GOLDEN RATIO OF MAPPING IDEA AND LITERATURE FORMAT
VOLUME 7, ISSUE. 1 (2027)
Website: https://goldenratio.id/index.php/grmilf

GOLDEN RATIO
ISSN [Online]: 2776-6381

MAPPING IDEA & LITERATURE FORMAT | RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Role of Social Support in Children with Dyslexia Who Experience Bullying: A Qualitative Case Study of Elementary School Students

Y. Yudistrian[1], R. Rohmatun[2]

[1,2] Department of Psychology, Faculty of Psychology, Universitas Islam Sultan Agung, Semarang, Indonesia.
Email: yudistrian17@gmail.com[1], rohmatun@unissula.ac.id[2]

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received: July 30, 2026
Revised: November 03, 2026
Accepted: November 08, 2026

DOI
https://doi.org/10.52970/grmilf.v7i1.2572

ABSTRACT
Children with dyslexia who experience bullying may face psychological and social challenges that affect their self-confidence, social interactions, and school engagement. Social support may serve as an important protective resource in helping these children cope with bullying experiences and develop psychological resilience. This study aims to explore the forms and sources of social support received by children with dyslexia who have experienced bullying and examine how such support contributes to their psychological resilience. Using a qualitative case study design, the research was conducted at two Islamic elementary schools in Central Java. Data were collected through observations, semi-structured in-depth interviews, and document analysis involving children with dyslexia, their parents, teachers, and peers. The data were analyzed thematically following Braun and Clarke's six-phase approach. The findings reveal four interconnected dimensions of social support: emotional, instrumental, informational, and appraisal support. Emotional support provides a sense of security and acceptance, while instrumental support addresses children's individual learning needs through adapted instructional approaches. Informational support helps children develop a positive understanding of dyslexia, whereas appraisal support strengthens their self-confidence, competence, and motivation through recognition and encouragement. The findings highlight the importance of collaboration among families, teachers, and peers in creating supportive educational environments. This study suggests that comprehensive and context-sensitive social support can contribute to strengthening psychological resilience among children with dyslexia who experience bullying.

Keywords: Social Support, Dyslexia, Bullying, Psychological Resilience, Islamic Elementary Schools.

I. Introduction

Dyslexia is a specific learning disorder that presents significant challenges to children's academic development and educational experiences, particularly during the elementary school years. Children with dyslexia commonly experience difficulties in word recognition, reading fluency, spelling, and phonological processing despite having adequate intellectual abilities and learning opportunities (American Psychiatric Association, 2022). These difficulties extend beyond reading performance because literacy skills are closely connected to classroom participation, academic achievement, and children's interactions with their social

2026. The Author(s). This open-access article is distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution (CC-BY-SA) 4.0 license.

ISSN [Online]: 2776-6381

environment. Odegard et al. (2024) emphasize the importance of understanding dyslexia as a persistent learning difficulty that requires appropriate educational responses rather than interpreting reading difficulties as a reflection of limited intelligence. Moreover, the prevalence of dyslexia among school-aged children indicates that it represents a relevant educational concern requiring greater attention from teachers, parents, and educational institutions (Shaywitz & Shaywitz, 2020). Therefore, understanding the experiences of children with dyslexia requires consideration of both their academic needs and their psychological and social development.

One important concern surrounding dyslexia is the potential vulnerability of affected children to negative social experiences, particularly peer rejection, discrimination, and bullying. Differences in reading abilities and classroom performance may expose children with dyslexia to unfavorable comparisons with their peers. In some circumstances, their learning difficulties may be misunderstood as laziness, lack of intelligence, or insufficient effort, creating opportunities for stigmatization and exclusion. The situation becomes particularly concerning when these perceptions develop into repeated aggressive behaviors. Bullying refers to intentional and repeated aggressive actions involving an imbalance of power between individuals or groups, which may occur through verbal aggression, physical intimidation, and social exclusion (Olweus, 1993). Children with learning disabilities may face additional social challenges because their academic and communication difficulties can influence peer interactions and increase their vulnerability to negative treatment (Mishna, 2003). Consequently, bullying should not be understood merely as an interpersonal conflict but also as an educational and psychosocial problem that may undermine children's sense of belonging, emotional security, and confidence.

These challenges deserve particular attention in Islamic elementary school environments, where educational experiences may include religious literacy activities alongside general academic learning. Reading the Qur'an, understanding Arabic-based religious texts, and participating in literacy-related classroom activities may create additional challenges for children who experience difficulties in reading and decoding written symbols. When their learning differences are not adequately understood, children may experience embarrassment, negative labeling, or exclusion from peer activities. Bullying in educational environments can take different forms, including verbal teasing, derogatory nicknames, social exclusion, and physical intimidation (Wiyani, 2012). Research examining bullying in Islamic boarding school environments also illustrates the importance of understanding how institutional and interpersonal interactions influence children's experiences of bullying (Septiana & Khasanah, 2019). Nevertheless, Islamic educational institutions should not automatically be regarded as environments that intensify bullying. Rather, they represent an important educational context in which religious values, inclusive teaching practices, and interpersonal relationships may influence how children with dyslexia experience acceptance, protection, and social participation.

In addressing these challenges, social support represents an important psychosocial resource that may help children cope with negative experiences and develop resilience. Social support involves assistance and positive interactions obtained through interpersonal relationships, particularly those involving family members, teachers, and peers. House (1981) identifies four dimensions of social support: emotional support, instrumental support, informational support, and appraisal support. Emotional support involves empathy, affection, trust, and acceptance; instrumental support provides tangible assistance and practical resources; informational support offers guidance and relevant knowledge; while appraisal support involves recognition, feedback, and affirmation that strengthen an individual's sense of competence. These dimensions provide a useful conceptual foundation for examining how children with dyslexia receive assistance in responding to bullying and managing their educational needs. Furthermore, the Buffering Hypothesis proposed by Cohen and Wills (1985) explains that social support may reduce the adverse effects of stressful experiences by providing resources that help individuals cope with psychological demands. Accordingly, the availability and appropriateness of social support from families, teachers, and peers may be particularly meaningful for children experiencing both learning difficulties and bullying.

2026. The Author(s). This open-access article is distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution (CC-BY-SA) 4.0 license.

ISSN [Online]: 2776-6381

Previous research has established important connections between learning disabilities, peer relationships, and negative social experiences. Mishna (2003), for example, highlights the vulnerability of children with learning disabilities to bullying and the challenges associated with their social interactions. Research on dyslexia has also emphasized the importance of appropriate educational responses to children's reading difficulties and their broader developmental needs (Odegard et al., 2024). Meanwhile, social support theory provides an established framework for understanding the different forms of assistance individuals receive from their interpersonal environments (House, 1981). The Buffering Hypothesis further explains why supportive relationships may become particularly important when individuals encounter stressful circumstances (Cohen & Wills, 1985). Although these perspectives offer valuable theoretical insights, understanding their practical significance requires attention to children's actual experiences, including the forms of support they receive, the individuals who provide that support, and how supportive interactions are experienced within school and family environments.

Despite these contributions, an important knowledge gap remains concerning the intersection of dyslexia, bullying, and social support in Islamic elementary school settings. In particular, the experiences of children with dyslexia who encounter bullying and the ways in which different sources of social support address their psychological and educational needs require more context-sensitive investigation. Existing discussions of learning disabilities and bullying have established the vulnerability of affected children, while social support literature has explained the protective potential of supportive interpersonal relationships. However, these perspectives do not sufficiently explain how emotional, instrumental, informational, and appraisal support operate together in the everyday experiences of children with dyslexia who have experienced bullying. Furthermore, the perspectives of children, parents, teachers, and peers need to be considered to understand the dynamics of support across home and school environments. Addressing this gap is important because the effectiveness of support cannot be understood solely through its availability but also through its relevance to children's individual needs and experiences.

To address this gap, the present study positions social support as the central analytical perspective for understanding the experiences of children with dyslexia who have experienced bullying in two Islamic elementary schools in Central Java, Indonesia. Rather than examining dyslexia, bullying, and social support as separate phenomena, this study brings these three dimensions together through a qualitative case study approach. Its analytical focus encompasses the four dimensions of social support proposed by House (1981), while the Buffering Hypothesis provides a theoretical perspective for interpreting the potential protective role of supportive relationships (Cohen & Wills, 1985). The study also considers the contributions of different support providers, particularly parents, teachers, and peers, in responding to children's psychological, social, and learning needs. This positioning allows the research to explore not only the forms of support available to children but also how these forms of support are reflected in their everyday educational and social experiences.

Accordingly, this study aims to explore the forms and sources of social support received by children with dyslexia who have experienced bullying and to understand how such support contributes to their psychological resilience, self-confidence, and social interactions. Specifically, it examines emotional, instrumental, informational, and appraisal support within the relationships established among children, families, teachers, and peers. The significance of this study lies in its potential to contribute to educational psychology by providing a context-sensitive understanding of social support among children experiencing both learning difficulties and bullying. Practically, the findings are expected to inform parents, teachers, and Islamic educational institutions in developing more inclusive learning environments, strengthening collaborative support systems, and responding more appropriately to the needs of children with dyslexia.

2026. The Author(s). This open-access article is distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution (CC-BY-SA) 4.0 license.

ISSN [Online]: 2776-6381

II. Literature Review

2.1. Dyslexia and Psychosocial Development

Dyslexia is a neurodevelopmental learning difficulty primarily associated with persistent problems in reading accuracy, reading fluency, decoding, and spelling. These difficulties cannot be explained solely by intellectual limitations or inadequate educational opportunities (American Psychiatric Association, 2022). Recent discussions have emphasized that dyslexia should be understood through a multidimensional perspective that considers its cognitive, neurological, educational, and psychosocial characteristics. Catts et al. (2024) highlight the importance of recognizing persistent literacy difficulties and their potential academic and psychosocial consequences. Similarly, Wolf et al. (2024) propose a comprehensive conceptualization of dyslexia that considers the interaction of biological, developmental, and sociocultural factors. Elliott and Grigorenko (2024) further argue that the identification and interpretation of dyslexia should prioritize individual learning needs and avoid practices that may produce educational inequity.

The consequences of dyslexia are not limited to difficulties in literacy acquisition. Repeated academic challenges may influence children's perceptions of their abilities, classroom participation, and relationships with peers. Shaywitz and Shaywitz (2020) emphasize the importance of understanding the reading-related characteristics of dyslexia, particularly difficulties in decoding and fluency, while recognizing their implications for educational development. These challenges may become more complex when children encounter environments that do not adequately accommodate their learning differences. Therefore, examining dyslexia requires attention not only to individual learning characteristics but also to the social and educational environments in which children develop.

2.2. Bullying and Vulnerability among Children with Learning Difficulties

Bullying is generally understood as repeated aggressive behavior involving an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim, making it difficult for the targeted individual to defend themselves (Olweus, 1993). In educational settings, bullying may occur through verbal aggression, physical intimidation, relational exclusion, and other behaviors that undermine children's safety and social participation. Smith (2016) explains that bullying is a multidimensional phenomenon involving different forms, causes, consequences, and intervention challenges. Consequently, bullying should be understood as a social and institutional concern rather than merely an individual behavioral problem.

Children with learning difficulties may experience additional vulnerability because differences in academic performance and communication can influence their peer relationships. Mishna (2003) describes this situation as a form of double jeopardy, in which learning disabilities and bullying may independently contribute to social, emotional, and behavioral difficulties. More recent evidence also demonstrates that children and adolescents with neurodevelopmental and psychiatric conditions require particular attention in school-based bullying research (Abregú-Crespo et al., 2024). In addition, Pinquart (2017) found elevated bullying victimization among children with chronic physical illnesses and physical or sensory disabilities, although these findings should not be directly generalized to children with dyslexia.

The consequences of bullying may extend beyond immediate emotional distress. Repeated victimization can affect children's confidence, social relationships, and sense of belonging within the school environment. Fang et al. (2022), through a systematic review and meta-analysis, demonstrate the broader vulnerability of children with disabilities to violence. Meanwhile, Badger et al. (2024) identify the need for more inclusive and evidence-informed anti-bullying approaches for children with special educational needs and disabilities. These findings reinforce the importance of examining how children with dyslexia experience bullying and how their surrounding environments respond to their needs.

2026. The Author(s). This open-access article is distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution (CC-BY-SA) 4.0 license.

GOLDEN RATIO
ISSN [Online]: 2776-6381

2.3. Social Support and Its Four Dimensions

Social support refers to the interpersonal resources and assistance individuals receive from people within their social environments. House (1981) identifies four major dimensions of social support: emotional, instrumental, informational, and appraisal support. Emotional support involves empathy, affection, trust, and acceptance that help individuals feel valued and psychologically secure. Instrumental support refers to tangible assistance, practical services, or resources that directly address individual needs. Informational support includes advice, guidance, and knowledge that help individuals understand and respond to difficult situations. Appraisal support involves affirmation, constructive feedback, and recognition that assist individuals in evaluating their abilities and personal worth.

These dimensions provide a useful framework for examining the experiences of children with dyslexia who have encountered bullying. Emotional support may be expressed through parental acceptance, teacher empathy, and positive peer relationships. Instrumental support may involve adapted learning activities, additional literacy assistance, and appropriate educational resources. Informational support may help children understand their learning difficulties and develop appropriate responses to negative social experiences. Appraisal support may be demonstrated through recognition of children's strengths, encouragement, and opportunities to participate meaningfully in classroom activities. Langford et al. (1997) reinforce the conceptual relevance of these four dimensions by identifying emotional, instrumental, informational, and appraisal support as major attributes of social support. Their analysis also associates supportive relationships with positive outcomes, including personal competence, perceived control, psychological well-being, and reduced anxiety. However, social support should not be interpreted merely through the existence of interpersonal relationships. The relevance and quality of the assistance provided are equally important in understanding its potential contribution to individual well-being.

2.4. Social Support, Psychological Resilience, and Educational Context

The relationship between social support and psychological resilience can be further understood through the Buffering Hypothesis proposed by Cohen and Wills (1985). This perspective explains that social support may protect individuals from the adverse effects of stressful experiences by providing interpersonal resources that correspond to their specific needs. In the context of children experiencing bullying, supportive relationships may help reduce feelings of isolation, strengthen emotional security, and facilitate adaptive coping. Nevertheless, the protective function of social support depends on the availability and appropriateness of support rather than its mere presence. Empirical findings provide further evidence of the importance of different sources of support. Jenkins et al. (2018), in a study involving 656 elementary and middle school students, found that peer support mediated the relationship between peer victimization and social-emotional difficulties, although teacher support did not demonstrate the same mediating effect. Lee et al. (2022) also found that family and peer support had different associations with patterns of bullying victimization among school-aged adolescents. These findings indicate that the contribution of social support may vary according to its source and the particular circumstances experienced by children.

The importance of supportive educational environments is also reflected in research on school belonging. Štremfel et al. (2024), through a systematic review of 86 studies, identified teacher relationships, classroom conditions, and school support practices as important factors associated with students' sense of belonging. Munawaroh et al. (2024) similarly identified social support and personal protective resources as important themes in the literature concerning the mental health consequences of bullying. However, social support should not automatically be assumed to reduce every negative outcome. Zhang et al. (2024), examining bullying victimization and adolescent well-being, found that the moderating roles of resilience and social support varied across different forms of victimization and well-being outcomes. Taken together, these studies suggest that social support is a context-dependent resource involving multiple relationships and forms of assistance. Nevertheless, the available literature does not sufficiently explain how the four

2026. The Author(s). This open-access article is distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution (CC-BY-SA) 4.0 license.

ISSN [Online]: 2776-6381

dimensions of social support operate together in the everyday experiences of children with dyslexia who have experienced bullying, particularly within Islamic elementary school environments. This study therefore uses House's (1981) framework to explore emotional, instrumental, informational, and appraisal support, while Cohen and Wills' (1985) Buffering Hypothesis provides a perspective for interpreting the potential protective contribution of supportive relationships. By considering the experiences of children, parents, teachers, and peers, the study seeks to develop a more contextualized understanding of how social support contributes to children's psychological resilience, self-confidence, and social participation following bullying experiences.

III. Research Method

3.1. Research Design

This study employed a qualitative approach using a case study design to explore the role of social support in the experiences of children with dyslexia who had encountered bullying in elementary school settings. A qualitative approach was considered appropriate because the study focused on understanding participants' experiences, social interactions, and the meanings they attributed to the support received from their surrounding environments. The case study design enabled an in-depth examination of the phenomenon within its actual educational context, taking into consideration the perspectives of children, parents, teachers, and peers. The investigation focused on the forms and sources of social support available to children with dyslexia who had experienced bullying. Particular attention was given to four dimensions of social support: emotional, instrumental, informational, and appraisal support. These dimensions provided an analytical perspective for examining how supportive relationships contributed to children's sense of security, self-confidence, learning experiences, and social interactions.

3.2. Research Setting and Duration

The study was conducted at two Islamic elementary schools in Central Java, Indonesia. The research locations were purposively selected because the schools had identified children with dyslexia who had experienced bullying within their educational environments. The selection of these settings enabled the researchers to examine social support within school environments involving interactions among children, teachers, parents, and peers. Data collection took place over a two-month period, from June to July 2026. During this period, the researchers conducted observations, semi-structured interviews, and document collection to obtain information about children's experiences of bullying and the support provided by their surrounding environments.

3.3. Participants and Sampling Strategy

Participants were selected using a purposive sampling strategy based on their relevance to the research objectives and their ability to provide information about the experiences of children with dyslexia who had encountered bullying. The primary participants were children identified as having dyslexia and who had experienced bullying in their school environments. Supporting informants included parents, teachers, and peers who had direct knowledge of the children's experiences and the forms of support they received. The manuscript records the involvement of two boys and one girl with dyslexia. However, the available participant descriptions identify only Participant A, a 10-year-old boy with mild dyslexia, and Participant B, an eight-year-old girl with moderate dyslexia. Their identification was based on information provided by an educational psychologist. The manuscript also reports that the children had experienced bullying over a period of approximately two years. The supporting informants included two female teachers from Participant A's school, one male teacher from Participant B's school, the children's parents, and peers. These informants

2026. The Author(s). This open-access article is distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution (CC-BY-SA) 4.0 license.

ISSN [Online]: 2776-6381

were included to provide complementary perspectives and strengthen the understanding of the social support experienced by the children.

3.4. Data Collection Techniques

Data were collected through three complementary techniques: observation, semi-structured in-depth interviews, and documentation. First, observations were conducted to examine children's social interactions and behaviors within their everyday school activities. Particular attention was given to interactions with peers, responses to social situations, and the forms of support provided by teachers and other members of the school community. Second, semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with the children, their parents, teachers, and relevant peers. The interviews explored experiences of bullying, perceived sources of support, and the forms of assistance provided within family and school environments. The interview framework was informed by the four dimensions of social support, namely emotional, instrumental, informational, and appraisal support. Third, documentation was used to complement the observational and interview data. The documents included school incident records, activity reports, and records of children's development. These materials provided additional contextual information regarding the children's educational experiences and the institutional responses to bullying.

3.5. Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using thematic analysis following the six-phase approach developed by Braun and Clarke (2006). This approach was selected because it enables researchers to identify, organize, and interpret recurring patterns of meaning across qualitative data sources. The analysis involved six interconnected phases. First, the researchers familiarized themselves with the data by reviewing interview transcripts, observation notes, and relevant documents. Second, initial codes were generated to identify meaningful information related to bullying experiences and social support. Third, related codes were organized into potential themes representing recurring patterns across the data. Fourth, the emerging themes were reviewed to assess their coherence and relevance to the research questions. Fifth, the themes were defined and refined to establish their central meanings and conceptual boundaries. Finally, the findings were organized and presented in a narrative form supported by relevant empirical evidence. The four dimensions of social support served as an analytical reference for interpreting the findings. Nevertheless, the analysis also considered other patterns emerging from participants' accounts and observations to ensure that the interpretation remained grounded in the empirical data.

3.6. Data Trustworthiness

The trustworthiness of the findings was addressed using the criteria proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1985), comprising credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility was strengthened through source triangulation involving children with dyslexia, parents, teachers, and peers. Member checking was also conducted with primary informants to examine the accuracy of the researchers' interpretations. Peer debriefing with researchers who had expertise in educational psychology was undertaken to critically examine the analytical process and interpretations. Transferability was supported through detailed descriptions of the research settings, participant characteristics, and educational contexts. Such descriptions were intended to enable readers to assess the relevance of the findings to comparable educational environments. Dependability was addressed through the maintenance of an audit trail documenting the research procedures, data collection activities, and analytical decisions. Confirmability was supported through the use of reflexive journals and systematic documentation of the relationship between empirical evidence and the resulting interpretations.

2026. The Author(s). This open-access article is distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution (CC-BY-SA) 4.0 license.

ISSN [Online]: 2776-6381

3.7. Research Ethics

Because this study involved children who had experienced bullying, ethical considerations were essential throughout the research process. The researchers were required to protect participants' privacy, emotional well-being, and rights to voluntary participation. Parental or guardian informed consent and age-appropriate child assent should be documented before participation. Participant identities should be protected through the use of pseudonyms, and research records should be stored and handled confidentially.

IV. Results and Discussion

4.1. Children's Experiences of Bullying

The findings revealed that children with dyslexia experienced different forms of bullying within their school environments, including verbal aggression, physical intimidation, and social exclusion. Participant A, a 10-year-old boy, reported being laughed at and given derogatory nicknames because of his difficulties in reading. One expression directed at him was "slow like a snail." He also experienced exclusion from social activities. These experiences were associated with feelings of sadness, fear, and embarrassment, which affected his willingness to read aloud in the classroom. Participant B, an eight-year-old girl, experienced verbal bullying through derogatory comments about her reading difficulties. Her shoes were also repeatedly hidden by other students. These experiences contributed to her reluctance to attend school. The accounts indicate that bullying affected not only the children's emotional experiences but also their participation in school activities and their sense of safety within the educational environment.

These findings illustrate the intersection between learning difficulties and negative peer experiences. Mishna (2003) describes the vulnerability of children with learning disabilities to bullying as a form of double jeopardy, in which academic difficulties and negative social interactions may reinforce one another. Similarly, Singer (2005) found that children with dyslexia may experience teasing and humiliation associated with their reading difficulties, potentially threatening their self-esteem and influencing how they respond to peer interactions. These experiences are also consistent with the broader conceptualization of bullying as repeated aggressive behavior involving an imbalance of power (Olweus, 1993). The findings further suggest that the consequences of bullying should not be restricted to the immediate experience of verbal or physical aggression. The reluctance of Participant A to read in class and Participant B's refusal to attend school indicate that negative peer experiences may extend into children's educational participation. Smith (2016) explains that bullying has psychological, social, and educational consequences that require attention from both individuals and educational institutions. Research by Abregú-Crespo et al. (2024) also demonstrates the importance of addressing bullying among children with neurodevelopmental and psychiatric conditions. Nevertheless, the present findings are interpreted as experiences of two documented cases rather than evidence that all children with dyslexia experience bullying in the same way.

4.2. Emotional Support: Establishing Psychological Safety and Acceptance

Emotional support emerged as an important theme in the experiences of the children. Parents provided affection, reassurance, and consistent attention, helping children understand that dyslexia did not indicate intellectual inferiority. Participant A expressed his positive relationship with his father by stating, "Playing with my father is the time I look forward to the most." Similarly, Participant B stated, "I always hurry when my mother and father come to pick me up." These statements illustrate the emotional significance of parental presence and the children's feelings of security within family relationships. Emotional support was also evident in the school environment. Teachers at Participant B's new school provided individualized attention and avoided requiring her to read aloud in front of the entire class. Instead, reading activities were conducted collectively. Peers also invited her to participate in play activities and listened to her stories. These

2026. The Author(s). This open-access article is distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution (CC-BY-SA) 4.0 license.

ISSN [Online]: 2776-6381

practices created opportunities for social acceptance and participation without unnecessarily exposing her reading difficulties.

These findings are consistent with House's (1981) conceptualization of emotional support as the provision of empathy, trust, affection, and care. They also reinforce Cohen and Wills' (1985) Buffering Hypothesis, which explains how supportive relationships may reduce the adverse effects of stressful experiences when the assistance corresponds to the individual's needs. However, the findings suggest that emotional support is not simply the presence of caring relationships. It is also reflected in specific interpersonal practices, such as listening, reassurance, acceptance, and avoiding situations that may intensify embarrassment.

The importance of matching support to individual needs is further explained by Cutrona and Russell (1990). Their optimal matching perspective emphasizes that different stressful circumstances require different forms of support. In the present study, reassurance from parents and the avoidance of unnecessary public reading demands represent responses to the children's emotional and educational needs. Wilmot et al. (2023a) similarly found that children with dyslexia and their parents emphasized the importance of supportive family relationships, friendship, and positive school connections in children's socio-emotional experiences. An additional finding concerns the contribution of teachers and peers to children's sense of belonging. Jenkins et al. (2018), in their study of 656 elementary and middle school students, found that peer support mediated the relationship between peer victimization and social-emotional difficulties, although teacher support did not demonstrate the same mediating pattern. This distinction is important because it indicates that different sources of emotional support may operate through different processes. In the present study, the positive peer interactions experienced by Participant B suggest that peer acceptance may provide an important opportunity to rebuild social confidence following negative school experiences.

4.3. Instrumental Support: Addressing Individual Learning Needs

Instrumental support was identified through concrete assistance provided by parents and teachers. Parents purchased books appropriate to children's learning needs and enrolled children in extracurricular activities involving developmental activities and reading- and speech-related interventions. Teachers also adapted instructional practices by providing additional time for literacy and numeracy activities. One teacher explained, "We differentiate the time allocation and reading targets for children with dyslexia." These findings demonstrate that instrumental support involves more than providing material resources. It also includes practical educational adjustments that respond to children's individual learning requirements. In the present study, the purchase of appropriate learning materials and the provision of additional instructional time represent efforts to address learning difficulties while maintaining children's opportunities to participate in educational activities.

House (1981) conceptualizes instrumental support as tangible assistance and practical resources that help individuals address specific demands. Langford et al. (1997) further explain that social support involves different functional dimensions that contribute to individual adjustment and well-being. From this perspective, the educational adaptations identified in the present study can be understood as practical forms of assistance directed toward children's learning needs. The findings also highlight the importance of ensuring that educational support is appropriate rather than merely available. Additional learning time, adapted reading targets, and individualized instructional approaches may help reduce unnecessary academic pressure. However, the effectiveness of such practices cannot be established solely from their implementation. Their actual contribution to reading development and academic achievement would require further assessment using appropriate educational evidence. Badger et al. (2024), through a systematic review of school-based anti-bullying approaches for children with special educational needs and disabilities, emphasize the importance of considering the specific requirements of these students when developing educational interventions. The present findings extend this discussion by illustrating how individualized educational assistance can coexist with efforts to provide psychological and social protection. Instrumental

2026. The Author(s). This open-access article is distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution (CC-BY-SA) 4.0 license.

ISSN [Online]: 2776-6381

support should therefore be integrated into inclusive teaching practices rather than treated as an isolated form of assistance.

4.4. Informational Support: Developing Positive Self-Understanding

Informational support emerged through the provision of knowledge, guidance, and explanations concerning dyslexia. Parents and teachers communicated that reading difficulties did not indicate stupidity or an absence of intelligence. Children were encouraged to recognize their individual strengths and understand that people possess different abilities. Participant B expressed this understanding by stating, "I also have other abilities that are more prominent." Teachers also incorporated messages of mutual respect into their interactions with children. One teacher stated, "Everyone has strengths and weaknesses, and we must respect one another." These statements suggest that informational support was not limited to explaining the characteristics of dyslexia. It also involved helping children develop a more positive interpretation of their learning differences.

House (1981) identifies informational support as the provision of knowledge, advice, and guidance that help individuals understand and respond to difficult situations. In the context of dyslexia, this form of support may help children distinguish between their specific reading difficulties and their broader intellectual and personal abilities. Langford et al. (1997) similarly emphasize the functional role of information in helping individuals understand and manage personal and environmental challenges. These findings are consistent with the experiences described by Wilmot et al. (2023a), whose research identified the importance of positive language, self-understanding, and supportive family-school relationships in children's experiences of dyslexia. Informational support may therefore contribute to reducing the internalization of negative labels, particularly when children receive explanations that are appropriate to their developmental level. The findings also have implications for the educational environment. Information about dyslexia should not be directed exclusively toward children and their families. Teachers and peers also need appropriate knowledge to understand learning differences and avoid interpretations that associate reading difficulties with laziness or low intelligence. This is important because informational support may be ineffective when children receive positive messages from parents but continue to encounter stigmatizing attitudes within their school environments.

4.5. Appraisal Support: Strengthening Competence and Recognition

Appraisal support was reflected in the recognition of children's efforts, abilities, and contributions. Parents provided encouragement and praise when children demonstrated progress in learning. One parental expression reported in the manuscript was, "Mom's champion, you can already do multiplication!" Teachers also provided opportunities for children to take classroom responsibilities, including appointing Participant B as a class security officer. Participant B expressed her experience by stating, "I was appointed as the class security officer." These findings suggest that appraisal support involves recognizing children's abilities beyond their reading difficulties. Rather than evaluating children exclusively through academic performance, parents and teachers acknowledged their contributions and provided opportunities for meaningful participation. Such recognition may help children develop a more balanced perception of their personal capabilities.

This interpretation is consistent with House's (1981) explanation of appraisal support as affirmation and feedback that assist individuals in evaluating their abilities. It also relates to Self-Determination Theory, which identifies competence as one of the fundamental psychological needs supporting motivation and well-being (Deci & Ryan, 2000). When children receive recognition for their efforts and are given opportunities to demonstrate their capabilities, they may develop a stronger sense of competence and personal value. Singer (2005) found that children with dyslexia adopt different strategies to maintain their self-esteem when facing teasing and humiliation. The present findings complement this perspective by illustrating the role of recognition from significant adults and the school environment. Rather than relying exclusively on individual

2026. The Author(s). This open-access article is distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution (CC-BY-SA) 4.0 license.

ISSN [Online]: 2776-6381

coping strategies, children may also benefit from environments that actively recognize their strengths and provide meaningful opportunities for participation.

Nevertheless, appraisal support should be distinguished from excessive praise or rewards. Its value lies in providing credible recognition of children's actual efforts and abilities. Assigning classroom responsibilities, for example, may become meaningful when the child is genuinely trusted to contribute to the classroom community. Therefore, appraisal support should be understood as a relational practice that promotes participation, competence, and acceptance rather than simply an activity intended to increase motivation.

4.6. Integration of Social Support and the Limitations of Educational Environments

The findings demonstrate that emotional, instrumental, informational, and appraisal support were reflected in different but interconnected practices. Emotional support provided reassurance and acceptance; instrumental support addressed practical learning needs; informational support helped children understand their learning differences; and appraisal support recognized their abilities and contributions. This pattern reinforces House's (1981) multidimensional framework. However, the findings also suggest that the four dimensions should not be interpreted as completely independent categories. For example, teachers' decisions to adapt reading activities may simultaneously provide instrumental and emotional support when such adjustments reduce children's exposure to embarrassment. Similarly, recognizing children's strengths may involve both appraisal and informational support when encouragement is accompanied by explanations about individual differences.

Cohen and Wills (1985) argue that the buffering function of social support is particularly relevant when the available interpersonal resources correspond to the demands created by stressful experiences. Cutrona and Russell (1990) further emphasize the importance of matching specific forms of support with particular stressors. These perspectives help explain why the different support practices identified in the present study may complement one another in responding to children's experiences of bullying and learning difficulties. However, the findings also reveal limitations within the educational environment. The manuscript reports that not all teachers and religious educators possessed sufficient knowledge about learning disabilities, particularly dyslexia. Consequently, some children's needs could not be addressed optimally. This finding is important because it demonstrates that supportive intentions alone do not guarantee appropriate educational responses. Teachers may provide encouragement and affection while still lacking the specialized knowledge required to identify learning difficulties and implement suitable instructional adaptations.

Wiyani (2012) discusses bullying as an educational concern requiring attention from schools and the broader educational community. In Islamic educational settings, the integration of religious values may provide an important foundation for promoting empathy, respect, and mutual acceptance. Haque et al. (2016) also discuss the potential contributions of Islamic traditions to contemporary psychological perspectives. Nevertheless, the presence of religious values should not automatically be interpreted as evidence of an inclusive or bullying-free environment. Such values need to be reflected in consistent institutional practices, teacher competencies, and effective responses to bullying. The findings are also relevant to the broader literature on school-based support. Lee et al. (2022) found that family and peer support had different associations with patterns of bullying victimization among school-aged adolescents. Wilmot et al. (2023b) similarly highlighted the interconnected nature of maternal well-being, school-related difficulties, and social support in families raising children with dyslexia. These studies reinforce the importance of considering the family-school relationship rather than treating support as the responsibility of a single individual.

From a practical perspective, the findings indicate the need for stronger collaboration among parents, teachers, and peers. Educational institutions should improve teachers' understanding of dyslexia, establish appropriate learning adaptations, develop structured peer-support practices, and provide clear procedures for responding to bullying. Badger et al. (2024) further highlight the importance of evidence-informed anti-bullying approaches that account for the needs of students with special educational needs and

2026. The Author(s). This open-access article is distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution (CC-BY-SA) 4.0 license.

ISSN [Online]: 2776-6381

disabilities. Overall, this study contributes to the understanding of social support by illustrating how four dimensions of support are reflected in the experiences of children with dyslexia who have encountered bullying. Its contribution lies not in establishing a causal relationship between social support and psychological resilience, but in showing how different supportive practices may address children's emotional, educational, informational, and interpersonal needs. Given the limited number of primary cases documented in this study, these findings should be interpreted contextually rather than generalized to all children with dyslexia. Nevertheless, the findings highlight the importance of coordinated family and school support in developing safer, more inclusive, and responsive educational environments.

V. Conclusion

This study highlights the role of social support in the experiences of children with dyslexia who have encountered bullying in Islamic elementary school environments. The findings identify four interconnected dimensions of support: emotional, instrumental, informational, and appraisal support, provided through relationships with parents, teachers, and peers. Emotional support offers acceptance and psychological security, instrumental support addresses children's individual learning needs, informational support facilitates positive self-understanding, and appraisal support strengthens their sense of competence and self-confidence. Taken together, these findings illustrate how supportive interpersonal relationships may contribute to children's psychological resilience and social participation following bullying experiences.

The findings have important theoretical and practical implications for educational psychology and inclusive education. Theoretically, this study extends the contextual understanding of House's multidimensional social support framework by illustrating how its four dimensions are reflected in the experiences of children with dyslexia who have encountered bullying. It also provides a contextual perspective on the potential protective role of social support in relation to the Buffering Hypothesis. Practically, the findings emphasize the importance of collaboration among families, teachers, and peers in creating safe and inclusive educational environments. Schools, particularly Islamic educational institutions, should strengthen teachers' competencies in identifying and supporting children with dyslexia, implement appropriate instructional adaptations, develop positive peer relationships, and establish responsive mechanisms for preventing and addressing bullying. The integration of Islamic values should also be reflected in consistent practices of empathy, respect, acceptance, and protection of every child's educational rights.

This study has limitations that should be considered when interpreting its findings. The research involved a small number of primary child participants in two Islamic elementary schools in Central Java, limiting the transferability of the findings to other educational contexts. Furthermore, the case study design provides contextual insights into participants' experiences but does not establish causal relationships between social support and psychological resilience or demonstrate long-term changes in children's psychological and academic outcomes. Future research should involve a larger and more diverse range of schools, explore the experiences of children with dyslexia across different educational settings, and employ longitudinal or intervention-based approaches to examine how different forms of social support develop over time and contribute to children's psychological and educational well-being.

AI Disclosure

Artificial intelligence (AI)-assisted tools, specifically ChatGPT (OpenAI), were used to support language refinement, improve academic clarity, and assist with the organization of the manuscript. The authors critically reviewed and revised all AI-assisted suggestions and take full responsibility for the accuracy, originality, interpretation, and final content of the manuscript.

2026. The Author(s). This open-access article is distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution (CC-BY-SA) 4.0 license.

GOLDEN RATIO
ISSN [Online]: 2776-6381

Authorship Contribution

Yudistrian contributed to the conceptualization, research design, data collection, data analysis, interpretation of findings, and preparation of the original manuscript. Rohmatun contributed to research supervision, methodological guidance, critical review, and revision of the manuscript. Both authors reviewed and approved the final version of the manuscript and agreed to be accountable for the content of the publication.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare that they have no known financial or non-financial conflicts of interest that could have influenced the research, its findings, or the preparation of this manuscript.

Data Availability Statement

The data supporting the findings of this study are not publicly available because they contain sensitive information concerning elementary school children and their experiences of bullying and dyslexia. However, relevant data may be made available by the corresponding author upon reasonable request, subject to applicable ethical considerations and the protection of participants' confidentiality.

Acknowledgment and Funding

The authors would like to express their sincere gratitude to the participating elementary schools, teachers, parents, and children who contributed to this study. Their cooperation, time, and valuable insights made this research possible. This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

References

Abregú-Crespo, R., Garriz-Luis, A., Ayora, M., Martín-Martínez, N., Cavone, V., Carrasco, M. Á., Fraguas, D., Martín-Babarro, J., Arango, C., & Díaz-Caneja, C. M. (2024). School bullying in children and adolescents with neurodevelopmental and psychiatric conditions: A systematic review and meta-analysis. The Lancet Child & Adolescent Health, 8(2), 122–134. https://doi.org/10.1016/S2352-4642(23)00289-4

American Psychiatric Association. (2022). Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders (5th ed., text rev.). American Psychiatric Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.books.9780890425787

Azizah, N., Widyorini, E., & Sutoyo, A. (2021). Prevalensi dan karakteristik disleksia pada siswa sekolah dasar di kota besar Indonesia. Jurnal Psikologi Pendidikan dan Konseling, 7(1), 112. https://doi.org/10.26858/jppk.v7i1.17682

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3(2), 77–101. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Catts, H. W., Terry, N. P., Lonigan, C. J., Compton, D. L., Wagner, R. K., Steacy, L. M., Farquharson, K., & Petscher, Y. (2024). Revisiting the definition of dyslexia. Annals of Dyslexia, 74(3), 282–302. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11881-023-00295-3

Cohen, S., & Wills, T. A. (1985). Stress, social support, and the buffering hypothesis. Psychological Bulletin, 98(2), 310–357. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.98.2.310

Cutrona, C. E., & Russell, D. W. (1990). Type of social support and specific stress: Toward a theory of optimal matching. In B. R. Sarason, I. G. Sarason, & G. R. Pierce (Eds.), Social support: An interactional view (pp. 319–366). Wiley.

2026. The Author(s). This open-access article is distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution (CC-BY-SA) 4.0 license.

GOLDEN RATIO
ISSN [Online]: 2776-6381

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). The "what" and "why" of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behavior. Psychological Inquiry, 11(4), 227–268. https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327965PLI1104_01

Elliott, J. G., & Grigorenko, E. L. (2024). Dyslexia in the twenty-first century: A commentary on the IDA definition of dyslexia. Annals of Dyslexia, 74(3), 363–377. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11881-024-00311-0

Haque, A., Khan, F., Keshavarzi, H., & Rothman, A. E. (2016). Integrating Islamic traditions in modern psychology: Research trends and finding common ground. Journal of Muslim Mental Health, 10(1), 75–100. https://doi.org/10.3998/jmmh.10381607.0010.106

House, J. S. (1981). Work stress and social support. Addison-Wesley Publishing Company.

Langford, C. P. H., Bowsher, J., Maloney, J. P., & Lillis, P. P. (1997). Social support: A conceptual analysis. Journal of Advanced Nursing, 25(1), 95–100. https://doi.org/10.1046/j.1365-2648.1997.1997025095.x

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). Naturalistic inquiry. SAGE Publications.

Mishna, F. (2003). Learning disabilities and bullying: Double jeopardy. Journal of Learning Disabilities, 36(4), 336–347. https://doi.org/10.1177/00222194030360040501

Odegard, T. N., Farris, E. A., & Middleton, A. E. (2024). Dyslexia in the 21st century: Revisiting the consensus definition. Annals of Dyslexia, 74(3), 273–281. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11881-024-00316-9

Olweus, D. (1993). Bullying at school: What we know and what we can do. Blackwell.

Patton, M. Q. (2015). Qualitative research & evaluation methods: Integrating theory and practice (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.

Pinquart, M. (2017). Systematic review: Bullying involvement of children with and without chronic physical illness and/or physical/sensory disability—A meta-analytic comparison with healthy/nondisabled peers. Journal of Pediatric Psychology, 42(3), 245–259. https://doi.org/10.1093/jpepsy/jsw081

Septiana, R., & Khasanah, U. (2019). Fenomena bullying di pondok pesantren: Studi kasus di pesantren wilayah Jawa Tengah. Jurnal Pendidikan Islam, 8(2), 201–220. https://doi.org/10.14421/jpi.2019.82.201-220

Shaywitz, S. E., & Shaywitz, B. A. (2020). Dyslexia: A disorder of reading fluency and decoding. Annual Review of Medicine, 71, 403–415. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-med-041718-085916

Smith, P. K. (2016). Bullying: Definition, types, causes, consequences and intervention. Social and Personality Psychology Compass, 10(9), 519–532. https://doi.org/10.1111/spc3.12266

Sneed, R. S., & Cohen, S. (2024). Main and buffering effect of social support. In Encyclopedia of quality of life and well-being research (pp. 4050–4053). Springer.

Wolf, M., Gotlieb, R. J., Kim, S. A., Pedroza, V., Rhinehart, L. V., Gorno-Tempini, M. L., & Sears, S. (2024). Towards a dynamic, comprehensive conceptualization of dyslexia. Annals of Dyslexia, 74(3), 303–324. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11881-023-00297-1

Wiyani, N. A. (2012). Save our children from school bullying. Ar-Ruzz Media.

Zablotsky, B., Bradshaw, C. P., Anderson, C. M., & Law, P. (2013). The association between school-based behavioral interventions and the social skills development of children with autism spectrum disorder. Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders, 43(7), 1545–1556. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10803-012-1711-0

2026. The Author(s). This open-access article is distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution (CC-BY-SA) 4.0 license.