with special needs should be understood as an inclusive and adaptive process. Conventional approaches that rely heavily on verbal explanation, abstract concepts, and uniform expectations may not be sufficient. Children with special needs require learning experiences that are concrete, repetitive, emotionally supportive, and individually adjusted.

The role of the family is especially significant because character formation occurs largely through daily experiences. Religious values such as honesty, patience, responsibility, discipline, and compassion are not only learned through formal instruction but also through observation, imitation, practice, and reinforcement. In this regard, the family serves as the first and most continuous context for character development [3, 11].

The findings also show that family involvement should be supported by schools. Placing the full responsibility on parents may create additional burdens, especially for families who already face caregiving stress and limited resources. Schools need to provide practical guidance, adaptive materials, and regular communication so that parents can support religious learning more effectively at home. Islamic Religious Education teachers should also collaborate with special education teachers to design strategies that are suitable for children with different needs.

Another important point is the need to move from general parental involvement to adaptive parental involvement. In the context of children with special needs, family involvement is not only about being present or supportive. It involves understanding the child's specific needs, adjusting learning methods, using appropriate media, and creating consistent routines. This adaptive involvement allows children to access religious education in ways that are meaningful and developmentally appropriate [31].

The study also indicates that character development should be viewed multidimensionally. For children with special needs, character development may appear in simple but meaningful forms, such as following a routine, showing respect, managing emotions, participating in prayer, saying greetings, helping others, or responding positively to guidance. These outcomes should be appreciated as important indicators of religious, moral, social, and emotional growth [3, 11].

Overall, the results of this review emphasize the importance of developing a collaborative model of Islamic Religious Education that integrates family roles, adaptive strategies, and inclusive school support. Such a model can help children with special needs access religious education more meaningfully and develop character through consistent practice in both school and family environments.

4. Conclusion

This study synthesized the role of families in supporting adaptive Islamic Religious Education for children with special needs and its implications for character development. The findings indicate that family involvement is a crucial element in making Islamic Religious Education more accessible, meaningful, and applicable in the daily lives of children with special needs. Families contribute through three main roles: learning companions, advocates, and home-based religious educators. These roles enable children to receive continuous support beyond the classroom and help transform religious values into everyday habits and behavior.

The review shows that effective family-based adaptive Islamic Religious Education requires individualized and flexible strategies. Daily worship habituation, simplified religious materials, visual and concrete media, repeated practice, emotional reinforcement, and parent-teacher collaboration are important strategies for supporting children with diverse learning needs. These strategies help children understand and practice religious values according to their developmental capacity. Family involvement also contributes to the development of religious, moral, social, and emotional character, including discipline in worship, honesty, respect, patience, emotional regulation, and positive social interaction.

However, the implementation of family-based adaptive Islamic Religious Education still faces several challenges. Limited parental knowledge of adaptive learning methods, caregiving stress, time constraints, limited access to appropriate learning materials, and weak school-family collaboration may reduce the

effectiveness of religious learning at home. Therefore, family involvement should not be viewed solely as parental responsibility. It must be supported by schools, teachers, and inclusive education policies through practical guidance, adaptive learning resources, and continuous communication between parents and educators.

This study contributes to the development of a conceptual understanding of family-based adaptive Islamic Religious Education for children with special needs. The proposed synthesis positions the family as an active partner in inclusive religious education and character formation. It also highlights the need to integrate home-based habituation, adaptive teaching strategies, emotional support, and school-family collaboration in supporting children with special needs.

The limitation of this study lies in its literature-based approach, which does not involve direct field data from parents, teachers, or children with special needs. Therefore, future studies are recommended to conduct empirical research through interviews, observations, case studies, or intervention-based designs. Further research may also examine the effectiveness of specific adaptive Islamic Religious Education strategies for different categories of special needs, such as autism, intellectual disability, hearing impairment, or attention and behavioral difficulties. Such studies would provide stronger empirical evidence and practical models for inclusive Islamic Religious Education in both school and family contexts.

CRedit authorship contribution statement

Mashdaria Huwaina: Writing – review & editing, Writing – original draft, Supervision, Software, Resources, Methodology, Investigation, Formal analysis, Data curation, Conceptualization. **Maisuhetni:** Conceptualization, Writing – original draft, Supervision, Software, Resources, Methodology, Investigation, Formal analysis. **Syamsul Huda:** Formal analysis, Writing – review & editing, Investigation. **Andika Eko Prasetyo:** Formal analysis, Writing – review & editing, Investigation.

Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Data availability

Data will be made available on request.

Acknowledgment

The authors would like to express their sincere gratitude to the academic community and all parties who provided valuable support in the preparation of this article. The authors also acknowledge the contribution of previous researchers whose works have provided important theoretical and empirical foundations for this integrative literature review. Appreciation is extended to the institutions and colleagues who supported the development of ideas related to Islamic Religious Education, inclusive education, family involvement, and character development for children with special needs. This research did not receive any specific grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

References

1. American Psychiatric Association. (2022). *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, 5th ed., text rev., Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Association. [Doi: 10.1176/appi.books.9780890425787](https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.books.9780890425787)

2. Ball, J., and Fazil, Q. (2013). Does Engagement in Meaningful Occupation Reduce Challenging Behavior in People with Intellectual Disabilities? A Systematic Review of the Literature, *Journal of Intellectual Disabilities: JOID*, Vol. 17, No. 1, pp. 64–77. [Doi: 10.1177/1744629512473557](https://doi.org/10.1177/1744629512473557)
3. Billen, E. (2022). *Improving the Understanding of Self-Regulation: Perspectives for Forensic Research and Practice*, PhD Dissertation, Tilburg University
4. Bonta, J., and Andrews, D. A. (2023). *The Psychology of Criminal Conduct*, 7th ed., New York, NY: Routledge
5. Cohen, I. L., and Tsiouris, J. A. (2020). Triggers of Aggressive Behaviors in Intellectually Disabled Adults and Their Association with Autism, Medical Conditions, Psychiatric Disorders, Age and Sex: A Large-Scale Study, *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, Vol. 50, No. 10, pp. 3748–3762. [Doi: 10.1007/s10803-020-04424-4](https://doi.org/10.1007/s10803-020-04424-4)
6. Craik, C., Bryant, W., Ryan, A., Barclay, S., Brooke, N., Mason, A., and Russell, P. (2010). A Qualitative Study of Service User Experiences of Occupation in Forensic Mental Health, *Australian Occupational Therapy Journal*, Vol. 57, No. 5, pp. 339–344. [Doi: 10.1111/j.1440-1630.2010.00857.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1440-1630.2010.00857.x)
7. Delforterie, M. J., Hesper, B. L., and Didden, R. (2020). Psychometric Properties of the Dynamic Risk Outcome Scales (DROS) for Individuals with Mild Intellectual Disability or Borderline Intellectual Functioning and Externalising Behaviour Problems, *Journal of Applied Research in Intellectual Disabilities: JARID*, Vol. 33, No. 4, pp. 662–672. [Doi: 10.1111/jar.12546](https://doi.org/10.1111/jar.12546)
8. De Vogel, V., and Didden, R. (2022). Victimization History in Female Forensic Psychiatric Patients with Intellectual Disabilities: Results from a Dutch Multicenter Study, *Research in Developmental Disabilities*, Vol. 122, 104179. [Doi: 10.1016/j.ridd.2022.104179](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ridd.2022.104179)
9. Farnworth, L., Nikitin, L., and Fossey, E. (2004). Being in a Secure Forensic Psychiatric Unit: Every Day is the Same, Killing Time or Making the Most of It, *British Journal of Occupational Therapy*, Vol. 67, No. 10, pp. 430–438. [Doi: 10.1177/030802260406701003](https://doi.org/10.1177/030802260406701003)
10. Frielink, N., Schuengel, C., and Embregts, P. J. C. M. (2018). Autonomy Support, Need Satisfaction, and Motivation for Support among Adults with Intellectual Disability: Testing a Self-Determination Theory Model, *American Journal on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities*, Vol. 123, No. 1, pp. 33–49. [Doi: 10.1352/1944-7558-123.1.33](https://doi.org/10.1352/1944-7558-123.1.33)
11. Guina, J., Hernandez, C., Witherell, J., Cowan, A., Dixon, D., King, I., and Gentile, J. P. (2022). Neurodevelopmental Disorders, Criminality, and Criminal Responsibility, *The Journal of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law*, Vol. 50, No. 3, pp. 358–368. [Doi: 10.29158/JAAPL.210103-21](https://doi.org/10.29158/JAAPL.210103-21)
12. Harris, J. C. (2006). *Intellectual Disability: Understanding Its Development, Causes, Classification, Evaluation, and Treatment*, New York, NY: Oxford University Press. Bai, C., Zhu, Q., and Sarkis, J. (2024). Do Blockchain Capabilities Help Overcome Supply and Operational Risks: Insights from Firm Market Returns during COVID-19, *Omega*, Vol. 126, 103049. [Doi: 10.1016/j.omega.2024.103049](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.omega.2024.103049)
13. Hollomotz, A. (2018). Successful Interviews with People with Intellectual Disability, *Qualitative Research*, Vol. 18, No. 2, pp. 153–170. [Doi: 10.1177/1468794117713810](https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794117713810)
14. Jahoda, A., Kemp, J., Riddell, S., and Banks, P. (2008). Feelings about Work: A Review of the Socio-Emotional Impact of Supported Employment on People with Intellectual Disabilities, *Journal of Applied Research in Intellectual Disabilities*, Vol. 21, No. 1, pp. 1–18. [Doi: 10.1111/j.1468-3148.2007.00365.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-3148.2007.00365.x)
15. Kaal, H. L., Nijman, H. L. I., and Moonen, X. M. H. (2015). Identifying Offenders with an Intellectual Disability in Detention in The Netherlands, *Journal of Intellectual Disabilities and Offending Behaviour*, Vol. 6, No. 2, pp. 94–101. [Doi: 10.1108/JIDOB-04-2015-0008](https://doi.org/10.1108/JIDOB-04-2015-0008)
16. Kim, M., and Cheon, K. A. (2024). Exploring the Clinical Characteristics and Comorbid Disorders of Borderline Intellectual Functioning, *Journal of the Korean Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, Vol. 35, No. 3, pp. 181–187. [Doi: 10.5765/jkacap.240012](https://doi.org/10.5765/jkacap.240012)
17. Littlewood, M., Dagnan, D., and Rodgers, J. (2018). Exploring the Emotion Regulation Strategies Used by Adults with Intellectual Disabilities, *International Journal of Developmental Disabilities*, Vol. 64, No. 3, pp. 204–211. [Doi: 10.1080/20473869.2018.1466510](https://doi.org/10.1080/20473869.2018.1466510)
18. Orío-Aparicio, C., López-Escribano, C., and Bel-Fenellós, C. (2025). Borderline Intellectual Functioning: A Scoping Review, *Journal of Intellectual Disability Research: JIDR*, Vol. 69, No. 6, pp. 437–456. [Doi: 10.1111/jir.13221](https://doi.org/10.1111/jir.13221)

19. Quinn, S., Rhynas, S., Gowland, S., Cameron, L., Braid, N., and O'Connor, S. (2022). Risk for Intellectual Disability Populations in Inpatient Forensic Settings in the United Kingdom: A Literature Review, *Journal of Applied Research in Intellectual Disabilities: JARID*, Vol. 35, No. 6, pp. 1267–1280. [Doi: 10.1111/jar.13030](https://doi.org/10.1111/jar.13030)
20. Ratti, V., Hassiotis, A., Crabtree, J., Deb, S., Gallagher, P., and Unwin, G. (2016). The Effectiveness of Person-Centred Planning for People with Intellectual Disabilities: A Systematic Review, *Research in Developmental Disabilities*, Vol. 57, pp. 63–84. [Doi: 10.1016/j.ridd.2016.06.015](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ridd.2016.06.015)
21. Ritchie, J., and Lewis, J. (2003). *Qualitative Research Practice: A Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers*, London: SAGE Publications.
22. Ryan, R. M., and Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-Determination Theory and the Facilitation of Intrinsic Motivation, Social Development, and Well-Being, *The American Psychologist*, Vol. 55, No. 1, pp. 68–78. [Doi: 10.1037/0003-066X.55.1.68](https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.55.1.68)
23. Sumarni, S., Ramadhani, R., Sazaki, Y., Astika, R. T., Andika, W. D., and Prasetyo, A. E. (2019). Development of “Child Friendly ICT” Textbooks to Improve Professional Competence of Teacher Candidates: A Case Study of Early Childhood Education Program Students, *Journal for the Education of Gifted Young Scientists*, Vol. 7, No. 3, pp. 643–658. [Doi: 10.17478/jegys.596095](https://doi.org/10.17478/jegys.596095)
24. Huda, S., Muawanah, M., Munifah, M., Syazali, M., Palupi, E. K., Umam, R., and Tortop, H. S. (2020). Islamic Education in Supply Chain System by Prioritizing Manners as a Success Factor of Millennial Generation on Socializing, *International Journal of Supply Chain Management*, Vol. 9, No. 2, pp. 853–863. [Doi: 10.59160/ijscm.v9i2.4727](https://doi.org/10.59160/ijscm.v9i2.4727)
25. Munifah, M., Huda, S., Hamida, U. D., Subandi, S., Syazali, M., and Umam, R. (2019). The Use of Management Strategies to Attract the Public's Interest in Pesantren: A New Model for Pesantren Dynamics Study, *International Journal of Innovation, Creativity and Change*, Vol. 8, pp. 363–383.
26. Sumarni, S., Pertiwi, S. T. Y., Rukiyah, A., Astika, W. D., Abdurrahman, R. T., and Umam, R. (2019). Behavior in Early Childhood (2–3) Years: A Case Study on the Use of Gadgets in Social Environments, *International Journal of Innovation, Creativity and Change*, Vol. 8, No. 8, pp. 384–404
27. Huda, S., Suherman, Komarudin, Syazali, M., and Umam, R. (2020). The Effectiveness of Al-Qurun Teaching Model (ATM) Viewed from Gender Differences: The Impact on Mathematical Problem-Solving Ability, *Journal of Physics: Conference Series*, Vol. 1467, 012001. [Doi: 10.1088/1742-6596/1467/1/012001](https://doi.org/10.1088/1742-6596/1467/1/012001)
28. Huda, S., Munifah, M., and Umam, R. (2020). Think Talk Write (TTW) Learning Model on Thinking Skills, Creativity, and Problem Solving, *Journal of Gifted Education and Creativity*, Vol. 7, No. 1, pp. 25–32.
29. Munifah, M., Tsani, I., Yasin, M., Tortop, H. S., Palupi, E. K., and Umam, R. (2019). Management System of Education: Conceptual Similarity (Integration) between Japanese Learning System and Islamic Learning System in Indonesia, *Tadris: Jurnal Keguruan dan Ilmu Tarbiyah*, Vol. 4, No. 2. [Doi: 10.24042/tadris.v4i2.4893](https://doi.org/10.24042/tadris.v4i2.4893)
30. Segeren, M. W., Fassaert, T. J. L., Kea, R., de Wit, M. A. S., and Popma, A. (2018). Exploring Differences in Criminogenic Risk Factors and Criminal Behavior between Young Adult Violent Offenders with and without Mild to Borderline Intellectual Disability, *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, Vol. 62, No. 4, pp. 978–999. [Doi: 10.1177/0306624X16674009](https://doi.org/10.1177/0306624X16674009)
31. Tassé, M. J., Schalock, R. L., Balboni, G., Bersani, H., Borthwick-Duffy, S. A., Spreat, S., Thissen, D., Widaman, K. F., and Zhang, D. (2012). The Construct of Adaptive Behavior: Its Conceptualization, Measurement, and Use in the Field of Intellectual Disability, *American Journal on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities*, Vol. 117, No. 4, pp. 291–303. [Doi: 10.1352/1944-7558-117.4.291](https://doi.org/10.1352/1944-7558-117.4.291)