

# Teaching Strategies in Qur'anic Education for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Students: A Systematic Literature Review

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## Abstract

Qur'anic education for deaf and hard-of-hearing (DHH) students is a critical dimension of inclusive Islamic education yet remains underserved due to the predominantly auditory nature of traditional instruction. This study systematically analyzes instructional strategies, pedagogical methods, effectiveness outcomes, implementation challenges, and future recommendations for Qur'anic learning among DHH students. A Systematic Literature Review (SLR) combined with bibliometric analysis was employed as the methodological framework. Data were retrieved from the Scopus database and screened in accordance with PRISMA guidelines, yielding five empirical articles that satisfied the predefined inclusion criteria. Analysis proceeded through bibliometric mapping and thematic synthesis. Findings reveal that Hijaiyah sign language and staged instructional approaches constitute the predominant strategies, with visual and multisensory methods demonstrating significant effectiveness in improving Qur'anic literacy encompassing reading, tajwid comprehension, and memorization. However, instructional effectiveness is conditioned by teacher competence, availability of appropriate learning media, and environmental support. Bibliometric analysis further indicates that technological integration remains nascent, representing a substantive gap and opportunity for future inquiry. This study contributes a structured scientific synthesis to the field of inclusive Islamic education and underscores the need for technology-driven pedagogical innovations, adaptive curricula, and systematic teacher preparation programs.

## 1. Introduction

Education is a fundamental right for every individual without exception, including children with hearing disabilities (Murray et al., 2018; Mihai, 2017). The global expansion of inclusive education paradigms has placed increasing attention on the accessibility of value-based religious instruction for students with special needs (Alekhina et al., 2018; Marschark et al., 2017). In the context of Islamic education, Qur'anic learning occupies a central position, functioning not only as a means of developing the capacity to read and understand sacred texts, but also as a foundation for character formation and spiritual development (Karimullah et al., 2022). For deaf and hard-of-hearing (DHH) students, however, participation in Qur'anic education presents complex challenges, primarily due to the auditory-centric nature of conventional instruction (Azis et al., 2025; Sahid et al., 2026).

The rationale for systematic inquiry into this area is grounded in the intersection of two imperatives: the religious obligation of Qur'anic literacy in Islamic tradition and the educational rights of DHH learners under inclusive education frameworks (Unesco, 2020). DHH students exhibit learning characteristics that are predominantly visual and kinesthetic rather than auditory, necessitating instructional adaptations that depart substantially from conventional pedagogical models (Efrina et al., 2018; Hall et al., 2017). Failure to provide adapted Qur'anic instruction not only limits religious participation but also compromises the broader goal of educational equity for this population (Pandia et al., 2024).

A growing body of scholarship has explored the application of visual-based instructional strategies in Qur'anic education for DHH students. The use of *hijaiyah* sign language a system of manual signs corresponding to Arabic letters has been documented as an effective approach to facilitating letter recognition, reading fluency, and memorization (Askurny et al., 2025; Hadi et al., 2025). Febriani et al. (2024) demonstrated that *hijaiyah* sign language significantly improved students' accuracy in Qur'anic reading and memorization relative to conventional methods. Multisensory approaches integrating visual cues, hand movement, and symbolic representation have further been shown to enhance understanding of tajwid (recitation rules) and support cognitive retention (Mayer & Trezek, 2023).

Beyond strategy-level investigations, broader literature on inclusive religious education has emphasized the importance of pedagogical adaptability, teacher competence in sign-based communication, and the availability of appropriate learning media students (Alqahtani, 2025; Efrina et al., 2020). The advancement of educational technology, including digital media and augmented reality, has similarly been identified as a promising avenue for improving learning quality among students with special needs (Bowen & Probst, 2023; Sheridan et al., 2019), though its application to Qur'anic education for DHH students remains largely unexplored (Bender et al., 2019).

Despite the promising findings reported in existing literature, critical gaps remain. Empirical studies specifically addressing Qur'anic instructional strategies for DHH students are relatively scarce, methodologically heterogeneous, and dispersed across independent research designs (Alasim, 2023). Most studies focus narrowly on the implementation of specific methods without providing a comprehensive synthesis of their effectiveness, challenges, or transferability across contexts (Ardi et al., 2026). Furthermore, no prior bibliometric analysis has mapped the intellectual structure and thematic evolution of this field, leaving research trends and collaborative networks undocumented (Efrina et al., 2021; Muzzamil et al., 2026). The integration of advanced technologies in Qur'anic education for DHH students also remains underexplored, representing a significant theoretical and practical lacuna (Jansen & Merwe, 2015; Tsaputra & Amani, 2025).

In response to these gaps, this study aims to conduct a systematic and bibliometrically informed review of the literature on instructional strategies in Qur'anic education for DHH students. Specifically, the study seeks to: (1) identify the instructional strategies and pedagogical methods employed; (2) assess their reported effectiveness; (3) document the challenges encountered in implementation; and (4) map publication trends and thematic developments in this emerging field. The theoretical contribution of this study lies in providing a structured scientific synthesis of Qur'anic teaching practices for DHH students, while its practical implications are expected to inform policy development, curriculum design, and the innovation of more inclusive and technology-enhanced learning approaches.

## 2. Method

This study employed a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach combined with bibliometric analysis to identify, evaluate, and synthesize research findings related to instructional strategies in Qur'anic education for deaf and hard-of-hearing (DHH) students (Robinson et al., 2018). The SLR approach was selected due to its ability to provide a comprehensive, transparent, and structured synthesis of relevant scientific literature, while bibliometric analysis was utilized to map research trends, publication distribution, and relationships among studies within the field (Alit et al., 2025).

The research design followed the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines to ensure that the literature selection process was conducted systematically, transparently, and in a manner amenable to replication (Zhang et al., 2020). The review stages comprised identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and final inclusion of relevant studies. In parallel, bibliometric analysis examined publication patterns, the chronological evolution of research themes, and methodological trends, thereby providing a quantitative foundation for the qualitative interpretations derived from the thematic synthesis.

### 2.1. Data Sources and Search Strategy

The primary data source for this study was the Scopus database, selected for its extensive coverage of high-quality, peer-reviewed, and globally indexed publications. The systematic search was conducted in January 2025, targeting publications from 2015 to 2025 to capture contemporary developments in the field. The search employed a combination of relevant keywords, including "Qur'anic education," "teaching strategies," "deaf students," "hearing impairment," and "Islamic education," connected using Boolean operators (AND, OR) to optimize search precision and recall. The search string was applied to title, abstract, and keyword fields. A supplementary manual search of reference lists of included articles was also conducted to identify any eligible studies not captured by the database search.

### 2.2. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The following inclusion criteria were applied: (1) empirical research articles reporting primary data; (2) studies focused on Qur'anic learning or Islamic religious education for DHH students; (3) articles published in peer-reviewed scientific journals; (4) publications within the 2015-2025 date range; (5) articles written in English or Indonesian; and (6) availability of full-text access. The exclusion criteria comprised: (1) non-empirical articles such as editorials, opinion papers, or theoretical essays; (2) studies not specifically addressing DHH student populations; (3) articles with incomplete or inaccessible data; and (4) grey literature, conference abstracts, and book chapters.

Quality assessment was conducted using a modified Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP) checklist adapted for qualitative and quasi-experimental studies. Each included article was evaluated for clarity of research objectives, appropriateness of study design, rigor of data collection and analysis procedures, and validity of reported conclusions. Only studies satisfying a minimum quality threshold were retained for thematic synthesis.

### 2.3. Study Selection Procedure

The article selection process was carried out in stages following the PRISMA flow, beginning with identification and ending with final inclusion. In the identification stage, a total of 243 records were retrieved from the Scopus database using the defined search strategy. Following deduplication, 217 unique records remained for screening. Title and abstract screening against the predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria resulted in the exclusion of 192 records. The remaining 25 articles proceeded to full-text eligibility assessment, during which 20 were excluded due to insufficient focus on DHH populations, absence of empirical data, or failure to meet quality thresholds. Ultimately, five articles satisfied all inclusion criteria and were retained for qualitative synthesis and bibliometric analysis.

A summary of the study selection process is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1. PRISMA Stages**

PRISMA Stage	Amount (n)
Identification (Records identified from Scopus database)	243
Records after duplicates removed	217
Records screened (Title & Abstract)	217
Records excluded after title & abstract screening	192
Full-text articles assessed for eligibility	25
Full-text articles excluded (with reasons documented)	20
Studies included in final synthesis	5

Based on this process, a total of five articles met the inclusion criteria and were included in the qualitative analysis.

### 2.4. Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis was conducted using two main approaches: bibliometric analysis and thematic analysis. Bibliometric analysis was employed to identify publication trends, distribution across years, and methodological approaches used in the selected studies. Meanwhile, thematic analysis was used to categorize research findings into several key themes: (1) instructional strategies; (2) teaching methods and media; (3) effectiveness of strategies; (4) implementation challenges and (5) development recommendations.

The analysis process was conducted iteratively by comparing findings across studies to produce a comprehensive and in-depth synthesis. Therefore, the results of this study are expected to provide a holistic understanding of Qur'anic learning practices for DHH students while also identifying directions for future research.

## 3. Results and Discussion

### 3.1. Results

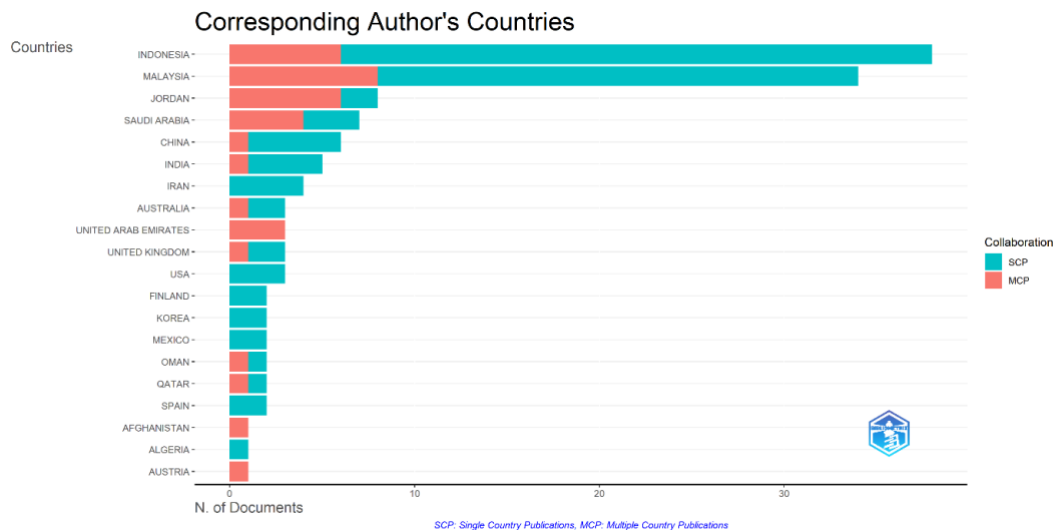
The bibliometric analysis indicates that research on instructional strategies in Qur'anic education for deaf and hard-of-hearing (DHH) students has developed dynamically over the past decade. Based on the collected data, a total of 243 documents were published across 192 journal sources, involving 763 authors. However, the annual growth rate of publications shows a negative value of -9.34%, suggesting fluctuations and a relative decline in publication volume in recent years, possibly reflecting the nascent and specialized nature of this research domain.

Figure 1 presents a summary of the main bibliometric statistics. The data indicate an average of 5.004 citations per document, with a mean document age of 3.6 years, reflecting the relative recency of publications in this field. The rate of international collaboration stands at 25.1%, with an average of 3.44 authors per article, suggesting that while collaborative research is present, it remains predominantly national in scope. These patterns indicate an emerging but still developing scholarly community, with significant potential for expanded international research partnerships.



**Figure 1. Bibliometric Analysis Summary**

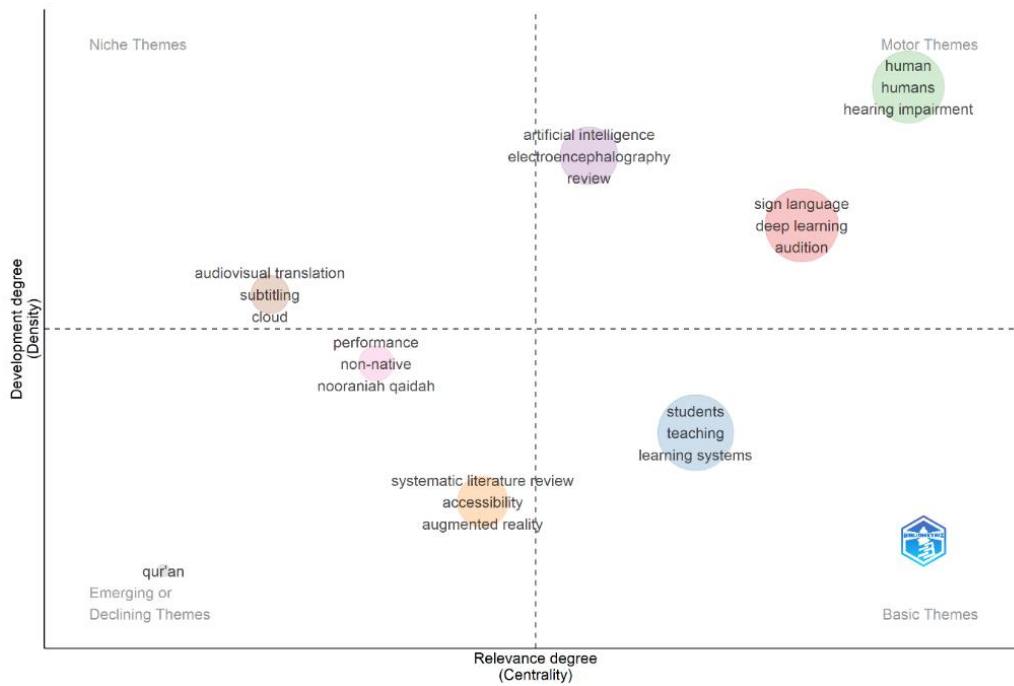
Figure 2 presents the distribution of corresponding authors' countries. The data indicate that Indonesia has the highest contribution to publications, followed by Malaysia, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia. The geographic concentration of research output in these countries reflects the strong Islamic educational traditions and the prevalence of Qur'anic instruction in their educational systems. This distribution also suggests that the field remains contextually and culturally situated, thereby presenting substantial opportunities for cross-national collaboration and the generalization of findings to other Muslim-majority contexts.



**Figure 2. Corresponding Author's Countries**

This distribution indicates that research in this field is highly contextual and culturally grounded, while also presenting substantial opportunities for expansion in a global context, particularly through cross-country collaboration.

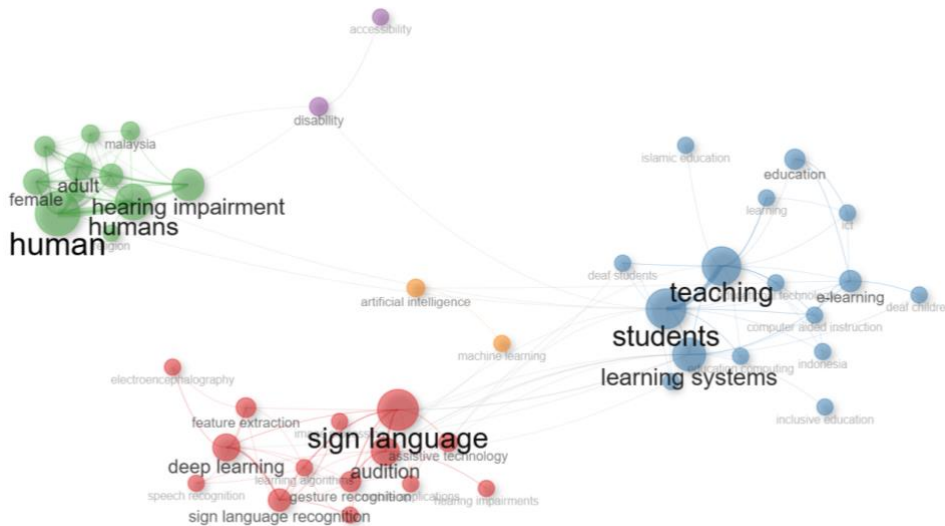
Figure 3 illustrates the thematic map based on centrality (relevance) and density (development). Themes such as "hearing impairment," "human," and "humans" are positioned within the motor themes quadrant, indicating that these topics are both highly central and well-developed within the field's existing literature. In contrast, themes such as "sign language" and "deep learning" are classified as developing or niche themes, suggesting an emerging yet not yet consolidated integration of technological and computational approaches in Qur'anic learning contexts. Themes including "augmented reality," "accessibility," and "systematic literature review" occupy the emerging themes quadrant, underscoring their novelty and the limited extent to which they have been examined in relation to Qur'anic education for DHH students.



**Figure 3. Thematic Map**

These findings highlight significant opportunities for future research, particularly in the integration of digital technologies to develop more adaptive and inclusive learning media.

Figure 4 presents the keyword co-occurrence network. The central cluster is anchored by the terms "students," "teaching," and "learning systems," indicating that the primary scholarly focus lies in pedagogical strategies and instructional design. Additional prominent clusters encompass "sign language," "deep learning," and "hearing impairment," reflecting the interconnections between visual communication modalities and emergent technological integration within the field. This network structure suggests that while visual and communicative pedagogies dominate current scholarship, the domain is gradually expanding toward technology-mediated instructional approaches.



**Figure 4. Keyword Co-occurrence Network**

This network pattern indicates that research in this field continues to emphasize pedagogical approaches and visual communication, while the integration of advanced technologies remains at an early stage of development.

In addition to the bibliometric analysis, the systematic synthesis of studies that met the PRISMA criteria reveals consistent patterns of findings. Based on the selection process, a total of five articles were identified and analyzed in depth. A summary of these studies is presented in Table 2.

**Table 2. Summary of Included Studies**

Author & Year	Title	Research Design	Key Findings
(Faishal Abyan Hanif, 2023)	Qur'anic Memorization Assistance Strategies for Deaf Students at Daarul Ashom Islamic Boarding School	Qualitative descriptive (interview, observation, documentation)	The <i>Hijaiyah</i> Sign Method was employed in <i>tahfidz</i> (Qur'anic memorization) instruction. This strategy proved effective in improving memorization accuracy and letter recognition. The main challenges include limited teaching staff, students' articulation difficulties, and constrained learning spaces. It is recommended to provide teacher training and develop specialized visual learning media.
(Siti Nurlaeli Sariyah, Elan Sumarna, Cucu Surahman, 2025)	Tahfidz Al-Qur'an Learning for Deaf Children: A Descriptive Study at Rumah Qur'an Isyarah	Descriptive qualitative	The visual-kinesthetic-based <i>Hijaiyah</i> Sign Method was found to enhance letter recognition, understanding of <i>tajwid</i> , and memorization accuracy. Major challenges include method adaptation and consistency of instructional support. The study recommends integrating visual-based curricula and multisensory learning approaches.
(Nurdyansyah & Pujiati, 2023)	Application of Hijaiyyah Letter Signs in improving the ability to read the Al-Qur'an for deaf children	Quasi-experimental	The use of <i>hijaiyah</i> sign media significantly improved Qur'anic reading skills. Visual-based methods were shown to accelerate students' understanding of letter structures and reading patterns compared to conventional approaches.
(Sariyah et al., 2025)	Tahfidz Al-Qur'an Learning for Deaf Children: A Descriptive Study on the Implementation of Qur'an Learning at Rumah Qur'an Isyarah	Qualitative case study	The <i>hijaiyah</i> sign language method enhanced Qur'anic literacy, memory retention, and student engagement. Recommendations include strengthening interactive visual media and providing teacher training in sign-based communication.
(Pamungkas & Hermanto, 2022)	Stages of Learning the Qur'an Using Hijaiyah Sign Letters for Children with Hearing Impairments	Mixed-methods	A staged instructional model consisting of sign introduction, letter decomposition, memorization, and rewriting was identified. This approach effectively improved memorization accuracy and understanding of verse structure. Key challenges include time limitations and insufficient teacher competence.

The synthesis of the five studies indicates that *hijaiyah* sign language-based strategies constitute the primary approach in Qur'anic education for *deaf and hard-of-hearing (DHH) students*. This approach has been demonstrated to be effective in enhancing reading skills, memorization, and understanding of verse structures. In addition, multisensory approaches that integrate visual and kinesthetics modalities make a significant contribution to improving Qur'anic literacy.

However, the effectiveness of these strategies is influenced by several interrelated factors, including teacher competence, the availability of instructional media, and support from the learning environment. The main challenges identified include a lack of adequately trained educators, limited availability of innovative learning media, and time constraints within the instructional process. Overall, the findings from both the bibliometric analysis and the systematic synthesis suggest that this field holds considerable potential for further development, particularly through the integration of technology and the strengthening of visual-based instructional approaches.

### 3.2. Discussion

The findings of this study reveal that instructional strategies in Qur'anic education for DHH students are predominantly characterized by the systematic application of *hijaiyah* sign language across sequential instructional stages commencing with letter recognition, progressing through reading structure decomposition, guided recitation practice, and culminating in memorization. This staged approach reflects the application of scaffolding theory, wherein instructional support is incrementally adjusted in accordance with students'

developing competencies (Vygotsky, 1978). The alignment of this strategy with the visual processing strengths of DHH learners is theoretically consistent with principles from cognitive load theory and the dual-coding model, which posit that information presented through multiple modalities facilitates more effective encoding and retention (Mayer & Trezek, 2023; Marschark, 2017).

The integration of kinesthetics elements through movement-based letter representations and sign sequences further reinforces students' cognitive processing by engaging both visual and bodily-kinesthetics channels. This is consistent with embodied cognition frameworks, which contend that physical engagement enhances conceptual understanding (M. L. Hall et al., 2019). The bibliometric findings additionally reveal that technology-based approaches, including augmented reality and deep learning systems, remain at an early stage of development within this field, indicating that current practice is still predominantly reliant on manual, teacher-mediated visual strategies.

The present findings are broadly consistent with prior scholarship on inclusive religious education and DHH pedagogy (Bowen & Probst, 2023) documented comparable patterns of challenge particularly limited teacher preparation and inadequate adaptive materials among DHH students with co-occurring disabilities, underscoring the systemic nature of these barriers beyond the Qur'anic education context. Similarly, Alasim, (2023) qualitative meta-analysis of inclusion practices for DHH students affirmed that visual-based instructional adaptations are among the most effective approaches for this population, a conclusion that aligns with the strategy profiles identified in the present review.

The geographic concentration of publications in Indonesia, Malaysia, and the broader Arab region mirrors patterns documented in the bibliometric literature on Islamic education research more broadly (Pandia et al., 2024). This distribution reflects the sociocultural contexts in which Qur'anic literacy holds particular salience, while simultaneously indicating the limited internationalization of research in this domain. Studies conducted in non-Muslim-majority contexts where DHH students may also encounter Qur'anic learning within Islamic community schools remain notably absent from the literature, representing a further gap warranting future investigation.

The emergence of technology-related themes ("deep learning" "augmented reality") in the keyword co-occurrence network, while still peripheral, parallels broader trends in DHH education research. Badilla-Quintana et al. (2020) demonstrated that augmented reality applications significantly enhanced academic achievement among students with and without special educational needs, and Alit et al. (2025) systematically reviewed technology applications in DHH learning contexts, confirming their growing relevance. However, the absence of technology-integrated Qur'anic education studies in the included articles suggests that this cross-disciplinary convergence has yet to be translated into empirical practice.

### 3.3. Implications

The theoretical implications of this study are twofold. First, the review contributes to the academic literature by providing the first bibliometrically grounded synthesis of Qur'anic instructional strategies for DHH students, establishing a documented baseline for future scholarship. Second, the study confirms the applicability of established inclusive education frameworks multisensory learning, scaffolding, and visual-spatial instruction to the specialized context of Islamic religious education, extending their theoretical reach (Mayer & Trezek, 2023; Efrina & Kusumastuti, 2020).

In terms of practical implications, the findings suggest that teacher education and professional development programs should prioritize competency in sign language particularly *hijayah* sign systems alongside general inclusive pedagogy. Curriculum developers and policymakers are encouraged to integrate multisensory frameworks into Qur'anic education syllabi and to mandate the provision of appropriate visual and interactive learning materials in schools serving DHH students (Alqahtani, 2025). The development and empirical evaluation of technology-enhanced Qur'anic learning tools such as interactive applications, animated sign sequences, and augmented reality Qur'anic content represents a high-priority direction for applied research and educational innovation.

### 3.4. Limitations

This study is subject to several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the restriction of the search to the Scopus database, while ensuring coverage of high-quality indexed publications, may have resulted in the exclusion of relevant studies published in regional or non-indexed journals, particularly those written in Arabic or other local languages. Second, the relatively small number of included articles (n = 5) limits the scope of the thematic synthesis and reduces the generalizability of conclusions. This constraint is itself indicative of the paucity of empirical research in this specialized area. Third, the cross-sectional nature of the bibliometric analysis precludes causal inference regarding publication trends. Finally, as all included studies were conducted within Indonesia, the findings may not be fully transferable to DHH populations in other cultural, linguistic, or

institutional contexts. Future research should seek to address these limitations through expanded database coverage, longitudinal bibliometric approaches, and studies conducted across diverse national settings.

## 4. Conclusion

This study provides a systematic and bibliometrically informed synthesis of instructional strategies in Qur'anic education for deaf and hard-of-hearing students. The evidence converges on a clear finding: visual and multisensory strategies particularly Hijaiyah sign language implemented through staged instructional sequences are effective in improving Qur'anic literacy, encompassing reading accuracy, tajwid comprehension, and memorization, among DHH learners. However, the sustained effectiveness of these approaches is contingent upon teacher competence in sign-based communication, the availability of adaptive learning media, and the quality of environmental support. This review further identifies the limited integration of educational technology as a critical gap and a significant opportunity for future innovation. By consolidating existing evidence and mapping the bibliometric landscape of this field, the study contributes both a theoretical foundation for visual-multisensory approaches in inclusive Islamic education and practical guidance for curriculum design, teacher preparation, and educational policy. Future research should pursue experimental and longitudinal designs, incorporate diverse cultural contexts, and investigate the efficacy of technology-enhanced tools in advancing Qur'anic education for DHH students.

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All authors have equal contributions to the paper. All the authors have read and approved the final manuscript.

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## Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

## Data Availability

The datasets generated during and/or analyzed during the current study are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

## Declaration on AI Use

The authors declare that no artificial intelligence (AI) or AI-assisted tools were used in the preparation of this manuscript.

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