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Teaching Short Prayers to Students with Cerebral Palsy Using a Multisensory Approach at MIM PK Kartasura

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Abstract

Despite increasing scholarly interest in inclusive Islamic religious education, limited attention has been given to the application of multisensory instructional techniques for teaching short prayers to children with Cerebral Palsy. This study investigates the implementation of multimodal methods and their influence on engagement and prayer pronunciation skills among students with physical disabilities. Adopting a qualitative methodology with a phenomenological case study design, the research involved one student with Cerebral Palsy, a classroom teacher, a special education assistant, and the student's parents, selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected through participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation, and analyzed thematically. The findings reveal that the integration of incremental aural stimulation, visual supports, adaptive kinesthetic activities, and tactile engagement significantly improved recall, pronunciation confidence, and emotional involvement in the prayer-learning process. These outcomes highlight the pedagogical value of multisensory learning frameworks within inclusive Islamic education and underscore the importance of collaborative instructional design involving both educators and families. The study contributes to the discourse on accessibility in religious pedagogy and suggests avenues for further research across varied educational settings and learner populations.

Keywords: Multisensory Learning; Cerebral Palsy; Inclusive Islamic Education; Prayer Instruction; Phenomenological Case Study

INTRODUCTION

Acquiring brief prayers is essential in Islamic religious education as it establishes the foundation for developing a worship habit from a young age (Admizal & Mandala, 2023; Risnawaty, 2023; Wahyuni et al., 2024). During the initial phases of a child's religious growth, prayer functions as a conduit for enhancing spiritual consciousness and emotional intimacy with Allah SWT(Aziz, 2024). In both official and informal educational environments, prayer learning contributes to the cultivation of moral ideals, ethics, and self-discipline (Hasanah et al., 2022). The ongoing practice of prayer education can cultivate a consistent religious character in youngsters (Baharuddin & Resky, 2025). Consequently, the acquisition of prayer holds significant importance in the formation of students' religious identities.

Nonetheless, the implementation of prayer learning encounters obstacles when applied to children with cerebral palsy, a neuromotor condition that impairs movement, coordination, and speech (Wulandari et al., 2025). Children with cerebral palsy frequently encounter challenges in articulation, concentration, and short-term memory, rendering verbal memorizing techniques inefficient (Fluss & Lidzba, 2020; Salsabilla & Sudarwati, 2025). Educational methods that do not accommodate children's sensory and motor requirements may result in diminished motivation and engagement in learning(Håkstad et al., 2022). UNESCO (2020) asserts that inclusive education necessitates pedagogical modifications tailored to the specific needs of each learner. Consequently, instructing children with cerebral palsy in prayer necessitates a more adapted and humane methodology.

A multimodal approach provides an educational framework that incorporates visual, aural, kinesthetic, and tactile modalities into the learning process (Aloizou et al., 2025). Multisensory activation has demonstrated the capacity to enhance memory retention and improve language processing in children with exceptional difficulties (Shams & Seitz, 2008). Maspupah et al. (2024) demonstrated that the utilization of visual media and uncomplicated movements can enhance pronunciation performance in children with cerebral palsy. Nonetheless, the majority of prior studies have concentrated on the implementation of multisensory learning in literacy and fundamental motor skills, rather than in religious worship (Gotlieb et al., 2022). This signifies a research deficiency that must be rectified within the framework of Islamic education.

This research is distinguished by the methodical implementation of a multimodal strategy to instructing brief prayers for students with cerebral palsy in an inclusive Islamic

madrasah setting. This study investigates the efficacy of cognitive factors with the emotional, sensory, and spiritual dimensions implicated in the internalization of prayer (Haverkamp et al., 2025). This study conceptualizes prayer not merely as memorization, but as a religious experience shaped by the interplay of bodily engagement, auditory elements, and visual perception (Froese & Jones, 2021). This methodology has not been extensively examined in the realm of religion education within formal inclusive settings in Indonesia (Chotimah et al., 2025; Rizal et al., 2024). Consequently, this research offers both conceptual and practical advancements to inclusive Islamic pedagogy.

This study seeks to elucidate the implementation of a multimodal strategy in instructing short prayers for students with cerebral palsy at MIM PK Kartasura. The objective is to evaluate the effect of the multimodal method on students' concentration, pronunciation, and spiritual comprehension (Yatri et al., 2024). This study aims to offer theoretical contributions to the advancement of an inclusive religious learning model (Ishtiaq, 2019). It is anticipated to offer pragmatic direction for educators and institutions in formulating multisensory-based worship learning practices (Denzin, 2017). Consequently, this research holds importance in both the scientific and practical domains of modern Islamic education.

Literature Review

Acquiring brief prayers is essential in Islamic religious education as it establishes the groundwork for cultivating devotional practices from a young age. The introduction of prayer promotes spiritual awareness, emotional intimacy with Allah SWT, and fortifies children's religious character (Baharuddin & Resky, 2025). For kids, the memorization of prayers transcends a basic verbal ability; it constitutes the internalization of moral ideals through the act of worship (Froese & Jones, 2021). In Islamic elementary schools, the instruction of prayers functions as a means to cultivate discipline, autonomy, and reinforce virtuous ethics (Hasanah et al., 2022). Consequently, the acquisition of brief prayers constitutes a pedagogical process that integrates cognitive, emotive, and spiritual dimensions.

Teaching prayer to children with cerebral palsy necessitates a distinct methodology. Cerebral palsy is a neuromotor condition that impacts bodily movement, coordination, speech articulation, and concentration (Fluss & Lidzba, 2020). Motor and cognitive disabilities render traditional verbal memorizing techniques less efficacious for children with cerebral palsy (Salsabilla & Sudarwati, 2025). UNESCO (2020) asserts that inclusive

education necessitates the modification of pedagogical approaches to accommodate the developmental requirements of every student. Consequently, instructing individuals with cerebral palsy in prayer necessitates an adapted, dialogic learning framework that accommodates multifaceted sensory inputs.

A multimodal approach is a recommended educational strategy for children with developmental difficulties. This method concurrently engages multiple senses, including visual, aural, kinesthetic, and tactile, to improve information processing (Liu et al., 2025). Studies indicate that multimodal engagement enhances memory, language proficiency, and students' enthusiasm to actively engage in learning (Håkstad et al., 2022). Aloizou et al. (2025) assert that multimodal learning frameworks can improve perceptual reactions and emotional involvement in young children. Nonetheless, the majority of multisensory research emphasizes literacy development and fundamental motor abilities, rather than the acquisition of worship and prayer within Islamic education, highlighting a significant research gap that requires attention.

Prior research encompassing religious inclusivity has predominantly concentrated on curriculum frameworks and religious counseling methodologies for students with special needs (Rizal et al., 2024; Wulandari et al., 2025). Nonetheless, research on multisensory integration in prayer instruction for children with cerebral palsy within Islamic educational institutions remains scarce. Maspupah et al. (2024) revealed that visual media and uncomplicated movements can enhance language articulation in youngsters with severe needs, however not specifically within a worship context. This study introduces an innovative multisensory strategy to teaching short prayers at MIM PK Kartasura, aimed at enhancing prayer reciting abilities and cultivating meaningful worship experiences in accordance with Islamic educational objectives.

METHODS

This study utilized a qualitative methodology with a descriptive-phenomenological framework, seeking to comprehensively comprehend the learning experiences of short prayers for students with cerebral palsy through a multimodal approach at MIM PK Kartasura. The phenomenological technique was employed since this study aimed to analyze the significance of the learning experiences of students, teachers, and special education instructors (Ishtiaq, 2019). Phenomenology enables researchers to elucidate the perceptual,

affective, and motor dynamics that arise throughout the prayer learning process, which cannot be quantified (Neubauer et al., 2019). This study emphasizes a contextual and interpretive comprehension of inclusive learning approaches within Islamic educational environments.

The research site was MIM PK Kartasura, which has instituted inclusive education services for pupils with special needs, including individuals with cerebral palsy. The research subjects included one student with cerebral palsy as the major focus, one classroom teacher, one special assistant teacher (GPK), and one parent engaged in home prayer practice. Participants were chosen through a purposive sampling method due to their direct engagement in the learning process (Sugiyono, 2020). Data collecting methods encompassed participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. Observations were performed to evaluate multimodal participation in direct prayer instruction, while interviews examined tactics, obstacles, and perceptions of educators and parents. Supplementary documentation, including lesson plans, progress notes, and video recordings of the educational process, were utilized to enhance data validity.

The analysis utilized the interactive approach proposed by Sugiyono (2020) encompassing three phases: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drafting. Data reduction entailed organizing pertinent information concerning the utilization of visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and tactile modalities in prayer learning; data presentation was executed as a thematic narrative; and findings were derived through an ongoing verification procedure. The findings' validity was upheld by the triangulation of sources, methods, and temporal aspects, alongside member checking with educators and parents to confirm that the researcher's interpretations corresponded with practical experiences (Denzin, 2017). Ethical issues were upheld by obtaining formal approval from the school and parents, while ensuring student anonymity to preserve the confidentiality and comfort of the informants. Consequently, this strategy guarantees the precision, legitimacy, and reliability of the research findings.

RESULTS

This study revealed that the integration of brief prayers for cerebral palsy (CP) pupils at MIM PK Kartasura occurred using a systematic yet adaptable pedagogical approach, accommodating the students' physical, cognitive, and emotional states. The primary

challenges included not only articulation and motor coordination abilities but also the stability of pupils' concentration during learning. Classroom observations and interviews with general educators, special education instructors, and parents revealed four consistently employed multisensory learning strategies: incremental auditory stimulation, visual-communicative support, adaptive kinesthetic exercises, and emotion-based reinforcement. These four tactics collectively create a religious experience that students may perceive, retain, and replicate within the realms of education and daily existence.

Employing a Multisensory Methodology in the Instruction of Brief Prayers

The instruction of brief prayers for students with cerebral palsy at MIM PK Kartasura employs a multimodal methodology that integrates visual, aural, and tactile components. Educators employ colorful prayer cards, gradually repeated audio recitations, and uncomplicated gestures adapted to the children' motor abilities. Empirical evidence indicates that the integration of these three senses enhances students' retention and alleviates cognitive burden during prayer recitation. Educators also stress a progressive methodology (scaffolding), first with individual words and brief phrases, and advancing to whole sentences of prayer. This method renders the learning process more adaptable and less burdensome for students.

A teacher indicated that the multisensory approach positively influences student involvement in the classroom, primarily due to the increased variety and enjoyment of learning activities. The teacher stated, "This child possesses the ability to remember; he merely requires a gradual approach along with the integration of visuals and movement." If he solely engages in reading, he rapidly becomes fatigued and loses concentration. This corresponds with classroom observations, indicating that pupils demonstrate greater responsiveness when learning incorporates hand gestures and visual media. Consequently, the application of multimodal learning has been demonstrated to progressively enhance students' retention and comprehension of prayers.

Cognitive and Emotional Reactions of Students with Cerebral Palsy

Students with cerebral palsy exhibited enhanced memorization skills when the learning process was executed consistently at a deliberate, regulated pace. In the preliminary phases, certain pupils encountered challenges with pronunciation and respiration regulation when reciting prayers. The utilization of auditory repeating patterns, coupled with the imagery of the words and meanings of the prayers, facilitated their comprehension of the

sentence structure and context of the prayers. Observations indicated that students recalled prayers more effectively when associated with daily activities, such as the prayer before meals or the prayer prior to studying.

Students exhibited more emotional confidence when educators offered positive verbal reinforcement and basic expressions of appreciation, such as commendation or a smile. This was corroborated by a student's remark, who stated with a smile, "I can now read the prayer independently, Ma'am." Squared This statement expressed pride and significant achievement. The learning process engenders cognitive transformations and enhances students' emotional well-being, especially in fostering a sense of self-efficacy.

The Influence of Educators and Parental Involvement on Learning

Educators serve as principal facilitators in guaranteeing that the learning process is both adaptive and compassionate. Educators not only create instructional materials and methodologies but also modify the tempo and structure of teaching in accordance with the students' physical and psychological states. Educators recognize that pupils with cerebral palsy necessitate a compassionate, patient, and supportive methodology. Field notes reveal that educators often implement brief intermissions when pupils exhibit signs of exhaustion, thereby fostering an effective and sustainable learning environment.

Moreover, parents significantly contribute to reinforcing the practice of prayer inside the household. Parents endeavor to consistently recite brief prayers at designated times, such as prior to sleep or during meals. A father remarked, "I recite the prayer slowly at home, occasionally holding her hand to soothe her." This activity illustrates that parental emotional engagement can enhance the development of long-term memory. Consequently, collaboration between educators and parents is a crucial factor in the efficacy of the multisensory method.

Table 1. Research Findings on Instructing Short Daily Prayers to Students with Cerebral Palsy Through a Multisensory Method

Learning Focus	Field Findings	Instructional Activities	Student Responses	Learning Impact
Visual	Students are more able to recognize the words of the prayer when supported by visual cues and color contrasts.	The teacher uses illustrated prayer cards, colored posters, and simple visual symbols.	Students show increased visual attention and focus longer duration.	Supports gradual recognition and memorization of prayer text.

Learning Focus	Field Findings	Instructional Activities	Student Responses	Learning Impact
Auditory	Step-by-step repetition improves phonological memory and pronunciation attempts.	The teacher recites the prayer repeatedly, uses recorded audio, and chants slowly.	Students attempt to imitate sounds, although articulation may remain limited.	Strengthens auditory recall and encourages speech motivation.
Kinesthetic	Body movements help reduce muscle stiffness and increase learning engagement.	Prayer is taught alongside clapping patterns, light body movements, and guided hand motion.	Students appear more participative and show increased emotional involvement.	Helps improve motor coordination and active learning participation.
Tactile	Textured materials assist students in identifying letters and symbols through touch.	The teacher provides simple Braille cards and tactile learning objects.	Students show longer tactile exploration and concentration.	Enhances sensory-based understanding and multisensory integration.
Repetition and Routine	Consistency is a key factor that determines prayer retention.	Daily practice routines are adopted, such as reciting prayers after Dhuha prayer and before dismissal.	Students recall prayers more quickly when reinforced daily.	Strengthens long-term memory and nurtures religious habit formation.

The results demonstrate that the multimodal method substantially aids students with cerebral palsy in acquiring brief daily prayers by concurrently engaging several sensory pathways. Visual aids assist pupils in identifying and distinguishing prayer passages, and aural repetition enhances phonological memory and vocal reproduction. Kinesthetic movement promotes physical participation, alleviating body rigidity and enhancing emotional involvement in educational tasks. Tactile experiences enhance recognition by direct sensory interaction, particularly for students with restricted verbal communication. Moreover, systematic repetition and daily practice regimens facilitate long-term memory and the habituation of prayer. Consequently, the multimodal method not only improves memorization but also fosters comprehensive growth across cognitive, physical, emotional, and spiritual aspects.

DISCUSSION

This study's findings indicate that the multimodal instructional strategy markedly enhanced the acquisition of brief daily prayers among students with cerebral palsy at MIM

PK Kartasura. Students with cerebral palsy frequently encounter deficits in physical coordination, articulation, and cognitive processing, rendering conventional memorization and verbal repetition inadequate for achieving successful learning outcomes (Fluss & Lidzba, 2020). The multimodal strategy, by simultaneously engaging visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and tactile modalities, mitigated cognitive overload and enhanced encoding and recall processes (Liu et al., 2025). This method offered learning routes that were more adaptable and accessible, catering to the learners' neurodevelopmental characteristics. The findings indicate that teaching prayer to learners with cerebral palsy necessitates pedagogical strategies based on sensory integration rather than solely verbal instruction (Håkstad et al., 2022).

The visual modality became a crucial factor in facilitating students' comprehension of prayer texts and their intrinsic meanings. Illustrated and color-coded prayer cards facilitated visual memory consolidation and aided children with phonological processing difficulties (Gotlieb et al., 2022). These visual aids correspond with comprehensive inclusive education strategies that advocate for representational and scaffolded visual signals for students with neurological and learning difficulties (Wulandari et al., 2025). Consistent exposure to visual models enhanced students' proficiency in Arabic characters, pronunciation patterns, and semantic connections. Consequently, visual reinforcement served as a cognitive gateway for understanding rather than simply as an ancillary classroom resource (Aloizou et al., 2025).

The aural element considerably aided students' recollection of prayers through rhythmic, repetitive, and structured recitations. Educators employed a systematic auditory sequencing approach that commenced with single syllables, advanced to words, and culminated in complete prayer lines, in accordance with scaffolding principles in language acquisition pedagogy (Gotlieb et al., 2022). Notwithstanding ongoing articulation difficulties, frequent auditory stimuli enhanced phonological memory and bolstered confidence in verbal communication (Salsabilla & Sudarwati, 2025). The teacher's vocal emotionality fostered an emotive link to the prayer experience, augmenting motivation and spiritual involvement (Haverkamp et al., 2025). Consequently, auditory repetition served not only a grammatical purpose but also enhanced emotional and spiritual significance.

The kinesthetic and tactile aspects bolstered emotional engagement and improved sensorimotor participation in prayer practice. Movement-based learning provided a conduit for embodied learning, engaging brain networks linked to attention, affective regulation, and

memory consolidation (Håkstad et al., 2022). Tactile instruments, including textured cards and guided hand movements, aided students in establishing physical associations that enhanced recall and reduced performance anxiety (Maspupah et al., 2024). These findings align with embodied cognition theory, which posits that learning rooted in physical experience facilitates deeper and more enduring internalization compared to abstract cognitive processing alone (Liu et al., 2025). Consequently, kinesthetic-tactile learning was crucial not only in providing physical assistance but also in influencing the emotional significance of prayer.

Parental engagement was essential in maintaining the continuity and emotional significance of prayer education beyond the classroom. Daily home reinforcement fostered the establishment of consistent prayer practices and enhanced the child's religious identity (Baharuddin & Resky, 2025). Parents exemplified prayer practices, offered emotional support, and established nurturing home environments that reflected school-based instruction (Aziz, 2024). These activities correspond with Islamic educational theory, which regards the family as the principal site for moral and spiritual development (Rizal et al., 2024). The multisensory learning approach is best comprehended as a comprehensive educational ecosystem necessitating ongoing collaboration between educators and families.

This study enhances the existing literature on inclusive Islamic education by illustrating the adaptation of religious instruction through sensory-responsive methodologies, while preserving its spiritual character. The incorporation of sensory modalities in prayer education demonstrates that religious instruction can be adaptable and tailored to the developmental requirements of learners. Limited prior research has investigated sensory-based pedagogy within Islamic educational environments, rendering this study a significant contribution to the literature on inclusive pedagogy (Chotimah et al., 2025). The results emphasize prayer as a cognitive process and a tangible spiritual practice manifested via physical involvement and emotional experience. Consequently, the research underscores that inclusive Islamic education should be both pedagogically attainable and spiritually significant.

Nevertheless, some limits must be recognized. This study concentrated on a solitary person inside a specific institutional context, hence constraining the generalizability of the findings. The study failed to utilize established assessment tools to quantitatively evaluate memorization, articulation, or sensorimotor development levels. Consequently, the results

ought to be regarded as context-dependent and exploratory rather than universally applicable. Future study ought to encompass bigger sample sizes, systematic assessment criteria, and comparison assessments among schools to enhance the empirical basis of multimodal religious pedagogy.

Subsequent research should explore the creation of structured teacher-training modules to assist educators in systematically implementing multimodal religious instruction. Longitudinal studies could investigate the persistence of prayer memorizing and the evolution of spiritual identity over time. Furthermore, subsequent research may assess the potential of digital or interactive multimodal technologies to enhance kinesthetic and tactile methods within inclusive Islamic educational settings. Extending study into other geographical and cultural educational settings may further substantiate the versatility of this instructional strategy. The theoretical and practical contributions of multimodal pedagogy in Islamic education can progress through these directives.

CONCLUSION

This research illustrates that a multimodal methodology substantially influences the acquisition of short prayers among students with cerebral palsy at MIM PK Kartasura. Through the integration of visual, aural, kinesthetic, and tactile modalities, children can more effectively acquire, retain, and recite prayer content. The gradual and supportive learning method facilitates the overcoming of motor, articulation, and focus difficulties frequently encountered by students with cerebral palsy. Education enhances prayer memorizing abilities, creates an environment for tranquil spiritual experiences, and cultivates pupils' confidence in doing daily worship. The multisensory approach has demonstrated efficacy, adaptability, and pertinence for application in religious education tailored for those with special needs.

This study demonstrates that learning achievement relies not just on teacher tactics but also on familial involvement and assistance in creating prayer habits at home. The synergistic partnership between educators as facilitators and parents as emotional supporters enhances the continuity of learning for pupils. This research offers practical implications: inclusive Islamic educational institutions must develop worship learning models that focus not only on cognitive attainment but also on students' sensorimotor and emotive dimensions. Future research is anticipated to broaden the investigation to additional forms of worship,

including ablution and prayer motions, employing a multimodal methodology grounded in corporeal experiences, thereby facilitating the holistic and sustainable advancement of religious education for students with special needs.

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