

The Phenomenon of Accelerated Acquisition of Hijaiyah Script Reading, and Challenges in Latin Alphabet Mastery among Children with Dyslexia

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ABSTRACT

Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that affects an individual's ability to read, write, and recognize written language symbols. This disorder is neurobiological, involving brain areas that regulate phonological and visual processing. An interesting phenomenon emerges when children with dyslexia show better ability in reading Arabic letters (Hijaiyah) compared to the Latin alphabet. This study aims to provide an in-depth description of the ease with which dyslexic children read Hijaiyah letters, despite difficulties with the Latin alphabet. Unlike previous studies that predominantly focus on deficits in Latin-based reading, this study offers a novel perspective by examining the contrasting proficiency of dyslexic children in reading Hijaiyah script and identifying the underlying spiritual and multisensory learning mechanisms. A qualitative approach with a phenomenological design was used to explore the subjective experiences of dyslexic children in the process of reading two different writing systems. Data were collected through semi-structured in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation studies involving children, parents, classroom teachers, psychologists, and religious teachers (ustazah). Data analysis was conducted through reduction, categorization, and thematic interpretation to uncover the essential meanings of the experiences of the subjects. The results indicate that Hijaiyah letters are easier for dyslexic children to read because their learning process involves a multisensory religious approach, activating alternative learning pathways through auditory repetition, kinesthetic movement, and spiritual guidance. This condition fosters emotional calm, intrinsic motivation, and self-confidence in reading Hijaiyah letters compared to the Latin alphabet. Religious values and a spiritual learning environment play a crucial role in enhancing self-confidence and reducing academic anxiety in dyslexic children. This phenomenon suggests that spiritual and multisensory-based learning could be an effective intervention alternative for children with literacy difficulties.

INTRODUCTION

Dyslexia is one of the most common learning disorders globally and is a serious concern in the fields of education and children's mental health, accounting for approximately 80% of all learning disorders (Yang et al., 2022). Dyslexia is characterized by difficulties in reading, writing, and spelling. This condition impacts psychological well-being, such as decreased self-confidence and increased stress, contributing to the development of negative attitudes toward the learning process. Intellectually, children with dyslexia typically possess abilities within normal or even above-average ranges, but their potential is hindered by specific impairments in processing written language (Lopez-Zamora et al., 2025). In many countries, including Indonesia, children with dyslexia often face significant challenges in learning the Latin alphabet used in formal education systems. As a result, they not only fall behind academically but may also experience a decline in self-esteem and are at risk of social isolation or withdrawal.

Education is a right for every citizen, including children with dyslexia who experience difficulties in basic literacy. The main goal of education is not only to transfer knowledge but also to help shape character, skills, and social abilities so that children can optimally contribute to society (Rohman & Hairudin, 2018). Dyslexia is not merely a common reading difficulty but a specific learning disorder that affects an individual's ability to recognize and process written symbols, particularly the Latin alphabet (J. Stein, 2023) , with a complex neurobiological basis involving impairments in the temporoparietal regions of the brain that regulate phonological and visual processing (Ren et al., 2024). Despite efforts to provide equal access to education, children with dyslexia are often overlooked due to limited understanding among the public and educators regarding the characteristics and appropriate learning approaches (Solin et al., 2025). Moreover, evidence from systematic reviews shows that practical understanding of dyslexia and appropriate interventions, particularly regarding the design and adoption of assistive technologies in classrooms, remains limited, leading to inconsistent support implementation (Alsswey et al., 2021). In the Indonesian context, Rosita & Nurihsan, (2022) through a case study in an inclusive elementary school found that fifth-grade dyslexic students with phonological deficits require assistive technology-based media to train their phonological awareness, yet the focus of the study remained on media design needs rather than on the child's subjective experience within a religious context. Consistent support must be backed by evidence-based interventions, as classroom action research shows that structured support can enhance word recognition, speed, comprehension, and motivation in dyslexic children (Balantekin, 2021).

An interesting phenomenon shows that dyslexic children, who struggle with reading the Latin alphabet, demonstrate progress in reading Hijaiyah letters. A psychological assessment conducted at the Cilacap General Hospital revealed that the child had a cognitive dyslexia disorder. Cognitive dyslexia is a type of dyslexia related to impairments in certain cognitive processes involved in reading and writing abilities. Specifically, cognitive dyslexia involves difficulties in language processing, such as problems recognizing letters, understanding the relationship between sounds and letters, and challenges in quickly and accurately recalling and processing verbal information. Through a multisensory and spiritually-based approach, research by Fitriani (2022) indicates that a specialized Qur'anic learning method significantly improves basic literacy skills in dyslexic children. Supporting findings of this phenomenon are also presented by Utami (2025), which show the effectiveness of flashcard media for Hijaiyah letters in TPQ (Taman Pendidikan Al-Qur'an) learning, revealing that a combination of consistent visual design of Hijaiyah letters, a multisensory approach, and the spiritual values accompanying the learning process enhances letter recognition in early childhood.

From a neurolinguistic perspective, Stein (2023) argues that teaching Hijaiyah letters with the proper intonation (tartil), repetition, and hand movements can activate alternative learning pathways more effectively, in line with findings by Mannel (2024), which show that a multisensory approach can help overcome language processing limitations in children with dyslexia. However, a systematic literature review (SLR) by Al-Dawsari & Alghabban (2025) indicates that current research focuses more on system design and short-term quantitative outcomes, while the lived experiences of children reading Hijaiyah versus Latin letters remain largely undocumented a gap that this

phenomenological qualitative study seeks to fill. Various studies, including case studies on the technological needs of dyslexic students in elementary schools, still place interventions in the realm of media-based technology development and phonological training, rather than focusing on the lived experience of children confronting two distinct writing systems in their daily religious context Rosita & Nurihsan (2022).

The urgency of this article is further emphasized by the fact that the majority of children in Indonesia are introduced to Hijaiyah letters early on through religious education at TPQ. However, there is a lack of scientific research analyzing how and why Hijaiyah letters are easier to learn for children with dyslexia. One of the major gaps in the literature is the scarcity of studies linking letter shapes, spiritual-religious learning methods, and the cognitive tendencies of dyslexic children in recognizing visual symbols. While the use of visual media and letter cards helps dyslexic children with reading, few studies specifically address the differences between the Latin alphabet and Hijaiyah letters in the learning experience (Andani et al., 2023). This is reinforced by Aryani & Fauziah (2020) regarding the importance of psychosocial factors in the success of dyslexic children's learning, which may be mediated by spiritual values and religious community support.

The theoretical framework of this article is based on a conceptual understanding of dyslexia as a specific learning disorder that affects reading, writing, and recognizing written symbols, with a complex neurobiological basis involving disruptions in the temporoparietal regions of the brain responsible for phonological processing (J. Stein, 2023). Recent research by Ren (2024), using a meta-analysis of fMRI studies, strengthens the understanding that dyslexia shares a neurobiological basis with developmental stuttering disorders. Meanwhile, the Phonological Processing Theory developed by Stein (2023) posits that dyslexia originates from weaknesses in processing phonemes, the smallest sound units in language. This difficulty prevents dyslexic children from associating sounds with graphic symbols or letters, which is the foundation for their reading and writing abilities.

The multisensory Orton-Gillingham approach is one of the most widely used strategies as it emphasizes the importance of engaging multiple senses, such as vision, hearing, touch, and movement, in the reading learning process. According to Talita (2024), this approach has proven effective in improving literacy skills in children with dyslexia. Another approach that has shown positive results in improving reading and writing skills for dyslexic children is the use of fluent reading strategies and step-by-step teaching, integrated into action research programs that successfully increased motivation and literacy performance in dyslexic students (Balantekin, 2021). Interestingly, the method of teaching Hijaiyah letters in the Qur'an already naturally incorporates multisensory elements, such as talaqqi (learning directly from a teacher), tartil (reading with correct pronunciation), hand movements to form letters, and the use of visual media. These findings support research by (Fitriani (2022), which indicates that a specially designed Qur'anic teaching method can help dyslexic children learn Hijaiyah letters better and more enjoyably.

From a cultural psychology perspective, this article integrates motivation theory and symbolic meaning in a religious context, where Sari (2025) emphasize that intrinsic motivation derived from spiritual values can be a strong driving force in learning, while Nur'aini & Hamzah (2023) show that spiritual value-based learning has a holistic impact on children's development. The visual-phonological characteristics of Hijaiyah

letters versus the Latin alphabet are a key focus, with research by Al-Edaily (2013) using eye-tracking technology showing that children with learning difficulties exhibit different eye-tracking patterns when reading Arabic letters. Comprehensively, dyslexia not only refers to technical reading difficulties but also affects emotional aspects such as self-confidence and learning motivation (Lopez-Zamora et al., 2025), social aspects through interaction with the learning environment (Stephenson et al., 2024), and family aspects through parenting and parental support (Aryani & Fauziah, 2020) with key characteristics including difficulties in decoding skills (Ch'ng & Jong, 2024) disruptions in working memory (Walda et al., 2024), and deficits in automatic metaphor processing (Cersosimo et al., 2024), as identified in a systematic review (Vagvolgyi et al., 2025). Based on the above, this article aims to describe in-depth the phenomenon of how dyslexic children find it easier to read Hijaiyah letters despite struggling with the Latin alphabet.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a phenomenological research design to explore the meaning and essence of the experience of a child with dyslexia in reading Hijaiyah letters. Phenomenological research is a method in qualitative research aimed at deeply understanding an individual's subjective experience of a phenomenon, with a focus on the meaning that the individual attributes to that experience. This approach emphasizes understanding from the perspective of those who directly experience a particular event or situation, rather than from the researcher's interpretation. Data is typically collected through in-depth interviews, observations, or document studies, and then analyzed to identify key themes that represent the essence of the experience. It can be concluded that qualitative research seeks to understand the phenomenon experienced by research subjects holistically through descriptions in the form of words and language. This article aims to understand the deep meaning of the lived experience of the individual research subject with the researcher as the primary instrument, describing the phenomenon holistically through descriptive narratives.

A. Research Subject

The subject of this research is a child with cognitive dyslexia named "H," aged 11, who shows ease in reading Hijaiyah letters despite struggling with reading the Latin alphabet. This subject was selected using purposive sampling. Purposive sampling, with inclusion criteria, means that the researcher deliberately selects respondents who meet certain criteria because they are considered most suitable to provide the information needed for the research. The selection of "H" was made purposively based on the inclusion criteria, which is having been diagnosed with dyslexia by a psychologist.

B. Data Collection

The data collection technique emphasizes the importance of using various sources of information in an integrated or mixed manner. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, or document studies. The interviews used were semi-structured and conducted with a child-friendly approach, ensuring the subject felt comfortable in sharing their learning experiences. Furthermore, observations were conducted following the principle of participatory observation, where the researcher was actively present in the child's environment. Documentation techniques were also

applied by collecting visual and written notes, and exploratory reading tests were conducted to directly assess the child's ability to read both Hijaiyah and Latin letters. Throughout this process, the researcher acted as the human instrument, being the primary tool in data collection and analysis. The expectation is that the combination of primary and secondary data will provide a comprehensive picture of the learning experience of a child with dyslexia

C. Data Analysis

This study used semi-structured in-depth interviews with several informants directly related to the dyslexic child. Data analysis followed the steps of transcendental phenomenology according to Moustakas, which include the epoche process to suspend the researcher's biases, phenomenological reduction to select and categorize meaningful units, imaginative variation to understand the conditions under which the experience occurs, and synthesis of meanings and essences to find the essence of the meanings from the participants' lived experiences, making the data obtained more holistic and scientifically reliable (Duevel, 2019).

Table 1. Research Informants

Nu	Informant	Inisials	Age	Role / Relationship to the Subject	Data Collection Method
1	Student	H	11 years	Primary research subject (fourth-grade elementary school student)	Semi-structured in-depth interviews and direct observation during the reading of Hijaiyah and Latin letters.
2	Teacher	RF	46 years	Elementary school teacher responsible for the child's formal education	In-depth interviews exploring learning behavior, reading difficulties, and classroom responses toward the child.
3	Parent	SF	42 Years	Biological parent (primary caregiver at home)	In-depth interviews and narrative discussions regarding the child's development, emotional support, and home learning routines.
4	Parent	K	46 years	Biological parent (person responsible for educational decision-making)	Semi-structured interviews addressing family support, perceptions of dyslexia, and the religious values practiced within the household.
5	TPQ Teacher (Qur'anic Instructor)	EH	62 years	Qur'anic teacher facilitating Hijaiyah literacy learning	In-depth interviews and observation of recitation activities (<i>talaqqi</i> and <i>tartil</i>) to understand spiritual and social learning approaches.
6	Psychologist	Z	38 years	Psychologist and child development specialist at the school	Professional interviews examining the child's cognitive, emotional, and social aspects from a psychological perspective.

Data analysis in this study used the interactive analysis model. The interactive analysis model is a process of qualitative data analysis that is iterative and dynamic. There are three main interrelated stages: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions with verification. In the data reduction stage, the researcher filters and simplifies the raw data to focus on information relevant to the research goal. The reduced data are then presented in a structured form, such as narrative summaries, to

facilitate identifying patterns and relationships between data. The final stage is drawing conclusions and verification, where the researcher interprets the data presented and re-tests the conclusions by referring to the original data to ensure their validity.

D. Data Validity

To ensure data validity in phenomenological qualitative research, the researcher follows four criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility is achieved through source and technique triangulation, involving data collection from various informants (e.g., dyslexic child, parents, teachers, psychologists) using methods like interviews, observations, and document studies. Transferability is enhanced by providing detailed contextual descriptions of the background, learning environment, and interactions, allowing readers to assess the relevance in similar contexts. Dependability is ensured by documenting the entire research process and conducting peer debriefing to maintain consistency and accuracy. Confirmability is guaranteed through critical reflection on researcher bias and complete documentation, enabling others to audit the findings. By applying these criteria, the study remains scientifically accountable, yielding valid and credible results. This study received ethical approval from Universitas Muhammadiyah Purwokerto (Approval No. A12-11/018-S.Re/LPPM/I/2026). All participants provided informed consent prior to participation. Ethical safeguards included assurances of anonymity, data confidentiality, and participants' right to withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The results of this study present the main findings obtained through phenomenological analysis of the experiences of a child with dyslexia in reading Hijaiyah and Latin letters. To provide a systematic overview of the interpretation and meaning construction direction from the field data, a coding framework table is constructed, which includes main themes, codes, and indicators from the interview and observation analysis. This table serves as the basis for presenting the findings in the next sections, which describe the emotional experiences, visual challenges, and social and religious support experienced by the research subject.

Table 2. Coding Frame for Children with Dyslexia

ID	Code (Label)	Brief Definition	Indicator	Example Excerpt (Paraphrased Interview Result)	Level (Manifest / Latent)
C1	Emotional calmness during Hijaiyah reading	The feeling of comfort and relaxation when the child reads Hijaiyah letters is different from the tension felt when reading Latin letters.	Child's verbal expressions indicating calmness, emotional safety, or comfort during Qur'anic reading activities.	"When I read Hijaiyah letters, I feel calm and not afraid of making mistakes."	Manifest
C2	Religiously reinforced self-confidence	The emergence of self-confidence strengthened by a spiritual or religious context.	The child appears more confident when reading or speaking in TPQ settings compared to formal school environments.	"I am brave enough to read because the teacher is patient and says that Allah helps me."	Latent

ID	Code (Label)	Brief Definition	Indicator	Example Excerpt (Paraphrased Interview Result)	Level (Manifest / Latent)
C3	Visual confusion of Latin letters	Difficulty differentiating visually similar letters within the Latin writing system.	Errors in reading or identifying letters such as b/d/p/q; confusion related to letter shapes.	"I often mix up the letters b and d."	Manifest
C4	Academic anxiety	Feelings of fear, shame, or psychological pressure when required to read in formal school settings.	Emotional expressions such as fear, nervousness, or silence when asked to read aloud.	"In class, I am afraid of being scolded if I read incorrectly."	Latent
C5	Social support from Qur'anic teacher and peers	Emotional and social assistance provided by the Qur'anic teacher (<i>ustadzah</i>) and peers during the learning process.	Statements indicating help, encouragement, or social acceptance.	"My friends usually help me when I have difficulty reading the Iqra."	Manifest
C6	Spiritual learning motivation	Learning motivation derived from religious values and a sense of closeness to God.	The child associates learning activities with worship or spiritual meaning.	"Reciting the Qur'an is an act of worship; I enjoy it because it makes me feel closer to Allah."	Latent
C7	Religiously oriented multisensory approach	The use of visual, auditory, and kinesthetic senses in reading Hijaiyah letters through <i>tartil</i> , <i>talaqqi</i> , or hand movements.	Observations of the child following hand movements, engaging in vocal repetition, or reading slowly in guided instruction.	"When the teacher reads slowly, I move my hand along and it helps me remember the letters."	Manifest
C8	Positive self-concept transformation	A shift in the child's perception of personal ability following successful religious learning experiences.	Expressions reflecting increased self-efficacy, self-acceptance, or confidence.	"Now I'm not afraid to read anymore; I can do it if I go slowly."	Latent
C9	Spiritual self-meaning	The construction of new self-meaning linked to religious experience and the perceived presence of God in the learning process.	Statements expressing reliance on or support from spiritual forces.	"Allah helps me when I am learning."	Latent

A. Positive Emotional Experiences in Reading Hijaiyah Letters

This study uses a phenomenological approach to understand the experiences of a child with dyslexia in reading Latin and Hijaiyah letter. The research subject, an 11-year-old child named "H," provided a real-life portrayal of the emotional and cognitive differences when reading these two types of writing. The results from interviews and observations indicate that child "H" feels calmer, more comfortable, and more confident when reading Hijaiyah letters, particularly in the context of religious learning activities, such as Qur'anic recitation at Taman Pendidikan Al-Qur'an (TPQ). The child stated, "When I read Hijaiyah letters, I feel calm, not afraid of making mistakes." Reading Hijaiyah letters does not cause the pressure or fear experienced when reading Latin letters in formal school settings. For the child, reading the Qur'an is an enjoyable, calming activity that fosters self-confidence.

This phenomenon suggests a strong relationship between affective aspects and learning motivation. As child "H" expressed, "I am brave to read because the ustazah is patient and says Allah helps." The emotional comfort felt by the dyslexic child in the context of religiously-based learning also contributes to a positive experience with Hijaiyah letters. In direct observation, the child appeared more focused and enthusiastic, maintaining attention longer than when reading Latin letters.

Additionally, the child's ease in reading Hijaiyah letters can also be related to the visual and phonological characteristics of Arabic script, which are more orthographically consistent than the Latin alphabet. The Hijaiyah letters have distinct shapes that are less similar to one another, and there is a direct correlation between the shape of the letter and the sound produced, which reduces the cognitive load for the child in the decoding process.

Child 'H's positive experience with Hijaiyah letters is influenced by religious, emotional, cognitive, and pedagogical factors. A supportive learning environment and multisensory approaches play a key role in building self-confidence and motivation. These findings have practical implications for teachers and parents to reconsider reading strategies for dyslexic children, integrating religious, affective, and sensory elements as part of a holistic approach to supporting their literacy skills.

B. Visual Challenges of Latin Letters Compared to Hijaiyah Letters

The Latin alphabet presents challenges for child 'H. The child frequently experiences confusion when recognizing similar-shaped letters, such as b, d, p, and q, which are often mixed up during the reading and writing process. Child "H" stated, "I often confuse b and d." This causes the child to lose confidence and feel anxious when reading aloud. The child expressed, "In class, I'm afraid of being scolded if I make a mistake while reading." Hijaiyah letters are easier to distinguish visually due to their varied shapes. The diacritical marks (harakat) help the child recognize sounds more clearly. This suggests that visual factors play a significant role in reading ease for dyslexic children.

Dyslexic children often struggle with distinguishing letter shapes, as shown by their difficulty writing Latin letters compared to Hijaiyah. In observation (Figure 1, Part A and Part B), in Part A, the child was able to write Hijaiyah letters with relatively accurate and consistent shapes. The child could even copy several Arabic words with Latin transliteration without showing hesitation or fear of making mistakes. In contrast, in Part B, during the task of writing Latin letters, the child frequently erased and rewrote because they were unsure about the shape of the letters. The visual similarity between Latin letters complicates reading for children with dyslexia.



Hijaiyah Script

Latin Alphabet Script

Figure 1 shows the clear difference in writing ability across the two systems. In Part A, the child copied Hijaiyah letters accurately, demonstrating good visual-motor coordination. In contrast, Part B shows inconsistent writing, overlapping letters, and phonetic spellings like 'mo gim jake'. There is also visible confusion with similar letters, chaotic spacing, and irregular writing lines. These findings show that dyslexic children face greater challenges with the Latin alphabet, which requires more orthographic consistency.

The comparison shows that the writing system significantly influences the cognitive and emotional processes of a child with dyslexia. The regularity and clarity of Hijaiyah letters provide strong visual-phonological support, boosting the child's confidence. The Latin alphabet, with similar-shaped letters, causes visual confusion, anxiety, and reduced motivation. These findings confirm that orthographic factors affect both technical skills and emotional aspects like self-confidence. Thus, dyslexia learning strategies should address both visual characteristics and emotional support to foster a positive literacy process.

C. Social Support and Religious Environment

The findings of this study indicate that a supportive religious learning environment contributes significantly to the comfort and learning success of children with dyslexia. In the context of Qur'anic learning at TPQ, child "H" perceives the act of reading the Qur'an not just as an obligation but as an act of worship that brings them closer to Allah. This is reflected in their statement, "Reading the Qur'an is worship, I feel happy because I feel close to Allah." During the learning process, child "H" receives patient and empathetic guidance from the ustadz and ustadzah. "My friends like to help me when I have trouble reading Iqra." Routine activities such as reading the Qur'an, tadarus, and reading Iqra create a warm learning atmosphere, free from pressure, and full of spiritual meaning. In such an environment, the child feels more accepted and valued, which fosters psychological safety that strengthens their enthusiasm to learn. The religious social environment also helps build the perception that learning to read Hijaiyah letters is not just an academic activity, but part of worship and spiritual enrichment.

This phenomenon shows that the success of a child with dyslexia in learning Hijaiyah letters is not solely determined by cognitive ability, but is also heavily influenced by emotional, social, and spiritual support naturally formed within the context of religious learning. In a religious environment like TPQ, the process of learning to read Hijaiyah letters is not only focused on academic achievement, but also fosters psychological safety and spiritual closeness between the child, teacher, and peers. The belief in divine help during the learning process is reflected in child "H"'s statement, "Allah helped me when I was learning." This atmosphere of love, patience, and acceptance makes the child feel welcomed without stigma, allowing them to freely express themselves and boldly attempt learning, even though they often make mistakes. Moreover, the positive emotional involvement between the teacher, peers, and the child creates a supportive learning climate and enhances intrinsic motivation. The child no longer views reading as a burdensome task full of pressure, but as an act of worship and a spiritually valuable activity. When the learning process is linked to religious values and meaningfulness, the child's internal motivation to learn increases significantly, helping to overcome both neurological and psychological barriers. This

transformation is reflected in child "H"'s acknowledgment, "Now I'm not afraid to read, I can do it slowly." Thus, learning Hijaiyah letters plays a dual role: as a means of religious literacy and as an affective therapy medium that strengthens the dyslexic child's self-confidence and emotional well-being.

Considering the entire dynamics, it can be concluded that child "H"'s success in learning Hijaiyah letters is the result of a synergy between religious, emotional, social, and pedagogical factors that mutually reinforce each other. The warm and loving environment at TPQ forms an inclusive learning space where the ustadz's patience, peers' empathy, and spiritual values create psychological safety and deep meaning in the learning process. This condition not only reduces anxiety and pressure often encountered in learning Latin letters, but also fosters strong intrinsic motivation to continue practicing reading Hijaiyah letters. Religious value-based learning ultimately functions as a form of healing pedagogy because it harmoniously integrates cognitive, affective, and spiritual aspects. These findings emphasize the importance of a holistic approach in the education of dyslexic children, an approach that focuses not only on the technical ability to read but also on psychological well-being and the spiritual meaning that accompanies the learning process.

Discussion

This article employs a phenomenological approach to deeply understand the subjective experiences of a child with dyslexia in facing two different writing systems, namely the Latin alphabet and Hijaiyah letters. This approach was chosen because it allows for the exploration of meaning from the perspective of the individual experiencing it directly, in this case, an 11-year-old child with the initial "H." Through in-depth interviews, direct observations within the learning context, and supporting documentation, one of the main findings that emerged was the significant difference in the comfort and ease of reading and writing between Hijaiyah and Latin letters. This finding reinforces the view that ease of reading in children with dyslexia is influenced by orthographic, emotional, and religious context factors ((Fitriani et al., 2022). This finding is also conceptually aligned with the study by Rosita & Nurihsan (2022), which shows that fifth-grade dyslexic students with phonological deficits require technology-based learning media to intensively train their phonological awareness. This means that, both in formal school contexts and religious environments, the success of reading in children with dyslexia is highly determined by the quality of environmental support and the design of learning media responsive to their phonological profiles.

Additionally, the results of this study are consistent with the findings of Tarabya (2025), which identified subtypes of reading difficulties among Arabic readers, closely related to linguistic and visuo-perceptual abilities. The study emphasizes that dyslexia does not emerge uniformly but varies depending on the characteristics of the writing system used (Lachmann & Bergstro, 2023). In this context, Hijaiyah letters, with their visual complexity and writing direction differing from the Latin alphabet, can create distinct patterns of difficulty for children with dyslexia (Sultan & Abidin, 2023). This finding strengthens the view that the reading experience for children with dyslexia is influenced by the interaction between orthographic factors and the individual's perceptual capacity (Carioti et al., 2021). Therefore, the difference in comfort and ease of reading between Latin and Hijaiyah letters in this research participant can be

understood as a manifestation of dyslexia subtypes triggered by differences in the writing systems.

Overall, the findings of this study emphasize that the reading experience of children with dyslexia cannot be separated from the characteristics of the writing system they are learning (Lachmann & Bergstro, 2023). The orthographic differences between Latin and Hijaiyah letters, along with perceptual, emotional, and religious context factors, form a unique variation in the level of comfort and ease of reading (Ghandour et al., 2025). Thus, understanding dyslexia should consider both linguistic and cultural-religious dimensions, so that the learning interventions provided can be more adaptive to the individual needs and experiences of the child. These findings indicate the potential for designing adaptive learning models that integrate orthographic, multisensory, and spiritual dimensions, offering a framework for inclusive literacy instruction. Future studies should validate this approach with larger samples and longitudinal interventions to strengthen evidence-based practice.

A. Positive Emotional Experience in Reading Hijaiyah Letters

From an emotional perspective, the experience of reading Hijaiyah letters evokes a sense of comfort and stronger self-confidence (Zakraoui et al., 2023). This aligns with research findings that show that structured literacy interventions improve motivation and affective comfort in children with reading difficulties (Balantekin, 2021). In educational phenomenology, the emotional dimension is an integral part of the meaning of learning; when children feel emotionally safe, the learning process becomes deeper and more meaningful (Creswell, J. W., & Poth, 2018). Meanwhile, the religious context provides a stable, empathetic, and spiritually meaningful social environment that enhances the child's intrinsic motivation (Aliffia et al., 2025). Research indicates that Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning can build self-confidence and clearer learning goals for children with special needs ((N. Sari et al., 2025). A religious environment not only provides space for social acceptance but also imparts a sense of worship in the learning process, turning reading into a positive spiritual experience (Aliffia et al., 2025). These findings suggest that the Hijaiyah-based reading experience functions as a form of “healing pedagogy,” integrating emotional, cognitive, and spiritual dimensions to support children with dyslexia. This conceptualization represents a valuable contribution to the field of educational psychology, highlighting how culturally and spiritually grounded learning interventions can foster intrinsic motivation and self-confidence.

This study is also supported by the findings of Haddad & Schiff (2025) in *Reading Research Quarterly*, which highlight how the phenomenon of diglossia and the orthographic characteristics of Arabic affect the reading learning process. The study explains that the variation in language forms (between Classical Arabic and everyday language) and the complex morphological structure not only requires high linguistic ability but is also influenced by the social and educational context, including the religious environment in which the language is taught (Haddad & Schiff, 2025). In the context of this study, Hijaiyah letters are not merely a writing system but also a spiritual tool taught through religious activities such as reading the Qur'an. This religious aspect creates a different emotional attachment compared to Latin letters, which are typically taught in formal academic contexts (Jaafar et al., 2025). Therefore, the reading experience of children with dyslexia in relation to Hijaiyah and Latin letters

is not only determined by orthographic differences but also by the emotional and religious meaning attached to their learning context (Hock, 2025),

B. Visual Challenges of Latin Letters Compared to Hijaiyah Letters

The findings of this study show that child "H" experiences difficulty distinguishing visually similar Latin letters such as b, d, p, and q, which are frequently confused during reading and writing. This difficulty causes anxiety and loss of self-confidence when facing reading tasks (Hock, 2025). In contrast, Hijaiyah letters are considered easier to read because they have diverse shapes and diacritical marks (harakat) that serve as additional phonological cues (Ghandour et al., 2025). This description aligns with the explanation of (Rosita & Nurihsan, 2022) that dyslexic students with phonological deficits still struggle to accurately identify letters despite having above-average intellectual capacity, and therefore need a structured and repetitive phonological training program. In other words, the visual confusion of Latin letters in child "H" can be understood as a manifestation of the combination of phonological deficits and orthographic complexity, which is also highlighted in the context of formal schooling.

Orthographically, the Latin alphabet is considered a writing system with low phoneme-grapheme transparency (deep orthography), where the relationship between letters and sounds is not always consistent (Vagvolgyi et al., 2025). This is different from the Arabic writing system, which is more symbolic and phonetic, making it easier for beginner readers, including children with dyslexia, to recognize the connection between letter forms, diacritical marks, and sounds (Al-Dawsari & Alghabban, 2025). The unique forms of Hijaiyah letters, which are not similar to each other, reduce the visual burden in the process of letter identification (Al-Edaily et al., 2013). The clear visual variation in Arabic letters helps dyslexic readers maintain visual focus and recognize writing patterns more quickly.

From a neurocognitive perspective, the difficulty in reading Latin letters is also influenced by complex visual-phonological factors. Dyslexia is associated with impairments in the magnocellular visual pathway, which causes individuals to struggle with distinguishing the direction and position of visually similar letters (J. Stein, 2023). This phenomenon aligns with the research findings that child "H" frequently reverses or swaps the positions of Latin letters, whereas in writing Hijaiyah, this is almost nonexistent because the writing system has a consistent visual orientation (Patro et al., 2025).

In addition to orthographic factors, the pedagogical approach to teaching Hijaiyah letters also plays a significant role. TPQ learning typically uses a multisensory method that simultaneously involves vision (visual), hearing (auditory), and motor movements (kinesthetic) (Said, 2025). This approach has proven effective for children with dyslexia because it activates more than one brain processing pathway in recognizing letters and sounds (Talita et al., 2024). This principle aligns with the Orton-Gillingham method, which emphasizes repeated practice through sensory integration to strengthen phonological memory and improve accuracy in both reading and writing (Subramaniam & Kunasegran, 2024).

The findings of this study are consistent with the research of Jabbour-Danial et al., (2024) in *Frontiers in Language Sciences*, which emphasizes that non-phonological factors and visual orthographic features in the Arabic writing system significantly affect the

reading process. Arabic, as the basis of Hijaiyah letters, has unique orthographic characteristics, such as letter forms that vary based on position and writing direction from right to left (Zhu et al., 2024). These characteristics demand different perceptual and motor strategies compared to Latin letters. This condition explains why children with dyslexia experience varying levels of comfort and ease when reading these two writing systems (Dalle, 2023). Therefore, the literacy performance differences between Hijaiyah and Latin letters in the research participant can be understood as a consequence of the different visual and orthographic burdens inherent in each writing system.

Thus, the empirical findings in child "H" show that orthographic, visual, and pedagogical factors synergistically affect the level of difficulty in reading between the two writing systems. The Latin alphabet, with its similar shapes and complex reading directions, poses significant challenges for children with dyslexia, whereas Hijaiyah letters, with their clear visual variations and support from harakat, provide a reading experience that is easier, more meaningful, and more confidence-boosting.

C. Social Support and Religious Environment

The findings of this study show that child "H"'s success in learning Hijaiyah letters is not only determined by cognitive ability or learning methods alone but is also heavily influenced by a supportive religious learning environment (Ali, 2025). In the TPQ learning context, the child receives guidance from patient and empathetic ustadz and ustadzah, who provide positive feedback every time the child attempts to read. Peer support, with peers accompanying and encouraging the child, fosters a sense of togetherness and reduces the anxiety typically experienced by children with dyslexia. These findings align with the study by B. Stein (2024), which emphasizes that emotional support from teachers and peers plays an important role in building resilience and reducing stress in children with learning vulnerabilities, including dyslexia. In a supportive learning environment like the TPQ where child "H" learns, positive interactions between teachers and students create a psychological safety that strengthens self-confidence and learning motivation (Rani Darmasari, 2023). The patience and empathy of the ustadz and ustadzah, along with peer support, help the child overcome the anxiety and pressure that usually arise when facing reading difficulties (Stan et al., 2025). Therefore, child "H"'s success in learning Hijaiyah letters can be understood as the result of a social-emotional process developed through warm and consistent interpersonal support in a religious environment.

Moreover, the view that children with dyslexia require strong emotional and social support from their surroundings in order to develop self-confidence and reduce psychological pressure due to reading difficulties is reinforced (Stephenson et al., 2024). In child "H"'s case, the religious atmosphere in TPQ creates a safe learning environment, free from stigma, allowing the child to freely experiment with Hijaiyah letters without fear of making mistakes.

An educational environment based on Islamic values fosters emotional, spiritual, and moral intelligence simultaneously, all of which play an important role in improving the child's psychological well-being (Nur'aini & Hamzah, 2023). In such an environment, the learning process becomes more meaningful because it is connected to the value of worship and strengthening of faith. This strengthens the child's intrinsic motivation to learn (Y. Sari et al., 2022). Spiritual motivation can be a primary driver for

special needs students in participating in Islamic Religious Education (N. Sari et al., 2025). Additionally, research on Qur'anic learning approaches for dyslexic children, conducted with love and patience by the teacher, effectively improves the child's concentration and self-confidence (Fitriani et al., 2022).

These findings align with the results of a systematic review conducted by Pinto et al., (2024), which emphasizes that the development of spiritual intelligence significantly contributes to resilience, mental well-being, and emotional management in children. In the context of Islamic value-based education, learning that emphasizes the meaning of worship and strengthening of faith can be a medium for developing spiritual intelligence (Abidin & Sirojuddin, 2024). Therefore, a religious learning environment like TPQ not only strengthens cognitive aspects but also fosters emotional and spiritual balance, supporting the psychological well-being of children, including those with special learning needs like dyslexia (Elzamzamy et al., 2024).

The teacher plays a role not only as an educator but also as a spiritual and emotional figure who helps the child overcome anxiety (Stan et al., 2025). The caregiving approach and empathetic methods from adults surrounding a dyslexic child can reduce learning stress and encourage gradual reading development (Aryani & Fauziah, 2020). Social support in a religious context works synergistically with the child's affective aspects (Li & Zhu, 2025). Children with dyslexia often experience emotional pressure due to repeated reading difficulties, so environmental support is crucial to maintaining their psychological balance and quality of life ((Lopez-Zamora et al., 2025). In the TPQ context, this support comes not only from teachers and peers but also from the spiritual meaning of the activities performed together. A sense of togetherness in worship creates a calming learning experience, strengthens the sense of purpose, and nurtures internal motivation to continue learning despite difficulties (Chui et al., 2025).

Islamic education, which focuses on forming a well-rounded personality, including spiritual, moral, and social aspects, is an ideal framework for inclusive education for children with special needs like dyslexia (Rohman & Hairudin, 2018). A supportive religious learning environment has proven to provide a protective effect against emotional pressure in children with dyslexia (Elzamzamy et al., 2024). The child not only learns to read Hijaiyah letters as a cognitive activity but also as a spiritual experience that calms, strengthens faith, and boosts self-confidence. In an environment full of love, patience, and free from stigma, the child feels accepted as they are. This positive psychological condition becomes a strong foundation for the sustainable development of literacy skills and emotional well-being in children with dyslexia (Polychroni et al., 2024).

This study has several limitations that should be considered without diminishing the value of the findings obtained. The study focused on one participant, so its results are more in-depth than broad. The learning context in a religious environment may have influenced the way the child expressed their feelings and motivation. Additionally, the study did not involve neurocognitive measurements or visual-phonological tests to further support the findings. Nevertheless, this research provides an important contribution to understanding the reading experience of children with dyslexia from emotional, visual, and spiritual perspectives. Future research is expected to expand with more participants and a wider variety of learning contexts to enrich and provide more comprehensive results

CONCLUSION

This study shows that children with dyslexia, who struggle with reading Latin letters, can read Hijaiyah letters more easily and fluently. This is mainly due to the visual clarity and distinct orthographic features of Hijaiyah letters, which reduce common letter confusion. Multisensory learning methods and a supportive religious environment further enhance the children's motivation, self-confidence, and comfort in reading. These findings indicate that the Hijaiyah-based approach acts as a "healing pedagogy," integrating cognitive, emotional, and spiritual dimensions to support children with dyslexia holistically.

The findings suggest that literacy instruction for children with dyslexia should integrate cognitive, emotional, and contextual support. Using clear visual characteristics, multisensory methods, and an inclusive environment—potentially incorporating religious values can enhance both reading ability and emotional well-being. The Hijaiyah-based approach exemplifies a "healing pedagogy" that can inform educational strategies and inclusive learning practices.

Further This study involved a limited number of participants, which may affect the generalizability of the findings. Future research should include more diverse participants and contexts, compare formal and non-formal learning settings, and consider integrating neurocognitive and visual-phonological assessments. Long-term intervention studies combining religious and multisensory approaches could further support the development of inclusive and adaptive learning models for children with dyslexia.

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