

RETHINKING DISABILITY RIGHTS IN PROFESSIONAL DOMAINS

An Exegesis of Surah ‘Abasa (80): 1-4 through The Socio-Religious Model of Disability (SRMD)

Mohammad Ulil Rosyad¹, Nur Rofiah², M. Darwis Hude³, Dinan Kiasati⁴

^{1,3}PTIQ University Jakarta, Indonesia; ²Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University, Jakarta, Indonesia; ⁴Hartford International University, Connecticut, USA.

mohammad.ulil.rosyad@mhs.ptiq.ac.id; nur.rofiah@staff.uinjkt.ac.id;
darwis@ptiq.ac.id; dinan.kiasati@stu.hartfordinternational.edu

Abstract

Persons with disabilities are often positioned within medical and charitable paradigms, which limit recognition of their capacities in public spaces, including the world of work. As a conceptual basis for fulfilling the professional rights of persons with disabilities, this article analyzes Surah ‘Abasa (80): 1–4. This study employs a qualitative approach through library research and applies the Socio-Religious Model of Disability (SRMD) by integrating the concepts of *ahliyyah* and *maqāṣid asy-syarī‘ah* into the social model. The findings show that Surah ‘Abasa (80): 1–4 presents the neglect of Abdullah ibn Umm Maktūm as related to a social perspective that evaluates a person based on bodily condition and social position. While the phrase “‘abasa wa tawallā” criticizes exclusion, “yazzakkā” indicates that persons with disabilities possess the potential for self-development, knowledge acquisition, and social contribution. Therefore, the mention of “*al-a‘mā*” does not signify incapacity; rather, it affirms that physical limitation does not remove a person’s dignity, agency, *ahliyyah*, and professional capacity. The fact that Abdullah ibn Umm Maktūm served as a *muazzzin*, *imām*, and leader in Medina further strengthens the argument that persons with disabilities are entitled to employment access, reasonable accommodation, media adaptation, inclusive facilities, and legal protection.

Keywords: Al-Qur’an, disability, profession, SRMD

***Meninjau Kembali Hak-hak Penyandang Disabilitas dalam Ranah Profesional:
Sebuah Tafsir atas Surah 'Abasa (80): 1–4 melalui Model Sosio-Religius Disabilitas (Socio-
Religious Model of Disability/SRMD)***

Abstrak

Penyandang disabilitas sering kali ditempatkan dalam paradigma medis dan karitatif, yang membatasi pengakuan mereka terhadap kemampuan mereka di lingkungan publik, termasuk di dunia kerja. Sebagai dasar konseptual untuk pemenuhan hak profesi penyandang disabilitas, artikel ini menganalisis Surah 'Abasa (80):1–4. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif melalui studi kepustakaan dan menerapkan Model Disabilitas Sosial-Religius (SRmD) dengan mengintegrasikan konsep ahliyyah dan maqāsid asy-syarī'ah pada model sosial. Hasil temuan pada Surah 'Abasa (80): 1-4 menunjukkan pengabaian terhadap Abdullah ibn Umm Maktūm berkaitan dengan perspektif sosial yang menilai seseorang berdasarkan kondisi tubuhnya dan posisi sosialnya. Sementara frase “abasa wa tawallā” mengkritik penolakan, “yazzakkā” menunjukkan bahwa penyandang disabilitas memiliki peluang untuk berkembang, memperoleh pengetahuan, dan membuat kontribusi sosial. Oleh karena itu, menyebut “al-a'mā” tidak berarti tidak cakap; namun itu berarti bahwa keterbatasan fisik tidak menghilangkan martabat, agensi, ahliyyah, dan kapasitas profesional seseorang. Fakta bahwa Abdullah ibn Umm Maktūm pernah bekerja sebagai muazin, imam, dan pemimpin di Madinah memperkuat keyakinan bahwa penyandang disabilitas berhak atas akses kerja, akomodasi yang layak, perubahan media, fasilitas inklusif dan perlindungan hukum.

Kata kunci: *Al-Qur'an, disabilitas, profesi, SRmD*

Introduction

Disability has become a global issue that is no longer understood merely as an individual medical condition. The shift from medical and charitable paradigms to social and rights-based models has changed the way disability is discussed in contemporary scholarship and public policy. The medical approach positions disability as a pathological condition that requires diagnosis, therapy, and rehabilitation, with a focus on efforts to “fix” or “cure”. Figures such as Benjamin Rush and Sigmund Freud reinforced this approach, particularly in the realm of mental and emotional disabilities (Sigmund Freud 1953, 32). However, this paradigm later received sharp criticism through the social model, which locates the main problem in social barriers, inaccessible environments, and discriminatory structures. This shift is particularly important in the professional domain, since persons with disabilities continue to face limited access to employment, vocational development, and equal participation in public life (Safitri 2022). Mike Oliver, through the idea of the social model of disability, emphasized that disability is a social issue rather than merely a medical one. According to him, although medical intervention remains relevant, the main barriers lie in the social environment that fails to provide access, facilities, and acceptance (Mike Oliver 1990, 3). This social paradigm then became an important counterbalance to the dominance of the medical model.

Religion occupies a contested position in disability studies. Some post-positivist and critical disability scholars have accused the Abrahamic religions of contributing to the perpetuation of discrimination against persons with disabilities. Some even view disability as a curse from God. For example, the edited volume by Darla Schumm and Michael Stoltzfus, *Disability in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, illustrates how the medical paradigm within religious traditions has understood disability as a physical impairment that hinders worship, thereby creating spiritual anxiety and social alienation. The lack of inclusive theological discourse often causes religion to fall into the trap of discrediting its own adherents (Schumm and Stoltzfus 2011, xiv). Others argued that these conditions also represent the individual model approach by describing persons with disabilities as a curse from God. This demonstrates that classical theological constructions were more inclined toward stigma than inclusivity (Mugeere et al. 2020, 65).

From its very inception, Islam emerged as a universal guidance affirming the principle of equality, including for persons with disabilities, and stressed in the Qur'an that “disability seems to be positively regarded” (Bengtsson 2018, 210). A social paradigm was offered early on, wherein persons with disabilities were regarded as rightful subjects, not as a group of secondary status. One important reference can be found in

Surah ‘Abasa (80): 1–4, which recounts the story of Abdullah ibn Umm Maktum, a blind man, who approached the Prophet Muhammad while he was engaged in preaching to the Quraysh leaders. The Prophet initially showed a displeased expression, after which God revealed verses as a rebuke. From that moment, the Prophet treated Abdullah ibn Umm Maktum with deep respect, marking a shift in attitude that underscored inclusivity (Kudhori et al. 2024, 290).

Furthermore, history records that Abdullah ibn Umm Maktum was not only honored in the spiritual sphere but also entrusted with strategic roles in leadership. He was once appointed to replace the Prophet Muhammad as the governor of Medina when the Prophet went out for battle, and on several occasions he served as both *imām* and *muazzzin* (Ibn al-Mulaqqin 1406, 453). This fact demonstrates that competence in leadership as well as in religious professions was not limited by physical conditions, but rather determined by personal capacity and integrity.

Existing scholarship on Islam and disability has developed across several major strands, ranging from Islamic legal discussions and Qur’anic interpretation to studies of religious accessibility, disability theology, and socio-religious models of inclusion.

The first strand examines disability within Qur’anic, theological, and Islamic legal discourses. Bengtsson discusses disability and identity formation in the Qur’an by showing how disability is related to the construction of community, solidarity, and the moral boundaries of the Muslim (Bengtsson 2018). Kudhori et al. expand this discussion by examining the rights of persons with disabilities in the Qur’an and Hadith through the perspective of *fiqh awlawiyyāt*, emphasizing that disability rights should receive priority in religious and social services (Kudhori et al. 2024). Ghaly contributes to the debate by placing the issue of legal capacity in dialogue between the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Islamic legal tradition, while Masotta approaches disability through Sufi thought and highlights vulnerability as a theological category in Islam (Ghaly 2019). The work with the title *Disability in Islamic Law* by Vardit Respler-Chaim highlights Islam’s attitude toward disability as passive and neutral, without emotional expressions such as empathy or regret. Chaim’s analysis is grounded in the biomedical paradigm and focuses on *fiqh* literature that discusses disability in a normative manner (Rispler-Chaim 2007, 93). Bahrul Hikam presents a different idea through the concept of the Socio-Religious Model of Disability (SrMD), which emphasizes that the granting of *rukḥṣah* is not sufficient. He underscores the importance of providing concrete supporting facilities for worship and *mu‘āmalah* as part of fulfilling the rights of persons with disabilities (Hikam 2023, 267). These studies are important because they show that disability in Islamic discourse is not merely a

bodily condition but is also connected to dignity, legal capacity, vulnerability, community, and moral responsibility.

The second strand focuses on accessibility, religious literacy, and institutional support for persons with sensory disabilities. Syatri studies the teaching of Qur'anic reading and writing in Braille for visually impaired Muslims and shows that Qur'anic access still depends on institutional readiness, curriculum, teaching methods, and learning materials (Syatri 2017). Jaeni traces the historical development and standardization of the Indonesian Braille Qur'an, showing that standardization is not only a textual matter but also an institutional and policy process. Jaeni et al. further map Qur'anic literacy media for deaf and speech-impaired Muslims by identifying oral-based and sign-based models of Qur'anic literacy (Jaeni 2020). Alhammadi, although working in the context of the United Arab Emirates, similarly demonstrates that persons with visual and hearing impairments require trained specialists, assistive technology, Braille trainers, orientation and mobility trainers, and sign language specialists (Alhammadi 2024). These studies indicate that inclusion requires more than normative recognition; it requires media adaptation, trained human resources, accessible systems, and institutional commitment.

The third strand discusses disability in relation to citizenship, vulnerability, welfare, and social exclusion. Afrianty and Fenwick analyze disability, religion, and citizenship in Indonesia, arguing that the realization of disability rights is hindered not only by policy implementation but also by social attitudes and normative assumptions (Afrianty and Fenwick 2025). Jackson et al. show that persons with disabilities in Southeast Asia face heightened vulnerability to exploitation and human trafficking due to poverty, limited education, barriers to livelihoods, discrimination, and stigma (Jackson et al. 2026). Demmin and Silverstein examine the relationship between visual impairment and mental health, showing that visual disability is often accompanied by unmet psychosocial needs (Demmin and Silverstein 2020). Scurich, in a different context, discusses maltreatment of children with disabilities and highlights how disability intersects with vulnerability, neglect, and the need for stronger protection systems (Scurich 2025). These studies broaden the discussion by showing that disability inclusion must address structural, psychological, social, and legal barriers.

The fourth strand directly connects disability with work and professional life. Marhaban et al. discuss the existence of disability in professional work from a Qur'anic perspective by referring to the story of Abdullah ibn Umm Maktūm in Surah 'Abasa. Their study is valuable because it has already linked disability with work, skill development, and professional attitudes (Marhaban et al. 2019). However, the discussion remains general and does not yet provide a detailed semantic-exegetical

analysis of Surah ‘Abasa (80): 1–4 as a basis for professional rights. In this regard, the existing scholarship has largely focused on theological recognition, legal capacity, worship accessibility, Qur’anic literacy, social vulnerability, or general professional attitude. The specific connection between Surah ‘Abasa (80): 1–4 and the fulfillment of professional rights remains underdeveloped.

Accordingly, it is evident that previous research still requires refinement, particularly in exploring dimensions beyond mere religious performance. This paper seeks to fill that gap by responding to the accusations of post-positivist scholars who regard religion as operating within charity and medical paradigms in viewing disability. Furthermore, this study proposes a paradigm that emphasizes inclusivity in fulfilling the professional rights of persons with disabilities. Exploring the interpretation of Surah ‘Abasa (80): 1–4 by analyzing key expressions such as *‘abasa wa tawallā*, *al-a’mā*, *yazzakkā*, and *tanfa’ahu aẓ-ẓikrā* through the Socio-Religious Model of Disability, while integrating the concepts of *ahliyyah* and *maqāṣid asy-syarī’ah* for recognizing the dignity, agency, legal capacity, and professional participation of persons with disabilities.

Method

This study employs a qualitative approach, specifically library research, by placing Qur’anic verses related to disability issues as the main objects of analysis. The verses in focus are Surah ‘Abasa (80): 1–4, which serve as the basis for exploring inclusive values in the Qur’an and the other verses as a complement. The primary data consist of the Qur’anic text, hadith, as well as interpretations from classical and contemporary tafsir works such as *Tafsir ar-Razi*, *Tafsir al-Qur’ubi*, and *Tafsir al-Misbah*, including reports about Abdullah ibn Umm Maktum. In addition, works by both Muslim and orientalist scholars such as Zanuar Mubin, Masykur Rozi, Respler-Chaim, and Sara Scalenghe are also referenced. Secondary data are drawn from literature on social theory and post-positivism, including works by Arseli Dokumaci, Bazna & Hatab, as well as *Disability in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, alongside legal regulations such as Law No. 8 of 2016 on Persons with Disabilities and statistical data from WHO, the Ministry of Social Affairs, and Statistics Indonesia (BPS).

Data collection techniques were carried out through literature studies of various sources, including tafsir works, books, journals, and relevant documents. Data analysis employed the framework of the Socio-Religious Model of Disability (SRmD) by integrating the concepts of *ahliyyah* and the values of *maqāṣid asy-syarī’ah* into the social paradigm. The analysis process was conducted in four stages: first, collecting data as broadly as possible according to the research variables; second, selecting data to

maintain focus and relevance; third, classifying and analyzing the data according to categories; and fourth, validating the findings to minimize errors. Thus, this method aims not only to interpret the text descriptively but also to affirm the professional rights and active roles of persons with disabilities within the framework of Qur'anic inclusivity.

The Concept and Evolution of Disability Paradigms

A paradigm is a conceptual framework used by a group, particularly in the field of science, to understand and interpret reality. This concept was first popularized by Thomas S. Kuhn through his work *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, in which he explained paradigm as a set of assumptions, values, and methods collectively embraced by the scientific community (Kuhn 1962, 125). This idea was later further developed in the realm of social sciences, notably by George Ritzer. According to him, a paradigm is a fundamental perspective on what should be studied and how it should be studied (Ritzer 2011, 50). Thus, a paradigm functions as the foundation that determines the direction of inquiry within a given discipline.

The existence of a paradigm is not static but can change through a mechanism known as a paradigm shift. Such a shift occurs when the old paradigm fails to explain various emerging anomalies, thereby triggering a crisis within the academic community. In such conditions, new ideas emerge, and alternative paradigms are proposed. If the new paradigm proves more effective in addressing existing issues, it fundamentally replaces the old one, marking the birth of a scientific revolution (Kuhn 1962, 150–55). This concept of shift is also relevant in understanding the development of disability paradigms. From being medically oriented with a focus on curing the individual, it shifted toward a social model that emphasizes environmental and structural barriers (Ghaly 2019, 253). The question arises: has a similar dynamic occurred in the context of Islam? This serves as an entry point to examine whether Islam's view of disability has evolved or whether it maintains its own consistency amid the changing global discourse.

In terms of etymology and Islamic Conceptual, contemporary Arabic has started to take into account a more inclusive social paradigm when considering people with special needs. The “handicap” term as a personal shortcoming is no longer emphasized by the terminology employed. The term for persons with disabilities is often translated as ذوي الاحتياجات الخاصة (*ḍawī al-iḥtiyājāt al-khāṣṣah*), which literally means “those who have special needs”. The word ذو (*ḍū*) means “one who possesses” (Hammad al-Jauhari 1987, 2551), while الاحتياجات (*al-iḥtiyājāt*) refers to “needs” that are essential rather than mere desires (al-Fāris n.d., 577; Maftuhin 2023, 500). Thus, the term refers to individuals

who have certain requirements in order to participate optimally in life ('Abd al-Hamid 2008, 230). They demonstrate an awareness that these people have particular requirements that should be met via social support, accessibility, and a setting that is receptive.

The issue reveals a persistent epistemic gap between legal theory and judicial practice. Disability studies have often explored the definition of human capacity in Islamic jurisprudence through the doctrines of *ahliyyah*, *hajr*, or *kifā'ah*, but there is a significant epistemic gap within Indonesia's religious courts, where judges are trained in statutory law, not classical *fiqh*. Compounding the problem is the lack of formal grounding in the Islamic legal architecture, as well as the fact that the contemporary "disability *fiqh*" initiatives of organisations such as NU and Muhammadiyah have not yet entered judicial practice, meaning that many judges are not aware of these developments. Thus judicial reasoning on disability is based not in Islamic jurisprudence but in administrative norms, social assumptions and national procedural requirements, illustrating the disjuncture that accounts for the divergence of court decisions from both modern rights frameworks and shifting religious discourses (Maftuhin and Cammack 2025, 606–7; Maftuhin 2021, 253, 2026, 25).

In terms of Indonesia's legal system, the development of regulations demonstrates a shift from the charity paradigm to the human rights paradigm in addressing persons with disabilities. From the outset, the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia (UDN NRI 1945) provided constitutional guarantees for vulnerable groups experiencing marginalization, social exclusion, and gaps in political participation as well as public life. However, in the early stages, the term "disability" was not yet recognized; the constitutional text still used the general phrase "all people". As a result, the protection offered was broad and nonspecific, allowing physical and mental discrimination to remain widespread. Over time, however, national regulations began to improve by placing greater emphasis on a human rights–based approach. To date, there are 114 legal instruments related to disability issues. Some key milestones include the enactment of the Law on Persons with Disabilities (UU Penyandang Cacat 1997 dan UU Penyandang Disabilitas 2016), the Human Rights Law (UU HAM 1999), the Law on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (UU Hak Ekosob 2005), the Presidential Election Law (UU Pilpres 2008), as well as various regional regulations at the district, city, and provincial levels affirming the fulfillment of the rights of persons with disabilities. This series of policies reflects a paradigm shift toward greater inclusivity, although their implementation still faces structural and cultural challenges; moreover, human trafficking remains in large numbers (Jackson et al. 2026, 7; Nursyamsi 2015, 23).

A rights-based and inclusion-oriented paradigm has replaced Indonesia's philanthropic and impairment-based approach to disability policy. Law No. 8 of 2016, specifically Article 53, reflects this change by mandating that state-or region-owned businesses, government agencies, and local governments employ at least 2% of people with disabilities, while private businesses must meet a minimum quota of 1% (Pinuri and Arifianto 2023, 43). However, structural exclusion has not entirely been addressed by this legislative change. Only about 0.55% of people with disabilities were employed in the formal sector, according to Statistics Indonesia's 2023 report. The majority of these people continued to work in low-paying informal jobs, particularly in agriculture, forestry, livestock, and fisheries, with few hours worked, little social protection, and a higher risk of unemployment and NEET status among young people (International Labor Organization 2022, 9–15; Maftuhin 2016, 240–42, 2021, 114–15). Low educational attainment, restricted access to industry-relevant training, poorly accessible infrastructure, fragmented disability data, and ongoing employer stigma all contribute to these problems (World Bank 2020, 25–30). This change in policy demonstrates Indonesia's formal progress toward inclusion at the statutory level, but the deeper question—how should Islamic legal reasoning conceptualize human capacity, dignity, and social responsibility toward persons with disabilities within modern Muslim legal institutions—remains theological and Islamic.

The inability of the state to integrate people with disabilities into the formal labor market cannot be solely attributed to an administrative flaw in the way policies are implemented. It also shows that their professional privileges are not publicly justified by a solid theological basis. Religious authority continues to have an impact on social attitudes, institutional ethics, and public acceptance of marginalized groups in the Indonesian Muslim environment. Therefore, the legal demand of inclusion loses some of its moral force when religious leaders, Islamic organizations, and exegetical discourses have not yet expressly affirmed the right of people with disabilities to work, contribute, and develop professional talents. Inclusive tafsir is required, and it may offer a normative link between statutory disability rights and Islamic ethical commitments to dignity, justice, capacity, and social duty.

Types and Characteristics of Disability Paradigms

1. The Development of Disability Models

Different perspectives on the status, capacities, and social engagement of people with disabilities are referred to as disability paradigms. The charity model, the medical model, the social model, and the rights-based model are the four main paradigms that are frequently debated in disability studies. These paradigms are more than just

theoretical categorizations. They also influence how people with disabilities are viewed by society, organizations, and workplaces. The medical model views disability primarily as an individual impairment that needs treatment, rehabilitation, or restoration (Anggraini, Anas, and Wike 2022, 165), whereas the charitable model prefers to portray people as objects of sympathy and support (Amponsah-Bediako 2013; Tsai and Ho t.th, 89). Although both paradigms have aided in some types of care, they frequently limit the recognition of the agency of people with disabilities and put them in a dependent position.

The social and rights-based approaches bring about a significant change. According to the social model, social barriers, inaccessible settings, and discriminatory systems all contribute to disability in addition to physical or mental impairment (K. al Ju'beh 2017, 63; Areheart 2008, 190). This perspective is further reinforced by the rights-based model, which affirms people with disabilities as subjects with rights, entitled to equality, autonomy, dignity, and full participation in public life. The WHO has reinforced this direction through Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) strategies and the redefinition of disability in the International Classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health (ICF) as a biopsychosocial concept that views disability as the interaction between health conditions, personal factors, and social environments (Anggraini, Anas, and Wike 2022, 165). People with disabilities shouldn't be viewed as people who need help or as people who need to be "fixed" before they can work. They must be acknowledged as competent professionals whose involvement is contingent upon equal career prospects, inclusive workplace cultures, accessible recruitment, reasonable accommodations, and assistive technology. The focus shifts from individual restriction to institutional responsibility and professional rights as a result of the shift from charitable and medical paradigms to social and rights-based paradigms (Ramalho 2024, 1–5).

2. The Post-Positivist Scholars' Paradigm

Post-positivist thought does not stand alone or serve as an antithesis to positivism; rather, it rejects the dominance of pure empiricism and rationality while still situating knowledge within a social construction. While positivism focuses primarily on rationality and empirical evidence, post-positivism considers the social factors surrounding a phenomenon (Henderson 2011, 343). In the context of disability, this approach highlights the role of religion, which often reinforces discrimination through medical and charity paradigms. As critiqued by Matthew L. Long's chapter in *Disability in Judaism, Christianity and Islam* have been understood as framing disability as an impairment that hinders worship, leading to spiritual anxiety and social alienation (Schumm and Stoltzfus 2011, xiv). Religious texts also frequently depict disability as a

divine punishment, as in the case of Martin Luther, who referred to it as a form of curse for human sins, thereby reinforcing marginalization (Luther 1967, 42–43).

For instance, rather than outlining the fundamental Islamic ideas that are normatively inclusive, Matthew L. Long's chapter on leprosy in early Islam typically describes how Muslim communities viewed "different" bodies through stigma or religious concern. Long begins by discussing leprosy in early Islam and describes how Muslim societies both during and after the period of the Prophet Muhammad were extremely wary of those who had the disease. This study focuses on the usage of Arabic terminology that is associated with leprosy, such as *abraṣ* (أبرص), *juḏām* (جذام), and *biyāḍān* (بياضان). Even though the Prophet's empathetic attitude toward people with leprosy can be found, particularly in his refusal to isolate them (Schumm and Stoltzfus 2011, 43–62), this discussion generally emphasizes how fear of contagion and perceptions of bodily impurity made people with leprosy vulnerable to social and religious marginalization.

Furthermore, to better represent the core Islamic principles of justice, empowerment, and dignity, the Islamic perspective on people with disabilities still has to be refined. People with disabilities are still frequently categorized as *mustaḍ'afīn* or *ḍu'āfā'* in a number of Islamic texts. These terms relate to disadvantaged people who are given priority for sympathy, support, and religious accommodations. For example, Husein Al-Habsyi depicts Abdullah ibn Umm Maktum as belonging to the social groupings of *ḍu'āfā'*, *fuqārā'*, and *masākīn* (Al-Habsyi 1991, 13), whereas Hiam Al-Aouf places people with disabilities within the framework of *mustaḍ'afīn* (Al-Aoufi, Al-Zyoud, and Shahminan 2012, 208). These phrases do demonstrate Islam's compassion for marginalized groups. However, rather than acknowledging people with disabilities as beings with rights, capacities, and professional potential, they could also maintain the idea that disability is synonymous with weakness, dependency, and sympathy. Zanuar Mubin and Masykur Rozi's work, which demonstrates that the social rights of people with disabilities are frequently not achieved through equal access but rather manifest in practices of exclusion and isolation, offers a similar critique (Mubin and Rozi 2020, 145).

Therefore, rather than being rejected, the Islamic epistemology of disability should be expanded to include rights recognition, accessibility, and empowerment rather than only charity and *rukḥṣah*. Islam should be understood as a faith that empowers people with disabilities as whole, equal human beings in addition to demonstrating compassion for them. The role of *Uli al-Amri* becomes crucial in this situation because authority encompasses all parties who bear social and professional responsibility,

including employers, supervisors, public-space managers, and institutional leaders, in addition to the state, the president, ministers, and formal institutions (Shihab 2005, 484–85). Therefore, by incorporating Symbolic Interactionism, the SRmD (Socio-Religious Model of Disability) approach must be extended into the domains of public space and professional access. This theory clarifies how perceptions of people with disabilities are shaped by social meanings, symbols, and daily encounters (Rosyad 2025, 10). SRmD can thus develop into a more comprehensive strategy based on inclusive Islamic principles for eliminating stigma, enhancing accessibility, and upholding the professional rights of people with disabilities.

Inclusivity in the Qur'an and Verses Related to Disability

The Qur'an does not explicitly use the term "inclusivity", to identify inclusive values in the Qur'an; an interpretative approach beyond literal reading is necessary. It contains principles that resonate with this concept. Therefore, the thematic exegesis method becomes relevant by collecting related verses and analyzing them within social, historical, and semantic contexts (Fakhrurrazi, Rafiq, and Ghazali 2024, 144–46).

Several inclusive derivations are reflected in the following principles: 1) Principle of Justice and Equality. The Qur'an emphasizes that *al-'adl* is a primary objective of the Shari'ah (Ar-Rāziy 2000, 132). Equality in dignity and human rights is affirmed, for example, in Surah al-Hujurat (49): 13, which rejects discrimination based on ethnicity, race, or biological condition. This message can be extended to disability issues, as persons with disabilities should not be excluded from the circle of social equality (Shihab 2005, 378). 2) *Karāmah al-Insān* (Respect for Human Dignity). Surah al-Isrā' (17): 70 states that Allah has honored all the children of Adam without exception. Tafsir al-Qurṭubiy emphasizes that this verse is universal, making no distinction based on physical or social condition (Al-Qurṭubiy n.d., 201). Thus, persons with disabilities retain *karāmah insāniyyah* that must be respected. 3) Concept of Mercy and Social Empathy. The concept of *rahmah* in the Qur'an is not merely interpreted as pity, but as a principle of social justice that encourages the removal of structural barriers. Surah al-Anbiyā' (21): 107 affirms that Prophet Muhammad was sent as *rahmatan li al-'ālamīn*, encompassing vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities (aṭ-Ṭabariy 2001, 245). 4) Tolerance and Recognition of Diversity. The Qur'an acknowledges the diversity of human conditions. Surah al-Rūm (30): 22 asserts that differences in language and skin color are signs of Allah's greatness. Differences in physical conditions, including disabilities, can be understood within the framework of this verse as part of *sunnatullah*, calling for social acceptance (Rahman 2009, 35).

The Qur'an mentions several terms that refer to conditions of disability, whether physical, non-physical, or social. Among the terms in the Qur'an that refer to physical

disabilities is the term *a'mā*. This term appears more than 30 times in the Qur'an, with both literal and metaphorical meanings (al-Bāqiy 1996, 478). For example, in Surah al-Fath (48): 17, Allah grants concessions in jihad for persons with disabilities while still acknowledging the capacity of their faith. Tafsir Fakhr ad-Dīn ar-Rāziy emphasizes that this verse affirms spiritual equality despite physical limitations (Ar-Rāziy 2000, 122). Additionally, the terms *aṣamm* and *a'raj* are also used. Surah al-Nūr (24): 61 rejects social stigma against them, affirming their right to participate in feasts and social gatherings (Al-Qurṭubiy n.d., 312; Parwanto and 'Afifah 2023, 187).

In the case of non-physical disabilities, the Qur'an uses the term *safih* (mentally deficient) in Surah Al-Baqarah (2): 282. Exegetes such as al-Qurṭubiy interpret it as a mental limitation requiring legal protection in transactions (Al-Qurṭubiy n.d., 228). However, this protection should be understood as empowerment, not exclusion. As for social disability, Surah 'Abasa (80): 1–10 recounts the incident where the Prophet frowned at Abdullah bin Ummi Maktum, a blind man. This verse serves as a direct critique of social discrimination (aṭ-Ṭabariy 2001, 45). Tafsir al-Misbah by Quraish Shihab emphasizes that this admonition demonstrates that the value of nobility is not determined by social status or physical condition, but by piety (Shihab 2005, 105).

The Qur'an also uses the terms *'amal*, *kasb*, and *fi'l* to refer to work (Ibn Sa'd 1960, 210). These terms emphasize the importance of human effort without discrimination. Surah al-Taubah (9): 105 affirms the command to work, stating that Allah will judge each person's deeds. Tafsir Ibn Kathir emphasizes that this verse is universal, without distinguishing physical conditions (al-Aṣfahāniy n.d., 351). The Qur'an's main message is that profession and labor are part of worship and social contribution. Therefore, persons with disabilities have the right to equal access to employment. This principle aligns with the *maqāṣid asy-syari'ah*, particularly *hifẓ an-nafs* (protection of life) and *hifẓ al-māl* (protection of property) (Auda 2008, 72).

The Discourse of Inclusivity in Fulfilling the Professional Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the Qur'an

The normative sources of Islam do not explicitly mention disability as understood in contemporary discourse; instead, they employ metaphorical terms such as blind, deaf, and mute to depict spiritual ignorance (Ar-Rāziy 2000, 55). Bazna and Hatab emphasize that the modern concept of disability only began to develop seriously after the Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons (1975). However, Islamic tradition recognizes several classical terms, such as *ma'āq*, which aligns closely with the "social model of disability", as it emphasizes social barriers rather than physical impairments (Bazna and Hatab 2005, 5). Hadith also illustrate dispensations in worship for persons

with disabilities, such as concessions in congregational prayer for the blind (Rispler-Chaim 2007, 14).

Although there is some inclusive space, classical Islamic legal texts still focus primarily on the physical aspect. Ibn Sirrīn considered it *makrūh* to follow a blind imam in prayer, while asy-Sya'rānī rejected a disabled imam because he was perceived as not representing the perfection of leadership (Asy-Sya'rāniy 1958, 40). Even Imam Malik and the Hanafiy scholars judged it invalid to follow an imam who could not stand (Al-Qurtūbiy n.d., 514). This bias stems from two factors: first, equating disability with illness, so that *fiqh* only grants concessions in worship (*al-masyaqqah tajlib al-taysir*), and second, the absence of *uṣūl al-fiqh* methodology to view disability as a social interaction (al-Fadani 1996, 255). Consequently, persons with disabilities were only granted *rukḥṣah* rather than equal access. Therefore, a reconstruction of the concept of *ahliyyah* is necessary to reorganize their rights more fairly, as has already been detailed in areas such as inheritance, endowment, and gifts (Auda 2008, 77).

Surah 'Abasa (80): 1–4 serves as a sharp critique of the marginalization of persons with disabilities, particularly the story of Abdullah ibn Umī Maktūm, the blind companion of the Prophet. According to ar-Rāziy, the reproach in the word 'Abasa was not directed merely at the Prophet's outward action, but also at an internal human tendency that was not ideal within the prophetic ethical standard. His greater attention to influential Quraysh leaders, and the possible neglect of a blind man without similar social status, became the basis of the divine correction. This reproach was not meant to humiliate the Prophet, but to perfect the ethics of prophethood, especially in showing justice and empathy toward marginalized people. The mention of *al-a'mā* does not carry a degrading meaning. Rather, it affirms that disability should become a reason for greater gentleness and care, not neglect. In this sense, revelation corrected any impression that social elites were being prioritized over vulnerable groups, so that divine justice remained the highest ethical measure (Ar-Rāziy 2000, 52–53). The *asbāb an-nuzūl* reports explain that the Prophet at that moment was focused on the leaders of the Quraysh, even though true sincerity of faith was present in Ibn Umī Maktūm (Al-Wāhidīy 1991, 492). This reprimand is understood not as a diminishment of the Prophet's infallibility, but as an example of *tark al-awlā* (Al-Ālūsiy 1985, 143).

The next verse in the sentence of *la'alahū yazakkā* "perhaps he may purify himself" has two explanations; the first is in reference to the blind man, indicating that his encounter with the Prophet could lead him from ignorance or sin toward knowledge, admonition, and obedience. The second reading connects the pronoun to the unbeliever, suggesting that the Prophet's hope for the conversion of the Quraysh elite was uncertain, while the spiritual receptivity of the blind man should not have

been overlooked. In both readings, the verse redirects attention from social status to moral and spiritual potential (Ar-Rāziy 2000, 54).

The dramatic approach offered by Husein al-Habsyi interprets Arab social structure in three layers: the *anbiyā'* as the moral authority, the *mustakbirīn* such as Walid ibn Mughirah, and the *mustaḍ'afīn* such as Ibn Ummi Maktum. Using Kenneth Burke's framework, this exegesis rejects the depiction of the Prophet as frowning, emphasizing the revelation's alignment with marginalized groups (Ar Ridho 2024, 149–50). This interpretation aligns with prophetic ethics, affirming that it is impossible for the Prophet to demean the *ḍu'āfā'*, as historical reports demonstrate his closeness to the poor (Al-Habsyi 1991, 11–13).

Exegetical consensus maintains that the subject of the verse is the Prophet Muhammad PBUH; however, the admonition is not intended as moral reproach but as prophetic correction to ensure that the *da'wah* does not fall into social preference. The term *al-a'mā* in this verse, according to ar-Rāziy, is not derogatory but rather emphasizes the special right to be treated with compassion (Ar-Rāziy 2000, 87). Thus, the verse affirms that human worth is determined not by physical condition but by faith and piety (Masotta 2021, 70). The admonition in Surah 'Abasa also serves as a normative foundation for inclusivity, demonstrating the revelation's alignment with vulnerable groups and underscoring the Prophet's leadership as just and grounded in social sensitivity (Shihab 2005, 109).

In the context of *mu'āmalah*, the principles of justice and independence require that persons with disabilities have equal access to decent employment. Such access is essential not only to ensure economic self-sufficiency but also to restore dignity and enable their active participation in society. This aligns with Law No. 8 of 2016 on Persons with Disabilities, particularly Articles 60–61, which obligate the government and private sector to provide vocational training, accessible healthcare services, a discrimination-free work environment, and support for independent entrepreneurship (Pemerintah Republik Indonesia 2016). This regulation shifts the paradigm from charity to concrete empowerment.

The Socio-Religious Model of Disability (SRmD) offers a conceptual framework for understanding the professional rights of persons with disabilities by integrating social and religious values. This model rests on the concepts of *ahliyyah* and *maqāṣid asy-syarī'ah* as a normative basis for ensuring access to employment (Mubin and Rozi 2020, 145). Classical Islamic legal scholars classified the *maqāṣid asy-syarī'ah* into three degrees of necessity, namely *al-ḍarūriyyāt*, *al-hājiyyāt* and *al-taḥsīniyyāt*. Traditionally, jurists identified five fundamental protections in the essential category: the protection of religion (*ḥifẓ ad-dīn*), life (*ḥifẓ an-nafs*), property (*ḥifẓ al-māl*), intellect (*ḥifẓ al-'aql*),

and progeny (*ḥifẓ an-nasl*). More recently, some modern scholars have extended this paradigm to include the preservation of honour (*ḥifẓ al-ʿird*) as a basic human need (Yasin 2021, 177). Within this framework, the implementation of professional rights can be analyzed according to the following disability categories:

First, physical disabilities (such as paraplegia, cerebral palsy, and dwarfism) do not diminish a person's *ahliyyah* to work. Ar-Rāziy emphasizes that although participation in physical jihad may be exempted, individuals with physical disabilities still possess social value that can be empowered (Ar-Rāziy 2000, 79–80). From the *maqāṣid* perspective, their right to work falls under the protection of life (*ḥifẓ an-naḥs*), intellect (*ḥifẓ al-ʿaql*), and livelihood (*ḥifẓ al-māl*). Professional implications include physical accessibility as well as affirmative recruitment policies (Zainudin and et. al 2021, 758).

Second, mental and intellectual disabilities—including psychosocial conditions (such as schizophrenia and bipolar disorder) and developmental conditions (such as autism and ADHD)—are understood within the framework of partial or temporary *ahliyyah* (Al-Nawawiy n.d., 101–4; Scurich 2025, 5). Islamic jurisprudence recognizes the category of *ma'tūh*, who remain valid in conducting contracts under supervision (Al-Kasani 1986, 177–79). The fulfillment of their right to work is closely linked to the protection of life (*ḥifẓ al-naḥs*) and honor (*ḥifẓ al-ʿirdh*). Practically, they can participate in professions that are routine-based, technical, or detail-oriented, with support through training, job coaching, and a non-discriminatory work environment (Kajian Pustaka 2020).

Third, sensory disabilities (such as blindness and deafness) do not diminish full *ahliyyah*, although communication methods may differ. The story of Ibn Ummi Maktum demonstrates that sensory limitations do not reduce social or spiritual eligibility; he was even appointed by the Prophet as a *muazzzin* and guardian of Madinah (Ibn al-Mulaqqin 1406, 453). The right to work for this group is closely linked to the protection of religion (*ḥifẓ ad-dīn*), intellect (*ḥifẓ al-ʿaql*), and livelihood (*ḥifẓ al-māl*). In practice, they can also work as professional sign language interpreters (ISL) for the deaf community, a field that is increasingly in demand and developing. To ensure deaf individuals can work optimally, access rights must include effective visual communication—such as sign language, written texts, or meeting captions—and training in deaf cultural awareness within the workplace (Alhammadi 2024, 1712). It showed that several individuals with deafness stood in urgent positions in terms of Indonesia's citizens, for instance *qārī'*, *hāfiẓ*, and muslim scholar (Jaeni et al. 2021, 268). Therefore, the World Federation of the Deaf (2016) emphasizes that barriers lie not in deafness itself but in inaccessible communication (World Federation of the Deaf 2016).

Meanwhile, individuals with visual impairments, or the blind, face barriers in visual perception, ranging from low vision to total blindness (Syatri 2017, 366). The visually impaired people are not restricted to a specific type of work because their employment eligibility is contingent upon the alignment of organizational support, workplace accommodations, assistive technology, and personal competency. Media work or journalism is one pertinent example. A blind professional can continue to work in the newsroom with the help of screen readers, editorial flexibility, field assistants, and opportunities to create media material linked to disabilities. Customer service or phone operations in the hospitality industry are further examples. A figure demonstrated that employment requiring verbal communication, auditory abilities, procedural memory, and interpersonal interaction can be appropriate for blind people by working as a telephone operator before transitioning into a guest-service expert. The article highlights the significance of screen readers, JAWS, and continuous learning (Firmanda 2025, 241–46). Organizations like the Perkins School for the Blind and the WHO note that when technological and environmental support is available, visually impaired individuals can contribute equally across many occupational sectors. Another behavioral intervention is improving in rehabilitation training, mobility training, and counseling in communities (Demmin and Silverstein 2020, 4239; Perkins School for the Blind n.d.).

Fourth, individuals with multiple disabilities require a multidimensional approach, as they face more than one functional barrier. Within the framework of *maqāṣid*, ensuring their right to work emphasizes the urgency of *ḥifẓ an-nafs*, *ḥifẓ al-‘aql*, and *ḥifẓ al-‘ird*. Suitable professional practices include tactile-based occupations, such as crafts or simple service roles, supported by supervisors, integrated assistive technologies, and an inclusive social environment (Battle for Blindness n.d.). The greatest obstacles do not lie within their conditions, but rather in society’s failure to provide adaptive communication systems, integrated physical access, and equitable social attitudes.

Thus, the implementation of the Socio-Religious Model of Disability (SRmD) emphasizes that employment for persons with disabilities is not merely a concession (*rukḥṣah*) or an act of charity, but a normative right grounded in Sharia. The integration of the concepts of *ahliyyah* (legal capacity) and *maqāṣid asy-syarī‘ah* (objectives of Islamic law) provides theological legitimacy, affirming that inclusive access to work is an integral part of Islam’s mission of justice and social development.

Conclusion

Analysis of Surah 'Abasa (80): 1–4 emphasizes that the Qur'an rejects the marginalization of persons with disabilities. The story of Abdullah ibn Ummi Maktum illustrates that Allah's admonition was not merely directed at the Prophet's social interaction but at the neglect of the potential of a sincere blind companion seeking guidance. This verse underscores that physical condition should not be a basis for discrimination, and that a person's value is determined by faith and moral commitment, rather than social status or bodily limitations. Consequently, Surah 'Abasa establishes a normative principle of inclusivity, positioning persons with disabilities as full members of the faithful community with equal rights, capacities, and dignity in socio-religious life.

Looking ahead, the study of disability inclusivity within Islam remains wide open for further exploration, both by mapping rights according to specific types of disabilities and by expanding the scope to education, family, politics, and legal protection. Critique should also address government policies, which remain largely administrative and have not fully integrated the Qur'anic values of justice, dignity, and the elimination of stigma. For this reason, integrating Qur'anic exegesis with social-humanities approaches must continue to be promoted so that Islamic thought is not only normative but also solution-oriented. Ultimately, the shared commitment of academics, scholars, and policymakers is key to creating a society that is more just and disability-friendly.

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