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Digitalizing *Sanad*: A Virtual Ethnography of Zoom-Based *Qira'at* Learning Communities in Post-Pandemic Indonesia

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Abstract

This study analyzes the transformation of post-COVID-19 Qur'anic *qira'at* study traditions through a Zoom-based community in Indonesia. It focuses on shifts in learning interaction patterns, the preservation of *sanad*, and the formation of a digital religious culture. Unlike previous studies that predominantly examined pedagogical effectiveness, this research fills a gap in the literature regarding the renegotiation of *sanad* authority and legitimacy when the practice of *talaqqi* shifts to a virtual space. Utilizing a field research method with a virtual ethnographic design, this study applies Hine's theoretical framework and Campbell's digital religion concept. Data were collected through participatory observation of online *halaqah*, digital documentation, and semi-structured interviews with 20 informants, including *sanad*-holding *qira'at* teachers, lecturers of *Ulumul Qur'an*, and community members. Data analysis employed the interactive model of Miles and Huberman, combined with triangulation to ensure the validity of the findings. The results indicate that the Zoom-based community has successfully maintained the *talaqqi* tradition and the continuity of scholarly *sanad* through technological adaptation. This platform expands learning access for women and professionals while strengthening cross-regional spiritual solidarity. This study conceptualizes the phenomenon as *mediated talaqqi*, a *talaqqi* practice that preserves *sanad* continuity despite the reconfiguration of its spatial and documentary forms. In conclusion, the digitization of *qira'at* serves as an adaptive mechanism that expands the continuity of tradition through the integration of *sanad*, spirituality, and technology, rather than replacing the classical tradition. Nevertheless, its long-term theological legitimacy still requires further academic inquiry and deeper juristic (*fiqh*) consideration.

Keywords: Digital Religion, Islamic Learning Culture, Qira'at, Sanad, Virtual Ethnography.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini menganalisis transformasi tradisi kajian qira'at Al-Qur'an pascapandemi COVID-19 melalui komunitas berbasis Zoom di Indonesia. Kajian ini berfokus pada perubahan pola interaksi pembelajaran, pelestarian sanad, serta pembentukan budaya keagamaan digital. Berbeda dari penelitian terdahulu yang mayoritas menguji efektivitas pedagogis, penelitian ini mengisi kekosongan literatur mengenai negosiasi otoritas dan legitimasi sanad saat praktik talaqqi beralih ke ruang virtual. Menggunakan metode penelitian lapangan (field research) dengan desain etnografi virtual, penelitian ini menerapkan kerangka teori Hine dan digital religion Campbell. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi partisipatif halaqah daring, dokumentasi digital, serta wawancara semi-terstruktur dengan 20 informan yang meliputi guru qira'at pemegang sanad, dosen Ulumul Qur'an, dan anggota komunitas. Analisis data memanfaatkan model interaktif Miles dan Huberman yang dipadukan dengan triangulasi untuk menjamin keabsahan temuan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa komunitas berbasis Zoom berhasil mempertahankan tradisi talaqqi dan kontinuitas sanad keilmuan melalui adaptasi teknologi. Platform ini memperluas akses belajar bagi perempuan dan profesional serta mempererat solidaritas spiritual lintas

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wilayah. Penelitian ini merumuskan fenomena tersebut sebagai mediated talaqqi, yakni praktik talaqqi yang menjaga kesinambungan sanad meskipun bentuk ruang dan dokumentasinya mengalami rekonfigurasi. Kesimpulannya, digitalisasi qira'at berfungsi sebagai adaptasi yang memperluas keberlangsungan tradisi melalui integrasi sanad, spiritualitas, dan teknologi, bukan sebagai pengganti tradisi klasik. Meski demikian, legitimasi teologisnya dalam jangka panjang tetap memerlukan kajian akademis dan pertimbangan fikih yang lebih mendalam.

***Kata Kunci**: Agama Digital, Budaya Pembelajaran Islam, Qira'at, Sanad, Etnografi Virtual, Zoom*

A. Introduction

The study of *qira'at* as an integral part of Islamic scholarship plays a very important role in maintaining the authenticity of the recitation of the Qur'an. In Indonesia, the development of *qira'at* has long been rooted in Islamic institutions such as PTIQ and IIQ Jakarta, which emphasise scholarly sanad and *talaqqi musyafahah* as the main methods of knowledge transmission. However, the Covid-19 pandemic has brought fundamental changes to religious interaction patterns, which were previously based on physical meetings, to online interactions. This phenomenon has led to the emergence of Zoom-based *qira'at* study communities that not only function as learning spaces but also as a medium for social cohesion across regions and generations of Muslims.[1] This transformation highlights the emergence of a religious digital culture, in which virtual space has become a new medium for the transmission of sanad and scholarly interpretations of the Qur'an.

The authority of *qira'at* in this tradition rests on an unbroken chain of transmission (*sanad*) that is traced back to the Prophet Muhammad and validated through direct oral reception (*talaqqi*). This principle was systematized in the classical *qira'at* literature, most authoritatively in Ibn al-Jazari's *al-Nashr fi al-Qira'at al-'Ashr* and his biographical dictionary *Ghayat al-Nihayah fi Tabaqat al-Qurra'*, which established that the soundness of a reading depends on the reliability of its chain of transmitters together with its conformity to the rules of Arabic and to the Uthmanic script, rather than on any particular physical setting. This classical criterion becomes analytically important once the setting of transmission shifts from the physical *majlis* to the virtual room, because it locates the legitimacy of *qira'at* in the integrity of the chain rather than in co-presence as such.

This shift reveals new dynamics in the preservation of Islamic traditions in the digital age. As explained by Crow and Allan, social community changes mark the form of adaptation of egalitarian networks in an effort to build solidarity and strengthen shared spiritual values.[2] Through this social community theory approach, the online *qira'at* study community can be understood as a new social entity that represents the collectivity of Muslims in maintaining the continuity of Al-Qur'an knowledge amid physical limitations. In this context, the transformation to the digital world is not only adaptive but also productive in generating innovations in religious learning culture.[3]

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[1] Süleyman Narol and Huda Fattahi, "The Historical Stages of the Spread of the Ten Qira'at in the Islamic World from the First Hijri Century Until the Present Century," *Selçuk Üniversitesi İslami İlimler Fakültesi Dergisi* 3, no. 1 (2022): 163–81, https://doi.org/10.53352/tevilat.1128578.

[2] Graham Crow and Graham Allan, *Community Life: An Introduction to Local Social Relations*, with Internet Archive (Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1994), http://archive.org/details/communitylifeint0000crow.

[3] Apri Wardana Ritonga et al., "E-Learning Process of Maharah Qira'ah in Higher Education during the Covid-19 Pandemic," *International Journal of Higher Education* 9, no. 6 (2020): 227, https://doi.org/10.5430/ijhe.v9n6p227; Muhammad Yasir, "The Living Application of Qur'anic Legal Norms in

The presence of Zoom as a means of scientific interaction demonstrates the ease and expansion of access to Al-Qur'an learning. Amin emphasises that the use of Zoom in *tahfizh* learning at STAIN Batusangkar is able to maintain the continuity of Qur'an memorisation amid social distancing policies.[4] This study is consistent with the findings Fadlillah et al which shows that video conferencing media such as Zoom and Google Meet are as effective as face-to-face learning in the context of Islamic education.[5] However, the approach taken by the *qira'at* community through Zoom places greater emphasis on the continuity of *sanad* and spiritual networks, making this practice unique among other forms of digital learning.

Previous studies have generally focused on the pedagogical and technical dimensions of online learning during the pandemic, while this study highlights the sociological and religious-cultural aspects of the *qira'at* community. For example, Asdlori explains that the use of digital media in Islamic education tends to be studied from the perspective of the effectiveness of the learning system, rather than the formation of a digital spiritual habitus.[6] Conversely, this study finds that Zoom-based *qira'at* communities have developed into new epistemic and cultural environments, where the transfer of knowledge is not solely text-based, but also builds a spiritual ethos based on virtual solidarity across regions.

To state the contribution more precisely, this study should be distinguished from the substantial existing literature on online *tahfiz*, digital *talaqqi*, virtual *maqra'ah*, and Living Qur'an in the digital age. That body of work has convincingly demonstrated that Qur'anic learning can continue online and that video conferencing can be pedagogically effective; what it has largely left unexamined is how the authority and legitimacy of *sanad* itself are renegotiated once the face-to-face co-presence long treated as constitutive of *talaqqi* is removed. The present study therefore takes this specific problem, namely the digital reconfiguration of *sanad* authority rather than the already well-documented feasibility of online learning, as its central research gap.

This phenomenon also demonstrates the sustainability of Qur'anic culture in Indonesia, as stated by Rasmussen, which highlights that the practice of reading the Qur'an is part of the public cultural project of Indonesian Muslims.[7] In the digital age, this culture has entered a new phase that is more fluid and inclusive, reaching a global audience while maintaining the structure of *sanad* legitimacy. Thus, this study presents a new approach in the form of an analysis of religious digital culture that bridges the classical discourse of Ulumul Quran with the dynamics of contemporary virtual communication and communities.[8]

Academically, this research is of great importance because it expands the framework of Ulumul Quran studies into the digital social sphere, which has previously been largely overlooked in tafsir and *qira'at* studies. This study seeks to emphasise that the science of

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the Indonesian Legal System: A Systematic Review of Ayat al-Aḥkam," *Jurnal Ilmiah Al-Mu'ashirah* 22, no. 1 (2025): 129–43, https://doi.org/10.22373/jim.v22i1.30238.

[4] Muhammad Amin, "Mujāhadah Students: The Innovation of Student Quranic After-Memorizing at the Institut Agama Islam al-Quran al-Ittifaqiah," *Studi Multidisipliner: Jurnal Kajian Keislaman* 10, no. 1 (2023): 25–54, https://doi.org/10.24952/multidisipliner.v10i1.5924.

[5] Nilna Fadlillah et al., "The Pedagogical Impact of Technological Innovations on Qur'anic Learning: A Systematic Literature Review," *Tarbawi: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan* 21, no. 1 (2025).

[6] Asdlori Asdlori, "Learning Media for Islamic Religious Education during a Pandemic: Systematic Literature Review Analysis," *International Journal of Social Science and Religion (IJSSR)*, June 11, 2023, 235–50, https://doi.org/10.53639/ijssr.v4i2.179.

[7] Anne K. Rasmussen, "The Qur'ân in Indonesian Daily Life: The Public Project of Musical Oratory," *Ethnomusicology* 45, no. 1 (2001): 30–57, https://doi.org/10.2307/852633.

[8] Muhammad Yusuf Salam and Adam Mudinilllah, "Zoom Meet: Alternative Media for Supporting Arabic Language Learning During the Pandemic," *Arabi: Journal of Arabic Studies* 7, no. 1 (2022): 13–24, https://doi.org/10.24865/ajas.v7i1.404.

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qira'at is not only preserved through oral tradition in physical spaces, but also through the reproduction of interactions in online media spaces. This model opens up new research opportunities on how the authority of *sanad*, learning practices, and the formation of Qur'anic authenticity can be transformed in the context of communication technology [9] Thus, this study does not merely explain the shift in medium, but reveals how the medium itself has changed the way Muslim communities understand, experience and study revelation.

Theoretically, this study combines three complementary lenses. In addition to the community perspective of Crow and Allan, it draws on Campbell's framework of digital religion, which shows how religious authority, community, and ritual are reconstituted rather than merely replicated in networked media,[10] and on Hine's virtual ethnography, which provides the methodological orientation for treating an online community as a culturally meaningful field site in its own right. [11] Together these frameworks allow the *qira'at* community to be read not simply as a technical adaptation but as a site in which scholarly authority is actively renegotiated under new mediated conditions.

This study is guided by three interrelated research questions. First, how has the culture of *qira'at* learning developed through Zoom in the post-pandemic period? Second, how do the community perspective of Crow and Allan and Campbell's digital-religion framework help explain the patterns of solidarity and interaction within these communities? Third, what are the theological and epistemological consequences of this digital transformation for the authority and authenticity of *qira'at* learning in Indonesia? These questions aim to identify emerging forms of Qur'anic culture in digital space and to clarify the contribution of online community models to the sustainability of *sanad* and the teaching of the Qur'an.

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a virtual ethnographic design, which aims to gain an in-depth understanding of the social and cultural dynamics of *qira'at* learning through Zoom communities after the pandemic. This approach is in line with the religious digital research framework as recommended by Sudirman et al In his study of the social transformation of Islamic education in the online era, to capture the subjective meanings that emerge from interactions between members of virtual communities. [12] The research design focuses on phenomenological and interpretative meanings that describe the scientific practice of *qira'at* in the digital space as part of Qur'anic cultural innovation.

Following Hine's approach to the internet as an embedded and embodied field site, the community studied was treated as a bounded yet networked cultural setting.[13] The field site is a voluntary, non-degree online *qira'at halaqah* that convenes via Zoom twice a week and is coordinated by sanad-holding teachers connected to *qira'at* networks associated with IIQ and PTIQ Jakarta. Its membership is national in scope, with several participants residing in Malaysia and Brunei Darussalam. Because the community is self-organized rather than

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[9] Fauzi Fathur Rosi et al., "Politics and Ideology in Qur'anic Translation: A Comparative Analysis Between the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs Translation and the Hilali-Khan Translation," *Jurnal Ilmiah Al-Mu'ashirah* 22, no. 1 (2025): 93–113, https://doi.org/10.22373/jim.v22i1.29862; Kharisul Wathoni et al., "Development Pattern of IT-Based Islamic Religious Learning After Covid-19 Pandemic in Coastal Serang Regency," *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 20, no. 2 (2023): 305–16, https://doi.org/10.14421/jpai.v20i2.7808.

[10] Heidi A. Campbell and Ruth Tsuria, *Digital Religion: Understanding Religious Practice in Digital Media*, 2nd ed. (Routledge, 2021), https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429295683; Crow and Allan, *Community Life*.

[11] Hine, Christine, *From Virtual Ethnography to the Embedded, Embodied, Everyday Internet* (The Routledge companion to digital ethnography. Routledge, 2017).

[12] Sudirman Sudirman et al., "The Transformation of State Islamic Higher Education Institutions into World-Class University: From Globalisation to Institutional Values," *Social Sciences & Humanities Open* 12 (January 2025): 101705, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssaho.2025.101705.

[13] Hine, Christine, *From Virtual Ethnography to the Embedded, Embodied, Everyday Internet*.

institutionally accredited, it provides a particularly informative case for observing how sanad practices are sustained outside conventional institutional structures.

The research subjects consisted of 20 active members of the *qira'at* study community who had participated in online *halaqah* via Zoom for at least one year, including teachers, *tahsin* students, and academic researchers from IIQ Jakarta and PTIQ Jakarta. The sampling technique used purposive sampling, taking into account the active involvement and consistency of participants in attending online *halaqah*.[14] This approach enables researchers to obtain data that is representative of the social and spiritual phenomena of the community, as also applied by Katoch & Rana a study on Online Spiritual Meets (OSMs).[15]

For transparency, the twenty informants comprised four *sanad*-holding *qira'at* teachers, three Ulumul Qur'an lecturers, eleven *tahsin* and *tahfiz* students, and two academic researchers; twelve were women and eight were men, drawn from Sumatra, Java, and two overseas locations. Purposive sampling followed three explicit inclusion criteria: a minimum of one year of continuous participation in the online *halaqah*; regular attendance verified against the community's Zoom attendance records; and willingness to be interviewed and recorded. Recruitment continued until thematic saturation, the point at which additional interviews no longer generated new categories.

The main instrument in this study was the researcher himself as the key instrument, assisted by semi-structured interview guides, participatory observation in Zoom rooms, and digital documentation (chat text, Zoom links, and study recordings). Data collection was conducted in stages through in-depth interviews over a period of three months, observation of weekly online *halaqah* activities, and collection of audiovisual documents recording virtual *talaqqi-musyafahah* practices. The data collection procedure followed the stages of virtual ethnography as outlined by about the integration of pesantren culture with digital technology.[16]

Data analysis was conducted inductively using an interactive thematic analysis model owned by Miles et al, covering data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing.[17] This analysis process is integrated with triangulation of sources, methods, and time to ensure validity. Data from observations and interviews are compared with digital documentation to identify patterns of social interaction, spiritual participation, and the formation of scientific identity among Al-Qur'an scholars. This model reinforces methodological replication due to the transparency of the research stages and consistency between instruments and data. This approach is also parallel to Abdurrahman et al., (2025) who researched digital preaching based on WhatsApp using triangulation and researcher reflexivity methods to maintain data credibility.

Analysis proceeded through open coding of interview transcripts and observation notes, followed by the grouping of codes into three overarching themes, namely the digital transformation of *qira'at* learning, the formation of community culture, and the adaptation of *sanad*, which organize the discussion below. Coding was carried out manually and cross-checked by re-reading the transcripts against the digital archive in order to reduce interpretive

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[14] Narol and Fattahi, "The Historical Stages of the Spread of the Ten Qira'at in the Islamic World from the First Hijri Century Until the Present Century."

[15] Rupinder Katoch and Avinash Rana, "Online Spiritual Meets (OSMs) and User Behavior – A Divine Application of Technology during COVID-19," *Computers in Human Behavior* 139 (February 2023): 107514, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2022.107514.

[16] Vinca Desti Mardiana and Dian Hidayati, "Transformasi Digital Pelaksanaan Pembelajaran Tematik di Sekolah pada Masa Pandemi," *Journal of Education and Teaching (JET)* 3, no. 2 (2022): 213–23, https://doi.org/10.51454/jet.v3i2.180.

[17] Matthew B. Miles et al., *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook* (SAGE Publications, 2013).

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bias. A methodological clarification is also warranted regarding the numerical figures reported in the findings. These figures are descriptive frequencies drawn from the community's Zoom attendance records and from a short-structured item appended to each of the twenty interviews; they are used only to summarize this small purposive sample and are not intended as statistically generalizable measures. Given the qualitative design and the limited sample size, the percentages should be read as indicative patterns within this particular community rather than as inferential claims about *qira'at* learners in general.

B. Result and Discussion

Research shows that the *qira'at* study community through Zoom has created a Quranic learning ecosystem across space and time. This transformation occurred because learning activities, previously limited to physical spaces such as dormitories and Islamic campuses, are now conducted digitally through the Zoom application. Community members are spread across various regions of Indonesia and even in several other countries, such as Malaysia and Brunei Darussalam. Online *halaqah* sessions are held regularly twice a week and involve speakers with *sanad* certification who act as primary guides in correcting recitations and understanding *qira'at* theory. The learning process utilizes screen sharing to display Syathibiyyah texts and recordings of participants' recitations, which are corrected directly by the supervising ustadz. Interviews with Ulumul Qur'an lecturers at PTIQ Jakarta indicate that:

"The transformation of *qira'at* learning to the digital space is not simply a technical response to the pandemic, but has become a new form of transmission of Islamic knowledge. Zoom *halaqahs* have opened access to *sanads* for people who previously had difficulty attending in-person qira'at assemblies due to geographic and work-related factors."[18]

Observations show that the online *qira'at* community serves not only as a learning space but also as a platform for fostering spiritual brotherhood among members. Participants interact actively during the *halaqah* and through WhatsApp and Telegram groups afterward. One participant from Medan stated:

"Even though we never meet in person, we feel like we're in the same gathering of knowledge. There's a sense of togetherness and a spirit of preserving the Quran together."[19]

Research findings also indicate that digitalization has not eliminated the traditions of *sanad* and *talaqqi*. The learning process continues through live recitation by students in the presence of a supervising teacher (*ustadz*), who then provides real-time corrections. An interview with Ustadz Muhammad Ridwan, a *qira'at* teacher with *sanad* in Jakarta, demonstrated that the validity of *sanad* can still be maintained through online media. He stated:

"The essence of *sanad* lies not in the physical space, but in the continuity of the teacher's recitation and corrections to the students. As long as *talaqqi* continues live, the value of the *sanad* remains intact." [20]

This statement shows that digital media expands the accessibility of Quranic studies without diminishing the authority of traditional scholarship. Furthermore, observations also indicate that the presence of Zoom recreates a sense of spiritual intimacy among members, even without face-to-face interaction. 85% of interviewed participants stated that online learning still provides a sense of emotional and spiritual connection similar to conventional learning. Observation data also indicates consistently high participation, with an average attendance of 78% at each weekly meeting. Community members demonstrate discipline in

[18] Interview with Muhammad Ridwan, PTIQ lecturer Jakarta.
[19] Interview with Shalha Rahmatina, IIQ Student Jakarta.
[20] Interview with Ahmad Jaeni, Lajnah Quran Jakarta.

attending sequential reading sessions, correcting pronunciation of letters, and deepening their knowledge of Tajweed and *farsh al-surat*.

In terms of interest, the study found that the main motivation for participants to attend online *halaqah* was their love for the Qur'an and their desire to maintain the scholarly *sanad* of *qira'a*t. Based on interview data, 70% of respondents participated in the study for the purpose of scholarly *sanad*, while the other 30% were oriented towards improving their reading and interest in teaching. The majority of respondents (90%) felt that the online learning method helped them obtain broader knowledge resources and facilitated the repetition of material. Several technical obstacles, such as network disruptions, only had a temporary impact and did not dampen their enthusiasm for learning.

In terms of social engagement, this *qira'at* study group displays an egalitarian and participatory community structure. Each participant is given the opportunity to read, correct, and provide input according to their capacity. Communication dynamics are two-way, both between teachers and students and among participants. Observations noted a significant increase in interaction among members after the first three months of the activity. In online chats after the activity, participants actively shared book references, reading links, and recordings of their recitations. These activities show that the digital platform is not only a space for teaching but also a place for forming Qur'anic social networks.

In addition to social aspects, the study also mapped the spiritual values that grew within this community. The values of *istiqamah, tawadhu*', and *ukhuwah ruhiyyah* became principles that lived among the participants. Based on observations during the *halaqah* sessions, 80% of participants showed consistent attendance, even some members who had household activities continued to participate actively. The interview data also shows that each learning session fosters a sense of calm and spiritual happiness, which illustrates a high level of emotional involvement in the study of the Qur'an. This moral commitment shows that the value of worship is the main driver of their participation.

The results of digital documentation collection show that more than 50 hours of *halaqah* recordings are stored as community archives. These archives are used as further learning materials by new participants and by ustadz to review the progress of each student. The documentation data also shows that participants utilise the recording playback feature to relearn *makhraj* and differences in recitation between the *Qira'at Sab'ah* and *'Asyarah* traditions. This documentation proves the existence of digital awareness among members in maintaining a neat and systematic *sanad* recitation.

In a structural context, the online *qira'at* community is formed from a non-hierarchical network that is collectively led. Community leaders serve as technical coordinators and *halaqah* moderators, while the supervising *ustadz* play an academic and spiritual role. This mode of organisation allows for more flexible learning activities, transcending age and educational levels. Participants come from diverse backgrounds, including students, *tahfizh* teachers, lecturers, and housewives. This diversity broadens the model of interaction, which has implications for increasing cross-social solidarity.

From the triangulation of interview and observation data, it was found that the shift from physical to digital communities did not reduce the quality of learning. On the contrary, online learning increased access to materials and expanded opportunities for women and workers to study without geographical limitations. It was noted that around 62% of members were women who had previously been inactive in face-to-face *halaqah* due to time constraints. Thus, the Zoom platform has become a catalyst for expanding participation in *qira'at* studies in the post-pandemic era.

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Table 1. Statistical data obtained from attendance and observation of online activities

Observation Aspects	Frequency/Total Participants	(%)
Average attendance per meeting	15 out of 19 active members	78%
Participants with scientific motivation	14 people	70%
Participants who use the recording playback feature	17 people	89%
Participants experiencing technical internet difficulties	5 people	26%
Women's participation in the community	12 people	62%
Total duration of online *halaqah* recordings	±50 hours	-

Overall, the results of the study confirm that the digital ecosystem has become a new space for the preservation and dissemination of *qira'at* knowledge in Indonesia. This transformation has successfully combined traditional scientific dimensions with modern technological support without losing the spiritual values that form the basis of Islamic scholarship. The online *qira'at* study community has proven not only capable of maintaining *sanad* and reading discipline, but also of building an inclusive learning culture, oriented towards compassion, and based *on ukhuwah Islamiyah* (Islamic brotherhood).

The Formation of *Qira'at* Community Culture in the Digital Space

The phenomenon of the formation of a *qira'at* community culture in the digital space shows a paradigm shift in understanding the scientific authority of the Qur'an. Before the pandemic, the processes of *talaqqi* and *musyafahah* were always understood in the context of physical presence between teacher and student.[21] However, the results of the study show that Zoom's presence has succeeded in maintaining the essence of *sanad* through scheduled interactions and live readings in virtual spaces. This transformation indicates that the digital space can become a new locus for Islamic scholarly practices without losing its sacred value. This digital transformation is in line with the view that Wahid in Exploring the Intersection of Islam and Digital Technology, which emphasises that digitalization is not merely a tool, but rather an epistemic space capable of expanding access to and legitimising religious knowledge.[22]

In a social context, the online *qira'at* study community was formed through solidarity across regions and age groups. Research data shows a pattern of high digital social cohesion among participants, where their interactions are not limited to learning sessions but also include religious discussions and virtual social activities.[23] This shows that Zoom functions as a "digital Qur'anic public space" that fosters a spirit of *ukhuwah* (brotherhood) and transnational collaboration among Muslims. This finding is in line with studies *Jannah* in The Bros Team and Public Qur'an in Indonesia, which explains the emergence of the phenomenon of digital religious communities in public recitation practices, where reading the Qur'an becomes a means of forming social and religious identities in online media.[24]

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[21] Mazlan Ibrahim, 'The Usage of Interpretation Methodology of Ambiguous Verses in the Ancestors's Exegesis', *Islamiyyat*, 47.1 (2025), pp. 245–57, doi:10.17576/islamiyyat-2025-4701-20.

[22] Soleh Hasan Wahid, "Exploring the Intersection of Islam and Digital Technology: A Bibliometric Analysis," *Social Sciences & Humanities Open* 10 (2024): 101085, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssaho.2024.101085.

[23] Suud Sarim Karimullah, 'THE ROLES OF MOSQUES AS CENTERS FOR EDUCATION AND MANAGEMENT IN ISLAMIC COMMUNITIES', *Jurnal Bina Ummat: Membina Dan Membentengi Ummat*, 6.2 (2023), doi:https://doi.org/10.38214/jurnalbinaummatstidnatsir.v6i2. 184.

[24] Imas Lu'ul Jannah, "Pious yet Trendy Young Muslim: 'The Bros Team' and Public Qur'an in Indonesia," *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Hadis* 23, no. 2 (2022): 373–90, https://doi.org/10.14421/qh.v23i2.4465.

Based on interview analysis, online interactions reveal a pattern of horizontal communication that replaces traditional hierarchical structures. Participants feel that they have an equal position in learning, something that rarely occurs in the context of conventional *halaqah*. Teachers act as discussion facilitators, while participants actively participate in providing input on the readings of fellow members. Thus, the social patterns of this online community foster a democratic space for the dissemination of *qira'at* knowledge, which supports the theory of "community of practice" as described Crow & Allan, that the community is formed on the basis of shared commitment and active participation in the learning process.[25]

Digital *Qira'at* Learning Model and *Sanad* Adaptation

Analysis of the observation results shows that Zoom-based *halaqah* activities follow the traditional *talaqqi* structure but are adapted to modern technology. The activity begins with participants reciting in front of the instructor, followed by correction and reinforcement of tajwid aspects and differences in the imam *qira'at's* recitation. Each session is recorded and stored as a digital archive for ongoing evaluation. This adaptation of format has led to new efficiencies in *sanad* documentation, as voice recordings can now be used as proof of the validity of recitations as well as a learning resource for future generations. Study: An Intelligent Framework Based on Deep Learning for Online Quran Learning during the Pandemic Nigar et al supports this finding by demonstrating that machine learning-based digital technology is capable of maintaining the quality of online *qira'at* learning through reading performance tracking.[26]

In addition, the interview results show that the use of Zoom provides temporal flexibility for participants. The recording system allows them to replay each session to correct reading errors. From a pedagogical perspective, this approach changes the learning pattern to be independent and reflective. Some participants even utilised Zoom features such as screen sharing to display the Al-Shatibiyyah text together, creating a collaborative learning experience based on digital literacy. This phenomenon demonstrates the integration of technology and traditional methods, which is referred to as as a symbiotic interaction between Islamic art and digital technology in the context of spiritual education.[27]

From an academic perspective, the online *qira'at* study community is also capable of developing a certified digital *sanad* learning system. The supervising ustadz verifies participants' recitations through audio recordings and issues online certificates to those who have completed specific recitations. This practice marks the integration between traditional scholarly *sanad* and modern conventions regarding the validation of spiritual competence. Thus, the online *qira'at* model introduces a new paradigm in which *sanad* is maintained but the medium of delivery undergoes an expansion of epistemological and documentary space.

Negotiating the Authority of *Sanad* in Virtual Space

The most theologically consequential question raised by these findings is not whether *qira'at* can be taught online, which the data clearly show to be possible, but whether a *sanad* transmitted through mediated *talaqqi* carries the same legitimacy as one transmitted in

[25] Crow and Allan, *Community Life*.

[26] Natasha Nigar et al., "An Intelligent Framework Based on Deep Learning for Online Quran Learning during Pandemic," *Applied Computational Intelligence and Soft Computing* 2023, no. 1 (2023): 5541699, https://doi.org/10.1155/2023/5541699.

[27] Maziar Asefi et al., "Art and Technology Interactions in Islamic and Christian Context: Historical Approach to Architectural Globalization," *Frontiers of Architectural Research* 8, no. 1 (2019): 66–79, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.foar.2018.12.003.

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physical co-presence. The informants themselves did not treat this question as settled. Several *sanad*-holding teachers drew a distinction between the technical validity of correction, which they regarded as fully achievable over Zoom because articulation (*makhraj*) and prosody can be heard and corrected in real time, and the dimension of adab, the embodied etiquette, physical proximity, and *baraka* historically associated with sitting before a teacher, which some felt was attenuated online. As one *qira'at* teacher explained: "I can hear every letter clearly through the microphone and correct it at once. What I cannot fully replace is the presence of sitting before the teacher. So, before I grant the ijazah, I listen for a longer time and more often than I would in person."[28]

This account suggests that digital *talaqqi* does not simply reproduce classical *sanad* practice but reconfigures it: legitimacy is preserved through intensified aural verification and systematic documentation rather than through physical proximity.[29] Read against the classical criteria codified by Ibn al-Jazari, in which the validity of a reading depends on the soundness of its chain and its conformity to Arabic and to the *Uthmanic* script rather than on a particular spatial setting, the medium of transmission is not in itself disqualifying. At the same time, the juristic status of online *ijazah* remains genuinely contested among contemporary scholars, and this study does not claim to resolve it.[30] What the data document is an emergent practice in which a community actively constructs legitimacy through new verification norms, precisely the dynamic that Campbell's digital-religion framework anticipates, in which authority online is neither simply transferred nor destroyed but renegotiated. It is this renegotiation, rather than any wholesale replacement of tradition, that the present study seeks to foreground.

Spiritual Transformation and Religious Identity in the Zoom Community

The triangulation of observational data and interviews yielded significant findings regarding the spiritual transformation experienced by members of the online *qira'at* community. Participants revealed that the virtual space did not diminish their devotion in reading and studying the Qur'an; rather, it deepened their religious experience by providing a calm and focused personal atmosphere. Some participants described this activity as a "shared space for remembrance" that gave new meaning to digital worship practices. This phenomenon of digital spirituality is consistent with the research on Living Quran in the Digital Age by Ziyadaturrohmah et al, which found that online Qur'an applications during the pandemic fostered digital communities that were able to maintain spiritual bonds despite social restrictions.[31]

The emotional involvement of participants was demonstrated through their active participation in online recitation even amidst their busy work or study schedules. Several informants assessed that online learning actually fostered spiritual discipline because it encouraged participants to manage their time and practise consistency in attending *halaqah.* This phenomenon explains the recalibration of the religious identity of modern Muslims, who no longer limit Qur'anic practices to mosques or Islamic boarding schools, but bring them into the global digital space. Research Hamidi et al emphasises that the spiritual sustainability

[28] Interview by Qira'at Teacher

[29] A Demir, 'Traces of Ahl al-Bayt in Shahristānī's Tafsir, Mafātīh al-Asrār', Hitit Theology Journal, 22.1 (2023), pp. 392–422, doi:10.14395/hid.1243817.

[30] Suarni Suarni and Syukrinur Syukrinur, 'REVITALIZATION OF QURANIC READING QUALITY IN COASTAL COMMUNITIES POST-TSUNAMI: A STUDY IN GLEE BRUEK LHOONG VILLAGE, ACEH BESAR', *Jurnal Ilmiah Al-Mu'ashirah*, 21.1 (2024), p. 104, doi:10.22373/jim.v21i1.23439.

[31] Nikhlah Ziyadaturrohmah et al., "Living Quran Di Era Digital Analisis Penggunaan Aplikasi Quran Dan Doa Dalam Ibadah Ramadhan Selama Pandemi," *Reflection: Islamic Education Journal* 2, no. 2 (2025): 331–41, https://doi.org/10.61132/reflection.v2i2.1081.

of Muslims now depends on the extent to which religious institutions are able to adapt to a technology-friendly digital paradigm while remaining grounded in Qur'anic values.[32]

The transformation of religious identity in this community also has a strong social dimension. Observations show that members from various professional backgrounds are connected by a shared intention to preserve the *sanad* of recitation. This phenomenon reveals a new form of inclusive faith network that occurs through digital space. Online *qira'at* learning has become a transformative means for individuals to strengthen their religious identity while reinforcing the values of Islamic moderation in the technological era, as discussed in the study Hadiyanto et al entitled Religious Moderation on Instagram: An Islamic Perspective. The study shows that social media has positive potential in strengthening moderation and Islamic commitment through a spiritual communication revolution.[33]

The results of this study are both related to and different from previous studies on the digitalization of Islamic learning and Quranic studies. This research supports previous studies showing that the digitalization of Quranic learning has resulted in a significant transformation from traditional learning models to digital and hybrid models without losing the essence of *talaqqi*, *sanad*, and spiritual closeness.[34] Learning that previously took place in person through *talaqqi-musyafahah*, has now evolved through the use of digital platforms such as Zoom, WhatsApp, Google Classroom, YouTube, Instagram, and mobile Quranic learning applications. Despite these media changes, various studies confirm that classical methods such as *Baghdadiyah, Iqra', Qira'at*i, and *talaqqi* remain the primary foundation for maintaining the authenticity of Quranic recitation. In this context, digital technology is positioned not as a replacement for tradition, but as an adaptive instrument that expands access to learning and strengthens the sustainability of Islamic scholarly *sanad* in the modern era.[35] The digitalization program for *qira'ah* learning and Quranic Reading Learning (QRL) has even involved thousands of participants through a structured online learning system, starting with initial ability mapping, regular virtual meetings, and final online evaluation.[36]

In terms of benefits, the findings of this study also support various studies concluding that digital *talaqqi* and mobile learning offer significant opportunities for expanding access to Quranic learning. Online learning systems enable Islamic boarding school students, students, and the general public outside Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) to continue intensive learning without being hampered by geographical distance and time constraints. In addition to expanding the reach of the *sanad*, digital learning is also considered more efficient in terms of cost and time, and offers schedule flexibility that better suits the needs of modern society. Various Quranic learning applications have been shown to increase learning motivation,

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[32] M. Luthfi Hamidi et al., "The Quest for Sustainable Mosques: A Paradigm Shift with the Quadruple Bottom Line Framework," *Sustainable Futures* 9 (2025): 100588, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sftr.2025.100588.

[33] Andy Hadiyanto et al., "Religious Moderation in Instagram: An Islamic Interpretation Perspective," *Heliyon* 11, no. 4 (2025): e42816, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2025.e42816.

[34] Ainiyatul Latifah et al., "Pembelajaran Tahfidz Dengan Metode Talaqqi Via Aplikasi Zoom Dan Whatsapp (Studi Kasus Setoran Online Rumah Tahfidz SMP Ma'arif NU 1 Wanareja)," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 12, no. 1 (2021): 1–12, https://doi.org/10.22236/jpi.v12i1.7006; Dodik Fathur Rohman and Zulfitria Zulfitria, "Pembelajaran Tahfidzul Qur'an Ber-Sanad Melalui Metode Talaqqi Berbasis Digital Mobile Learning," *Suliwa: Jurnal Multidisiplin Teknik, Sains, Pendidikan Dan Teknologi* 2, no. 2 (2025): 163–67, https://doi.org/10.62671/suliwa.v2i2.86.

[35] Habib Zainuri et al., "Al-Qur'an Learning Models in Global Studies: Traditional and Modern Approaches," *Tafkir: Interdisciplinary Journal of Islamic Education* 7, no. 2 (2026): 445–60, https://doi.org/10.31538/tijie.v7i2.2575.

[36] Mutimmatul Faidah et al., "Digitalization of the Quranic Reading Learning Program for Collage Students, Indonesia," *2023 IEEE 5th Eurasia Conference on Biomedical Engineering, Healthcare and Sustainability*, 2023, 76, https://doi.org/10.3390/engproc2023055076; Ritonga et al., "E-Learning Process of Maharah Qira'ah in Higher Education during the Covid-19 Pandemic."

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improve tajweed accuracy, and facilitate students' recitation.[37] In a study of e-learning in Islamic Religious Education, online learning was also deemed to have a positive impact on learning monitoring, evaluation of learning outcomes, and increased student engagement.[38] In addition to pedagogical aspects, the presence of digital assemblies based on Zoom, YouTube, and Instagram also strengthens the social and spiritual dimensions of the Muslim community through online *tadarus*, digital da'wah, contextual tafsir, and the development of digital Sufism.[39]

However, this study identified various challenges and limitations in its implementation, such as network constraints, limited digital devices, and so on. The results of this study agree with the findings that reveal a number of challenges and limitations in implementing digital-based Quranic learning.[40] Technical constraints such as weak internet connections, limited digital devices, and connection disruptions are major obstacles to maintaining the smooth running of online learning.[41] Furthermore, the lack of direct face-to-face interaction caused some participants to experience fatigue, decreased concentration, and reduced depth of emotional interaction between teachers and students. Several studies also highlight a shift in the learning paradigm from student-centered to media-centered due to the dominance of technology in the learning process. In the context of *talaqqi* and *sanad*, concerns have arisen regarding teacher integrity, excessively loose *sanad* authorization, and the potential weakening of traditional etiquette in the transmission of Quranic knowledge.[42] Therefore, although participants acknowledged the benefits of online learning, most still viewed face-to-face learning as a more ideal model for maintaining the spiritual quality and depth of scholarly relationships.

C. Conclusion

This study concludes that the transformation of *qira'at* learning through digital platforms such as Zoom fosters a new scientific and spiritual culture in Indonesia through the concept of *mediated talaqqi*. This phenomenon proves that virtual media can expand

[37] Padriyanti et al., "Learning Qira'ah Al-Qur'an Using the Tilawati Mobile Application in the Digital Era," *Intiha: Islamic Education Journal* 2, no. 1 (2024): 202–9, https://doi.org/10.58988/intiha.v2i1.324.

[38] Charisma Adinda et al., "Literature Review on the Use of E-Learning for Islamic Religious Education Learning," *Al-Masail: Journal of Islamic Studies* 2, no. 1 (2024): 20–27, https://doi.org/10.61677/al-masail.v2i1.181.

[39] Kholid Haryono and Junaidi Safitri, "Enhancing Quranic Literacy for Activists of Karang Taruna Using Digital Quran Memorization: Peningkatan Literasi Qur'an Bagi Aktivis Karang Taruna Menggunakan Qur'an Digital Hafalan," *Dinamisia : Jurnal Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat* 9, no. 1 (2025): 96–108, https://doi.org/10.31849/dinamisia.v9i1.22637; Lu'luatul Fauziah et al., "Living Quran Di Era Digital: Analisis Praktik Tadarus Online Selama Ramadhan Pada Platform Internet: Penelitian," *Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat Dan Riset Pendidikan* 4, no. 1 (2025): 656–61, https://doi.org/10.31004/jerkin.v4i1.1644.

[40] Al Faiz Muhammad Rabbany Tarman, Arifah Cahyo Andini Suparmun, and Isral Naska, 'PROGRESSIVE INTERPRETATION OF THE QUR'AN IN TAFSIR AT-TANWIR: MUHAMMADIYAH'S COLLECTIVE IDENTITY ON ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES', *QiST: Journal of Quran and Tafseer Studies*, 3.2 (2024), doi:10.23917/qist.v3i2.3717.

[41] Fahrina YustiasariLiriwati et al., "Implementasi Talaqqi Digital Dalam Pembelajaran Al-Qur'an Di Pondok Pesantren Nurul Iman Jambi," *IHSANIKA: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 2, no. 4 (2024): 37–52, https://doi.org/10.59841/ihsanika.v2i4.1865; M. Nurul Ikhsan Saleh et al., "Management of Online Learning in Islamic Higher Education: Challenges and Prospects," *POTENSIA: Jurnal Kependidikan Islam* 9, no. 1 (2023): 58, https://doi.org/10.24014/potensia.v9i1.22761.

[42] Muhammad Zul Ikhwan Zahari et al., "Opportunities And Challenges in the Authorization of the Sanad Talaqqi of The Qur'an in Digital Era," *Contrarius Series: Law & Social Justice* 1, no. 1 (2026): 34–42, https://doi.org/10.53955/cslsj.v1i1.29; Ahmad Saefulloh, "Contextual Tafsir and Digital Islam in Southeast Asia: A Narrative Review," *Sinergi International Journal of Islamic Studies* 2, no. 2 (2024): 109–22, https://doi.org/10.61194/ijis.v2i2.603.

geographical reach and maintain the continuity of *sanad* without diminishing the sacredness of the *talaqqi* and *musyafahah* traditions. Driven by spiritual motivation, this digital interaction preserves the values of *ukhuwah*, *tawadhu'*, and *istiqamah*, while establishing the "virtual *maqra'ah*" as an inclusive and flexible alternative for Qur'anic learning. Academically and practically, these findings enrich the fields of digital hermeneutics and online religious ethnography, as well as offer new directions for developing digital-based *qira'at* curricula in Islamic higher education institutions and Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*).

However, this study has limitations as it focuses on a single community with a limited sample of informants, rendering its findings analytically transferable rather than statistically generalizable. Furthermore, the study does not examine the juristic (*fiqh*) validity of online certification (*ijazah*) nor does it incorporate the perspectives of scholars who reject online *talaqqi*. Therefore, future research is recommended to explore digital *sanad* ethics, the role of artificial intelligence, and cross-country comparative studies to deepen the understanding of the sustainability of Qur'anic traditions in the digital era.

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Interviews

Interview with Muhammad Ridwan, PTIQ lecturer Jakarta.
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Interview with Ahmad Jaeni, Lajnah Al-Quran Jakarta.
Interview by Qira'at Teacher