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DISCOVERING THE BEAUTY OF THE HIJAIYAH ALPHABET: A CALLIGRAPHY ADVENTURE FOR BRILLIANT CHILDREN

[1.] Dwi Oktarosada, [2.] Nurul Fadilah, [3.] Zainal Abidin Muhja
[1,2.] University of Borneo Tarakan [3.] International Islamic University Malaysia
[1.] dwioktarosada@gmail.com, [2.] nurulfadilah@borneo.ac.id, [3.] Zainal.muhja@live.iium.edu.my

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ABSTRACT

This community service initiative was prompted by the limited variety of teaching methods for the Hijaiyah alphabet, which tend to be one-way in nature and are therefore not particularly engaging for primary school-aged children. The programme aims to introduce the Hijaiyah alphabet whilst fostering a love for the Qur'an through a creative and enjoyable approach to calligraphy. The study underpinning this activity emphasises the importance of visual, kinaesthetic and experience-based learning to support children's cognitive and motor development, as well as the formation of their religious character. The activity was carried out with Year 2 pupils at SDN Utama 2 Tarakan using a participatory educational method, comprising the following stages: preparation; coordination with the school; delivery of material introducing the Hijaiyah alphabet; educational games; calligraphy colouring activities; guidance; and a simple evaluation. The results of the activity demonstrated an increase in pupils' enthusiasm for learning the Hijaiyah alphabet, the development of creativity and fine motor skills, as well as the cultivation of religious values, discipline and positive social interaction. This programme demonstrates that the integration of calligraphy into Islamic education has the potential to serve as an effective and sustainable learning alternative for young children.

Keywords: *the Hijaiyah alphabet, calligraphy, Islamic education, primary school pupils, community service*

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INTRODUCTION

According to Alfina et al., 2023, early childhood is the 'golden age' or prime period of a child's development a phase during which the brain develops rapidly, enabling children to absorb various forms of stimulation with great ease, including the recognition of Hijaiyah letters as the foundation for learning to read the Qur'an. At this stage, the success of the learning process is greatly influenced by the suitability of the methods and media used in relation to the child's developmental characteristics. Young children tend to learn through direct experience, play-based activities, exploration, and engaging visual stimuli. Therefore, the process of religious education, particularly the introduction to the Hijaiyah alphabet, needs to be designed in an enjoyable way so as to build intrinsic motivation whilst providing a meaningful learning experience.

The learning characteristics of young children indicate that they find it easier to understand material when it is presented through colourful, interactive media that involves motor skills and creativity. Conversely, conventional, teacher-centred teaching methods that rely on monotonous repetition often cause children to become bored quickly and lose interest in learning. This situation is still commonly encountered in the teaching of the Hijaiyah alphabet, where the process of letter recognition places greater emphasis on rote memorisation than on an enjoyable learning experience. Research Alfina et al., 2023 indicates that the lack of learning materials suited to the characteristics of young children is one of the obstacles to improving their ability to recognise Hijaiyah letters. Meanwhile, research on the Tilawati method also confirms that learning combined with visual aids, rhythm and enjoyable activities can increase children's engagement and enthusiasm for learning the Hijaiyah alphabet.

Given these circumstances, there is a need for innovative teaching methods that can integrate elements of education, art and play, so that the process of learning the Hijaiyah alphabet is not solely focused on achieving cognitive outcomes, but also fosters a sense of enjoyment, creativity and active engagement in children during the learning process. One alternative that can be implemented is the use of creative media based on artistic activities, such as simple calligraphy, soft books, educational games, and audio-visual media that enable children to learn through multisensory experiences. Various studies indicate that the use of interactive learning materials

appropriate to children's developmental stages can enhance their interest in learning, improve their ability to recognise Hijaiyah letters, and strengthen their readiness to study the Qur'an at the next level Alfina et al., 2023.

At primary school level, pupils are at a crucial stage of development in building a range of basic academic skills that form the foundation for successful learning at subsequent levels of education. One of the skills that must be developed to the fullest at this stage is literacy, particularly reading and writing skills. These two skills not only serve as core competencies in language learning but also act as the primary tools enabling pupils to acquire, understand, process and communicate information from a variety of learning resources.

Good reading skills help pupils understand the content of lesson material, instructions and information conveyed by teachers, whilst writing skills enable pupils to express their ideas, complete tasks and develop critical and systematic thinking skills. Thus, mastering literacy from primary education onwards is a vital asset in supporting the learning process as a whole. As stated by (Azzahra et al., 2025), at primary school level, pupils have strong potential to develop basic academic skills, and it is at this stage that reading and writing skills form the main foundation that can guide pupils' success in understanding the learning material presented by teachers, whilst also supporting their ability to complete various tasks that require reading and writing skills.

Calligraphy serves as an alternative learning method that not only functions as a medium for introducing the shapes of Arabic letters but also as a means of developing children's aesthetic and fine motor skills. (Muti, 2023) explains that, in Islamic history, calligraphy is not merely a form of art but a medium of da'wah (proselytising) imbued with spiritual values. Children who are introduced to the Hijaiyah alphabet through calligraphy colouring activities are indirectly trained to be patient, meticulous, and to appreciate the beauty of the language of the Qur'an. Learning carried out using this kind of visual and kinaesthetic approach has been shown to create a more meaningful and memorable learning experience.

Noviyanti et al. (2024) emphasise that teaching the Hijaiyah alphabet can also be used to instil Islamic character values. Through activities involving children - such as reciting prayers together, learning the Asmaul Husna, and observing proper etiquette whilst studying - moral values such as good manners, respect and discipline

will develop naturally. Children do not merely learn the letters, but also understand the meaning behind them. In this way, such activities not only enhance Qur'anic literacy skills but also strengthen the development of religious character from an early age. The cornerstone of learning Arabic is the ability to master Arabic vocabulary, as this is linked to the development of pupils' skills through listening to and observing the Hijaiyah letters (Sastrawan et al., 2025).

Furthermore, introducing the Hijaiyah letters through the art of calligraphy also helps children to distinguish the sounds and shapes of the letters more accurately. Fitrianingrum & Aminingsih, (2024) state that mispronunciation of Hijaiyah letters often occurs due to a lack of phonological understanding in the early stages. Therefore, the integration of sound recognition (makhraj) with the shapes of the letters through artistic activities is vital for creating a holistic and balanced learning experience. Given all these benefits, it is hoped that such an approach can serve as a model for Islamic education that is more enjoyable, effective, and suited to the developmental needs of children in the present day. Furthermore, the introduction of the Hijaiyah alphabet can help enhance teachers' competence in optimising the teaching of Qur'anic reading and memorisation to pupils, using a variety of methods tailored to the pupils' individual needs (Setiawan et al., 2025).

Through this activity, we aim to introduce the Hijaiyah alphabet and the basics of calligraphy to primary school children using fun and creative methods. It is hoped that this activity will help address the lack of variety in Hijaiyah teaching methods that has been evident to date. In a relaxed yet structured environment, children can learn about their faith without pressure. May this experience mark a good start to their spiritual journey.

The objectives of this activity are to introduce the Hijaiyah alphabet in an enjoyable way and to foster positive values in children. These objectives include: Introducing the Hijaiyah Alphabet in an Enjoyable Way; Fostering a Love for the Qur'an and the Arabic Language; Developing Children's Creativity and Fine Motor Skills; Building Positive Character; and Providing an Interactive Alternative to Islamic Education.

The Hijaiyah alphabet is a set of letters used in the Arabic language and forms the basis for reading and writing the Qur'an. There are 29 letters in the Hijaiyah alphabet, each with its own distinct shape, name and sound. These letters are

particularly special as they are the medium through which Allah SWT revealed His message to the Prophet Muhammad SAW via the Holy Qur'an. Therefore, introducing the Hijaiyah letters to children means instilling a sense of love and respect for the Qur'an from an early age. (Putri, 2025)

Childhood is the golden age for cognitive, linguistic, social-emotional development, and the formation of religious character. During this phase, a child's brain develops rapidly, giving them a high capacity to receive, process, and store new information. Children find it easier to understand material presented through visual, auditory, and kinesthetic stimuli, including recognizing letter shapes, distinguishing symbols, and remembering the sounds they produce. Therefore, elementary school age is a highly strategic period for instilling the fundamentals of Qur'anic literacy through the introduction of the Hijaiyah alphabet. Learning provided from an early age not only helps children develop the ability to read the Qur'an but also serves as a foundation for fostering a love for Islamic teachings and establishing habits of worship from an early age.

Teaching the Hijaiyah alphabet is more effective when it is delivered using an approach that aligns with children's developmental characteristics. Elementary school-aged children tend to be more interested in learning activities that involve games, stories, songs, visual media, and hands-on practice than in monotonous lecture-style methods. Therefore, the learning process needs to be designed in a creative and enjoyable way so that children feel comfortable and motivated to learn actively. Various educational activities, such as singing the Hijaiyah letters, letter-matching games, storytelling, and calligraphy activities, can enhance children's motivation to learn, concentration, creativity, and memory of the shapes and pronunciations of the Hijaiyah letters without causing psychological stress. This child-friendly approach can also create a meaningful learning experience, making the material easier to understand and remember in the long term (Alfina et al., 2023).

In addition to serving as a tool for learning to read the Qur'an, introducing the Hijaiyah alphabet also plays a crucial role in shaping children's Islamic identity from an early age. The ability to recognize and read the Hijaiyah alphabet is the first step in understanding the content of the Qur'an as a guide for the lives of Muslims. Through an engaging and participatory learning process, children not only learn to recognize Arabic symbols but also begin to understand that the Qur'an is a source of

values, moral principles, and guidance for life. Thus, learning the Hijaiyah alphabet is not only focused on achieving academic proficiency but also serves as a means of internalizing religious values that can shape a child's character fostering faith, noble character, and a deep love for the Holy Book.

On the other hand, advances in digital technology have transformed the way children acquire information, interact, and learn. Today's generation of children is growing up in an environment rich in digital media, leading them to prefer learning through interactive, visual, and enjoyable experiences. This situation presents both a challenge and an opportunity for educators to introduce innovations in Islamic Religious Education, including the introduction of the Hijaiyah alphabet. The use of creative media that combines elements of art, games, and technology can increase student engagement while making learning more relevant to the needs of the digital generation. Therefore, the transformation of religious education must continue so that the instillation of Islamic values takes place effectively, contextually, and is able to address the challenges of the times without losing the substance of Islamic teachings (Fadilah et al., 2025).

Learning the Hijaiyah alphabet is not merely part of religious education, but marks the beginning of a Muslim's spiritual journey. Children who are already familiar with the Hijaiyah alphabet will be better prepared to read the Qur'an in its entirety in the future. They will also develop a stronger connection with Islam's sacred text and feel more confident in performing acts of worship that involve reciting the Qur'an. (Nurzakun, Muhammad and Santoso, 2021)

Reading the Hijaiyah alphabet is a highly recommended practice in Islam and carries great spiritual reward. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said that reciting a single letter from the Qur'an earns one good deed, and every good deed is rewarded tenfold. This means that simply by reciting the letter 'Alif', a person already receives ten rewards. Therefore, the practice of reciting the Hijaiyah alphabet should be introduced as part of religious practice from a young age. (Nurzakun, Muhammad and Santoso, 2021)

The pronunciation of the Hijaiyah letters must follow the rules of makhraj, which refer to the points of articulation—the parts of the body from which the sounds emerge, such as the throat, tongue and lips. For example, the letter 'Ba' is produced between the lips, whilst 'Ain' originates from the centre of the throat. Children need

to be introduced to these points of articulation one by one, in a slow, repetitive and enjoyable manner. Correct pronunciation helps children read the Qur'an accurately and without altering the meaning.

Learning the makhraj also trains children's hearing and their ability to distinguish between sounds. Children often find it difficult to tell the difference between similar letters, such as 'Shad' and 'Sin', or 'Tha' and 'Ta'. Therefore, the teaching of articulation points should be accompanied by sound examples from the teacher or audio materials. Exercises such as imitating sounds, singing the letters, and regular repetition can improve children's pronunciation skills. (Fitrianingrum & Aminingsih, 2024)

Vowel marks are diacritical marks that serve to give sound to the Hijaiyah letters. There are three main harakat taught at the initial stage, namely fathah (the sound 'a'), kasrah (the sound 'i'), and dhammah (the sound 'u'). Harakat enable letters to be read clearly and form syllables in the Arabic language. Without harakat, letters would be difficult to read as it would be unclear how to pronounce them. (Mustofa, 2020)

Arabic calligraphy is a branch of Islamic art that combines aesthetic, spiritual, and educational elements. This art form not only showcases the beauty of the Arabic alphabet but also embodies religious values that reflect reverence for the sacred verses of the Qur'an. In Islamic civilization, calligraphy has evolved as a medium of artistic expression that adorns mosques, Qur'anic manuscripts, historic buildings, and various works of Islamic culture. Therefore, introducing calligraphy to children from an early age is a strategic step toward instilling a love for the Hijaiyah script and the Qur'an through an approach that is enjoyable, creative, and aligned with children's developmental characteristics (Muti, 2023).

Calligraphy instruction provides a learning experience that focuses not only on writing skills but also on the process of appreciating the beauty and meaning contained in each Hijaiyah letter. Through activities such as tracing lines, copying letter shapes, decorating, and coloring calligraphy, children have the opportunity to develop fine motor skills, hand-eye coordination, creativity, and the ability to concentrate. These activities also foster patience, precision, and discipline, as each stroke requires attention and care. Thus, calligraphy serves as a learning medium

capable of integrating cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects in a balanced way within a child's educational process (Fauzi et al., 2026).

More than just an artistic activity, calligraphy serves as an effective means of internalizing Islamic values. When children write words such as Allah, Bismillāh, or passages from the Qur'an with great precision, they are not only learning writing techniques but also cultivating a sense of respect, love, and emotional connection to the teachings of Islam. This experience helps children understand that writing the Hijaiyah alphabet is not merely an academic skill but rather a form of worship and a way of honoring the words of Allah SWT. Therefore, learning calligraphy contributes to shaping Islamic identity, fostering a sense of pride in Islamic cultural heritage, and strengthening religious character from an early age (Muti, 2023).

In the digital age, characterized by the rapid flow of information and changing patterns of social interaction, religious education requires a more creative, contextual, and engaging approach to remain relevant to the younger generation. Calligraphy has emerged as an innovative form of Islamic Religious Education that combines elements of art, character education, and spiritual development. Through enjoyable and meaningful activities, children not only acquire artistic skills but also internalize moral values such as patience, perseverance, responsibility, love for the Qur'an, and respect for religious symbols. Thus, calligraphy instruction aligns with the goals of Islamic Religious Education in shaping a generation with noble character, a religious disposition, and the ability to face the challenges of technological advancement without losing the moral and spiritual values that serve as the foundation of life (Muti, 2023).

METHOD

The 'Discovering the Beauty of the Hijaiyah Alphabet: A Calligraphy Adventure for Brilliant Children' outreach programme was delivered using a non-formal educational approach that was child-friendly, interactive and participatory. This activity was specifically aimed at Year 2 pupils at SDN Utama 2 Tarakan, who are at an early stage of development in reading and recognising the Hijaiyah alphabet. The main objective of this approach was to create an enjoyable learning atmosphere through visual and artistic activities, where children did not feel pressured but still gained a basic understanding of the letters of the Qur'an. The students acted as

facilitators who accompanied and guided the course of the activities, rather than as formal teachers, ensuring the atmosphere remained relaxed yet focused and educational.

Prior to the event, the student group undertook several preparatory stages, including an internal meeting to plan the sequence of activities, the allocation of roles amongst members, the creation of visual aids, and the design of worksheets to be used for colouring calligraphic letters. In addition, coordination took place with the school regarding the timing of the event, the number of participants, and the practical arrangements for using the classroom. All these preparations were aimed at ensuring that the activity ran smoothly, effectively, and in line with the needs and abilities of the Year 2 pupils targeted by this programme.

On the day of the event, activities began at 08.00 WITA with an opening ceremony and a warm welcome to the pupils and accompanying teachers. Afterwards, the university students briefly introduced themselves to foster a friendly atmosphere. To help everyone feel at ease, light refreshments were served to the pupils before the main session began. The first topic was an introduction to the Hijaiyah alphabet, presented visually using images and large slides. The students recited the letters from Alif to Ya one by one, encouraging the pupils to repeat the pronunciation together, whilst also introducing basic vowel marks such as fathah, kasrah and dhammah. The presentation was delivered in a soft voice, with correct pronunciation and simple language to ensure it was easily understood by the Year 2 pupils

To maintain the children's enthusiasm and concentration, the activity was interspersed with ice-breaking sessions in the form of light educational games, such as guessing letters or mimicking the shapes of letters with their hands and bodies. Once the atmosphere had refreshed, the session continued with the second topic: an introduction to the art of Hijaiyah letter calligraphy. The students demonstrated examples of beautiful yet simple calligraphic lettering, then explained that the Hijaiyah letters can be written in artistic and colourful forms. The pupils were then given worksheets featuring the Asmaul Husna in simple calligraphic form, which they could colour in freely according to their own creativity.

Throughout the colouring session, the university students moved around to assist the pupils, offering encouragement and helping them if they encountered

difficulties with colouring or recognising the letters. This activity not only provided an opportunity for creativity, but also helped to cultivate perseverance and patience, whilst fostering an appreciation for the beauty of the letters of the Qur'an. Once all the pupils had finished, a brief assessment was carried out and recognition was given to some of the best works in the form of simple prizes such as stationery. This was intended to provide encouragement and recognition for the pupils' efforts.

The activity concluded with a joint prayer session, expressions of gratitude to all those involved, and a group photograph of the pupils and teachers. The students also presented an educational poster featuring the Asmaul Husna to the school as a memento and a gesture of support for the continued creative learning of Islam. Based on this overall process, the methods employed in this activity can be categorised as participatory educational methods, visual-kinesthetic methods, and methods for instilling Islamic values. These three approaches were combined to ensure the activity was effective, enjoyable, and addressed the students' cognitive, motor and spiritual aspects comprehensively.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The outreach event themed 'Discovering the Beauty of the Hijaiyah Alphabet: A Calligraphy Adventure for Brilliant Children', held at SDN Utama 2 Tarakan, yielded very positive results, particularly in increasing Year 2 pupils' interest in the Hijaiyah alphabet whilst instilling Islamic values from an early age. Throughout the event, the participants' enthusiasm was consistently high. This was evident in the pupils' active participation from start to finish, as demonstrated by their willingness to answer various questions, their attentive following of instructions, and their keen curiosity about the material presented. The learning atmosphere was interactive, enjoyable and communicative, creating a meaningful learning experience for the pupils.

One of the key achievements of this activity was the emergence of the pupils' initial interest in learning the Hijaiyah alphabet. Although the majority of participants were not yet able to pronounce each letter with the correct and perfect makhraj, they demonstrated courage and self-confidence in attempting to pronounce the names of the Arabic letters that were introduced. Through guidance and collective repetition, the pupils were able to gradually imitate the pronunciation of the Hijaiyah letters, indicating early progress in their ability to recognise and remember the basic

symbols of the Qur'an. This positive response serves as an indicator that the pupils are highly motivated to learn the Hijaiyah letters when the teaching is delivered through an approach suited to children's developmental characteristics.

The introduction of the Hijaiyah alphabet through engaging visual aids, combined with group pronunciation exercises and two-way interaction between the facilitator and the pupils, has proven effective in fostering both an emotional and cognitive connection between the pupils and the symbols of the Qur'an. This approach not only makes it easier for pupils to recognise the shapes of the letters, but also helps them associate their learning experience with enjoyable activities. Consequently, the non-formal educational learning strategy implemented in this outreach activity has proven effective in creating a child-friendly and enjoyable learning environment, whilst encouraging pupils to learn without pressure or fear. These findings indicate that an approach integrating elements of play, visualisation and hands-on practice can serve as an effective alternative for introducing the fundamentals of Islamic religious education to primary school-aged pupils.

As well as yielding positive results in terms of cognitive development, this outreach activity also demonstrated a significant impact on the pupils' psychomotor development and creativity. This impact was evident through the activity of colouring calligraphy sheets themed around the Asmaul Husna, which formed one of the main components of the programme. Through this activity, pupils were given the opportunity to freely express their ideas, imagination and creativity through their choice of colours, colouring techniques and the arrangement of visual compositions, in accordance with their individual abilities. The activity not only served as a means of self-expression but also provided an enjoyable learning experience by combining elements of art, religious education and hands-on, practice-based learning.

The collected works demonstrated a considerable degree of diversity, both in terms of colour combinations, colouring techniques and the level of precision in completing the drawings. The majority of pupils were able to complete their calligraphy sheets with great diligence right through to the final stage, reflecting their dedication and commitment to participating in the entire series of activities. Interestingly, some pupils spontaneously added various decorative elements, such as flowers, simple geometric patterns, ornamental lines, and coloured frames around the calligraphic text. This initiative demonstrates that the pupils not only followed

the instructions given but were also able to develop their creativity independently and took pride in and felt a sense of ownership of the works they created. This creativity serves as an indicator that an arts-based learning approach is able to provide space for pupils to explore their potential whilst boosting their self-confidence in presenting their learning outcomes.

Furthermore, the activity of colouring calligraphy makes a positive contribution to the development of pupils' fine motor skills. During the colouring process, pupils are trained to coordinate hand and eye movements, control the pressure when using colouring tools, and maintain precision so that the colour does not go outside the provided outline. This process indirectly fosters patience, perseverance, concentration and neatness in completing a task, which are essential skills for the development of primary school-aged children. Consequently, this activity is not merely focused on producing a final artwork, but also serves as a learning tool that supports the integrated development of various aspects of pupils' abilities.

More than just an artistic activity, colouring Asmaul Husna calligraphy is also an effective means of introducing Islamic aesthetic values to pupils through a simple, enjoyable and easy-to-understand approach. The beauty of Arabic script, combined with the colouring activity, creates a more meaningful learning experience, enabling pupils not only to become familiar with Islamic symbols visually, but also to begin cultivating a sense of love and appreciation for the legacy of Islamic art. The relaxed and appreciative learning atmosphere made all the pupils feel comfortable participating without feeling pressured. Indeed, some pupils who initially appeared shy and lacked confidence gradually began to engage actively in every activity, were brave enough to ask questions, and enthusiastically showed their work to their teachers, the facilitators, and their classmates. This change in attitude serves as an indicator of the programme's success in creating an inclusive and enjoyable learning environment that boosts pupils' self-confidence through an arts-based, child-centred approach to learning.

This outreach activity also succeeded in instilling Islamic values that, whilst simple, hold profound significance for the students' character development. The instilling of these values was carried out through various forms of positive reinforcement that were naturally integrated into each series of activities, so that pupils not only gained knowledge of the Hijaiyah alphabet, but also gained first-hand

experience in applying Islamic values in their daily lives. This approach made the learning process more holistic as it combined cognitive, affective and psychomotor aspects within a single, mutually supportive activity.

Throughout the programme, pupils were guided to get into the habit of beginning and ending each activity with a group prayer as an expression of gratitude to Allah the Almighty. In addition, pupils were encouraged to take part in the entire programme in an orderly manner, to follow the instructions given by the facilitators, to wait their turn when participating, and to show mutual respect towards their classmates, teachers and activity supervisors. These simple practices serve as an effective means of instilling the values of discipline, responsibility, politeness and mutual respect from primary school age onwards. Although behavioural changes of this kind cannot be measured directly using quantitative instruments, the indicators that emerged during the activities suggest that the process of internalising these values is proceeding positively and gradually.

The good manners, discipline and sense of responsibility demonstrated by the pupils whilst taking part in the activities are the result of a process of habit-forming fostered through positive interactions and a conducive learning environment. These character values form an important foundation for the development of individuals who are religious, of noble character, and capable of interacting harmoniously with their surroundings. Therefore, the success of this programme is measured not only by the students' improved understanding of the Hijaiyah alphabet, but also by the changes in attitude that began to emerge during the learning process.

The students, who acted as both facilitators and mentors for the activities, also observed developments in the pupils' social and religious attitudes. Some pupils who had appeared passive and shy at the start of the activities began to show the courage to greet the facilitators, offer greetings and express their thanks after receiving help or guidance, and show concern for classmates who were struggling with the colouring activities or the pronunciation of the Hijaiyah letters. The attitudes of helping one another, sharing stationery, and offering support to classmates who were unable to complete their tasks provided a clear illustration of the growing values of empathy and cooperation amongst the pupils. These behavioural changes demonstrate that the learning process implemented was not merely focused on the

delivery of subject matter, but was also capable of fostering positive social interaction through setting a good example and the cultivation of good habits.

The findings show that the Islamic approach applied in this activity was realised not only through the oral delivery of material, but also through practical application, setting a good example, and the positive culture fostered throughout the learning process. The students, acting as facilitators, endeavoured to set an example of behaviour that reflected Islamic values, such as being friendly, patient and polite, respecting every student's opinion, and showing appreciation for every effort made by the learners. This role-modelling approach has proven effective in creating a warm, inclusive and enjoyable learning atmosphere, making it easier for pupils to understand and internalise Islamic values in their daily behaviour. Consequently, these outreach activities not only provide benefits in terms of knowledge and skills but also make a tangible contribution to the development of pupils' religious, social and moral character an essential component of the objectives of Islamic education in primary schools.

For the participating students, this community service activity provided a highly valuable experience in directly applying the knowledge, skills and values they had acquired during their studies. This activity not only serves as a platform for applying academic competencies within the community, but also provides students with the opportunity to gain a real-world understanding of the dynamics of implementing community service programmes at primary school level. Through direct interaction with pupils, teachers and the school environment, students gain authentic experiences that enrich their professional insight whilst fostering a sense of social responsibility as future educators and agents of change in society.

Throughout the implementation of the activities, students are not only required to develop activity concepts and deliver learning materials in a systematic manner, but also to learn to manage their time, allocate roles within the team, and deal with the diverse characteristics of early-years learners. Students are expected to be able to adapt to various situations that arise in the field, such as keeping pupils' attention focused, adjusting teaching methods to the children's level of understanding, and creating an interactive and enjoyable learning atmosphere. This experience demonstrates that the success of an educational activity is determined not only by the quality of the material presented, but also by the facilitator's ability to establish

warm, empathetic communication that is appropriate to the developmental characteristics of the pupils.

This activity also provided highly meaningful lessons on the importance of patience, teamwork, communication skills and flexibility in tackling various challenges throughout the programme. The students learnt that every pupil has a different character, ability and learning style; therefore, the approach used must be adaptive, creative and centred on the children's needs. The process of coordination amongst the students—from preparing teaching materials, dividing tasks and supporting pupils to evaluating the activities—further strengthened their collaboration and leadership skills, which are key competencies in both the world of education and community service.

Furthermore, this experience provided the students with a profound insight into the fact that the transmission of Islamic values does not always have to be carried out through a formal, rigid, lecture-based approach. On the contrary, Islamic values can be instilled more effectively through a gentle, communicative, creative and enjoyable approach, in keeping with the characteristics and world of children. The integration of educational games, the art of calligraphy, warm interaction and the cultivation of positive behaviour has proven capable of creating a more meaningful learning experience whilst strengthening the emotional bond between facilitators and learners. This experience broadens the students' perspective on the importance of innovation in Islamic religious education so that the learning process becomes more engaging, easily accepted and has a lasting impact.

Ultimately, this community service activity reinforced the students' understanding that the essence of community service lies not merely in delivering material or teaching in the classroom. More than that, community service is a process of building positive relationships with the community, sharing knowledge and life values, and providing learning experiences that leave a lasting impression on students. Through this activity, students realized that the success of community service can be measured by the growth of students' enthusiasm for learning, increased self-confidence, and the creation of a learning environment that is enjoyable, humanistic, and meaningful. Therefore, this experience serves as invaluable preparation for students in developing their professional, pedagogical, and social competencies, as well as their personal character as future educators who

are not only capable of transferring knowledge but also of inspiring, guiding, and instilling character values in the younger generation.

Overall, this outreach program can be considered successful in achieving the objectives set during the program's planning phase. This success is reflected in the high level of student participation throughout the program, their growing interest in the Hijaiyah alphabet, the development of creativity through calligraphy activities, and the emergence of various positive behaviors that reflect the internalization of Islamic values in the learning process. The entire series of activities proceeded smoothly thanks to the synergy between the student organizers, the school administration, the supervising teachers, and the enthusiasm of the students, thereby ensuring that both educational and character-building goals were optimally achieved.

Students not only gain their first experience in learning the Hijaiyah alphabet through methods that are engaging, interactive, and tailored to the developmental characteristics of elementary school-aged children, but they also have the opportunity to learn in a fun, pressure-free environment. A learning approach that combines visual media, educational games, group pronunciation practice, and calligraphy coloring activities provides a more meaningful learning experience and helps boost students' motivation to learn the basic symbols of the Qur'an. In addition, calligraphy serves as an effective medium for students to channel their creativity, develop fine motor skills, and build self-confidence through appreciation of the artwork they create.

On the other hand, this activity also successfully provided a learning experience that balanced the integration of knowledge, skills, and religious character development. Various positive habits—such as praying together, behaving in an orderly manner, respecting one another, cooperating, and demonstrating polite behavior throughout the activity—contributed to reinforcing Islamic values that are applied contextually in daily life. Thus, this outreach activity is not only focused on improving students' ability to recognize the Hijaiyah alphabet but also serves as a means of character development that supports the holistic growth of the students.

For participating students, this activity provides invaluable hands-on experience in developing academic, pedagogical, social, and professional competencies. Through direct involvement in the process of planning, implementing, mentoring, and evaluating the activity, students gain a deeper understanding of the

importance of creativity, effective communication, teamwork, adaptability, and the application of learner-centered teaching approaches. This experience further enriches students' perspectives on the implementation of Islamic education, which not only emphasizes the transfer of knowledge but also prioritizes character building, setting a good example, and fostering positive relationships between educators and students.

The findings from this activity show that a learning approach that integrates Islamic values, artistic elements, creative activities, and emotional connection can create a more engaging, enjoyable, and meaningful learning experience for elementary school-aged children. This approach provides space for students to learn actively, explore their creativity, and develop religious attitudes through real-life and contextual experiences. Therefore, this type of activity model has great potential to be developed as an innovative alternative for Islamic education at various educational levels, whether through community service programs or as part of supplementary learning activities in schools. By integrating elements of religious education, the arts, and child-centered learning, similar activities are expected to make a broader contribution to improving the quality of character education and reinforcing Islamic values from an early age.







Figure 1
Event Documentation

CONCLUSION

The outreach activity themed "Discovering the Beauty of the Hijaiyah Alphabet: A Calligraphy Adventure for Amazing Kids," held at SDN Utama 2 Tarakan, has had a positive impact and fulfilled the program's intended objectives. This activity successfully introduced the Hijaiyah alphabet to second-grade students through a fun, interactive learning approach tailored to the developmental characteristics of elementary school-aged children. The use of visual aids, group recitation, and calligraphy activities created an active and conducive learning environment, encouraging students to participate fully. The participants' enthusiasm was evident in their engagement during each session, their willingness to try pronouncing the Hijaiyah letters, and their growing interest in learning the basics of the Qur'an.

In addition to providing educational benefits, this activity also contributes to the development of students' skills and character building. The calligraphy coloring activity not only serves as a medium for developing students' fine motor skills, hand-eye coordination, and creativity, but also as a means of introducing Islamic aesthetic values through the beauty of Arabic script. Furthermore, various positive habits practiced during the activity such as praying together, maintaining discipline, respecting peers, collaborating, and following rules in an orderly manner help support the natural internalization of Islamic values. The learning experiences gained by the students demonstrate that religious education can be presented in an engaging way without compromising the substance of the values intended to be instilled.

For the participating students, this activity serves as a highly valuable community service experience that helps them develop their academic, pedagogical, social, and professional competencies. Direct involvement in the process—from planning and implementation to mentoring and evaluation—provides students with the opportunity to hone their communication skills, collaborate in teams, manage educational activities, and develop creativity in presenting Islamic material using an approach that is friendly, communicative, and appropriate for children. This experience further strengthens the students' understanding of the importance of learner-centered learning, the use of innovative methods, and leading by example in instilling Islamic values.

Overall, this outreach activity not only succeeded in achieving its primary objective introducing the Hijaiyah alphabet to students through an educational and enjoyable approach but also provided broader benefits in supporting the development of students' cognitive, psychomotor, and affective aspects, as well as the formation of their religious character. Furthermore, this activity served as a practical learning experience for university students to apply the knowledge they gained in higher education through community service activities. Therefore, this outreach model which integrates religious education, the art of calligraphy, and experiential learning has the potential to be developed and replicated as an alternative form of Islamic educational activities in various elementary schools to support the strengthening of religious literacy, creativity, and character education from an early age.

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