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Inclusive Wikipedia Writing in Higher Education

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Abstract
Students with disabilities are often included in digital higher education as users of accessible learning technologies rather than as contributors to public knowledge. This article examines how a university Wikimedia partnership can be designed to support students with disabilities as Wikipedia contributors through inclusive digital pedagogy. Using qualitative document analysis, this study examines an institutional program proposal, international policy frameworks, accessibility principles, and scholarship on disability inclusion, open education, Wikipedia pedagogy, and knowledge equity. The analysis identifies five design principles: accessibility by design, contribution-oriented pedagogy, verification-centered digital literacy, multi-actor partnership governance, and output-linked evaluation. The article argues that Wikipedia can function as an inclusive public-learning environment when accessibility planning, mentoring, disability-support services, and Wikimedia facilitation are embedded from the beginning. The proposed model contributes to inclusive higher education by shifting digital inclusion from access toward authorship, participation, and public knowledge contribution.

Keywords:
Disability Inclusion; Wikipedia Pedagogy; Digital Literacy; Open Knowledge; Document Analysis.

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INTRODUCTION

Digital transformation has become one of the defining features of contemporary higher education. Universities increasingly rely on learning management systems, online repositories, digital communication platforms, open educational resources, and collaborative online tools to support teaching, learning, research, and public engagement. This transformation has created new opportunities for widening access to knowledge (Johinke R & Di Lauro F, 2020). At the same time, it has also exposed persistent inequalities in the ways students participate in digital learning environments. For students with disabilities, digital higher education is often framed through the language of access and accommodation: accessible documents, captions, assistive technologies, alternative formats, extended time, screen-reader compatibility, and other reasonable adjustments (Cummings, 2020). These supports are essential, but they do not exhaust the meaning of inclusion. The central problem addressed in this article is that students with disabilities are still more often positioned as users of digital learning technologies than as contributors to public knowledge. In many higher-education settings, digital inclusion is understood as the removal of barriers that prevent students with disabilities from receiving information (Frasesr, 2020). Less attention is given to whether students with disabilities are supported to produce, edit, publish, and circulate knowledge in public digital spaces. This distinction matters because inclusion is not only about access to information. It is also about

authorship, visibility, recognition, participation, and epistemic agency (Wyatt, 2020).

This article develops a journal manuscript draft based on an institutional initiative titled Membangun Ruang Pengetahuan Inklusif: Partisipasi Mahasiswa Disabilitas dalam Penulisan Wikipedia bersama FISIP UB dan Wikimedia Indonesia. The program proposes a collaboration between the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Brawijaya, and Wikimedia Indonesia to train and mentor students with disabilities in writing and editing Wikipedia articles. The program is designed as a community-service and partnership-based activity under the Dosen Berkarya scheme. Its core premise is that students with disabilities should not only be provided access to knowledge but should also be given structured opportunities to participate in producing public knowledge (Masukume, 2020). The proposed program is significant because Wikipedia is one of the most visible public knowledge platforms in the world. (Vetter, 2020) It is not merely a website for retrieving information; it is a collaborative knowledge infrastructure governed by community norms, verifiability rules, neutral-point-of-view expectations, citation practices, and open licensing. In educational contexts, Wikipedia assignments can help students develop public writing, source evaluation, digital literacy, collaborative authorship, and civic communication skills (Lauro, 2020). However, the pedagogical potential of Wikipedia has rarely been discussed specifically through the lens of disability-inclusive higher education Xing, J., & (Vetter, M. A, 2020).

The issue is particularly relevant to disability studies because participation in knowledge production is linked to broader questions of recognition, representation, and equality. Students with disabilities frequently encounter institutional structures that treat them primarily as recipients of support (Ford& Wajcman, 2017). While support is necessary, such a framing may unintentionally reproduce a passive model of disability inclusion (Bali & Jhangiani, 2020). A university–Wikimedia program can challenge this model by positioning students with disabilities as writers, editors, knowledge curators, and contributors to a public encyclopedia. In this sense, the proposed activity is not only a digital-skills intervention. It is also an intervention in epistemic participation. The program also aligns with international policy frameworks. SDG 4 calls for inclusive and equitable quality education, equal access to tertiary education, relevant skills including information and communication technology skills, and disability-sensitive learning environments. SDG 10 emphasizes reducing inequalities and ensuring social, economic, and political inclusion irrespective of disability. SDG 17 stresses partnerships that mobilize knowledge, expertise, technology, and institutional collaboration. UNESCO's Recommendation on Open Educational Resources links open knowledge to inclusive access, accessible formats, adaptation, reuse, and collaborative knowledge creation. These frameworks support the argument that inclusive Wikipedia writing can be understood as part of a larger agenda of inclusive digital citizenship and open knowledge equity.

The research gap addressed in this article emerges at the intersection of several literatures (Ball, 2019). Studies of disability in higher education often focus on accessibility, institutional barriers, transition experiences, assistive technologies, and accommodation policies. Studies of Wikipedia pedagogy often examine public writing, source literacy, collaborative editing, and student motivation, but usually treat students as a generic group. (Miller, 2014) Open education scholarship discusses access, open licensing, reuse, and learner participation, but it has not sufficiently explored how students with disabilities can be supported as co-creators in open knowledge environments (Dawe & Robinson, 2017). Thus, the specific question of how students with disabilities can be supported to contribute to Wikipedia through

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an accessible university–Wikimedia partnership remains underdeveloped (Kahili-Heede et al, 2022). This article asks: How can a university–Wikimedia partnership be designed to support students with disabilities as contributors to public knowledge through accessible Wikipedia writing? The article has three objectives. First, it identifies the conceptual and normative foundations for inclusive Wikipedia pedagogy. Second, it develops a design model based on qualitative document analysis. Third, it proposes evaluation indicators that can be used when the program is implemented (Mc Dowell&Vetter,2022).

The article contributes to disability studies and inclusive higher education in four ways. First, it reframes digital inclusion from access to contribution. Second, it connects disability-support practice with open pedagogy and Wikipedia-based learning. Third, it proposes a multi-actor partnership model involving academic units, Wikimedia facilitators, and disability-support actors. Fourth, it offers a practical framework for future empirical evaluation of inclusive Wikipedia-writing programs (Shane & Brooks, 2016).

METHOD

This article uses qualitative document analysis (Fink A, 2018). The method is appropriate because the article develops a design model based on institutional planning documents, journal guidelines, international policy frameworks, accessibility standards, and scholarly literature (Ball,2019). The study does not claim to evaluate completed participant outcomes. Instead, it offers a pre-implementation or design-based analysis that can guide the implementation and future evaluation of the proposed program. The primary institutional source is the uploaded manuscript draft on inclusive Wikipedia writing at Brawijaya University. The draft frames the issue as a shift from access to contribution and proposes a university–Wikimedia partnership to support students with disabilities in Wikipedia writing. It identifies accessibility by design, contribution-oriented pedagogy, verification-centered digital literacy, partnership governance, and evaluation as key principles.

The analysis also refers to the DOKAR Wikimedia proposal. The proposal states that the program aims to involve students with disabilities in writing and editing Wikipedia articles through coordination with Wikimedia Indonesia, participant identification, accessibility-needs assessment, module development, training, mentoring, documentation, media publication, and journal writing. The proposal also positions Wikimedia Indonesia as a partner with expertise in free knowledge, Wikipedia training, and community-based digital literacy. The document corpus consists of four categories. First, institutional documents, including the program proposal and manuscript draft. Second, journal-format documents, especially author guidelines. Third, normative and policy documents, including SDG 4, SDG 10, SDG 17, UNESCO OER Recommendation, WCAG 2.2, and UDL Guidelines. Fourth, scholarly literature on disability inclusion, open education, Wikipedia pedagogy, and knowledge equity.

The analysis was conducted through five stages. First, the documents were read to identify recurring themes: accessibility, disability inclusion, digital literacy, Wikipedia writing, public contribution, open knowledge, mentoring, partnership, and evaluation. Second, the documents were coded for normative justification, especially how they frame inclusion, participation, open knowledge, and disability rights. Third, the documents were coded for programmatic implications: what activities, supports, and governance mechanisms would be needed to implement an inclusive Wikipedia-writing program. Fourth, the codes were grouped into design principles. Fifth, the design principles were translated into a program model and

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evaluation framework.

Because the activity had not yet produced final post-implementation participant data at the time of drafting, this article does not present empirical claims about learning gains, article-completion rates, or long-term Wikipedia retention. Instead, it proposes indicators that can be used in the future (Kahili-Heede et al, 2022). These include participation indicators, accessibility indicators, editorial-output indicators, and sustainability indicators. Ethically, future empirical research should obtain informed consent from participants, protect privacy regarding disability and accommodation needs, ensure voluntary participation, avoid making Wikipedia contribution a coercive requirement, and provide accessible communication throughout the process. If interviews, surveys, or reflective data are collected from students, formal ethical clearance should be obtained according to university procedures.

RESULT AND ANALYSIS

Accessibility by Design

The first finding is that accessibility must be treated as a core design principle rather than as an additional service. An inclusive Wikipedia program should not begin with the assumption that standard training materials are suitable for all participants. Instead, the program should begin with an accessibility-needs assessment (Ford & Wajcman, 2017). This assessment should identify participants' preferred formats, assistive technologies, communication needs, pacing needs, mobility considerations, and mentoring preferences. For example, some students may need screen-reader-compatible documents; others may need captions, sign-language interpretation, written instructions, larger fonts, simplified navigation guides, peer assistance, or additional practice time. Some students may prefer asynchronous preparation before live training. Others may need small-group mentoring.

Accessibility by design also includes platform preparation. Wikipedia editing interfaces may be unfamiliar even to students who use the internet daily. Facilitators should therefore provide step-by-step guides, accessible screenshots with alternative text, keyboard-navigation notes, and practice tasks. Training should not assume that all participants are equally familiar with account creation, citation tools, article talk pages, or editing syntax. The principle of accessibility by design changes the role of disability-support units. They should not be invited only after the training design is completed. They should be involved from the planning stage, including recruitment, needs assessment, material preparation, facilitator briefing, risk mitigation, and evaluation. This aligns with UDL and with SDG 4's emphasis on inclusive and disability-sensitive learning environments.

Contribution-Oriented Pedagogy

The second finding is that Wikipedia provides a contribution-oriented pedagogy. In many digital-literacy programs, students are trained to search, access, or use information. In this model, students are trained to contribute. They are expected to become public writers who participate in improving knowledge resources. Contribution-oriented pedagogy has several implications (Xing & Vetter, 2020). First, students must be supported to choose appropriate topics. Topic selection should consider student interest, source availability, notability, and relevance to public knowledge. Second, students must learn to identify reliable sources. Third, students must learn Wikipedia's encyclopedic style, which differs from argumentative essays. Fourth, students must understand that writing in Wikipedia is iterative; edits may be revised,

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commented on, or improved by others.

For students with disabilities, contribution-oriented pedagogy can strengthen academic confidence. It communicates that their work is not merely a classroom exercise but part of a broader public knowledge ecosystem. This may support a sense of belonging in higher education and public intellectual participation. However, this requires careful mentoring. Without mentoring, the public nature of Wikipedia may be intimidating, especially if students fear making mistakes or having edits reverted.Therefore, the proposed program should include article clinics. These clinics allow students to receive feedback on topic selection, article structure, citation format, neutrality, and revision. The clinic model also provides emotional and academic support. It converts a one-time workshop into a longer learning process.

Multi-Actor Partnership Governance

The fourth finding is that the proposed program requires multi-actor partnership governance. No single actor has all the expertise required. The academic unit contributes disciplinary knowledge, student mentoring, and institutional coordination. Wikimedia Indonesia contributes expertise in Wikipedia editing, free knowledge, community norms, and training methods. Disability-support actors contribute accessibility knowledge, accommodation planning, and inclusive communication (Bali M & Jhangiani, 2020). This partnership structure reflects SDG 17's emphasis on sharing knowledge, expertise, technology, and resources through partnerships. It also responds to practical implementation needs. For example, Wikimedia facilitators may understand editing norms but may not know each participant's accessibility needs. Disability-support units may understand accommodations but may not know Wikipedia's editorial culture. Academic mentors may understand student learning but may need Wikimedia-specific guidance.

The program works best when these competencies are combined. Partnership governance should be operationalized through clear role division. Before the training, the team should agree on responsibilities: who recruits participants, who conducts accessibility assessment, who prepares materials, who facilitates Wikipedia training, who provides academic mentoring, who documents outputs, who manages media publication, and who prepares the journal manuscript. Clear role division reduces confusion and increases accountability.

Output-Linked Evaluation

The fifth finding is that evaluation should be linked to outputs and outcomes. The DOKAR program requires visible outputs such as documentation, media publication, reports, partnership evidence, and journal submission. These outputs should be integrated into the research and evaluation design rather than treated only as administrative requirements. Evaluation can be organized around four domains: participation, accessibility, editorial contribution, and sustainability.

Table 1. Proposed Evaluation Domains for Inclusive Wikipedia Writing

Domain	Indicator	Evidence
Participation	Number of students recruited; attendance; completion of mentoring	Attendance list, participation log
Accessibility	Accommodation needs identified; accommodations delivered; unresolved	Accessibility checklist, facilitator notes

	barriers	
Editorial contribution	Accounts created; edits made; references added; articles drafted or improved	Wikipedia dashboard, edit history, article review
Sustainability	Continued mentoring; media coverage; journal draft; repeat partnership plan	Reports, media links, article submission, IA/MoA

Source : Data Analysis, 2026

This framework avoids reducing success to the number of published articles alone. Article completion is important, but so are accessibility quality, student confidence, source-literacy development, and willingness to continue contributing. A student who makes only a small edit may still experience a significant change in confidence and sense of belonging. Therefore, evaluation should combine quantitative indicators and qualitative reflections. Possible instruments include pre/post self-assessment on digital-literacy confidence, accessibility satisfaction forms, mentoring logs, output-tracking sheets, and reflective prompts. Questions might include: Did the training materials meet your access needs? Did you feel supported in contributing to Wikipedia? Did the activity increase your confidence in public writing? What barriers did you experience? What support helped you most? Would you continue editing after the program?

Proposed Program Model

Based on the analysis, this article proposes a six-stage model for inclusive Wikipedia pedagogy.

Stage 1: Institutional coordination.

The university, Wikimedia Indonesia, and disability-support actors clarify objectives, roles, timeline, communication channels, accessibility principles, and expected outputs.

Stage 2: Participant recruitment and accessibility assessment.

Students with disabilities are invited to participate voluntarily. The team identifies access needs, preferred learning formats, technology requirements, and mentoring preferences.

Stage 3: Accessible module development.

Training materials are prepared in accessible formats. Modules cover Wikimedia principles, Wikipedia basics, reliable sources, neutral writing, citation, open licensing, and ethical participation.

Stage 4: Core training.

Participants learn account creation, editing basics, source use, article structure, and Wikipedia norms through accessible and practice-based sessions.

Stage 5: Article clinic and mentoring.

Students receive follow-up support in topic selection, source collection, drafting, editing, citation improvement, and responding to feedback.

Stage 6: Documentation, evaluation, and publication.

The team collects output data, participant reflections, accessibility notes, documentation, and learning evidence . These become the basis for media coverage, reports, and journal articles.

This model is designed to be replicable. It can be used by other universities that wish to develop inclusive digital-literacy programs, open-knowledge initiatives, or disability-centered public-writing activities (Machi L. A & McEvoy, 2021). It can also be adapted for different groups, such as students from marginalized regions, first-generation students, or communities underrepresented in public knowledge platforms.

CONCLUSION

This article examined how a university–Wikimedia partnership can be designed to support students with disabilities as contributors to public knowledge through accessible Wikipedia writing. Using qualitative document analysis, it found that inclusive Wikipedia pedagogy requires five interrelated principles: accessibility by design, contribution-oriented pedagogy, verification-centered digital literacy, multi-actor partnership governance, and output-linked evaluation. The main argument is that digital inclusion in higher education should move beyond access. Students with disabilities should not only receive accessible materials and use digital platforms; they should also be supported to write, edit, publish, and participate in public knowledge systems. Wikipedia provides a useful pedagogical environment for this shift because it combines public writing, source evaluation, collaborative editing, open licensing, and civic knowledge contribution.

The article contributes conceptually by integrating the capability approach, Universal Design for Learning, and knowledge equity. The capability approach helps explain why contribution matters as a form of substantive freedom. UDL explains how accessible pedagogy should be designed from the beginning. Knowledge equity explains why participation in Wikipedia has public significance, especially for groups historically underrepresented in knowledge production. Practically, the article proposes a six-stage program model that can guide implementation: institutional coordination, participant recruitment and accessibility assessment, accessible module development, core training, article clinic and mentoring, and documentation and evaluation. This model recognizes that partnership is essential. Academic units, Wikimedia facilitators, and disability-support actors must work together because inclusive Wikipedia pedagogy requires disciplinary mentoring, platform expertise, and accessibility competence.

The article also recommends that future implementation collect empirical data through pre/post self-assessments, accessibility logs, mentoring notes, edit histories, participant reflections, and output tracking. Such data would allow the current design-based article to be followed by an empirical evaluation of learning outcomes, accessibility quality, and long-term participation. For Indonesian higher education, the broader implication is clear. Inclusive digital transformation should not be limited to compliance with accessibility requirements. It should create meaningful opportunities for students with disabilities to participate as knowledge producers. A university–Wikimedia partnership offers one promising pathway toward that goal.

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