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## Embodied knowledge, mediated practice: A critical examination of digital integration in Qur'anic tahsin pedagogy

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### Abstract

Digitalization has rapidly expanded access to Qur'anic tahsin learning, yet existing scholarship often prioritizes technological adoption while giving limited attention to how religious authority, social interaction, and sacred meaning are negotiated in online environments. This study examines online tahsin at Universitas Terbuka, Indonesia, as a socio-pedagogical space where tradition, pedagogical authority, and digital mediation intersect within contemporary distance education. Using an explanatory sequential mixed-method design, the research began with a survey of 56 students from several Indonesian provinces in 2025, employing a five-point Likert scale to explore learning experiences, digital readiness, technical challenges, and perceptions of tutor feedback. This quantitative phase was followed by semi-structured interviews to deepen interpretation of the statistical findings. The results show that tutor authority is reconstructed in virtual settings through sustained corrective interaction, precise recitation guidance, and pedagogical practices that emphasize adab and ethical responsibility. These processes enhance recitation accuracy, affective engagement, and learner confidence, including dimensions of spiritual experience, despite structural constraints that continue to shape the quality of interaction.

### Keywords

Digital mediation, social interaction, Qur'an learning, tahsin, pedagogical authority

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## Introduction

Learning the Qur'an is understood as a practice of transmitting knowledge that unites technical, ethical, and spiritual dimensions in one pedagogical unity (Berkey, 2014). In Islamic tradition, the process of passing on knowledge of the Qur'an always takes place through a living pedagogical relationship between the *ustad* and the students, where the *ustad* plays the role of both a reading director and a guardian of scientific etiquette (Sabki & Hardaker, 2013). Therefore, learning the Quran is not interpreted as just phonetic practice, but as a process of forming moral ethics of learning and respect for the authority of knowledge, which is built through repeated correction and continuous guidance. (Berkey, 2014; Sabki & Hardaker, 2013).

Learning the Qur'an is understood as a practice of transmitting knowledge that unites technical, ethical, and spiritual dimensions within a single pedagogical framework (Berkey, 2014). In Islamic tradition, the process of conveying Qur'anic knowledge has always taken place through a living pedagogical relationship between the *ustad* and the students, in which the *ustad* serves simultaneously as a guide to correct recitation and as a guardian of scholarly etiquette (Sabki & Hardaker, 2013). For this reason, learning the Qur'an is not interpreted merely as phonetic practice, but as a process of forming moral and ethical sensibility and cultivating respect for the authority of knowledge, built through repeated correction and continuous guidance (Berkey, 2014; Sabki & Hardaker, 2013).

In the Indonesian context, Qur'anic learning (*tahsin*) has developed within a rich and diverse local cultural ecology, encompassing *halaqah* circles in mosques, learning sessions in teachers' homes, and the distinctive practices of *sorogan* and *bandongan* in Islamic boarding schools (Irawan, 2022; Berkey, 2014). These patterns constitute a characteristic mode of learning in which *tahsin* skills are refined through attentive listening and rigorous oral correction, as emphasized in classical Islamic pedagogy (Sahin, 2022; Sabki & Hardaker, 2013). The affective closeness between the *ustad* and students in this ecology functions both as a foundation for disciplined practice and as a mechanism for legitimizing knowledge that preserves standards of recitation and *tajwid* discipline (Berkey, 2014; Amzat, 2022).

The advancement of technology and the digitalization of religious education in Indonesia have brought significant changes to the landscape of Qur'anic learning (Pangesti, 2025; Mustofa, 2023). The adoption of digital devices, learning management systems (Syafi'i, 2025c), mobile applications, and synchronous and asynchronous learning platforms has enabled *tahsin* instruction to transcend boundaries of space and time (Sariyani, 2025), thereby expanding access for learners who were previously unable to participate (Ahmad & Khalid, 2024). However, as studies of technology-based Islamic education have noted, this transformation also demands new pedagogical adaptations in the *ustad*–*santri* relationship, as well as in learning methods and the design of educational experiences (Rifdillah, 2025; Dalimunthe et al., 2023; Mar 2024).

This transformation is increasingly evident in large-scale distance education at Universitas Terbuka, which provides online *tahsin* learning for students from diverse regions, religious backgrounds, and varying conditions of digital access (Darajat & Kosasih, 2025; Syafi'i, 2025a). In this virtual space, heterogeneous learning experiences are brought together

within a relatively uniform platform (Shen, 2018; Syafi'i, 2025b), making it necessary to understand online tahsin learning as an arena for the encounter between tradition, authority, and digital mediation, rather than as a purely technical exercise (Andrade & Alden-Rivers, 2019; Darajat & Kosasih, 2025).

A central issue in this transformation concerns the shift of pedagogical authority from physical presence and direct correction toward digitally mediated patterns (Hedberg, 2011; Berkey, 2014; Makarova, 2018). When tahsin learning is digitally mediated, authority does not disappear; rather, it is transformed through voice recordings, written feedback, comment features, and the rhythms of synchronous–asynchronous communication (Sariyani, 2025; Akem et al., 2025). Digitalization thus reshapes the ways in which authority is displayed, received, and internalized by students during the process of correcting Qur'anic recitation (Hendawi & Qadhi, 2024; Ibrahim, 2025). Beyond the technical aspects, tahsin learning is also shaped by affective and spiritual dimensions (Syafi'i, 2025d), such as self-confidence, comfort in receiving correction, and social support, all of which are essential for the sustainability of online learning (Fredricks, 2011; Daher et al., 2021). In Islamic education, the affective dimension is integrated with spiritual and moral formation, rendering the tahsin learning experience rich in religious values and meaning (Tisdell, 2003; Ardilla, 2024).

Digital learning environments pose both structural and cultural challenges for tahsin pedagogy, particularly in relation to unequal access, audio quality limitations, network reliability, and the adequacy of devices for precise makhraj production and sustained practice (Indra, 2020; Ilham, 2020; Hakimi et al., 2024; Yahya et al., 2021). These challenges underscore the necessity of religious digital literacy, understood not merely as technical competence but as an ethical and pedagogical capacity to sustain meaningful religious learning in online settings (Dalimunthe et al., 2023; Muhdi et al., 2023; Nurdin, 2022). Nevertheless, scholarly discussions of how pedagogical authority is reshaped through digital mediation within tahsin traditions remain scarce (Syafi'i & Sariyani, 2025), despite the central role of the Qur'an in structuring epistemic authority and the ustad–santri relationship in Islamic education (Muliana et al., 2024; Widyawati, 2024).

The topic of tradition, authority, and digital mediation in Qur'anic tahsin pedagogy is therefore timely and significant for understanding how tradition and authority are reconfigured in contemporary distance learning, and for situating these transformations within broader debates in Islamic thought and global Muslim contexts (Atran & Axelrod, 2008; Tschaepé, 2020; Hanafi, 2023). Although online tahsin instruction has expanded rapidly alongside the digitalization of Islamic education, existing scholarship largely concentrates on technical aspects and technology adoption, while questions of religious–pedagogical authority and the sacred character of the Qur'an in digital spaces remain underexplored (Akem et al., 2025; Hendawi & Qadhi, 2024). Addressing this gap, the present study examines how tahsin traditions and tutor authority are constructed and negotiated through digital mediation, and what implications this holds for students' affective engagement, spiritual experience, and challenges related to digital inequality. Theoretically, this study contributes to contemporary Islamic thought by framing online tahsin as a site where tradition, authority, and digital modernity intersect, while practically it offers insights for developing high-quality and sustainable online tahsin pedagogy (Ahmad & Khalid, 2024).

## Literature Review

### *Tahsin and the digitalization of Qur'anic education*

In recent years, research on online tahsin learning has expanded in parallel with the broader digitalization of Islamic education. Existing studies indicate that digital technologies such as online platforms and mobile applications have enhanced access to Qur'anic learning and enabled greater flexibility across time and space (Ahmad & Khalid, 2024; Akem et al., 2025). Within this body of literature, technology is primarily framed as a pedagogical tool that improves efficiency and outreach in religious education. However, this framing tends to treat tahsin as a technical skill that can be optimized through digital media, leaving the normative and relational dimensions of Qur'anic pedagogy insufficiently examined (Hendawi & Qadhi, 2024). Related research highlights the technical opportunities and constraints of online Qur'anic learning, including issues of audio quality, network stability, and learners' digital literacy (Yahya et al., 2021; Hakimi et al., 2024). While such studies are valuable, they tend to operate at the level of operational effectiveness. By contrast, within Islamic educational traditions, tahsin functions not merely as phonetic training but as a medium for transmitting adab and establishing epistemic authority grounded in the sacred status of the Qur'an (Berkey, 2014).

### *Tradition, authority, and digital mediation*

Theoretically, this study is grounded in the view that Islamic education is structured around authoritative teacher–student relationships legitimized by scholarly tradition and sacred values. Research on Islamic pedagogy emphasizes that teacher authority is not derived solely from content mastery, but also from social roles, adab, and pedagogical presence that cultivate students' trust (Sabki & Hardaker, 2013). In tahsin instruction, this relationship is further reinforced through the tradition of sanad and rigorous mechanisms of recitation correction that ensure continuity and integrity in religious practice (Muliana et al., 2024). When learning is mediated by digital technologies, however, these authoritative relations undergo significant transformation.

Digital mediation theory suggests that technology functions not as a neutral tool but as a medium that reshapes how authority is enacted, negotiated, and internalized by learners (Tschaeppe, 2020). Within this framework, pedagogical authority becomes less dependent on physical co-presence and is instead expressed through recorded instruction, written feedback, and patterns of synchronous–asynchronous communication (Akem et al., 2025; Ibrahim, 2025). Such shifts also affect how sacred values are negotiated within learning environments that intersect with the distractions and rhythms of everyday digital life (Atran & Axelrod, 2008).

### *Gaps in the existing literature*

Despite the growing body of research on online tahsin and digital Islamic education, significant gaps persist. Most studies continue to focus on technical effectiveness or

comparisons between synchronous and asynchronous models, without foregrounding authority and tradition as central analytical lenses (Sariyani, 2025; Syafi'i & Sariyani, 2025). Research that integrates Islamic intellectual perspectives on authority, adab, and the sacred nature of the Qur'an with analyses of digital mediation remains limited, particularly within large-scale distance education contexts. Furthermore, few studies have systematically examined how transformations in tahsin authority relate to learners' affective and spiritual experiences in online settings, even though engagement literature underscores the importance of these dimensions for sustained and meaningful learning (Fredricks, 2011; Daher et al., 2021). There is accordingly a pressing need for research that bridges Islamic educational technology with theoretical frameworks on tradition and authority in contemporary Islamic thought (Hanafi, 2023).

## **Methodology**

### ***Research design***

This study adopts a mixed-method approach using an explanatory sequential design, in which quantitative data are collected and analyzed first, followed by qualitative inquiry to elaborate and contextualize the statistical findings (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). This design is appropriate because it enables the identification of general patterns in online tahsin learning experiences while simultaneously providing in-depth insights into the underlying pedagogical meanings and dynamics. Such an approach is particularly suitable for educational research that examines social interaction and affective experiences within digital environments (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). The explanatory sequential design also allows the qualitative phase to be purposefully shaped by quantitative findings, ensuring that the inquiry is grounded in empirical patterns rather than predetermined assumptions.

### ***Participants and research setting***

The study was conducted within the context of online tahsin classes at Universitas Terbuka (UT), Indonesia's national open university, which serves students from across the archipelago. The quantitative phase involved 56 students enrolled in online tahsin classes from multiple provinces in 2025, representing diverse regions including Java, Sumatra, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, Nusa Tenggara, Maluku, and Bali. Participants were selected using purposive sampling to ensure diversity of regional origin and digital access conditions. For the qualitative phase, a subset of informants was selected from among survey respondents who provided particularly detailed responses or whose experiences reflected notable patterns identified in the quantitative data. These informants participated in semi-structured interviews to provide deeper contextual understanding of the survey findings.

### ***Data collection***

Quantitative data were collected through an online survey administered via Google Forms, a method widely employed in distance education research due to its efficiency and broad reach (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The survey instrument employed a five-point Likert

scale (“strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”) to measure four constructs: (1) learning experiences in online tahsin, (2) digital readiness and technological access, (3) technical challenges encountered during instruction, and (4) perceptions of tutor feedback effectiveness, with particular attention to experiences of recitation correction, pedagogical relationships, and perceptions of authority. The survey was administered during the 2025 academic cycle.

Following the analysis of quantitative data, qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews. An interview guide was developed based on preliminary quantitative findings to explore participants lived experiences of authority, spiritual engagement, and the role of digital mediation in greater depth. Interviews were conducted online via video conferencing tools and lasted approximately 30–45 minutes each. With participants' consent, all interviews were audio-recorded and subsequently transcribed verbatim for analysis.

### ***Data analysis***

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to illustrate overall trends in participants' online tahsin learning experiences. Frequency distributions and mean scores were computed for each Likert-scale item to identify patterns in digital readiness, perceived challenges, and tutor feedback effectiveness. Qualitative data were examined through thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's (2021) six-phase framework: familiarization with the data, generation of initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report. The validity of the findings was strengthened through methodological triangulation by integrating survey and interview results at the interpretation stage, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of the transformation of tahsin practices in distance education contexts (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2020).

### ***Ethical consideration***

This study was conducted in accordance with established principles of research ethics. Prior to participation, all respondents were informed of the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of their involvement, and their right to withdraw at any time without consequence. Informed consent was obtained from all participants before the survey and interview data were collected. To protect participant confidentiality, no personally identifying information is reported in the findings; regional data presented in tables reflect aggregated patterns rather than identifiable individual accounts. The study involved no deception, and the data collected were used solely for academic research purposes. Interview recordings and transcripts are stored securely and accessible only to the research team.

## **Results and Discussion**

### ***Tutor authority and the practice of ta‘līm bi al-tashhīḥ in digital mediation***

Online tahsin instruction at Universitas Terbuka is delivered through an e-learning system organized into classes of one lecturer and 15 students, comprising eight sessions of two hours each. Each session is supported by structured modules and textbooks,

complemented by presentation slides made available on the learning platform, and concludes with Qur'anic recitation practice and synchronous discussion conducted via webinar-based tutorials. Students are required to complete self-reported attendance to indicate readiness for participation, while lecturers verify attendance at every session. Assessment is based on attendance and the quality of recitation practice, evaluated both during live webinar sessions and through independent practice assignments submitted as video recordings. The instructional content is sequenced progressively, beginning with foundational concepts of tajwid, makharrij al-huruf, reading rhythm, and their significance in tahsin (Session 1), followed by the application of vowel length rules (Session 2), rules of nun sakinah and tanwin, idgham, izhar mutlaq, and qalqalah (Session 3), mim sakinah and ghunnah rules (Session 4), the pronunciation of ra' and lam ta'rif (Session 5), and selected gharib readings, including unvowelled waw, nun wiqayah, ayat al-sajdah, sifr mustadir and musta'fil, as well as waqf and ibtida' (Session 6), culminating in an enrichment practice session designed to consolidate students' overall Qur'anic recitation skills (Session 8).

The findings show that the majority of students from diverse regions of Indonesia—including Java, Sumatra, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, and Nusa Tenggara—experienced improvements in the quality of their Qur'anic recitation. These improvements were primarily attributed to consistent tutor feedback provided during synchronous webinar sessions and through individualized responses to students' video-based practice assignments. Table 1 illustrates how digitally mediated tahsin instruction facilitates cross-regional participation and highlights flexibility, accessibility, and instructional efficiency as recurring advantages experienced by learners from diverse regions across Indonesia.

**Table 1.** Regional distribution of students' experiences in online tahsin learning at Universitas Terbuka

No	Region of Origin	Perceived Advantages of Online Tahsin Learning
1	West Java (Tasikmalaya)	Tutor feedback was clear and responsive, facilitating understanding of <i>tajwid</i> rules and accurate correction of recitation errors.
2	South Sumatra (Banyuasin, Palembang)	Online learning expanded <i>tajwid</i> knowledge and supported consistency ( <i>istiqamah</i> ) in Qur'anic study.
3	East Kalimantan (Samarinda, East Kutai)	Instructional materials and tutor corrections were easy to follow; learning was effective when internet connectivity was stable.
4	Riau (Sinaboi Besar, Sapat)	Learning process was efficient and flexible, supporting recitation improvement despite being conducted online.
5	East Java (Jombang, Malang, Kediri, Sampang)	Tutors were patient and provided detailed explanations; effectiveness was occasionally constrained by schedules and internet quality.
6	Cianjur, West Java	The tutor's feedback was very clear and helped improve reading according to Tajweed rules; learning provided a new and different experience.
7	Maluku (South Buru)	Tutor feedback was clearly understood and highly supportive of the <i>tahsin</i> learning process.
8	Bangka Belitung	Learning ran smoothly, with tutor guidance perceived as beneficial both academically and spiritually.
9	North Sumatra (Medan)	Learning was generally effective, although occasionally disrupted by electricity and internet issues.
10	Sulawesi (Makassar, Gorontalo, North Luwu, Bantaeng)	Tutor feedback increased motivation, error awareness, and reading fluency.

11	Jakarta & Bandung	Learning supported recitation improvement; students suggested recorded audio/video materials to address work-time constraints.
12	North Kalimantan (Tarakan, Bulungan)	Learning was beneficial but sometimes conflicted with work schedules and unstable network conditions.
13	Bali	Online <i>tahsin</i> supported recitation improvement, with unstable signals as the main challenge.
14	West Nusa Tenggara (Mataram)	Tutor feedback was highly helpful and clear; greater scheduling flexibility was requested to accommodate daily activities.
15	Central Java (Boyolali, Sukoharjo, Surakarta)	Learning was effective and flexible, contributing to improved recitation quality with minimal obstacles.

The survey involved 56 students enrolled in online *tahsin* classes at Universitas Terbuka from various provinces across Indonesia. The 15 regions presented in Table 1 reflect aggregated locations where respondents reported similar learning experiences; thus, the table highlights regional patterns rather than individual counts, enabling analytical clarity while preserving the diversity of the national sample.

Across regions, students consistently reported that clear and detailed recitation corrections supported by concrete examples were essential for identifying and understanding errors in makhraj, vowel length, madd rules, and waqf signs. These findings indicate that the practice of *ta'lim bi al-tashhih* can be effectively sustained in digitally mediated learning environments, supporting prior studies on the pedagogical flexibility of online Qur'anic instruction (Ahmad & Khalid, 2024; Akem et al., 2025).

From the perspective of Islamic thought, this pattern resonates with the normative injunction to recite the Qur'an accurately and deliberately, as articulated in Qur'an 73:4 (*wa rattil al-Qur'ana tartilan*), which frames correct recitation as an expression of *adab* rather than a purely technical skill. In contrast to research that emphasizes technological effectiveness as the primary determinant of online learning success (Hendawi & Qadhi, 2024), the present findings suggest that students' recognition of tutor authority is shaped more by the quality of correction and the consistency of guidance—reinforcing theoretical perspectives that locate Islamic scholarly authority in competence, *adab*, and continuity of knowledge transmission rather than in technological media or physical proximity alone (Berkey, 2014; Sabki & Hardaker, 2013; Muliana et al., 2024).

### ***Affective and spiritual experiences in online tahsin learning***

Beyond improvements in technical recitation skills, the findings reveal a significant impact on students' affective dimensions in online *tahsin* learning. Many participants reported increased self-confidence, motivation, and commitment to improving their Qur'anic recitation after receiving tutor feedback. Some indicated that these experiences encouraged them to apply *tahsin* knowledge in social and professional contexts, such as teaching students in schools or within their local communities. This suggests that online *tahsin* learning extends beyond technical achievement and fosters the internalization of religious values and sustained practice (Ahmad & Khalid, 2024; Akem et al., 2025).

Within the framework of Islamic education, these findings reflect the integration of *ta'lim* and *tarbiyah*, whereby Qur'anic learning is oriented not only toward knowledge transmission but also toward the cultivation of spiritual awareness and religious ethos.

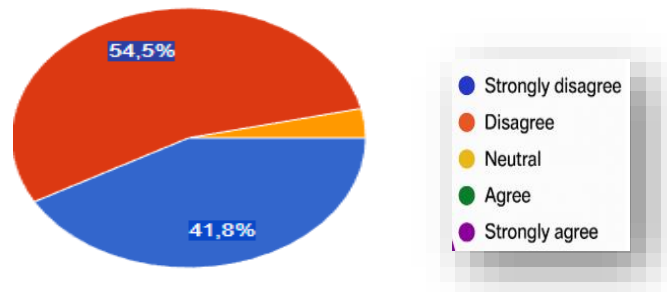
Students' reported experiences of inner calm, meaningful engagement, and a strengthened connection with the Qur'an indicate that digital mediation does not inherently diminish spiritual value. Rather, when supported by meaningful and authoritative pedagogical relationships, digital technologies can expand religious experience within contemporary Islamic education (Berkey, 2014; Atran & Axelrod, 2008).

Consistent with learning engagement literature, these results underscore the critical role of affective dimensions in sustaining and deepening learning processes, particularly in online environments characterized by limited physical interaction (Fredricks, 2011; Daher et al., 2021). In contrast to prior studies that primarily emphasize user satisfaction or technical platform effectiveness (Hendawi & Qadhi, 2024), this study demonstrates that the success of online tahsin learning is strongly shaped by students' perceptions of being valued, supported, and spiritually motivated through consistent and empathetic tutor guidance (Sabki & Hardaker, 2013; Muliana et al., 2024). As illustrated in Figure 1, affective and spiritual dimensions remain integral to Qur'anic tahsin learning even in digitally mediated contexts. Positive perceptions of accessibility and ease of participation suggest that meaningful engagement with the Qur'an can be sustained online when learners maintain adab toward the teacher and the sanctity of the Qur'anic text.

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**Figure 1.** Student perceptions of the ease of participating in online Qur'anic tahsin learning through the Universitas Terbuka platform (n = 55).



The figure indicates that the majority of respondents perceived online Qur'anic tahsin learning as relatively easy to follow, with 54.5% reporting strongly agree and 41.8% indicating agree. Only a small proportion of respondents expressed a neutral stance, and none reported disagreement. These results suggest that, overall, the Universitas Terbuka online learning platform is regarded as accessible and supportive of effective tahsin instruction within a distance education context.

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### ***Challenges of digital mediation and the negotiation of *ḥudūr al-mu'allim****

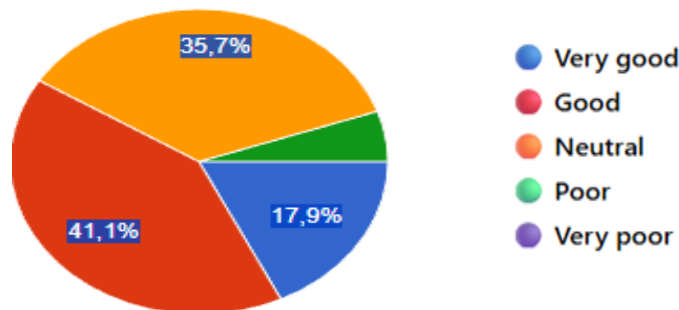
Although online tahsin learning was generally perceived positively, the findings also reveal recurring structural challenges. Students reported unstable internet connectivity, electricity disruptions, limited study time due to work commitments, and the absence of recorded audio or video materials as the primary obstacles. These constraints directly affected the quality of interaction and learners' concentration during recitation correction, particularly in learning activities that are highly dependent on clear and stable audio transmission (Yahya et al., 2021; Hakimi et al., 2024).

From the perspective of Islamic thought, such challenges can be understood as issues related to *wasā'il* (means) rather than *maqasid* (ends). While the primary objective of tahsin—maintaining accurate recitation and proper adab toward the Qur'an—remains intact, digital media require contextual adaptation to avoid obstructing the internalization of religious values. Students' expressed needs for recorded learning materials, more flexible schedules, and opportunities for direct consultation reflect an effort to re-establish *ḥudūr al-mu'allim* (the perceived presence of the teacher) within digital spaces, even in the absence of physical co-presence (Tschaepe, 2020; Berkey, 2014).

Compared with prior studies that address digital divides in a more general sense (Yahya et al., 2021; Hakimi et al., 2024), these findings offer a more contextualized account of online

tahsin learning. They demonstrate that audio quality and temporal flexibility are particularly critical factors in Qur'anic pedagogy, as limitations in these areas not only hinder technical accuracy but also influence students' affective engagement and perceptions of pedagogical presence. This underscores the need for instructional designs that are sensitive to both technological constraints and the distinctive epistemic and spiritual characteristics of tahsin learning in digitally mediated environments (Atran & Axelrod, 2008; Ahmad & Khalid, 2024).

**Figure 2.** Student perceptions of internet connectivity quality and its influence on the fluency of Qur'anic recitation and feedback reception during online tutorials (n = 56).



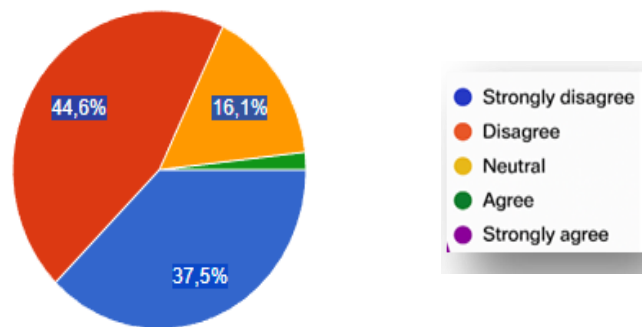
The figure shows that most respondents rated their internet connectivity as good (35.7%) or very good (17.9%), while a substantial proportion (41.1%) reported a neutral assessment. Although only a small number of participants indicated poor connectivity and none selected very poor, the relatively large neutral category suggests considerable variation in network quality across regions. These findings underscore the critical role of internet stability in supporting effective online tahsin learning, particularly in relation to audio clarity and the effectiveness of Qur'anic recitation feedback.

### ***Transformation of local learning practices in Qur'anic education through digital mediation***

In the tradition of Islamic education, local learning spaces have long functioned as arenas for cultivating adab, shaping teacher–student relationships, and nurturing collective spiritual experiences that are integral to the transmission of Qur'anic knowledge. Previous studies suggest that digitally mediated Qur'anic learning tends to shift educational practices from communal settings to more individualized and flexible spaces, while not entirely displacing the religious meanings embedded in the learning process (Atran & Axelrod, 2008).

Research on the digitalization of Islamic education further indicates that changes in learning media are often accompanied by transformations in religious habitus, influencing how learners relate to teachers, sacred texts, and learning communities (Tschaepe, 2020). However, much of this literature remains focused on describing shifts in learning patterns and has not yet examined in sufficient depth how such transformations are actively negotiated in relation to the values of adab and epistemic authority that underpin Islamic educational traditions (Berkey, 2014; Muliana et al., 2024).

**Figure 3.** Student perceptions of changes in local Qur'anic learning practices due to online tahsin instruction (n = 56)



The figure shows that most respondents agreed (44.6%) and strongly agreed (37.5%) that online tahsin learning has changed their local habits in learning the Qur'an, while 16.1% were neutral and almost none rejected the change. This finding confirms that digital mediation is not merely an alternative learning method but is also reshaping religious learning patterns previously grounded in physical presence, marking a significant shift in contemporary Islamic educational practices.

### ***Synthesis within the framework of islamic thought and prior research***

Taken together, the findings of this study indicate that online tahsin learning at Universitas Terbuka constitutes a site of convergence between Islamic scholarly tradition and digital modernity. Tutor authority is not diminished in virtual environments but is reconstituted through the clarity of recitation correction, the consistency of pedagogical guidance, and instructional attitudes that cultivate adab and learner motivation. This aligns with perspectives in contemporary Islamic thought that locate scholarly authority in amanah, competence, and continuity of knowledge transmission rather than in physical co-presence alone (Hanafi, 2023; Berkey, 2014).

In contrast to earlier studies that predominantly emphasize technological dimensions or compare synchronous and asynchronous learning models (Sariyani, 2025; Syafi'i & Sariyani, 2025), this study extends the discussion by foregrounding affective and spiritual experiences alongside the negotiation of authority in online tahsin pedagogy. These findings suggest that the effectiveness of digital Qur'anic learning cannot be fully understood through technical performance alone, but must also account for how learners experience guidance, trust, and spiritual engagement within mediated learning spaces (Fredricks, 2011; Daher et al., 2021).

This synthesis demonstrates that digitalization should not be construed as a disruption to tahsin traditions, but rather as a contextual arena in which Islamic educational values can be rearticulated and sustained. When supported by meaningful pedagogical relationships and ethically grounded instructional practices, online tahsin learning offers opportunities to re-actualize Islamic values in contemporary distance education while remaining anchored in established traditions of authority and adab (T'schaepe, 2020; Ahmad & Khalid, 2024).

## Conclusion

This study demonstrates that online tahsin learning at Universitas Terbuka effectively integrates Islamic scholarly tradition with digital learning environments. The authority of the *ustad* (lecturer or tutor) is not diminished but reconfigured through clear recitation correction, consistent guidance, and pedagogical dispositions that cultivate *adab*. As a result, online tahsin not only enhances the technical accuracy of Qur'anic recitation but also strengthens students' affective engagement and spiritual experience. Nevertheless, structural constraints such as unstable internet connectivity, audio quality limitations, and restrictions related to learning location and time continue to influence instructional effectiveness and the perceived pedagogical presence of tutors in virtual settings.

Within the broader context of Islamic studies and contemporary educational issues, these findings suggest that digitalization should not be viewed as a threat to Qur'anic learning traditions. Instead, it can function as an alternative space for transmitting authority, ethical orientation, and sacred values, provided that learning is grounded in meaningful pedagogical relationships. Online tahsin should therefore be understood as an ethical–pedagogical process rather than a purely technical activity, requiring instructional designs that are sensitive to the spiritual and epistemic dimensions inherent in Qur'anic education, particularly within large-scale distance education systems.

Future research is recommended to compare diverse models and platforms of online tahsin instruction across institutions, to examine the long-term sustainability of students' affective and spiritual engagement beyond limited instructional cycles, and to investigate more deeply how technological factors such as audio quality and connectivity interact with pedagogical authority and learning experiences in digitally mediated Qur'anic education.

## Disclosure Statement

No potential conflicts of interest were reported by the authors.

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