

Living Qur'an in The *Pesantren* Campus: Religious Authority and Qur'anic Pedagogy at Ma'had Al-Jami'ah Uin Ar-Raniry, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how the Living Qur'an is practiced through religious authority and Qur'anic pedagogy at Ma'had Al-Jami'ah UIN Ar-Raniry, Indonesia. While Ma'had Al-Jami'ah has become a common institutional model in Indonesian Islamic higher education, its operation within Aceh's distinctive socio-religious context offers an important case for understanding how *pesantren*-based Qur'anic formation is negotiated in a modern university. The study addresses the tendency to treat *tahsīn* and Qur'anic learning primarily as technical processes of improving recitation, while overlooking their broader role in producing religious subjectivity, moral discipline, and embodied authority. Employing a qualitative case study design, the research draws on observation, semi-structured interviews with Ma'had administrators, Qur'anic teachers, students, and alumni, as well as institutional documentation and placement test data. The findings show that Ma'had Al-Jami'ah functions as an institutional space where the Qur'an is lived through *tahsīn*, *talqīn*, *tahfīz*, worship habituation, moral supervision, and emotional-psychomotor pedagogy. Religious authority is constructed through the teacher's voice, correction, repetition, textual reference, and direct teacher-student interaction. The study also reveals that students' Qur'anic literacy is uneven, shaped by prior educational backgrounds, institutional classification, learning duration, and everyday academic pressures. Theoretically, this article expands Living Qur'an studies by showing that Qur'anic reception is not only ritual or communal, but also institutional, pedagogical, embodied, and socially differentiated. It contributes to Qur'anic studies, lived Islam, *pesantren* studies, and Islamic higher education by demonstrating how the Qur'an becomes lived within the disciplined structure of a *pesantren* campus.

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INTRODUCTION

The conversation the contemporary study of Islam has increasingly moved beyond normative-textual analysis toward the investigation of how Islamic values, authority, knowledge, and practices are lived, negotiated, and institutionalized in everyday social life. This analytical shift is significant because Islam is not experienced only as doctrine, law, or scripture, but also as embodied practice, moral discipline, educational formation, and institutional routine. In Indonesia, this issue is particularly important because Islamic life is shaped by the interaction of formal religious education, *pesantren* traditions, local cultures, public morality, and changing modes of religious authority. Islamic higher education, therefore, has become a strategic site for examining how Muslim subjectivity, Qur'anic literacy, and religious authority are produced within modern institutional settings. Previous scholarship has shown that *pesantren* traditions continue to influence Islamic education in Indonesia by shaping knowledge transmission, ethical discipline, and Muslim identity, even when they are adapted into modern universities and state educational institutions (Dhofier, 1999; Hefner, 2009; Lukens-Bull, 2005; Tan, 2011). Recent research on *pesantren* pedagogy further shows that the continuity of Islamic knowledge transmission cannot be separated from pedagogical adaptation, since *pesantren* are increasingly required to preserve their epistemic authority while responding to students' changing learning needs and contemporary educational demands (Muhlis et al., 2025).

This study is situated within the broader scholarly discussion on Living Qur'an and lived Islam. The Living Qur'an approach emphasizes that the Qur'an should not be studied only as a written text or exegetical object, but also as a sacred discourse embodied in rituals, devotional practices, educational programs, social ethics, and community life (Habillah, 2019; Mansur, 2007; Rafiq, 2014). Recent studies have further emphasized that Qur'anic teachings are continuously interpreted and integrated into Muslim everyday experience through memorization, recitation, communal programs, and socio-cultural practices (A. A. Hidayat et al., 2024; Mukhtar et al., 2023). Also show that Qur'anic values are lived through local Islamic ritual in the *Atib Koambai* tradition in Riau, where dhikr functions not only as devotional remembrance but also as a medium of communal solidarity, spiritual discipline, and local Islamic interpretation (Tambunan et al., 2025). In a similar direction, lived Islam scholarship rejects rigid distinctions between the religious and the secular by examining how Muslims negotiate faith within gendered, institutional, interfaith, pedagogical, and everyday contexts (McGinty, 2023; Raudvere, 2018; Stiles, 2021). These perspectives are useful for understanding Qur'anic learning not merely as religious instruction, but as a process through which Islamic meanings are practiced, embodied, and socially organized.

Within this broader transformation, Ma'had Al-Jami'ah has become an important institutional model in many Indonesian Islamic higher education institutions. Its significance does not lie in the claim that it is unique as a university-based Ma'had, since similar institutions exist in many State Islamic Universities. Rather, the case of Ma'had Al-Jami'ah UIN (Universitas Islam Negeri) Ar-Raniry is academically significant because it is located in Aceh, a region with a distinctive socio-religious history, strong *dayah* traditions, recognized Islamic legal frameworks, and a public culture deeply shaped by Islamic norms. Aceh occupies a special position within Indonesia's legal and political structure through special autonomy and the formal implementation of Islamic law in regional governance (Feener, 2013; Ichwan et al., 2025; Salim, 2008). This makes UIN Ar-Raniry a particularly relevant case for examining how *pesantren*-based religious formation operates within a university situated in Indonesia's most explicitly Islamically regulated province.

Ma'had Al-Jami'ah UIN Ar-Raniry should therefore not be understood merely as a dormitory or a technical Qur'anic learning center. It is better conceptualized as an institutional arena where *pesantren* traditions, Qur'anic pedagogy, religious authority, and Acehnese Islamic culture intersect. The Ma'had organizes programs such as *tahsīn* and *talqīn*, Qur'anic correction, worship habituation, moral supervision, and character formation. These practices indicate that the Qur'an is approached not only as a text to be read correctly according to the rules of tajwid, but also as a living source of discipline, ethical formation, and religious identity. In this sense, Ma'had Al-Jami'ah represents a concrete site of Living Qur'an, where the Qur'an is received, recited, corrected, memorized, embodied, and institutionalized in students' daily lives (Habillah, 2019; A. A. Hidayat et al., 2024; Mansur, 2007; Mukhtar et al., 2023; Rafiq, 2014).

The central scholarly tension addressed in this article concerns the tendency to treat Qur'anic

pedagogy as a technical process of improving reading accuracy, while overlooking its broader role in producing religious subjectivity and authority. In many educational studies, *taḥsīn* is commonly discussed as a method for improving pronunciation, *tajwīd*, *makhārij al-ḥurūf*, fluency, and recitational correctness. Yet, in the context of Ma'had Al-Jami'ah UIN Ar-Raniry, *taḥsīn* and *talqīn* are embedded in a wider system of teacher authority, student discipline, moral advice, collective worship, peer learning, and *pesantren*-based supervision. Students enter the Ma'had with diverse educational backgrounds: some have prior experience in *pesantren* or *dayah*, while others come from general schools with limited exposure to intensive Qur'anic learning. This diversity creates pedagogical challenges in standardizing Qur'anic competence, sustaining student motivation, and adapting teaching methods to different levels of religious literacy.

This problem becomes more complex in the contemporary landscape of Islamic knowledge transmission. Students no longer receive Islamic knowledge only from teachers in formal institutions; they also learn through digital platforms, Qur'anic applications, online sermons, social media preachers, and fragmented religious content. Studies on digital Islam show that new media do not simply weaken traditional authority, but restructure the field of religious authority by multiplying voices, expanding access, and altering the conditions under which religious knowledge is authenticated (Bunt, 2018; Campbell, 2010; Eickelman & Anderson, 2003; Hosen, 2019). In this context, Ma'had Al-Jami'ah becomes a significant site for examining how face-to-face Qur'anic pedagogy, oral correction, and teacher authority continue to operate amid the changing ecology of Islamic learning. The issue is not whether traditional authority disappears, but how it is reconfigured through embodied pedagogical practice within institutional settings.

Previous scholarship related to this topic can be grouped into four main strands. The first strand focuses on Qur'anic literacy and instructional methods, including *tajwīd* mastery, *taḥsīn*, *talqīn*, *sorogan*, and pedagogical strategies for improving reading fluency. These studies are valuable for identifying effective Qur'anic teaching techniques, but they often treat Qur'anic learning as a technical educational issue rather than a lived religious practice. The second strand examines *pesantren* and Islamic education as institutions of moral formation, discipline, tolerance, and religious socialization. This literature demonstrates that *pesantren* and Islamic boarding schools remain important in shaping Muslim ethics, character education, and religious habitus in Indonesia (Dhofier, 1999; Niam & Lukens-Bull, 2025; Purwanto et al., 2021). The third strand develops Living Qur'an studies by analyzing how Muslim communities receive, perform, and embody the Qur'an in ritual, educational, and socio-cultural contexts (Habillah, 2019; Mansur, 2007; Mukhtar et al., 2023; Rafiq, 2014). The fourth strand discusses religious authority and knowledge transmission in modern Muslim societies, particularly how authority is shaped through texts, teachers, institutions, media, public discourse, and processes of authentication (Bunt, 2018; Eickelman & Anderson, 2003; Zaman, 2002).

However, these strands of scholarship have not fully addressed the specific intersection between Qur'anic pedagogy, religious authority, and the institutional life of a *pesantren* campus. Conceptually, studies on *taḥsīn* and Qur'anic reading often focus on competence, correctness, and fluency, but do not sufficiently explain how Qur'anic pedagogy produces authority, ethical discipline, and lived Islamic subjectivity. Methodologically, many studies of Qur'anic learning rely on educational evaluation, while fewer integrate institutional analysis, classroom observation, and Living Qur'an perspectives. Empirically, Ma'had Al-Jami'ah UIN Ar-Raniry remains underexplored as a case where university life, Acehese Islamic culture, *pesantren* tradition, and Qur'anic pedagogy intersect. Interpretively, there is still limited discussion of how religious authority is enacted through everyday pedagogical practices such as *talqīn*, correction of recitation, moral guidance, collective worship, and teacher-student interaction.

Based on these gaps, this study addresses three research questions. First, how is the Living Qur'an practiced through Qur'anic pedagogy at Ma'had Al-Jami'ah UIN Ar-Raniry? Second, how is religious authority constructed, transmitted, and negotiated through *taḥsīn*, *talqīn*, moral guidance, and teacher-student interaction? Third, how do students experience and internalize Qur'anic learning within the institutional culture of a *pesantren*-based Islamic university in Aceh? The objectives of this study are to analyze Qur'anic pedagogy as a lived religious practice, to explain the construction of religious authority within Ma'had Al-Jami'ah, and to demonstrate how Qur'anic learning contributes to the formation of student piety in Indonesian Islamic higher education.

Theoretically, this article employs three interconnected perspectives. First, it uses the Living Qur'an approach developed in Indonesian Qur'anic studies by Mansur (Mansur, 2007), Rafiq (Rafiq, 2014) and Habillah (Habillah, 2019), while also drawing on recent studies that emphasize the embodiment of Qur'anic teachings in devotional, educational, and community (K. A. Ahmad et al., 2026; A. A. Hidayat et al., 2024; Mukhtar et al., 2023). This approach understands the Qur'an not only as a written text, but also as a lived and socially embedded reality that is recited, memorized, performed, corrected, and institutionalized in Muslim everyday life. Second, the study draws on Talal Asad's theory of Islam as a discursive tradition. Asad argues that Islam should be understood as a tradition in which correct practices, authoritative knowledge, moral discipline, and embodied religious forms are continuously transmitted, debated, and reproduced (Asad, 1986). Third, the article uses the concept of religious authority and knowledge transmission in Muslim societies as discussed by Zaman (2002), Eickelman and Anderson (Eickelman & Anderson, 2003), Campbell (Campbell, 2010), Bunt (Bunt, 2018), Hosen (Hosen, 2019), and Ahmad (K. A. Ahmad et al., 2026). This perspective helps explain how authority is constructed through teachers, institutions, oral correction, textual knowledge, interpretive legitimacy, and contemporary media environments.

The novelty of this article lies in its effort to reframe Qur'anic reading instruction at Ma'had Al-Jami'ah from a narrow technical-pedagogical issue into a broader analysis of Living Qur'an, religious authority, and Islamic higher education transformation. Unlike studies that mainly measure students' Qur'anic reading competence, this article argues that *tahsīn* and *talqīn* are institutional practices through which the Qur'an becomes lived, embodied, corrected, and morally internalized. The case of UIN Ar-Raniry is particularly significant because it shows how a Ma'had model that is common in Indonesian Islamic universities operates distinctively within Aceh's socio-religious context, where *dayah* traditions, Islamic public norms, and institutionalized religious authority shape campus-based Qur'anic pedagogy. This study contributes to ongoing scholarly discussions on lived Islam, Qur'anic studies, religious authority, and Islamic education by demonstrating how the Qur'an is negotiated within the everyday institutional life of a *pesantren* campus in contemporary Indonesia.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative case study design to examine how the Living Qur'an is practiced, institutionalized, and negotiated through Qur'anic pedagogy, religious authority, and student formation at Ma'had Al-Jami'ah UIN Ar-Raniry, Indonesia. A qualitative approach was selected because the study seeks to interpret meanings, practices, experiences, and institutional processes within a specific socio-religious context rather than to measure causal relationships or produce statistical generalization. Creswell and Poth explain that qualitative inquiry is appropriate when researchers aim to explore a social or human problem by understanding participants' meanings in natural settings (Creswell & Poth, 2018). More specifically, this study uses a case study strategy because Ma'had Al-Jami'ah UIN Ar-Raniry represents a bounded institutional system in which Qur'anic learning, *pesantren*-based discipline, teacher authority, student piety, and Acehese Islamic culture interact within a particular educational environment.

The research site was Ma'had Al-Jami'ah UIN Ar-Raniry, Banda Aceh. This site was selected purposively because it provides a relevant and information-rich case for examining the institutionalization of Qur'anic pedagogy in an Islamic university located in Aceh. Although Ma'had Al-Jami'ah exists in many Indonesian Islamic universities, UIN Ar-Raniry offers a distinctive empirical setting because its Ma'had operates within Aceh's socio-religious context, where *dayah* traditions, Qur'anic practice, public Islamic norms, and religious authority are deeply embedded in educational and social life. Therefore, the selection of this site follows the logic of purposive sampling, in which participants and settings are chosen because they can provide rich, relevant, and theoretically meaningful information about the central phenomenon being studied (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Patton, 2015).

Data were collected through observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. Observation was conducted to examine Qur'anic learning practices, including *tahsīn*, *talqīn*, correction of recitation, teacher-student interaction, worship routines, moral supervision, and the daily religious atmosphere of the Ma'had. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with Ma'had administrators, Qur'anic teachers, active students, and alumni. These informants were selected because they were

directly involved in the planning, implementation, experience, and evaluation of Qur'anic learning and student formation at Ma'had. Interview materials included information from the head of Ma'had, academic administrators, Qur'anic teachers, students, and alumni regarding the role of Ma'had, the use of *talqīn* and *taḥsīn*, student ability, challenges in tajwīd mastery, teacher authority, moral guidance, emotional and psychomotor approaches, and institutional constraints. Documentation was used to examine institutional records, Ma'had guidelines, learning programs, placement test data, tahsin and tahfidz activities, and other materials related to Qur'anic pedagogy and student formation.

The primary data used in this study were derived from field materials collected at Ma'had Al-Jami'ah UIN Ar-Raniry. Interview data show that *talqīn* is the main method used in Qur'anic learning, in which the teacher first recites the Qur'anic passage correctly and students repeat it under direct supervision. The data also show that students were organized into small learning circles, with approximately 10–12 students guided by one teacher, allowing correction to occur in a relatively close pedagogical setting. In addition, the Ma'had conducted placement tests to classify students according to their Qur'anic reading ability. The available assessment data indicate that among 18 students tested, 13 demonstrated good Qur'anic reading ability, while 5 still required improvement in *tajwīd*, pronunciation, and reading fluency. These data were not used for statistical generalization, but as qualitative evidence to interpret unequal Qur'anic literacy, differentiated student backgrounds, and the pedagogical challenges faced by the Ma'had.

Data analysis followed the interactive qualitative analysis model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (Miles et al., 2014), consisting of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification. In the first stage, interview notes, observation records, and institutional documents were condensed by identifying recurring themes related to Living Qur'an practice, Qur'anic pedagogy, religious authority, *talqīn*, *taḥsīn*, student piety, unequal Qur'anic literacy, emotional-psychomotor pedagogy, and institutional limitations. In the second stage, the data were organized into thematic categories corresponding to the analytical structure of the article: Ma'had as an institutional space for Living Qur'an, *taḥsīn* and *talqīn* as mechanisms of religious authority, unequal Qur'anic literacy and the negotiation of student piety, and emotional-psychomotor pedagogy with its institutional limits. In the third stage, conclusions were drawn by interpreting the findings through the Living Qur'an approach, Talal Asad's theory of Islam as a discursive tradition, Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital, and scholarship on religious authority and knowledge transmission in Muslim societies.

The validity of the data was ensured through source triangulation, technique triangulation, and interpretive consistency. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information from administrators, teachers, students, alumni, field observations, and institutional documents. Technique triangulation was conducted by comparing interview data with observation records and documentation. This process is important in qualitative inquiry because credibility is strengthened when findings are supported by multiple forms of evidence and examined across different sources of meaning (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Patton, 2015). Interpretive consistency was maintained by ensuring that all analytical claims were grounded in field data and connected to the theoretical framework used in the study. Ethically, this study followed the principles of informed participation, confidentiality, and academic integrity. Informants were treated as knowledge holders whose experiences and interpretations were central to understanding Qur'anic pedagogy, religious authority, and student formation at Ma'had. The analysis avoided overgeneralization because this study was designed as a qualitative case study, not as a representative survey of all Ma'had Al-Jami'ah institutions in Indonesia. The findings are therefore not intended to represent every *pesantren* campus, but to provide an in-depth and theoretically informed interpretation of how the Living Qur'an, religious authority, Qur'anic pedagogy, and student piety are negotiated in one specific Islamic higher education context.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Ma'had Al-Jami'ah as an Institutional Space for Living Qur'an in the *Pesantren* Campus

Ma'had Al-Jami'ah UIN Ar-Raniry functions as an institutional space where the Qur'an is transformed from a sacred text into a lived pedagogical, moral, and disciplinary practice. The findings indicate that the Ma'had is not designed merely as a residential facility for students, but as a *pesantren*-based formation system that integrates Qur'anic learning, worship habituation, moral supervision, linguistic training, and character development. Institutional documents state that Ma'had Al-Jami'ah

aims to form students who are pious, morally upright, attached to the Qur'an, and competent in Arabic and English (Dokumentasi UPT Ma'had Al-Jami'ah UIN Ar-Raniry, 2025). This institutional orientation is supported by a structured residential system consisting of six dormitory units, 32 dormitory supervisors, and 19 *musa'id/musa'idah* who accompany students in daily religious activities. Its regular programs include congregational prayer, sunnah fasting, *halaqah tahsîn* and *tahfîz*, and Arabic-English language development (Kepala Bidang Akademik Ma'had, 2025).

These findings show that Qur'anic pedagogy at Ma'had Al-Jami'ah operates through an institutional ecology rather than through isolated classroom instruction. Students encounter the Qur'an not only during formal *tahsîn* or *tahfîz* sessions, but also through repeated practices of recitation, correction, memorization, worship routines, and moral advice. This pattern corresponds to the Living Qur'an perspective, which views the Qur'an not merely as a written scripture or exegetical object, but as a lived reality embodied in social practices, ritual routines, and communal forms of religious discipline (Habillah, 2019; Mansur, 2007; Rafiq, 2014). Recent studies on Living Qur'an similarly emphasize that Qur'anic teachings are integrated into daily life through devotional practices, educational programs, and community engagement (S. Hidayat & Khaq, 2024; Mukhtar et al., 2023). In this study, the Ma'had becomes a concrete institutional site where the Qur'an is recited, corrected, memorized, habituated, and morally internalized within the everyday rhythm of student life.

The data further suggest that the institutionalization of Qur'anic learning at Ma'had Al-Jami'ah is inseparable from the *pesantren* model of religious formation. *Pesantren* institutions commonly place Qur'anic learning at the center of their curriculum, not only to develop textual competence but also to cultivate character, discipline, humility, and religious commitment. Studies on Darul Huffadh *Pesantren*, for example, show that Qur'anic memorization is integrated with local wisdom to develop religious moderation and moral character (Yusuf et al., 2021). Similarly, Biharul Ulum Agroecology *Pesantren* combines Qur'anic theology with environmental stewardship, demonstrating that Qur'anic learning can be contextualized within broader ethical and practical concerns (As'ad & Hakim, 2022; Karman et al., 2024). These studies illuminate the broader pattern within which Ma'had Al-Jami'ah UIN Ar-Raniry can be located: Qur'anic pedagogy becomes meaningful when it is embedded in a wider institutional culture that organizes students' bodies, time, conduct, and moral imagination.

However, the case of Ma'had Al-Jami'ah also refines existing scholarship on *pesantren* education. Earlier studies have emphasized *pesantren* as institutions of moral discipline, ethical habituation, and religious socialization (Dhofier, 1999; Hefner, 2009; Lukens-Bull, 2005). The present study supports this argument, but it extends it by showing how *pesantren* logic is recontextualized within Islamic higher education. Unlike traditional *pesantren*, Ma'had Al-Jami'ah operates inside a university system where students simultaneously engage with academic schedules, modern disciplinary structures, institutional bureaucracy, and diverse educational backgrounds. This creates a hybrid model: the Ma'had preserves *pesantren*-based religious formation while adapting it to the temporal and administrative structure of a modern Islamic university. Similar patterns of integration have been identified in *pesantren*-campus models such as UNSIQ Wonosobo, where *pesantren* values are incorporated into higher education to produce graduates who are intellectually competent and spiritually resilient (Haryanto & Muslih, 2024).

The findings also contribute to debates on modernization and institutional transformation in *pesantren* education. Contemporary *pesantren* are increasingly expected to respond to modern educational demands while maintaining their religious identity. Studies show that *pesantren* modernization involves curriculum reform, teacher development, digital learning tools, and new pedagogical strategies, although implementation often faces communication gaps and uneven institutional readiness (Basir et al., 2024; Istiyani et al., 2026; Jennah & Purnama, 2025). In the case of Ma'had Al-Jami'ah UIN Ar-Raniry, institutional transformation is visible in the effort to combine *tahsîn*, *tahfîz*, worship discipline, character formation, and language development within a structured university-based residential system. Yet, the available data also imply that this transformation depends heavily on the consistency of supervision, the capacity of *musyrif* and *musa'id/musa'idah*, and the ability of the institution to translate *pesantren* values into daily student routines.

Analytically, Ma'had Al-Jami'ah demonstrates that Living Qur'an in the *pesantren* campus is not only a matter of Qur'anic reception, but also a process of institutional production. The Qur'an becomes "living" because the institution organizes the conditions under which students encounter,

repeat, correct, and embody Qur'anic practices. Talal Asad's concept of Islam as a discursive tradition is useful here because it explains how correct religious practice is produced through authorized knowledge, discipline, repetition, and institutional transmission (Asad, 1986). At Ma'had Al-Jami'ah, Qur'anic correctness is not only taught as cognitive knowledge of tajwid; it is produced through embodied routines such as recitation circles, correction by teachers, collective worship, and moral monitoring. This finding supports Asad's theoretical claim, while refining it by showing how discursive tradition operates within a university-based pesantren institution.

The religious formation produced by Ma'had Al-Jami'ah also involves the internalization of Islamic values through everyday discipline. *Pesantren* studies have shown that humility, sincerity, simplicity, tolerance, and trustworthiness are often cultivated through daily practices rather than abstract moral instruction (Fauzi et al., 2025; Haryanto & Muslih, 2024). The Ma'had's programs similarly position Qur'anic learning within a broader moral environment in which students are trained to regulate their time, speech, worship, and social conduct. This formation is also related to the wider discourse of Islamic moderation. Studies on *pesantren* and lived hadith practices show that *pesantren* can promote moderation, justice, balance, and tolerance through embodied religious education and interfaith or multicultural engagement (Helmy et al., 2021; Rostandi et al., 2026). Although the present study does not focus directly on interfaith relations, its findings suggest that the Ma'had's Qur'an-oriented discipline contributes to the formation of students' ethical orientation and religious self-regulation.

Theoretically, this sub-section shows that Living Qur'an in an Islamic university should not be reduced to ritual performance, textual reception, or community tradition. It can also be understood as an institutional process through which Qur'anic values are organized, supervised, repeated, and embodied in student life. This finding challenges studies that treat Qur'anic learning primarily as technical literacy training and instead demonstrates that Qur'anic pedagogy at Ma'had Al-Jami'ah is simultaneously educational, disciplinary, moral, and institutional. Thus, Ma'had Al-Jami'ah UIN Ar-Raniry reveals how the Qur'an is lived through the structured formation of the *pesantren* campus, making it a significant case for understanding the transformation of Living Qur'an within Indonesian Islamic higher education.

Talqīn, taḥsīn, and the Pedagogical Construction of Religious Authority

Talqīn and *taḥsīn* at Ma'had Al-Jami'ah UIN Ar-Raniry demonstrate that religious authority in Qur'anic pedagogy is constructed not only through institutional position or textual mastery, but through embodied acts of recitation, correction, repetition, and teacher-student interaction. The data show that *talqīn* is the principal method used in Qur'anic learning: the teacher first recites a Qur'anic passage correctly, and students then repeat it under direct supervision (Murtadha, 2025). This method is implemented in small groups of approximately 10–12 students under one teacher, allowing correction to take place in an intimate pedagogical setting (Tenaga Pengajar Ma'had, 2025). One student explained that the method helped them maintain correct recitation patterns even outside formal learning sessions (Mahasiswa Ma'had, 2025).

Conceptually, *talqīn* should not be reduced to a technical exercise in pronunciation. It functions as an embodied mechanism of religious transmission in which the teacher's voice becomes the authoritative medium through which Qur'anic correctness is demonstrated, repeated, and validated. This reflects the logic of *talaqqi*, a direct teacher-based mode of Qur'anic learning that emphasizes oral transmission, correction, and continuity of authoritative recitation (Ramli et al., 2014; Zahari & Yusuf, 2022). In this setting, the teacher is not merely an instructor but an authorized mediator between the Qur'anic text and the student's bodily performance of the text. The use of the *Asy-Syafi'i* practical tajwid book introduced by Ustadz Syifa Al-Musyarruf further reinforces this authority by providing a textual standard for evaluating recitational accuracy (Al-Musyarruf, 2025).

These findings support Zaman's argument that religious authority in Muslim societies is produced through knowledge transmission, textual competence, and institutional recognition (Zaman, 2002). However, the Ma'had case also refines this argument by showing that authority in Qur'anic pedagogy is acoustic, corporeal, and relational. Authority is heard in the teacher's recitation, embodied in students' repetition, and confirmed through correction. This means that authority is not simply possessed by the teacher as a status; it is enacted through a pedagogical sequence of listening, imitating, correcting, and approving. Asad's concept of Islam as a discursive tradition is useful here because

correct practice is produced through disciplined repetition and authorized correction (Asad, 1986). *Talqīn* and *tahsīn* are therefore not peripheral teaching methods but practical sites where Islamic normativity is reproduced.

This finding also engages critically with studies that frame *tahsīn* primarily as a method for improving *tajwīd*, pronunciation, and recitational fluency. While such studies correctly identify the technical function of *tahsīn*, they often understate its role in forming religious subjectivity. Recent scholarship notes that traditional Qur'anic learning faces challenges such as low participation, scheduling conflicts, and the need for blended learning models using social media (Syaiful Romadhon et al., 2019). Yet the Ma'had case shows that face-to-face pedagogy remains significant precisely because religious authority in Qur'anic recitation depends on more than access to content. It requires affective trust, evaluative presence, and embodied correction.

Teacher-student interaction is central to this process. Studies of Qur'anic schooling show that learning is mediated not only by words, but also by body positioning, pointing, eye gaze, and gradual transfer of responsibility from teacher to student (Moore, 2008). Similarly, recent studies emphasize that effective Qur'anic education depends on respectful, collaborative interaction that fosters motivation, belonging, moral formation, and spiritual development (Deji-Afuye & Zhou, 2025, 2026). The Ma'had data confirm this argument, but also extend it by showing that interaction is not merely pedagogical support; it is the medium through which authority becomes socially recognizable.

The rise of digital and AI-based Qur'anic correction further clarifies the theoretical significance of these findings. Although AI tools may support self-guided recitation practice, recent studies argue that they cannot fully replace the spiritual, moral, and pedagogical role of the teacher (A. M. B. Ahmad & Musa, 2025; Birgün, 2026). The Ma'had case supports this position. Qur'anic correction here is not only about detecting phonetic error; it is also about transmitting discipline, humility, *adab*, and trust in an authorized pedagogical relationship. Thus, *Talqīn* and *tahsīn* at Ma'had Al-Jami'ah expand the study of religious authority by shifting attention from public preaching, fatwa, and digital authority to micro-pedagogical encounters in Qur'anic learning. The theoretical contribution of this finding is that religious authority in Living Qur'an practices should be understood as embodied, acoustic, relational, and institutionally situated.

Unequal Qur'anic Literacy and the Negotiation of Student Piety

The findings of this study complicate previous scholarship on Qur'anic literacy by showing that Qur'anic learning in Ma'had Al-Jami'ah is not merely a process of standardizing recitation, but a negotiated field shaped by unequal religious backgrounds, institutional classification, and differentiated forms of student piety. Studies on Qur'anic literacy have long emphasized its foundational role in Islamic education, particularly in developing recitation, textual familiarity, spiritual discipline, and further access to Islamic knowledge (Diallo, 2012; Mohammed Nur, 2018; Moore, 2013). The case of Ma'had Al-Jami'ah confirms this argument, but it also refines it by demonstrating that students do not enter Qur'anic pedagogy from the same starting point. Their prior schooling, family religious environment, *pesantren* or *dayah* exposure, and personal discipline shape how they respond to *tahsīn*, *tajwīd* correction, and institutional expectations.

The empirical findings show that students at Ma'had Al-Jami'ah possess uneven levels of Qur'anic literacy. Some students already demonstrate fluency in *tajwīd* and recitation, while others continue to struggle with hijaiyah pronunciation, *makhārij al-ḥurūf*, *mad*, and basic rules of *tajwīd* (Observasi Peneliti, 2025). To manage this diversity, the Ma'had conducts a placement test at the beginning of the program. Students are assessed by *musyirif* or *musyirifah* based on fluency, *tajwīd* accuracy, and pronunciation, and the results are used to place them into appropriate *tahsīn* or *tahfidz* groups (Dokumentasi UPT Ma'had, 2025). Among 18 students assessed, 13 demonstrated good Qur'anic reading ability, while 5 still required further improvement (Tes Bacaan Mahasiswa, 2025). This finding supports the broader educational function of placement tests as diagnostic instruments for mapping student ability and designing level-appropriate instruction (Ahmed, 2025; Baker et al., 2024; Cox & Wilcox, 2025). However, unlike placement tests in language education, placement in Qur'anic learning also carries moral and religious implications because recitational ability is closely associated with piety, discipline, and religious legitimacy.

This study therefore extends discussions of placement testing by showing that diagnostic

assessment in Qur'anic education is not value-neutral. At Ma'had Al-Jami'ah, placement does not simply classify technical proficiency; it shapes students' confidence, teacher expectations, learning trajectories, and participation in religious formation. Ustadz Syifa Al-Musyarraf explains that the graduation standard requires correct *makhārij al-hurūf*, *tajwīd*, and *faṣāḥah* (Al-Musyarraf, 2025). Yet interviews show that some students still make mistakes in *tajwīd*, especially in the lengthening and shortening of sounds, often because they rush during recitation submission (Mahasiswa Ma'had, 2025). An alumnus further notes that students from SMA or MA backgrounds do not necessarily have the same Qur'anic preparation as those from *pesantren* or integrated *dayah* backgrounds (Alumni Ma'had, 2025). These data demonstrate that Qur'anic literacy is strongly shaped by prior educational capital.

Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital is useful for interpreting this unequal starting point because it explains how previous educational exposure affects students' ability to meet institutional expectations (Bourdieu, 1986). In the Ma'had context, Qur'anic competence operates as a form of religious capital: it influences students' placement, confidence, recognition, and ability to participate fully in Qur'anic pedagogy. This finding refines Living Qur'an studies, which often emphasize communal reception and embodiment of the Qur'an, by showing that Qur'anic reception is socially differentiated. Students may inhabit the same institutional environment, but they do not experience the Qur'an in identical ways. Their ability to read, memorize, correct, and internalize the Qur'an depends on unequal access to prior religious training.

The findings also contribute to current debates on *tajwīd* education. *Tajwīd* is widely understood as essential for preserving the meaning, sound, and spiritual integrity of Qur'anic recitation, with classical contributions from scholars such as Ibn al-Jazarī and Sulaymān al-Jamzūrī shaping its development (Bulut, 2023; Koyuncu, 2017; Yasin et al., 2018). Recent studies have explored technological approaches, including augmented reality and deep learning models, to improve *tajwīd* learning and provide more interactive forms of correction (Anggraini et al., 2026; Sesmiarni et al., 2023). The Ma'had case does not reject such innovations, but it suggests that technology alone cannot resolve the social inequality of Qur'anic literacy. Students require differentiated pedagogical support because their challenges are not merely phonetic or technical; they are also shaped by educational history, institutional time, and religious self-confidence.

This finding further challenges studies that treat *tahsīn* success as a linear outcome of method. Contemporary Qur'anic education faces pressures from urbanization, Western-style schooling, diversified student needs, and changing models of Islamic learning (Alahmadi et al., 2024; Salleh et al., 2024; Yasin et al., 2018). The Ma'had data show that method is important, but not sufficient. Students also face academic workloads, organizational commitments, limited practice time, and inconsistent self-discipline (Tenaga Pengajar Ma'had, 2025). The difference between Non-Regular students who attend the compulsory program for one month and Regular students who attend for three months also affects depth of learning (Tenaga Pengajar Ma'had, 2025). These findings align with studies on student diversity in *tahfīz* and faith-based education, which emphasize the need for flexible learning strategies, pedagogical accompaniment, and attention to individual differences in memorization and retention capacity (Dimyathi et al., 2025; Mohammed Nur, 2018).

Finally, the negotiation of Qur'anic literacy at Ma'had Al-Jami'ah is inseparable from the formation of piety. Qur'anic education has been shown to cultivate spiritual growth, ethical responsibility, civic engagement, and moral character in diverse societies (Al-Hawary et al., 2023; Muchtar & Amin, 2025; Önder, 2023). Context-sensitive Qur'anic interpretation also emphasizes pluralism, justice, and interfaith respect as part of contemporary Islamic moral formation (Muchtar & Amin, 2025). The Ma'had case contributes to this debate by showing that piety is not simply transmitted through instruction; it is negotiated through prior religious capital, institutional discipline, pedagogical classification, and everyday learning constraints. Thus, this study positions Ma'had Al-Jami'ah as a site where Qur'anic literacy and student piety are co-produced through both religious pedagogy and social differentiation.

Emotional-Psychomotor Pedagogy and the Limits of Institutional Transformation

The broader significance of Ma'had Al-Jami'ah UIN Ar-Raniry lies in showing that Qur'anic pedagogy is not only a matter of textual instruction, but also an affective, bodily, moral, and institutional process whose success depends on the capacity of the institution to sustain holistic religious formation.

The findings indicate that teachers respond to students' Qur'anic reading difficulties through emotional approaches, such as cultivating love for the Qur'an, emphasizing the beauty of Qur'anic language, connecting Qur'anic verses with students' lived experiences, and giving appreciation to students who show progress (Tenaga Pengajar Ma'had, 2025). At the same time, teachers employ psychomotor strategies through pronunciation training, intonation, rhythm, reading speed, collective recitation, murojaah, and *tahsīn* groups (Tenaga Pengajar Ma'had, 2025). These practices reveal that Qur'anic learning at the Ma'had does not operate only at the cognitive level of tajwīd knowledge, but also through emotional attachment and bodily habituation.

This finding contributes to wider debates on emotional pedagogy by demonstrating that affect is not supplementary to religious learning; it is central to the formation of Qur'anic subjectivity. Studies on emotional pedagogy argue that emotions enhance learning outcomes, emotional literacy, creativity, self-regulation, and pro-social attitudes when they are integrated into educational practice (Górska, 2020; Lamazares de Prado & Arias Gago, 2022; Lourenço & Valente, 2021). The Ma'had case supports this argument, but also extends it into Islamic pedagogy by showing that emotional learning is tied to reverence, love, humility, and attachment to sacred text. This confirms the importance of teacher emotional intelligence and emotional responsiveness in sustaining effective learning environments (Costa-Rodriguez et al., 2021; Fischer et al., 2026). In Qur'anic pedagogy, emotional responsiveness is not merely a classroom strategy; it is part of the moral atmosphere through which students learn to value the Qur'an as a guide for life.

The psychomotor dimension of the findings also has broader methodological implications. Psychomotor learning is commonly discussed in relation to motor skills, cognitive integration, social development, and structured educational performance (Borrego-Balsalobre et al., 2021; Gastelum-Acosta et al., 2024; Valentini & Battistelli, 2009; Zhang et al., 2021). In the Ma'had context, however, psychomotor pedagogy is inseparable from sacred performance. Students are expected not only to understand *tajwīd* rules but to embody correct recitation through the disciplined coordination of voice, breath, rhythm, articulation, and listening. This suggests that Qur'anic pedagogy requires an interpretive methodology attentive to the body, sound, repetition, and affect. The Qur'an becomes lived not only through meaning and interpretation, but through trained bodily practice.

This has direct implications for theories of moral discipline. Teachers at Ma'had also guide students morally by advising them to avoid immoral acts, based on the belief that moral purity supports ease in memorizing and reciting the Qur'an (Mahasiswa Ma'had, 2025). Qur'anic correction is therefore linked to moral correction: the student's voice, body, and ethical conduct are treated as interconnected domains of formation. This resonates with studies that view moral education as a process of cultivating ethical behavior, social responsibility, and intergenerational harmony through role modelling, storytelling, ritual, and community practice (Almazroui, 2025; Kour et al., 2025; Sockett, 2018). It also shows that the "hidden curriculum" of Ma'had its schedules, rules, rituals, supervision, and teacher-student interactions plays a crucial role in shaping moral conduct beyond formal Qur'anic instruction.

Theoretically, this finding supports Asad's argument that Islamic practice is formed through discipline, repetition, and embodied correction (Asad, 1986). It also aligns with Living Qur'an theory, which understands the Qur'an as a lived reality embedded in practice, affect, bodily training, and social discipline (Habillah, 2019; Mansur, 2007; Rafiq, 2014). Yet the findings also challenge an overly idealized view of institutional religious formation. Although Ma'had applies motivation, *talqin*, correction, knowledge sharing, and moral supervision, persistent limitations remain: weak *tajwīd* mastery among some students, unequal teaching quality among musyrif, insufficiently adaptive methods, crowded schedules, overlap with academic activities, and minimal use of learning technology (Kesimpulan Penelitian, 2025). These limitations show that institutional Living Qur'an depends not only on religious intention but also on organizational capacity, pedagogical design, and resource distribution.

This point is particularly important in relation to digital transformation. Studies on digital Islam have shown that online platforms increasingly reshape religious knowledge transmission, authority, and learning practices (Bunt, 2018; Campbell, 2010; Hosen, 2019). However, Ma'had Al-Jami'ah still relies primarily on face-to-face oral pedagogy. This preserves the strength of embodied teacher-student transmission, but also limits students' opportunities for independent practice with structured feedback outside formal sessions. Broader educational literature shows that digital limitations are shaped by

unequal access, insufficient digital literacy, weak infrastructure, and lack of institutional support, especially in developing contexts (Aziz et al., 2026; Karageorgou et al., 2026; Koole & Dube, 2025). At the same time, adaptive technologies, AI, XR, and digital platforms may support psychomotor learning when embedded within strong pedagogical design and inclusive institutional policy (Jeong et al., 2025; Tseng & Lam, 2022; Wu et al., 2025).

The findings therefore point to the need for institutional reform rather than simple technological adoption. Digital transformation in education requires strategic planning, stakeholder engagement, teacher training, leadership vision, and alignment between pedagogy, curriculum, and technology (Chee, 2025; Driss Hanafi et al., 2026; Oubibi et al., 2026; Wang et al., 2026). For Ma'had Al-Jami'ah, this means that digital Qur'anic learning should not replace *talqin*, teacher authority, or embodied correction, but should complement them through structured practice tools, recorded recitation feedback, adaptive tajwīd modules, and digitally supported monitoring. Such reform must also preserve the holistic nature of Islamic education by integrating cognitive, affective, psychomotor, moral, and spiritual domains (Ekpenyong et al., 2023).

The broader scholarly contribution of this sub-section is that it reframes institutional Living Qur'an as both a formative and limited process. Ma'had Al-Jami'ah successfully constructs a Qur'an-oriented learning environment through emotional attachment, bodily discipline, and moral supervision, but its transformative capacity depends on institutional readiness, teacher quality, adaptive pedagogy, and digital support. Thus, the study contributes to Islamic education, lived religion, and Qur'anic studies by showing that the future of Qur'anic pedagogy in higher education requires not only stronger religious commitment, but also more sophisticated institutional design.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that Ma'had Al-Jami'ah UIN Ar-Raniry functions as a strategic institutional space where the Living Qur'an is practiced through Qur'anic pedagogy, religious authority, and student formation within a *pesantren*-based Islamic university. The study shows that the Qur'an is not only taught as a text to be read correctly, but also lived through daily routines, oral correction, worship habituation, moral supervision, emotional attachment, and bodily discipline. In this sense, Ma'had Al-Jami'ah transforms Qur'anic learning from a technical process of improving recitation into a broader formation of religious subjectivity.

The findings answer the research objectives in three main ways. First, Living Qur'an at Ma'had Al-Jami'ah is practiced through institutional routines that integrate *taḥsīn*, *talqīn*, *taḥfīẓ*, congregational worship, moral guidance, and character formation. Second, religious authority is constructed through the teacher's voice, correction, evaluative judgment, textual reference, and direct teacher-student interaction. Authority is therefore not only institutional or textual, but also embodied, acoustic, relational, and pedagogical. Third, students' experience of Qur'anic learning is shaped by unequal religious literacy, prior educational background, institutional classification through placement tests, learning duration, and daily academic pressures. Student piety is consequently not produced automatically through instruction, but negotiated through religious capital, institutional discipline, and personal commitment.

The theoretical contribution of this study lies in its effort to expand Living Qur'an studies beyond ritual reception and community practice by showing that the Qur'an can also be lived through institutional pedagogy in Islamic higher education. The study also refines the concept of religious authority by demonstrating that authority in Qur'anic learning is enacted through micro-pedagogical practices such as listening, repeating, correcting, approving, and morally guiding students. Moreover, the findings show that Qur'anic pedagogy is not only cognitive, but also emotional, psychomotor, moral, and institutional. Academically, this study contributes to discussions on lived Islam, Qur'anic studies, *pesantren* studies, and Islamic higher education by positioning Ma'had Al-Jami'ah as a distinctive site where *pesantren* traditions are recontextualized within the modern university. The case of UIN Ar-Raniry is significant because it illustrates how a common Ma'had model operates within Aceh's socio-religious context, where *dayah* traditions, Islamic public norms, and institutionalized religious authority shape campus-based Qur'anic formation.

The broader implication of this study is that Qur'anic pedagogy in Islamic higher education should be understood not merely as a program for improving recitation, but as a holistic process

involving institutional design, teacher quality, affective formation, bodily practice, moral discipline, and adaptive learning support. Future studies may compare Ma'had Al-Jami'ah across different Indonesian Islamic universities, examine gendered experiences of Qur'anic pedagogy, or explore how digital technologies can support *tahsīn* and *tajwīd* learning without weakening embodied teacher-student transmission.

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