



Social Development of Persons with Disabilities and Its Implementation in Indonesia from the Perspective of the Qur'an

Zulfikar | Universitas PTIQ, Jakarta | Indonesia

*Correspondence: Zulfikarst@gmail.com

Abstract

This study concludes that the social development model for persons with disabilities and its implementation in Indonesia from the perspective of the Qur'an are various efforts in building human capital, building social capital, accessibility, eliminating stigma and social protection. In addition, it also opens up decent job opportunities in productive economic participation and entrepreneurship. Meanwhile, the goal is to build prosperity based on Hayyatan Thayyibah (Good Lives Building) or a good life, which is a good and desirable state of human life based on divine standards. Meanwhile, the result is the realization of an equal society, the rights of people with disabilities are fulfilled and can improve their welfare. This research also emphasizes the importance of the role of the state in fulfilling the rights of persons with disabilities. This conclusion was obtained through theoretical analysis of social development, problems of persons with disabilities, government policies towards persons with disabilities and strategies to improve the welfare of persons with disabilities. The approach used in this study is a qualitative approach, based on literature and field research, coupled with verses of the Qur'an, publications in the form of research results, journals, seminars and articles. Meanwhile, the interpretation method used is the Maudhû'i thematic interpretation method, which functions to analyze problems from a theological point of view using Qur'anic verses.

Keywords: Social Development, Disability, Quran Perspective.

Received: January 11, 2025 | Revised: January 24, 2025 | Accepted: February 25, 2025

INTRODUCTION

The world's attention to increase public awareness of people with disabilities has been growing stronger since the last three decades. Especially since the establishment of December 3 as the *International Day of Persons with Disabilities* (IDPWD) by the UN General Assembly in 1992 (UN, 1992). Since then, international discourse, research and campaigns on the rights of persons with disabilities have increased rapidly. It culminated on December 13, 2006, with the issuance of the UN Resolution on *the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (CRPD) abbreviated as CRPD (UN, 2006). The content of the Resolution includes the rights of persons with disabilities and a statement on the measures taken to ensure the implementation of the Convention.

Quantitatively, the number of people with disabilities in the world is not small. According to a 2011 report by the *World Health Organization* (WHO) and the *World Bank*, about 15% of the world's population lives with a variety of disabilities, with 2–4% of them



being severely disabled. This shows that more than one billion people in the world currently experience conditions of disability in both severe, moderate and mild categories (WHO & World Bank, 2011, p. 261). In the same report, the WHO and the World Bank mentioned that people with disabilities generally have poorer health, lower educational attainment, fewer economic opportunities, and higher poverty rates than people without disabilities. This is largely due to the lack of services available to them and the many obstacles they face in their daily lives (WHO & World Bank, 2011, pp. 19–54).

In Indonesia, people with disabilities tend to have lower levels of well-being than non-disabled people, as seen by the higher poverty rates. When Indonesia's poverty rate reached single-digit numbers in 2018, the proportion of people with disabilities living below the poverty line was still around 14.97%. Likewise, in terms of employment, citizens with disabilities face much more limited access to employment (Riskseddas, 2018). The main problems faced by persons with disabilities are inequalities in social and economic life, which can be seen in their welfare situation in terms of poverty levels, access to employment, public services such as health, education, information and technology, public infrastructure, as well as problems in persons with disabilities such as low awareness, self-confidence, and participation in social and political life.

A development approach that focuses its attention on the problems of social welfare, inequality and underdevelopment is the perspective of social development. The orientation of economic development that ignores social development is suspected to be the cause of inequality and social welfare problems, and is even accused of giving rise to social inequality (Wirutomo, 2014). According to Midgley, social development contains three dimensions in realizing social welfare, namely managing social problems, meeting needs and increasing opportunities. If these three requirements are met, then it can be said that the community or society enjoys a satisfactory level of welfare. On the contrary, when these requirements are not met, then the community or society has failed to achieve a satisfactory level of welfare (Midgley, 1995, pp. 15–16).

The term disability is a translation of the word *disability* in English, which was previously interpreted as a disabled person or person with a disability. Linguistically, this word comes from *the words dis* and *ability* which literally mean the opposite of ability, namely inability. In Indonesia, the refinement of disabled people to people with disabilities is carried out because the term disabled person is considered rude and has a negative connotation. In addition, the term disability or disability has also appeared, which is an acronym for *Different Ability People*, which means people who have different abilities (Suharto et al., 2016). However, in this paper, the author chooses the term disability or persons with disabilities because in scientific discourse generally the term used is *disability* or *persons with disability*. This term is also used by world institutions such as the United Nations and WHO, and has been adopted into Law Number 8 of 2016 concerning Persons with Disabilities.

Historically, people with disabilities have often been treated poorly and degraded. Greek philosophers, including Plato, stated that people with disabilities were considered dangerous to their ideal state, while Aristotle advised parents not to raise children with disabilities, so they were not allowed to study, develop autonomy or marry (Saad & Borowska-

Beszta, 2019, p. 30). Plato in his book *The Republic* (Plato, 2018, pp. 97–102) and Aristotle in his book *Politics* (Aristotle, 1999, p. 178) even view individuals with incurable disabilities as unworthy of medical care and should be left to die in the process of passive euthanasia. Under these assumptions, non-disabled people continue to practice various forms of discrimination, intolerance, and the use of stigma labels in their daily lives (Mourad & Walid, 2008, p. 31).

The same thing happened to pre-Islamic Arab societies. According to Ibn Khaldun in *Muqaddimah* (Khaldun, 2001, pp. 184–185), the life of the pre-Islamic Arab society was described as a savage, robber and robber. Jawwad Ali also stated in *the Arab History before Islam* that they were very difficult to govern by leaders and did not have an advanced civilization, but their character was brave (Ali, 2018, p. 248). As a result of this harsh attitude, the position of people with disabilities is considered dirty and low, as quoted by Ibn Kathir from the expression Adh-Dhahhak who states that before the arrival of Islam, those who were blind, lame and sick did not want to eat with normal people because they felt dirty and inferior (Ibn Kathir, 1994, p. 86).

RESEARCH THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

Social Development becomes the theoretical framework in this study, involving a process that Midgley calls "Institutional Structuralism", which is based on the mobilization of various social institutions and associations in order to implement Social Development (Midgley, 2020, pp. 268–284). This concept refers to different social and economic institutions and seeks to mobilize communities through an approach known as "*pluralism manage*", with the expected result of which a new tool to develop the process of institutional structuralism through a *bottom-up* methodology that enables the achievement of social development goals.

The methodology of interpreting the Qur'an in this study is carried out through Fazlur Rahman's *double movement approach*, which is an interpretation method that contains two movements: the first movement departs from the present situation to the situation when the Qur'an was revealed, and the second movement returns again from the situation when the Qur'an was revealed to the present, which will presuppose the progressivity of revelation. The research was conducted with a qualitative approach that did not use statistical analysis. The research method used is the maudhu'i/thematic tafsir method, which is trying to find answers in the Qur'an by collecting verses of the Qur'an that have the same goal, paying attention to the social context of the descent in harmony with the causes of its descent, then paying attention to the verses in relation to each other.

The primary data sources used are Qur'anic verses that have similarities in the theme of disability and those that are appropriate in the discussion of dissertations, then interpreted by referring to books of Qur'anic interpretation from different backgrounds of times, schools, and patterns. The data in this study was obtained through library *research*, and was also strengthened by data from the field obtained from various authoritative sources, including verses of the Qur'an and written materials that have been published in the form of books, journals, magazines, and other sources including from the internet related to the research.

DISCUSSION

Terms Related to Social Development in the Qur'an

The Qur'an uses a number of terms related to the concept of development and social change. Among these terms, there are three that are most relevant to the theme of social development for people with disabilities, namely *taghyîr*, *ishlah*, and *tabdîl*.

Taghyîr

Al-Taghyîr is a complete transformation in aspects of understanding, methods, and patterns of behavior that results in the occurrence of different circumstances or different end results. In general, *taghyîr* consists of two patterns of change, namely positive-constructive change and negative change. According to Al-Raghib Al-Ashfahany, *taghyîr* has three meanings (Al-Ashfahany, 2017, p. 897). The first meaning is *litaghyîr shûrah al-syai' dûna dzâtibi*, which is a change in form but not a change in substance. The second meaning is *litabdîlihi bighairihi*, which is the substitution of something for another. While the third meaning is *hawwalahu wa baddala*, which is transformative and reformative. M. Quraish Shihab in his commentary as quoted by Nugraha explained that the sentence *mâ biqaum* shows external sides such as wealth, poverty, health, and disease, while *mâ bi anfusihîm* is the internal side of human beings such as mindset, work ethic, and mental attitude (Nugraha, t.t., pp. 242–243).

The pressure point that gives hints at social change is the statement *innallâha lâ yugayyiru mâ biqaumin hattâ yugayyiru mâ bianfusihim*. The statement contains two main points: first, the transformation of Allah SWT into the social state of man which is declared as *sunnatullah* or *sunnah of Al-Taghyîr*; and second, the transformation of man into their own social circumstances and reality which is often expressed as social engineering (Nugraha, t.t., p. 242). In the context of social development of persons with disabilities, *taghyîr* means to change oneself (improve one's quality), change family and community behavior and change government policies towards persons with disabilities so that their social life is better, prosperous and dignified.

Ishlah

Al-Ishlah is the opposite of *ifsad*. Etymologically, *al-Ishlah* is taken from the words *aslaha*, *yuslihu*, *ishlahan*, meaning improvement or peace, so this word and all its derivative forms mean "to bring benefits, repair, reform, and harmony". To understand the Qur'an's instructions on the issue of *ishlah*, it must be understood historically, so that it not only looks at the meaning of the text, but also must understand the background of the descent of the verses of the Qur'an (Zainuddin, 2022, p. 164). The purpose of the practice of *ishlah* as mentioned in the Qur'an includes several things (Ismail et al., 2017, pp. 191–192): objectifying the concept of *ukhuwwah* (brotherhood) and maintaining affection between people (QS. al-Hujurat /49:10; QS. Ali Imran /3:103); maintaining the harmony of society which starts from family life (QS. al-Baqarah /2:182; QS. al-Nisa' /4:128–129; QS. al-Anfâl (8:1); maintaining the preservation and balance of the universe (QS. al-Shu'ara /26:150–152; QS. al-A'raf /7:56); removing fear and sadness in daily life (QS. al-An'am /6:48); and to maintain the secrecy of the

disputing parties (QS. al-Nisa' /4:114). In addition, *ishlah* is one of the obligations to Allah SWT that He commands (QS. al-Anfâl /8:1; QS. al-Hujurât /49:9–10), as well as the way to obtain His forgiveness and enjoyment in the hereafter (QS. al-Maidah /5:39).

Tabdîl

In addition to *taghyîr* and *ishlah*, the Qur'an also reveals other terms that mean change, namely *badala* and *tabdîl*. According to Al-Raghib Al-Ashfahany, *tabdîl* means to put something in another place, and this is more common than the word *'iwadun* (replace), because to replace means to make for you something second by giving something first. The word *tabdîl* sometimes means to change absolutely even without replacing it (QS. Al-Baqarah /2:59) (Al-Ashfahany, 2017, p. 150). In the context of people with disabilities, *tabdîl* means to rearrange systems and strategies in overcoming the problems of people with disabilities. Especially if a better policy model is found, it is necessary to make a change.

Islamic Views on Disability

The term disability is not known in the Qur'an or Hadith. A study by Bazna and Hatab (2005, pp. 5–27) concluded that the term disability is not mentioned in the Qur'an, although some words associated with disability such as *summun*, *bukmun*, and *'umyun* have indeed been found (Mahalli, 2019, pp. 282–288). However, the concept of disability in the conventional sense was not found. Disability in the physical sense is mentioned in the Qur'an through the term *al-a'mâ* which means blind person (QS. 'Abasa / 80:2), *al-akmaha* which also means blind (QS. Al-Maidah /5:110), *sufaha'* jama' from *safih* which means a person whose intellect is not yet perfect (QS. Al-Baqarah (2:13), and *al-a'raj* which means lame (Qur'an. Al-Fath /48:17).

In his overview of his studies on Islam and disability, Schuelka (2013, pp. 500–513) emphasizes that the Qur'an seems to view people with disabilities positively by underlining the idea of justice. In line with this, Bazna and Hatab (2005, pp. 5–7) state that in the Qur'an, disability is included in the concept of unluck that must be treated with compassion and justice.

The perspective on disability in Islam can be distinguished through two forms of understanding, namely the Sufi review and the philosophical review (Ghaly, 2010, p. 20). In the Sufi view, the real problem of disability is a problem that afflicts a person's heart and soul, not his body. A person's status and dignity in Islam is more damaged by this type of mental disability than by the one that afflicts one's body.

In a theological and philosophical review, Ghaly (2010, pp. 52–53) identifies three patterns of monotheistic studies. The *Ash'ariyites* see God's perfection in His omnipotence, so they argue that the only explanation for disability and all forms of pain is God's omnipotence and human reason cannot question it. The *Mu'tazilah* group on the other hand states that God's perfection is primarily represented in His justice and wisdom, so that all disasters in life have one or more wise purposes. Meanwhile, a third group represented by the majority of Muslim scholars such as Abu Mansur al-Maturidi, Ibn Taymiyah, Ibn Qayyim al-

Jauzi, and Izzuddin Abdul Salam sought a middle ground, arguing that God's omnipotence should not be emphasized at the expense of His justice and wisdom, or vice versa.

Social Development Policy for Persons with Disabilities in Islamic History

The term Social Development was not yet known in the time of the prophet, but technically its practices have been carried out. In pre-Islamic times, the position of Persons with Disabilities was not favorable in the social structure of Arab society. In the Ancient Greek world, the work of Lysias, Plutarch, and other writers showed that Persons with Disabilities were forbidden to exercise military, political, and religious roles (Penrose, t.t., pp. 499–523), while Plato expressly stated that those with special needs were a category that was a burden on society and a factor that damaged the state (Kiefer, 2014). According to Al-Dahhaq, before the Prophet PBUH went to Medina, the people of Medina did not mix their food with the blind and the sick, because they considered them dirty and disgusting. Allah SWT then said that there is no sin in eating with the sick, the blind, and the paralyzed (Islam & Samsudin, 2020, p. 751).

The Attitude and Policies of the Prophet Muhammad towards People with Disabilities

In contrast to the Quraish people, the Prophet Muhammad actually treated people with disabilities well from the beginning of his prophethood. The harsh pre-Islamic social conditions of the Arab society and the importance of physical strength had a negative impact on people with disabilities (Anshori, 2022, p. 40). The Prophet treated them in a way that was contrary to the traditions of the society at that time.

In a hadith narrated by Imam Bukhari from Atha' bin Abi Rabbah (HR. Bukhari, No. 5652), it is narrated that a woman who suffered from an illness came to the Prophet. The Prophet said that if he is willing to be patient, he will get heaven, but if he chooses to be prayed, the Prophet will pray for his recovery. The woman chose to be patient. This hadith is a reflection of how much the Prophet respects the choice and dignity of people with disabilities.

Another example is the Prophet's treatment of Itban bin Maalik, a blind man from the community of Medina. The Prophet Muhammad PBUH was willing to come and perform prayers at his home because he understood the condition of Itban who had difficulty going to the mosque regularly (Nurhakim, 2024). As for the companion named Julaybib who had a flawed appearance and was shunned by the community, the Prophet befriended him, took care of him, and raised his dignity, even saying, "This man is from me and I am from him" (Rakhmat, t.t.). The Prophet's partisan attitude shows the direction of inclusive and just social policies.

Policies during the Islamic Caliphate

The policy of partiality towards people with disabilities was continued by the caliphs after the Prophet. Umar bin Khattab, during the famine of 18 AH, when he saw someone eating with his left hand because his right hand was cut off in the battle of Mu'thah, immediately wept and appointed a servant to help him, give him a house and meet his needs

(Nadvi, 2012, pp. 33–40). Umar bin Abdul Aziz's government instructed governors in each province to record all people who were blind, disabled, or chronically ill and ensure they had an assistant who cared for them.

Al-Wālid bin Abdul Mālik is recorded as the first caliph to establish a treatment center for people with special needs. It sets salaries, hires doctors and nurses, and allocates special benefits for people with disabilities, the visually impaired, and the sick. Among his services were to provide a special hospital for lepers, to provide a guide for every blind person, and to provide a manager to treat the permanently disabled (Hasan, t.t.). This practice shows that the state has taken an active role in the social protection of persons with disabilities long before the concept of the modern welfare state was formulated.

During the Ottoman period, Scalenghe (2014, p. 22) recounts that visitors to the Ottoman palace from Europe were amazed to see the sultan conversing with his deaf and mute servants through gestures. Based on their proximity to the rulers, the Palace Dumbers were able to gain a lot of power and influence, a picture that disability was not always an obstacle to achieving social status. Meanwhile in terms of law and religion, Shaykh Al-Azhar Dr. Muhammad Sayyid Tantawi issued a fatwa advocating the use of sign language interpreters so that deaf people can understand the Friday sermons, showing that Islamic teachings actively encourage the inclusivity of people with disabilities in religious life (Mokhtar & Tah, 2017, pp. 21–42).

Social Development Model for Persons with Disabilities

Hayyatan Thayyibah as an Approach to Social Development

Hayyatan thayyibah or *Good Lives Building* is the Qur'an's approach to building a good life, as mentioned in Surah An-Nahl verse 97. This perspective is related to *enabling good lives* (EGL) as a policy for Disability used in New Zealand, and is known in psychology as *the Good Lives Model* (GLM). In Islam, *hayyatan thayyibah* is the desired state of human life based on a system of divine standards, given by God to man through conscious and voluntary choice and commitment, so that its realization leads to the achievement of the original purpose of life. Based on Surah An-Nahl verse 97, this verse shows that everyone, both men and women, people with disabilities or non-disabilities, rich or poor, for those who do righteous deeds will get *hayyatan thayyibah*, as explained by Az-Zuhaili (2015, p. 472).

Hayyatan Thayyibah (Good Lives Building) is conceptually based on eight principles (Vicente et al., 2020, pp. 1–14), namely: self-determination, starting early, being people-centered, living an ordinary life, accessing public facilities before special facilities, improving skills, having easy-to-use and flexible support, and building broad relationships with the community.

Building Human Capital

Building human capital is the most strategic component in carrying out social development for people with disabilities. Human capital includes education, training, intelligence, skills, and health that are valued by employers and are considered to have a relationship with economic growth and productivity. Even though community support is

minimal and discriminatory, human capital can make people with disabilities still be able to rise. On the contrary, strong community support but without human capital will not allow people with disabilities to develop properly.

In the framework of building human capital for people with disabilities, there are several approaches that can be carried out in stages. The capability approach is the main foundation that encourages every person with a disability to develop their best potential. This approach is supported by a home-based (family) service policy, which is considered the most appropriate way in developing countries. Family-based services will strengthen family resilience, as shown in the study of Cuzzocrea (2011, pp. 7–24) which examines the concept of family resilience in terms of the vulnerability of individual family members and families as a unit.

Hayyatan Thayyibah's *perspective* supports the important role that the family plays and recognizes the interdependence between its members. This approach focuses on how to improve the overall well-being of the family and meet the needs of individuals in the family context (Farrar, 2024), both for the person with the disability itself and for their parents, spouses, siblings, and children. In line with that, early intervention is the best way to support the development and well-being of children and adolescents with disabilities. Children who get early intervention may even need less or no support at all as they age.

A community-based service *center* is also needed considering the magnitude of family problems with people with disabilities. Sometimes it's the families who need support from professionals first before they can support their child with a disability. The government must prepare professionals in the fields of medical, therapists, psychologists, social workers, as well as education and domestic care personnel, including funding assistance for all rehabilitation costs.

In terms of education, there are two models applied in Indonesia. The non-inclusive model, known as the Extraordinary School (SLB), educates children separately based on their type of disability. An in-depth evaluation of this special education has never been carried out comprehensively (Nurdianti & Yuanita, 2024). The inclusion education model places students with disabilities in a general education environment. In many cases, students with disabilities still face limited interaction with non-disabled peers and often do not have access to national curricula (Hayes & Bulat, 2017). Government support for inclusive schools is still very minimal, both in terms of budget and policy practices, among other things due to the lack of provision of *shadow teachers* in schools.

Social and Community Capital Development

The next approach to Persons with Disabilities is to strengthen social capital, in the sense that a person with a disability has a meaningful relationship with the wider community, gains trust and is recognized as such. Social capital is a concept that recognizes that people's relationships and social networks are an important aspect of a person's health and quality of life, and have been shown to improve people's physical and mental health outcomes (Rodgers et al., 2019). Social capital can also increase access to resources, resilience, and mutual cooperation.

Family participation and advocacy in community life is an important foundation in the development of social capital of persons with disabilities. Parental participation is closely related to students' ability to obtain social capital through their school; If parents do not participate in school activities, it severely limits the student's ability to access available social capital. Outside of the family, it is essential for individuals with disabilities to develop relationships with the wider community. One way is to involve people with disabilities in service learning programs to help develop community inclusion. People with disabilities also need to establish relationships with social structures that provide access to support services, such as employment incentive programs and medical coverage, so that they not only gain personal social capital but also benefit from the actions of these groups in the form of improved laws and regulations.

Accessibility

In daily life, people with disabilities face real physical and social obstacles in their surroundings. CRPD Article 9 stipulates that accessibility measures should include the identification and removal of barriers to buildings, roads, transportation and other facilities, including schools, housing, health facilities and workplaces; and on information, communication and other services, including electronic services and emergency services (CRPD, Article 9).

Removing the Stigma

The most important barrier to building an inclusive society is stigma and its adverse impact on how people with disabilities are perceived in society. Stigma contributes to the discrimination and exclusion experienced by people with disabilities and their families in all aspects of life. Lack of understanding and awareness of the nature of disability and the ability of people with disabilities are the main factors that cause such stigma, such as the misconception that people with disabilities cannot contribute, cannot have normal relationships, or even transmit their condition.

Social Protection

According to data from the Ministry of Social Affairs, the number of people with disabilities in Indonesia is 22.97 million people, with as many as 6.1 million people included in the severe category consisting of 1.2 million people with physical disabilities, 3.07 million people with sensory disabilities, 149 thousand people with mental disabilities, and 1.7 million people with intellectual disabilities. According to Islamic law, social protection aims to realize social justice, social peace, and social protection around the world. The application of the fundamental principles and approaches of Islam in terms of social protection will produce the desired impact according to the level of religiosity of the people and their dependence on religious provisions.

Active Participation in the Productive Economy

The results of the study show that there are still many people with disabilities who are refused to work by companies, and those who have worked often resign because of unequal treatment from leaders and fellow employees. Until now, no company has ever received sanctions even though the rules for the treatment of persons with disabilities have been affirmed in Law Number 8 of 2016 (Poernomo et al., t.t., pp. 61–73). Stricter supervision is needed so that companies not only meet the quota of 1% of employees with disabilities, but also treat them equally.

Entrepreneurship is a viable option for people with disabilities because it offers the possibility to accommodate their needs and build independence. According to research data, 79% of people with disabilities work in the informal sector and only 21% work in the formal sector (Maftuchan et al., t.t., p. 8). This employment gap not only increases social inequality and exclusion, but also weakens the goals of development itself (Pérez-Macías, 2022, p. 726). Therefore, encouraging and facilitating entrepreneurship for people with disabilities is one of the important strategies in realizing independence and productive economic participation.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the social development model for persons with disabilities and its implementation in Indonesia from the perspective of the Qur'an is a series of efforts in building human capital, building social capital, accessibility, eliminating stigma and social protection, in addition to also opening up decent job opportunities in productive economic participation and entrepreneurship. The purpose of all these efforts is to build prosperity based on *Good Lives Building* or good life (*Hayyatan Thayyibah*), that is, a good and desirable state of human life based on divine standards, which is revealed in the form of independence and autonomy, starting from scratch, centered on people with disabilities, living an ordinary life of normal human beings, using public facilities before special facilities, improving ability, using easy tools, and having a broad relationship with the community.

The expected outcome of this social development model is the realization of an equal society, the fulfillment of the rights of persons with disabilities and the improvement of their overall welfare. This research also confirms that the perspective of the Qur'an and the prophetic tradition provide a strong foundation for the formulation of inclusive policies towards persons with disabilities, which are relevant both historically and in the context of contemporary social development.

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