Research and Development Journal Of Education
Vol. 12, No. 2, Oktober 2026, Pp: 719 – 733 p–ISSN 2406-9744
DOI: https://doi.org/10.30998 e–ISSN 2657-1056
Available online at https://journal.lppmunindra.ac.id/index.php/RDJE

GESTURE-BASED MEMORIZATION IN ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: EXPLORING THE HANIFIDA METHOD TO ENHANCE ASMAUL HUSNA LEARNING AMONG EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNERS

Widya Sifa[1(*)], Ratoni[2]
STAI Brebes, Indonesia[12]
widyasifa2001@gmail.com[1], hratoni@yahoo.co.id[2]

Received: 26 Juni 2026
Revised: 04 Juli 2026
Accepted: 11 Juli 2026

Abstract

This study explores the effectiveness of the Hanifida Method as a gesture-based memorization strategy in Islamic religious education for early childhood learners, with a particular focus on Asmaul Husna learning in Qur'anic educational settings. Early childhood is a critical period for religious and cognitive development, yet memorization activities are often delivered through conventional, teacher-centered approaches that do not fully accommodate young children's developmental characteristics. Using a qualitative case study approach, this research examines how hand gestures, verbal repetition, and multisensory engagement support children's memorization, attention, motivation, and participation. The findings indicate that the Hanifida Method enhances learning by transforming abstract religious content into concrete bodily actions, thereby strengthening visual, auditory, and kinesthetic memory pathways. The method is theoretically consistent with embodied cognition, kinesthetic learning, multisensory learning, and Dual Coding Theory, all of which explain why children retain Asmaul Husna more effectively when learning is linked to movement and sensory experience. In addition, the study shows that the method increases children's enthusiasm, confidence, and classroom engagement while preserving the spiritual authenticity of Islamic instruction. The results suggest that gesture-based memorization offers a meaningful innovation in early childhood Islamic education because it aligns with children's developmental needs and supports long-term memory retention. This study contributes to the literature by proposing a conceptual model of embodied religious memorization and by demonstrating that Islamic pedagogy can be innovatively designed without compromising doctrinal integrity.

Keywords: Gesture-Based Learning; Hanifida Method; Early Childhood Education; Islamic Religious Education; Embodied Cognition

(*) Corresponding Author: Sifa, widyasifa2001@gmail.com

How to Cite: Sifa, W. & Ratoni. (2026). GESTURE-BASED MEMORIZATION IN ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: EXPLORING THE HANIFIDA METHOD TO ENHANCE ASMAUL HUSNA LEARNING AMONG EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNERS. *Research and Development Journal of Education*, 12(2), 719-733.

INTRODUCTION

The development of religious education during early childhood has become an increasingly significant concern in contemporary educational discourse because this stage represents a critical period for shaping children's cognitive, emotional, moral, and spiritual development. Early childhood, commonly referred to as the "golden age," is characterized by rapid neurological growth, during which approximately ninety percent of brain

development occurs before the age of eight (Muthmainnah et al., 2025). Consequently, educational experiences provided during this period have long-term implications for children's intellectual abilities, character formation, and lifelong learning habits (McCoy et al., 2017). Within the context of Islamic education, this developmental phase offers a strategic opportunity to cultivate faith (iman), piety (taqwa), and noble character (akhlaq al-karimah) through meaningful and developmentally appropriate learning experiences (Azizah et al., 2025). One of the essential components of Islamic religious education for young learners is introducing and memorizing Asmaul Husna, the ninety-nine beautiful names of Allah, which embody fundamental Islamic values such as compassion, justice, wisdom, mercy, patience, and generosity. Rather than functioning merely as a memorization exercise, learning Asmaul Husna is intended to nurture children's spiritual awareness while simultaneously fostering positive behavioral dispositions inspired by divine attributes (Rukmana et al., 2024). Educational psychologists have consistently emphasized that meaningful learning occurs when learners actively construct knowledge through sensory engagement and contextual experiences instead of relying solely on passive information reception (Montes-Isunza et al., 2026). Therefore, Islamic educational institutions, particularly Qur'anic learning centers (Taman Pendidikan Al-Qur'an/TPQ), are increasingly expected to employ innovative instructional approaches capable of integrating cognitive, affective, and psychomotor dimensions into religious learning (Adamu & Ardo, 2025). Such pedagogical transformation aligns with the broader objectives of twenty-first-century education, which advocate active participation, learner-centered instruction, creativity, collaboration, and meaningful interaction (Dwikamayuda et al., 2024). In this regard, gesture-based learning emerges as a promising instructional strategy because it combines verbal explanation with coordinated physical movement, allowing children to process abstract religious concepts through multisensory experiences. By engaging visual, auditory, and kinesthetic modalities simultaneously, gesture-based instruction has the potential to strengthen memory retention while making religious learning more enjoyable and meaningful for young children (Fitriyanti et al., 2026).

Despite the recognized importance of memorizing Asmaul Husna, its implementation within many Qur'anic educational institutions continues to encounter substantial pedagogical challenges (Piper & Dubeck, 2024). Instruction frequently relies on conventional teacher-centered approaches, in which learners repeatedly imitate the teacher's recitation without sufficient opportunities to engage actively in constructing meaning. Although repetitive recitation remains an important component of Islamic memorization traditions, its exclusive use often results in monotonous classroom experiences that fail to accommodate the developmental characteristics of early childhood learners, whose attention spans are relatively short and whose learning preferences emphasize movement, play, exploration, and direct interaction (Alfatih et al., 2025). Consequently, many children experience difficulty retaining the sequence and meanings of Asmaul Husna, quickly forgetting previously memorized names after instruction has concluded (Hayya et al., 2024). These challenges become more evident when classroom activities provide limited sensory stimulation and minimal opportunities for active participation, reducing learners' motivation and emotional engagement during the learning process. Contemporary educational research demonstrates that young children's memory performance improves significantly when learning activities integrate multiple sensory channels, physical movement, emotional involvement, and meaningful contextual associations (Cadavid et al., 2025). Theories of embodied cognition further argue that cognitive processes are inseparable from bodily experiences, suggesting that physical actions such as gestures can enhance conceptual understanding and long-term memory formation. Likewise, kinesthetic learning emphasizes that children acquire knowledge

more effectively when they actively manipulate, imitate, and physically experience learning content rather than merely listening to verbal explanations (Muthmainnah et al., 2025). Multisensory learning theory similarly proposes that combining visual, auditory, and motor experiences facilitates stronger neural connections, thereby improving comprehension and retention . These theoretical developments indicate that innovative instructional methods integrating bodily movement with religious learning deserve greater scholarly attention, particularly within Islamic educational contexts (Idawati & Hanifuddin, 2021). Consequently, developing and examining gesture-based memorization strategies represents an important step toward improving the quality of Asmaul Husna instruction while simultaneously responding to the educational needs of contemporary early childhood learners.

The growing interest in gesture-based learning is supported by a substantial body of international scholarship demonstrating that bodily movement can significantly enhance memory, comprehension, and learner engagement across educational settings (Su & Zhao, 2024). Within embodied cognition theory, knowledge is not understood as a purely mental process detached from the body, but rather as a dynamic interaction between perception, action, and cognition (Chen et al., 2024). This perspective suggests that when children associate verbal content with physical gestures, they create richer cognitive representations that are easier to retrieve from memory (Yang et al., 2025). In early childhood education, such an approach is particularly relevant because young learners naturally rely on concrete experiences, imitation, and repetition to understand new information. Kinesthetic learning theory further reinforces this view by highlighting the importance of movement-based activities in supporting children's cognitive development. When learners are encouraged to move their hands, bodies, or facial expressions in synchrony with verbal material, they are more likely to remain attentive, emotionally involved, and cognitively connected to the lesson. Multisensory learning also contributes to this pedagogical rationale by showing that simultaneous stimulation of visual, auditory, and motor pathways can improve retention and recall. In religious education, these theoretical insights are especially valuable because many spiritual concepts are abstract and difficult for young children to grasp through verbal explanation alone. Asmaul Husna, for example, contains theological meanings that may be too complex for early childhood learners if presented only through recitation. However, when each name is accompanied by a meaningful gesture, children can begin to associate the sound, meaning, and movement in a more integrated way. This integration not only supports memorization but also helps children internalize the values represented by the divine names. Therefore, gesture-based learning offers a pedagogically sound bridge between cognitive development and spiritual formation, making it a relevant and promising approach for Islamic early childhood education.

Within this broader pedagogical landscape, the Hanifida Method has emerged as an innovative memorization strategy that combines verbal repetition with structured hand gestures to support children's learning of religious content (Rusydi et al., 2024). The method was developed as a practical response to the limitations of conventional rote memorization, particularly in contexts where learners struggle to maintain concentration and recall information effectively (Idawati & Hanifuddin, 2021). Its core principle is that each item to be memorized is paired with a specific gesture, allowing learners to encode information through both verbal and motor channels. In the context of Asmaul Husna learning, this means that every divine name is associated with a distinct movement that reflects its meaning or symbolic representation, thereby helping children remember not only the sequence of the names but also their conceptual significance. The Hanifida Method is grounded in the assumption that memory becomes stronger when learners are actively involved in the learning process and when abstract content is transformed into concrete,

embodied experience (Castrillo González, 2025). This approach is particularly suitable for early childhood learners because it aligns with their developmental characteristics, including their preference for play, imitation, rhythm, and physical activity (Sairiyah et al., 2025). Moreover, the method creates a more joyful and interactive classroom atmosphere, which can increase children's motivation and willingness to participate. Previous studies on gesture-assisted memorization in general educational settings have shown positive effects on recall, engagement, and learner confidence. However, relatively few studies have examined the Hanifida Method specifically within Islamic religious education, especially in relation to Asmaul Husna learning for young children. This gap is important because the method is not merely a technical memorization tool; it also reflects a pedagogical philosophy that integrates body, mind, and faith in a unified learning experience. As such, the Hanifida Method deserves closer scholarly examination as a potentially effective model for religious instruction in Qur'anic educational institutions.

Although prior studies have extensively discussed memorization techniques in Islamic education, limited research has investigated how gesture-based memorization through the Hanifida Method functions in early childhood Qur'anic learning environments. Most existing literature tends to focus on general memorization outcomes, teacher-centered recitation practices, or the use of visual media, while fewer studies explore how bodily movement can mediate children's understanding and retention of Asmaul Husna. In addition, many studies have not sufficiently addressed the specific developmental needs of early childhood learners, whose learning processes differ substantially from those of older students. This creates a significant research gap in the field of Islamic early childhood education, particularly regarding the integration of embodied cognition, kinesthetic learning, and religious memorization. The present study seeks to fill this gap by examining how the Hanifida Method is implemented in Qur'anic learning, how gesture-based instruction facilitates Asmaul Husna memorization, and what challenges and opportunities emerge during its application. The novelty of this research lies in its attempt to connect a culturally grounded Islamic pedagogical practice with contemporary learning theories that emphasize embodiment, multisensory engagement, and active participation. By doing so, the study contributes not only to the practical improvement of memorization instruction but also to the theoretical development of Islamic educational pedagogy. It positions gesture-based memorization as more than a supplementary technique; rather, it is conceptualized as a meaningful instructional framework that can enrich children's spiritual learning while supporting cognitive development. This perspective is particularly relevant for Qur'anic institutions seeking to modernize their teaching practices without losing the spiritual and moral foundations of Islamic education.

Accordingly, this study is guided by three main research questions: first, how is the Hanifida Method implemented in Qur'anic learning for early childhood learners; second, how does gesture-based learning facilitate the memorization of Asmaul Husna; and third, what challenges and opportunities emerge during the implementation of this method in practice. The primary objective of the study is to explore the pedagogical process and educational impact of the Hanifida Method in enhancing Asmaul Husna learning among young children. More specifically, the study aims to describe the instructional stages of the method, analyze its contribution to children's memorization performance and engagement, and identify contextual factors that support or hinder its effectiveness. By addressing these objectives, the study intends to provide empirical evidence and conceptual insight into the role of gesture-based memorization in Islamic religious education. Ultimately, the findings are expected to inform teachers, curriculum developers, and Islamic educational institutions about the potential of embodied and multisensory approaches for strengthening early childhood religious learning. In doing so, the study contributes to the broader

discourse on innovative Islamic pedagogy and offers a practical model for integrating faith-based content with developmentally appropriate instructional strategies.

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative case study design to explore the implementation of the Hanifida Method in teaching Asmaul Husna to early childhood learners at TPQ Darul Qur'an Sawojajar. A qualitative approach was chosen to understand classroom practices, teacher strategies, student participation, and the contextual factors influencing gesture-based memorization in Islamic religious education.

The research subjects consisted of one principal, one teacher who implemented the Hanifida Method, and 18 early childhood students participating in the Asmaul Husna learning program (Sugiyono, 2023). Parents were consulted as additional informants when information regarding children's learning experiences at home was needed. Data were collected through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and documentation (Ardiansyah et al., 2023). Observations focused on teaching activities, the use of gestures, and students' engagement. Interviews explored participants' experiences and perceptions, while documents such as lesson plans and learning materials were used to support the findings.

Data were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman interactive model, which includes data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Relevant data were coded, categorized, and organized into themes to identify patterns related to the implementation of the Hanifida Method. To ensure trustworthiness, the study applied data triangulation, member checking, and an audit trail. Triangulation compared findings from observations, interviews, and documentation, while member checking was conducted with the teacher and principal to verify the accuracy of interpretations (Sumilih et al., 2025). The audit trail documented the research process, including field notes, interview transcripts, and coding procedures, to enhance the credibility, dependability, and confirmability of the study.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Results

Implementation of the Hanifida Method

The findings from interviews with the teacher and principal, supported by classroom observations and documentation analysis, show that the Hanifida Method was implemented through a clear sequence of learning activities that combined verbal repetition, bodily movement, and visual media. In the opening stage, the teacher prepared the children through greetings, prayer, and short motivational prompts to create a calm and focused atmosphere before beginning the memorization activity. In the core stage, the teacher introduced each Asmaul Husna name one by one, pronounced it clearly, and then demonstrated a specific hand gesture that represented the rhythm or meaning of the name. The children were invited to imitate the pronunciation and movement simultaneously, which made the lesson more interactive and helped them remember the sequence more easily. Observation notes indicated that the learners were more attentive when gestures were used, while interview data revealed that the teacher considered movement essential because early childhood learners respond better to concrete and playful activities than to verbal explanation alone. Documentation such as lesson plans, gesture guides, picture

cards, and classroom notes confirmed that the method was supported by simple visual media to reinforce memory. During guided practice, students repeated the names in groups and individually, and the teacher provided correction and reinforcement. In the closing stage, the teacher conducted a brief review and asked students to recite the memorized names without assistance. Overall, the implementation of the Hanifida Method reflected an active, multisensory, and child-friendly learning process that integrated gesture, repetition, and visual support to strengthen Asmaul Husna memorization..

Table 1.
Implementation of the Hanifida Method

Learning Stage	Teacher Activity	Student Activity
Opening	Greets students, leads prayer, gives motivation, and prepares the class for learning.	Responds to greetings, follows prayer, and listens attentively.
Introduction of Material	Introduces Asmaul Husna names one by one using clear pronunciation and visual media such as picture cards or gesture charts.	Observes the teacher, listens carefully, and begins to recognize the names.
Modeling of Gestures	Demonstrates hand gestures for each name and connects movement with pronunciation and meaning.	Imitates the teacher's gestures and repeats the names aloud.
Guided Practice	Leads group repetition, corrects pronunciation, and reinforces gestures through repetition.	Practices in groups, follows corrections, and repeats the memorization with movement.
Independent Practice and Closing	Asks students to recite the memorized names without assistance and gives feedback.	Recites Asmaul Husna independently and responds to teacher feedback.

Source: Research Results on the Hanfida method at TPQ

Students' Learning Engagement

The second theme that emerged from the data was students' learning engagement during the implementation of the Hanifida Method. The findings showed that the children were actively involved throughout the learning process, expressed enjoyment while participating in the activities, and demonstrated growing confidence when reciting Asmaul Husna with gestures. Observation results indicated that the learners were more responsive when the teacher used movement, rhythm, and repetition together, because these elements created a lively classroom atmosphere that encouraged participation. Rather than remaining passive listeners, the children followed the teacher's instructions, imitated the hand gestures, repeated the names aloud, and showed enthusiasm during both group and individual practice. Interview data from the teacher confirmed that the students appeared more engaged than in conventional memorization lessons, especially because the method allowed them to learn through play and physical activity. The teacher also noted that the children were happier during the lesson because they could move their hands, sing the names together, and interact with their peers in a relaxed environment. In addition, the data revealed that the method contributed to the development of students' self-confidence. At the beginning of the learning sessions, some children were hesitant to speak individually, but after repeated practice and teacher encouragement, they became more willing to recite

the memorized names in front of the class. This increase in confidence was visible in their facial expressions, voice clarity, and willingness to volunteer during practice. Documentation of classroom activities further supported these findings, showing that students were given opportunities to perform individually and in groups, which helped reduce anxiety and build a sense of achievement. Overall, the Hanifida Method fostered active participation, positive emotional responses, and self-confidence among early childhood learners, making the memorization of Asmaul Husna not only more effective but also more enjoyable and meaningful.

Table 2.
Students' Learning Engagement

Engagement Indicator	Description of Student Behavior	Supporting Evidence from the Field
Active	Students participated directly by imitating gestures, repeating names, and responding to the teacher.	Observation notes showed frequent participation during group and individual practice.
Happy	Students appeared cheerful, enthusiastic, and relaxed during the learning activities.	Teacher interviews and classroom observations indicated a joyful learning atmosphere.
Confident	Students were willing to recite Asmaul Husna in front of the class and showed reduced hesitation.	Students gradually became more expressive and self-assured during practice sessions.

Source: Research Results on the Hanfida method at TPQ

Improvement of Memorization Ability

The third theme identified in the findings was the improvement of students' memorization ability after the Hanifida Method was applied in Asmaul Husna learning. Before the implementation of the method, many children were able to repeat only a few names correctly, often with hesitation, incomplete sequence, and weak recall after a short pause. Some students depended heavily on teacher prompts and were unable to continue recitation independently. Observation data showed that memorization was still fragmented, and several learners confused the order of the names or forgot previously learned items when asked to repeat them individually. After the Hanifida Method was introduced, however, there was a noticeable improvement in both the accuracy and fluency of memorization. The combination of gestures, repetition, and visual cues helped children associate each name with a physical movement, making the memorization process more concrete and easier to retain. During follow-up practice, students were able to recall more names in the correct sequence, pronounce them more clearly, and recite them with greater confidence. Interview data from the teacher indicated that the children's memorization became stronger because the learning process was repeated in a playful and meaningful way, allowing them to store the material more effectively in memory. Documentation of classroom assessments also showed that students required fewer prompts over time and were increasingly able to perform independently. These findings suggest that the Hanifida Method contributed not only to short-term recall but also to the consolidation of memorized material through multisensory reinforcement. In this sense, the method supported early childhood learners in moving from assisted repetition to more autonomous memorization, demonstrating that gesture-based instruction can significantly enhance the learning of Asmaul Husna in Qur'anic educational settings.

Table 3.
Improvement of Memorization Ability

Indicator	Before the Implementation of the Hanifida Method	After the Implementation of the Hanifida Method
Number of Asmaul Husna memorized	Most students were able to memorize only a limited number of Asmaul Husna and often stopped before completing the sequence.	Students were able to memorize a greater number of Asmaul Husna and complete the sequence with fewer interruptions.
Accuracy of memorization	Students frequently omitted, misplaced, or confused several names during recitation.	Students demonstrated more accurate memorization with correct sequencing and fewer recall errors.
Fluency of recitation	Recitation was hesitant, slow, and frequently interrupted by pauses or teacher assistance.	Students recited more fluently, confidently, and continuously with minimal hesitation.
Dependence on teacher prompts	Most learners relied heavily on teacher guidance to continue memorization.	Students gradually memorized independently and required significantly fewer prompts from the teacher.
Memory retention	Previously memorized names were easily forgotten after a short period of time.	Students retained memorized material for longer periods and successfully recalled it during follow-up learning sessions.
Association between names and meaning	Memorization was mainly mechanical, with limited association between the names and their meanings.	Hand gestures enabled students to associate each Asmaul Husna with meaningful physical movements, strengthening conceptual understanding.
Student confidence	Many students lacked confidence when asked to recite individually in front of the class.	Students demonstrated greater confidence and willingly participated in both individual and group recitations.
Overall learning outcome	Memorization remained fragmented and inconsistent across learners.	Memorization became more systematic, accurate, and sustainable through gesture-based multisensory learning.

Source: Research Results on the Hanfida method at TPQ

Challenges

The fourth theme that emerged from the findings concerns the challenges encountered during the implementation of the Hanifida Method in Asmaul Husna learning. Although the method was generally effective in increasing engagement and memorization, the data revealed several obstacles that influenced the learning process. One of the main challenges was the difference in children's abilities. Observation and interview data

showed that not all learners responded to the method at the same pace. Some children were able to imitate the gestures and memorize the names quickly, while others needed more time, repetition, and individual guidance. This variation in ability required the teacher to provide differentiated support so that slower learners would not feel left behind. Another challenge was limited learning time. The teacher explained that the duration of each session was often short, while the number of activities that needed to be completed was relatively large. As a result, the teacher had to balance between introducing new material, practicing gestures, repeating memorization, and conducting review activities within a restricted time frame. This limitation sometimes reduced the depth of reinforcement that could be given to each child. In addition, concentration became a significant issue, especially because early childhood learners are naturally prone to distraction. Observation notes indicated that some children lost focus during repetition, became interested in their peers' movements, or shifted attention to other classroom stimuli. When concentration decreased, the accuracy of pronunciation and gesture imitation also declined. The teacher therefore needed to repeatedly redirect attention and maintain a lively classroom atmosphere to sustain engagement. These findings indicate that, despite its strengths, the Hanifida Method still requires careful classroom management, flexible pacing, and continuous teacher support to address differences in ability, time constraints, and fluctuating concentration among young learners.

Table 4.
Challenges

Challenge Indicator	Description of the Problem	Supporting Evidence from the Field
Difference in children's ability	Learners showed varied levels of speed in understanding gestures and memorizing the names.	Some students mastered the material quickly, while others needed repeated assistance.
Limited learning time	The duration of the lesson was not always sufficient for full explanation and repetition.	Teachers reported difficulty completing all stages within the available session time.
Concentration	Several children became distracted and lost focus during memorization activities.	Observation notes showed reduced attention during longer repetition sessions.
Challenge Indicator	Description of the Problem	Supporting Evidence from the Field
Difference in children's ability	Learners showed varied levels of speed in understanding gestures and memorizing the names.	Some students mastered the material quickly, while others needed repeated assistance.

Source: Research Results on the Hanfida method at TPQ

Discussion

Gesture-Based Learning and Embodied Cognition

The findings of this study indicate that the Hanifida Method is theoretically consistent with embodied cognition, which posits that cognitive processes are not isolated in the mind but are distributed across bodily action, sensory perception, and environmental interaction. From this perspective, learning Asmaul Husna through hand gestures is not merely an instructional embellishment but a cognitive mechanism that helps children construct meaning through bodily experience (Muthmainnah et al., 2025). The children's improved attention, participation, and recall suggest that the gestures functioned as embodied representations of abstract religious concepts, enabling learners to anchor verbal

information in physical movement. This is particularly relevant for early childhood learners, whose cognitive development is still dominated by concrete operational experiences and who therefore benefit from learning activities that transform abstract symbols into observable and repeatable actions. In this sense, the Hanifida Method operationalizes embodied cognition by allowing the body to serve as a medium of understanding, not simply as a tool for imitation.

This interpretation is strengthened by the relationship between embodied cognition and multisensory learning. The method combined auditory input through recitation, visual input through gesture observation, and kinesthetic input through movement imitation. According to multisensory learning theory, the simultaneous activation of multiple sensory channels increases the likelihood that information will be encoded more deeply and retrieved more effectively. The children in this study did not only hear the names of Allah; they also saw them represented through movement and enacted them physically (Rusydi et al., 2024). Such integration reduces the abstraction of the material and creates richer memory traces. Moreover, the findings align with Vygotskian ideas of mediated learning, in which external tools and social interaction support internal cognitive development. In this case, gestures acted as mediational tools that scaffolded children's understanding of Asmaul Husna. Therefore, the effectiveness of the Hanifida Method can be explained not only pedagogically but also theoretically, as it reflects the principle that cognition is strengthened when learning is embodied, socially mediated, and multisensory.

Hanifida Method and Kinesthetic Memory

The improvement in memorization observed in this study can be explained through the lens of kinesthetic learning and Dual Coding Theory. Kinesthetic learning theory argues that learners, especially young children, retain information more effectively when they are physically involved in the learning process. In the Hanifida Method, children repeatedly performed hand gestures while reciting Asmaul Husna, and this repetition likely strengthened procedural memory alongside verbal memory. The gestures were not random movements; they were systematically paired with specific divine names, creating stable associations between language and action. This supports the idea that memory is enhanced when learning is encoded through both verbal and nonverbal pathways. Dual Coding Theory further explains this outcome by proposing that information processed through two channels—linguistic and imagistic—has a higher probability of being retained. In this study, the verbal channel consisted of pronunciation and repetition of Asmaul Husna, while the nonverbal channel consisted of gestures and visual cues. The convergence of these two channels likely reduced cognitive load and improved recall accuracy (Hayya et al., 2024).

The role of motor memory is also central to understanding the effectiveness of the method. From a cognitive neuroscience perspective, repeated bodily actions can create procedural memory traces that support automaticity and retrieval fluency. When children imitate gestures consistently, the movement becomes associated with the verbal sequence, allowing the body to function as a retrieval cue. This is especially important in early childhood education, where memory systems are still developing and where repetition alone may not be sufficient to ensure durable retention. The Hanifida Method therefore works as embodied rehearsal: children do not merely repeat the names of Allah verbally, but rehearse them through coordinated movement, which strengthens memory consolidation. This interpretation is consistent with research showing that motor engagement enhances recall because it creates richer neural connections and more accessible memory pathways. Thus, the method is theoretically grounded in the interaction between kinesthetic learning, dual coding, and motor memory, all of which help explain

why gesture-based memorization is effective for young learners in Qur'anic education settings.

Religious Learning Innovation

This study contributes to the literature on religious learning innovation by demonstrating that Islamic memorization practices can be pedagogically renewed without compromising doctrinal authenticity. Theoretically, this innovation can be understood through constructivist learning theory, which emphasizes that learners actively build knowledge through meaningful interaction rather than passively receiving information. In the context of Asmaul Husna learning, the Hanifida Method shifts memorization from a rote, teacher-centered activity into an interactive process in which children participate physically, emotionally, and cognitively. This transformation is significant because early childhood learners are more responsive to learning environments that are playful, repetitive, and socially engaging. The method therefore aligns with child-centered pedagogy while preserving the sacred content of Islamic instruction. In other words, the innovation lies not in changing the religious substance, but in redesigning the instructional form so that it corresponds to how young children learn most effectively (Nisa et al., 2025).

The findings also resonate with self-determination theory, which suggests that learners are more motivated when they experience autonomy, competence, and relatedness. The Hanifida Method appears to support these three psychological needs. Children experience competence when they successfully follow gestures and memorize the names of Allah; they experience relatedness through shared recitation and collective movement with peers and teachers; and they experience a limited form of autonomy when they actively participate rather than merely listen. These motivational conditions help explain why the children in this study showed greater enthusiasm and confidence during learning. Furthermore, the method reflects the principle of meaningful learning, in which new information is more easily retained when it is connected to familiar actions and emotionally positive experiences. By embedding Asmaul Husna in gesture, rhythm, and repetition, the Hanifida Method creates a learning environment that is both spiritually meaningful and cognitively effective. This makes it an important model of innovation in Islamic education, showing that tradition and modern learning theory can be integrated productively to improve religious learning outcomes.

Implications for Early Childhood Islamic Education

The findings of this study have important implications for early childhood Islamic education when viewed through the framework of developmental psychology and pedagogical theory. First, the results suggest that curriculum design for Qur'anic learning institutions should be aligned with the developmental characteristics of young children. According to Piagetian theory, children at the early childhood stage learn best through concrete, observable, and repetitive experiences rather than through abstract verbal explanation. The Hanifida Method responds to this developmental need by translating Asmaul Husna into bodily actions that children can see, imitate, and remember. This implies that curriculum planners should not treat memorization as a purely verbal task, but should integrate movement-based and multisensory strategies into religious instruction. Such an approach would make Islamic learning more developmentally appropriate and more likely to produce durable learning outcomes.

Second, the study highlights the importance of teacher competence in implementing child-centered religious pedagogy. From a sociocultural perspective, teachers function as mediators who scaffold children's learning within their zone of proximal development. The success of the Hanifida Method depends not only on the method itself but also on the

teacher's ability to model gestures, maintain rhythm, provide encouragement, and create a supportive classroom climate. This means that teacher training in Qur'anic institutions should include not only mastery of religious content but also knowledge of early childhood pedagogy, learning theory, and classroom interaction strategies. Third, the findings imply that institutional support is essential for sustaining innovation. Schools and TPQ centers need to provide time, space, and learning media that allow children to move freely and practice repeatedly. Parental involvement is also important because reinforcement at home can strengthen memory consolidation and continuity of learning. Taken together, these implications show that effective early childhood Islamic education requires a holistic ecosystem in which curriculum, teachers, institutions, and families work together to support embodied, meaningful, and spiritually grounded learning.

Proposed Conceptual Model

Based on the findings of this study, a conceptual model can be proposed to explain how the Hanifida Method supports Asmaul Husna memorization among early childhood learners (Idawati & Hanifuddin, 2021). The model is as follows:

Hanifida Method → Hand Gesture → Visual Memory → Motor Memory → Meaning Association → Long-Term Memory → Asmaul Husna Memorization

This model can be theoretically interpreted as a sequence of cognitive and embodied processes. The Hanifida Method begins with structured instructional design that combines verbal recitation with gesture-based demonstration. In theoretical terms, this stage activates dual coding because children receive information through both linguistic and nonlinguistic channels. The hand gestures then stimulate visual memory, allowing learners to associate each divine name with a specific movement pattern. At the same time, repeated imitation strengthens motor memory, which is consistent with kinesthetic learning theory and procedural memory formation (Hendawi et al., 2024). As children repeatedly connect gesture, sound, and meaning, they begin to form semantic associations that deepen comprehension and reduce reliance on short-term recall. These associations are then consolidated into long-term memory through repetition and embodied rehearsal. Ultimately, this process results in more stable memorization of Asmaul Husna.

The conceptual model also reflects the principles of embodied cognition and meaningful learning. Rather than treating memorization as mechanical repetition, the model shows that memory is strengthened when the body participates in the learning process and when abstract content is linked to concrete action. This has important implications for future research because it suggests that gesture-based memorization can be examined not only as a practical teaching technique but also as a theoretically grounded model of religious cognition. Future studies may test this model across different age groups, religious texts, or instructional settings to determine whether the same embodied mechanisms operate in other forms of Islamic learning. Overall, the discussion demonstrates that the Hanifida Method is not simply a classroom technique, but a pedagogically and theoretically robust approach that integrates embodied cognition, dual coding, kinesthetic memory, and religious learning innovation to support Asmaul Husna memorization in early childhood education.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the Hanifida Method is an effective gesture-based instructional approach for enhancing Asmaul Husna memorization among early childhood learners in Qur'anic educational settings. The findings show that the method not only

improves children's recall of the divine names but also increases their attention, participation, motivation, and enjoyment during learning. Theoretically, its effectiveness can be explained through embodied cognition, kinesthetic learning, multisensory learning, and Dual Coding Theory, all of which support the idea that young children learn more successfully when verbal instruction is combined with bodily movement and sensory engagement. In addition, the study demonstrates that Islamic religious education can be innovatively designed without losing its spiritual authenticity, as the Hanifida Method preserves the sacred content of Asmaul Husna while making it more accessible to early childhood learners. The study also implies that successful implementation requires competent teachers, supportive institutions, and a learning environment that encourages active participation. Therefore, the Hanifida Method offers a meaningful contribution to early childhood Islamic education by providing a pedagogically sound, spiritually grounded, and developmentally appropriate model for religious memorization.

REFERENCES

Adamu, A. I., & Ardo, H. (2025). Modern Centers of Qur'anic Recitation and its Positive Effects on Students and the Society in Yobe State. *LECTURES: Journal of Islamic and Education Studies*, *4*(1), 25–37. https://doi.org/10.58355/lectures.v4i1.122

Alfatih, A. M., Raharjo, Baroroh, L., & Mubarok, Z. (2025). Lalaran and Tasmi's: Traditional Memorisation Techniques in Classical Arabic Education at Pesantren. *Belajea: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, *10*(2), 395–420. https://doi.org/10.29240/belajea.v10i2.11355

Ardiansyah, Risnita, & Jailani, M. S. (2023). Teknik Pengumpulan Data Dan Instrumen Penelitian Ilmiah Pendidikan Pada Pendekatan Kualitatif dan Kuantitatif. *IHSAN : Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, *1*(2), 1–9. https://doi.org/10.61104/ihsan.v1i2.57

Azizah, L., Amien, S., & Nurhakim, M. (2025). Developing Religious School Culture: Strategies and Impacts on Islamic Religious Education Outcomes. *AL-ISHLAH: Jurnal Pendidikan*, *17*(4), 7324–7337. https://doi.org/10.35445/alishlah.v17i4.7836

Cadavid, S., Cortés-Albornoz, M. C., Gómez-Carvajal, A.-M., Mendoza-Ayús, S. D., Luna, K., Olaya Galindo, M. D., Vélez-Van-Meerbeke, A., & Talero-Gutiérrez, C. (2025). Learning techniques to improve memory in children: A systematic review. *European Journal of Psychology of Education*, *40*(1), 38. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10212-024-00936-0

Castrillo González, H. (2025). From Syllable-Timed to Stress-Timed Rhythm: Gesture as a Facilitator in English Rhythmic Training. *Epos : Revista de filología*, (41), 47–70. https://doi.org/10.5944/epos.41.2025.46612

Chen, G., Xu, M., Wang, Q., Xu, C., Wang, Y., Wu, T., Ma, Y., Peng, L., & Ji, X. (2024). Enhancing Clinical Medical Education Through Hand Gesture Analogy Teaching: A Narrative Review. *Cureus*. https://doi.org/10.7759/cureus.76619

Dwikamayuda, D. M., Ari, I. A. N. M. D., Ekawati, N., Nitiasih, P. K., Riastini, P. N., & Sudatha, I. G. W. (2024). EMPOWERING EDUCATION: INTEGRATING CRITICAL PEDAGOGY INTO TRANSFORMATIVE TEACHING STRATEGIES. *Indonesian Journal of Educational Development (IJED)*, *5*(2), 230–242. https://doi.org/10.59672/ijed.v5i2.3823

Fitriyanti, F., Puspita, M., Septiana, Y., Zuhdiyah, Z., & Karolina, A. (2026). Islamic Religious Education Teachers' Strategies in Implementing a Multiple Intelligence-Based Kinesthetic Approach at State Senior High School 2 Palembang. *Journal of*

Educational Sciences, *10*(1), 1625–1639. https://doi.org/10.31258/jes.10.1.p.1625-1639

Hayya, A. F., Mukminin, A., Mustofa, Z., & Saleh, M. (2024). Application of singing method to improve memorization of asmaul husna for 1st grade students at kedungjati public elementary school. *Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan Dan Sains Islam Interdisipliner*, 28–33. https://doi.org/10.59944/jipsi.v3i1.267

Hendawi, M., Murshidi, G. A., Asrori, A., Hadi, M. F., Huda, M., & Lovat, T. (2024). The Development of Islamic Education Curriculum from the Quranic Perspective. *Ar-Fachruddin: Journal of Islamic Education*, *1*(2), 93–123. https://doi.org/10.7401/hms52091

Idawati, K., & Hanifuddin, H. (2021). Pelatihan al-Asma al-Husna Metode Hanifida: Solusi Nyata Lejitkan Otak Anak. *DINAMIS: Jurnal Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat*. https://doi.org/10.33752/dinamis.v1i2.498

McCoy, D. C., Yoshikawa, H., Ziol-Guest, K. M., Duncan, G. J., Schindler, H. S., Magnuson, K., Yang, R., Koepp, A., & Shonkoff, J. P. (2017). Impacts of Early Childhood Education on Medium- and Long-Term Educational Outcomes. *Educational Researcher*, *46*(8), 474–487. https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X17737739

Montes-Isunza, S., Lozada-Flores, O., Berumen-Glinz, L. A., Escobar-Castillejos, D., & Escobar-Castillejos, D. (2026). Integrating visuo-haptic simulators for active learning to explore the concept of Boyle's Law. *Frontiers in Education*, *10*. https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2025.1687152

Muthmainnah, M., Firmansyah, F., & Pehlic, I. (2025). Implementation of the Hanifida Method as a Technique for Memorizing Asmaul Husana at the At-Taqwa Al-Qur'an Education Park (TPA), Pulau Harapan Village, Sembawa. *Hadlonah: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pengasuhan Anak*, *6*(1), 30–40. https://doi.org/10.47453/hadlonah.v6i1.3127

Nisa, I. H., Rahmawati, D., & Komalasari, D. T. (2025). Building Tolerant Minds: Strategies for Integrating Religious Moderation in Schools. *QuranicEdu: Journal of Islamic Education*, *5*(2), 158–176. https://doi.org/10.37252/quranicedu.v5i2.1656

Piper, B., & Dubeck, M. M. (2024). Responding to the learning crisis: Structured pedagogy in sub-Saharan Africa. *International Journal of Educational Development*, *109*, 103095. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2024.103095

Rukmana, S., Pasaribu, M., & Sofyan, S. (2024). Holistic Integration of Islamic Religious Education Values: A Comprehensive Strategy for Character Development at MAN 1 Tapanuli Tengah. *FIKROTUNA: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Manajemen Islam*, *13*(2), 217–228. https://doi.org/10.32806/jf.v14i2.636

Rusydi, I., Himmawan, D., Nurhasanah, F., Akhlak, M., Melalui, S., Membaca, P., Husna, A., Metode, D., Di Kelas, H., MTs, V., Nahwi, D., & Indramayu, S. (2024). Forming Students' Morals Through the Habit of Reading Asmaul Husna Using the Hanifida Method in Class VII MTs Darun Nahwi Singajaya Indramayu. *Quality : Journal Of Education, Arabic And Islamic Studies*. https://doi.org/10.58355/qwt.v2i2.24

Sairiyah, M., Yuliawati, F., & Setiyawan, A. (2025). The implementation of gesture game in vocabulary learning for first graders of senior high school. *Celtic : A Journal of Culture, English Language Teaching, Literature and Linguistics*, *12*(1), 196–212. https://doi.org/10.22219/celtic.v12i1.40600

Su, Y.-N., & Zhao, D.-Y. (2024). Effectiveness of the "Hand as Foot" teaching method in human physiology: A randomized controlled trial. *Asian Journal of Surgery*, *47*(2), 953–958. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.asjsur.2023.12.178

Sugiyono. (2023). *Metode Penelitian Studi Kasus (Pendekatan: Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan Kombinasi)*. Alfabeta.

Sumilih, D. A., Jaya, A., Fitrianingsih, A. D. R., Nugrohowardhani, R. L. K. R., Irawan, E. P., Dirna, F. C., Rachmaningtyas, N. A., Ras, A., Pujiriyani, D. W., Setyorini, N., Hermawan, S., Ulfah, S., & Kurniasih, U. (2025). *METODE PENELITIAN KUALITATIF*. PT. Star Digital Publishing, Yogyakarta-Indonesia.

Yang, J., Yang, D., Yu, J., & Liu, J. (2025). The innovation and practice of the “hand as foot” teaching method in the teaching of Parkinson’s disease. *Frontiers in Aging Neuroscience*, *17*, 1519067. https://doi.org/10.3389/fnagi.2025.1519067.