

Reconstructing Prophetic Teaching Methods for Digital Islamic Education: A Directed Content Analysis

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Abstract. Islamic education has migrated onto digital platforms, and the Prophet Muhammad's teaching methods are routinely invoked to legitimise that migration, yet the proposed adaptations are asserted rather than tested. This study reconstructs six tarbawi methods into design principles and appraises each against learning-sciences evidence. Directed content analysis was applied to teaching narrations in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* and *Sunan al-Tirmizī* using an a priori category frame drawn from tarbawi scholarship, after which every proposed digital affordance was rated supported, conditionally supported, contested, or not yet evidenced. The six adaptations are not equally defensible. Lecture and dialogue transfer only under specified design conditions; gamified repetition is bounded by content complexity; short-form storytelling and teacher self-presentation carry documented risks that the tarbawi literature has not confronted. Reconstruction therefore requires stated boundary conditions rather than media substitution, and six testable propositions are formulated for empirical work.

Keyword: digital pedagogy; hadith tarbawi; Islamic education; multimedia learning; prophetic teaching methods

Abstrak. Pendidikan Islam telah berpindah ke platform digital, dan metode pengajaran Nabi Muhammad saw. lazim dirujuk untuk melegitimasi perpindahan itu, namun adaptasi yang diusulkan bersifat asersi dan belum diuji. Studi ini merekonstruksi enam metode tarbawi menjadi prinsip desain dan menakar tiap prinsip terhadap bukti ilmu pembelajaran. Analisis isi terarah diterapkan pada riwayat-riwayat pengajaran dalam *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, dan *Sunan al-Tirmizī* dengan kerangka kategori a priori yang diturunkan dari khazanah tarbawi, lalu setiap afordansi digital dinilai sebagai didukung, didukung bersyarat, diperdebatkan, atau belum terbukti. Keenam adaptasi tidak sama kuatnya. Ceramah dan dialog hanya bergeser dengan syarat desain tertentu; pengulangan bergamifikasi dibatasi kompleksitas materi; kisah format pendek dan penampilan diri guru menyimpan risiko terdokumentasi yang belum terdapat dalam literatur tarbawi. Rekonstruksi karenanya menuntut syarat batas yang jelas, bukan penggantian media, dan enam proposisi yang dapat diuji dirumuskan bagi riset empiris.

Kata Kunci: hadis tarbawi; media pembelajaran multimedia; metode pengajaran profetik; pedagogi digital; pendidikan Islam

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Introduction

Islamic religious education in Indonesia now runs on platforms that did not exist when its pedagogical canon was written. Lessons move through WhatsApp groups, recorded explanations circulate on YouTube, moral content arrives as fifteen-second video, and formative assessment happens inside quiz applications. The shift is not a temporary accommodation left over from the pandemic; it has become the ordinary condition of teaching. Educators working in this environment reach for the tradition they know best, and the teaching practice of the Prophet Muhammad saw. is the natural anchor. He is remembered in the tarbawi literature as a mu'allim and murabbi who taught through demonstration, dialogue, narrative and repetition rather than through instruction alone (Alfiah, 2015; Rizki & Lessy, 2024).

What has grown quickly alongside that turn is the claim that these methods map cleanly onto digital media. Lecture becomes broadcast, dialogue becomes a group chat, narrative becomes short-form video, repetition becomes a gamified quiz. The mapping is intuitive and widely repeated in Indonesian scholarship, and it is also, as far as we can determine, untested: the studies proposing these correspondences neither ask whether the medium preserves the function it is supposed to carry nor consult the empirical research that has examined these media for two decades.

Existing scholarship falls into three groups that rarely meet. Single-method studies examine one method in depth: Subhan (2019) treats qashash as a vehicle for moral internalisation but confines the analysis to its psychopedagogical properties; Mustofa (2019) and Hidayah and Puspasetya (2021) develop uswah hasanah as the ground of character education without reaching the question of how exemplarity behaves once mediated by a public profile; Ma'rufin (2015) and Yuniartin, Khuluq, Siswanto and Firmansyah (2025) analyse targhib and tarhib in terms framed entirely by the conventional classroom. Whole-taxonomy studies form the second group and disagree with one another, since Budiyanto (2025) derives four methods from al-Bukhārī and Muslim while Hidayah and Puspasetya (2021), working from a tarbawi textbook, report eight, and Muasmara, Husti, Zamsiswaya and Fibriyani (2025) emphasise a smaller interactive cluster. The third group is digital pedagogy research that examines these platforms rigorously with no engagement with prophetic sources at all.

Three problems follow from this arrangement, and they are the problems this article addresses. The disagreement over how many prophetic methods exist is never confronted, which means any list of six is presented as a finding when it is in fact an inherited starting point. The digital adaptations are offered without appraisal, so a reader cannot tell which of them the evidence supports and which it does not. And learning theory is invoked at the level of the label rather than the mechanism, with names such as social learning, the zone of proximal development and multimedia learning appearing in the argument without the operative claims of those theories doing any analytic work.

This study takes a different route. It treats the six-method taxonomy as an a priori frame to be declared and justified rather than discovered, and it appraises each proposed digital adaptation against empirical evidence, including evidence running against the adaptation. Three questions organise the work. Which teaching functions do the tarbawi narrations in the three canonical collections actually perform? Does the proposed digital affordance preserve each function, and under what conditions? Where evidence is absent or contrary, what boundary conditions must a reconstruction state to remain defensible?

Three bodies of theory supply the analytic apparatus, each used for a specific claim rather than as decoration. Social learning theory holds that observational learning proceeds through attention, retention, reproduction and motivation, and that the observer's judgement of the model conditions the last of these (Bandura, 1977), which is what makes mediated exemplarity a live question. The zone of proximal development holds that learning advances when a more capable

participant supports performance the learner cannot yet manage alone (Vygotsky, 1978), which specifies what a digital dialogue must accomplish to count as *hiwar*. The cognitive theory of multimedia learning holds that verbal and visual channels are separate, that processing capacity is limited, and that meaningful learning requires selecting, organising and integrating material (Mayer, 2024); with cognitive load theory (Sweller, van Merriënboer, & Paas, 2019), it sets the conditions under which mediated narrative and explanation help rather than hinder. Used this way, theory generates boundary conditions instead of endorsements, and the contribution of the article is correspondingly corrective: where the field offers a table of correspondences, it offers an appraisal, and where the appraisal fails it says so.

Method

Design

This is a qualitative, library-based study using directed content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). The directed variant is appropriate precisely because the categories are not emergent: existing theory supplies the coding frame, the analyst applies it, and the reporting obligation is to declare the frame in advance and record what it fails to accommodate. Conventional content analysis, in which categories arise from the data, would misdescribe what a study working from an inherited taxonomy of prophetic methods actually does. The review procedure follows Snyder (2019) and established treatments of library research in Islamic education (Abdurrahman, 2024; Rahmadi, 2011; Saefullah, 2024).

The a priori category frame and its status

Six categories organise the analysis: *al-muhadlarah* (structured oral delivery), *hiwar* (dialogue), *qashash* (narrative), *targhib wa tarhib* (encouragement and admonition), *uswah* (exemplarity) and *takrir* (repetition). These categories are not a result of this study. They are drawn from the *tarbawi* textbook tradition (Alfiah, 2015; Pasaribu, 2018) and are widely used in Indonesian scholarship. Declaring their status matters, because the literature does not agree on them. Budiyanto (2025) arrives at four categories from the same two collections; Hidayah and Puspasetya (2021) report eight. A study that presents six as an outcome of analysis, having begun the analysis with six, argues in a circle. The frame is therefore stated here as an instrument, and the analysis reports where the instrument proved inadequate.

Sources and selection criteria

Primary sources are *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* and *Sunan al-Tirmizī*, selected for their canonical standing and because their chapters on knowledge and manners depict teaching as an activity rather than only transmitting doctrine. Narrations were sought in *Kitāb al-'Ilm* and thematically adjacent chapters. A narration was included when its *matn* shows the Prophet performing an identifiable act of instruction whose pedagogical form can be read from the text rather than only from commentary. Narrations conveying doctrine without a discernible instructional form were excluded.

One limitation belongs in the Method rather than in a closing paragraph. Authenticity is accepted on the authority of the collections themselves; no independent *takhrīj* or *sanad* appraisal was conducted, and no grading of individual narrations is claimed. Readers should treat the corpus as canonical by convention rather than as independently authenticated for the purposes of this study.

Two-stage analysis

The first stage assigns each retained narration to a category and records the teaching function it performs, stated as a mechanism rather than a label. The second stage asks whether a proposed

digital affordance preserves that function, and this is where the study departs from existing work. Each adaptation was appraised against empirical research on the specific medium and rated on a four-point scale: supported, where controlled or systematically reviewed evidence indicates the affordance delivers the function; conditionally supported, where it does so only under specified design conditions; contested, where evidence documents both benefit and countervailing harm; and not yet evidenced, where no appraisable evidence was located. Contrary evidence was sought deliberately.

Trustworthiness

Credibility rests on triangulation across three source types, the narration itself, classical and contemporary commentary on it, and independent empirical research on the medium, following the criteria set out by Lincoln and Guba (1985). Dependability rests on the a priori frame being declared before analysis and reported in full, so that another analyst can apply the same instrument. Confirmability rests on the appraisal scale, which makes the evidential basis of every claim visible and separable from the authors' judgement. Transferability is bounded deliberately, since the analysis addresses Islamic religious education in Indonesian schools and madrasah and assumes the Indonesian platform ecology. One boundary should be stated without hedging. The design is non-empirical with respect to learning outcomes and measures the effectiveness of nothing; what it produces is a set of conditional design claims and a set of falsifiable propositions, set out in Table 3.

Result and Discussion

The six categories are presented in turn. Each subsection reports the narration, the teaching function it performs, the proposed digital affordance, the evidential appraisal of that affordance, and the design condition that follows. The appraisals are summarised in Table 2.

Al-muhadlarah: structured delivery and the segmenting problem

Structured oral delivery is the most basic of the prophetic methods. The obligation it rests on is stated directly in a narration transmitted by al-Bukhārī:

حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو عَاصِمٍ الضَّحَّاكُ بْنُ مَخْلَدٍ: أَخْبَرَنَا الْأَوْزَاعِيُّ: حَدَّثَنَا حَسَّانُ بْنُ عَطِيَّةَ، عَنْ أَبِي كَبْشَةَ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عَمْرٍ: أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ ﷺ قَالَ: ((بَلِّغُوا عَنِّي وَلَوْ آيَةً، وَحَدِّثُوا عَنْ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ وَلَا حَرَجَ، وَمَنْ كَذَبَ عَلَيَّ مُتَعَمِّدًا فَلْيَتَّبِعُوا مَقْعَدَهُ مِنَ النَّارِ)) (رواه البخاري)

Narrated from 'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr, that the Prophet saw. said: *"Convey from me, even a single verse; and narrate from the Children of Israel, there is no harm in it; and whoever lies about me deliberately, let him take his seat in the Fire"* (al-Bukhārī, 1993).

The narration establishes an obligation to transmit and it attaches a condition of fidelity to that obligation. Read pedagogically, the teaching function is not the transmission of a quantity of material but the accurate delivery of a bounded unit, expressed in the phrase "even a single verse" (Pasaribu, 2018). The unit is small by design.

The usual digital adaptation is the broadcast voice note and the synchronous video meeting. Appraised against evidence, this transfer is conditionally supported. Mayer (2024) reports fifteen evidence-based principles of multimedia design, of which segmenting, coherence, signalling and modality bear directly on recorded explanation; Brame (2016) synthesises the same body of work for educational video and identifies cognitive load management, engagement and active processing as the three conditions of effectiveness. Cognitive load theory supplies the reason, since novel material passes through a working memory limited in both capacity and duration, and formats that ignore that limit degrade learning regardless of content quality (Sweller et al., 2019).

The implication cuts against common practice. A ninety-minute recorded session reproduces the physical lecture rather than the prophetic one, whereas the narration models a short, self-contained, accurately transmitted unit that is closer to the segmenting principle than to the extended lecture digital tools make easy to produce. The design condition is therefore explicit. Delivery is segmented into units short enough to be processed, extraneous material is removed, key points are signalled, and each segment terminates in a task requiring the learner to do something with what was said.

Hiwar: dialogue and the resolution problem

The dialogic character of prophetic teaching is clearest in the exchange with Mu'adh ibn Jabal:

حَدَّثَنِي إِسْحَاقُ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ: سَمِعَ يَحْيَى بْنَ آدَمَ: حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو الْأَحْوَصِ، عَنْ أَبِي إِسْحَاقَ، عَنْ عَمْرِو بْنِ مَيْمُونٍ، عَنْ مُعَاذٍ قَالَ: كُنْتُ رَدَفْتُ النَّبِيَّ ﷺ عَلَى جَمَارٍ يُقَالُ لَهُ عُفَيْرٌ، فَقَالَ: (يَا مُعَاذُ، هَلْ تَدْرِي حَقَّ اللَّهِ عَلَى عِبَادِهِ، وَمَا حَقُّ الْعِبَادِ عَلَى اللَّهِ). قُلْتُ: اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَعْلَمُ، قَالَ: (فَإِنَّ حَقَّ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْعِبَادِ أَنْ يَعْبُدُوهُ، وَلَا يُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا، وَحَقُّ الْعِبَادِ عَلَى اللَّهِ أَنْ لَا يُعَذِّبَ مَنْ لَا يُشْرِكُ بِهِ شَيْئًا). فَقُلْتُ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، أَفَلَا أُبَشِّرُ بِهِ النَّاسَ؟ قَالَ: (لَا تُبَشِّرْهُمْ فَيَتَكَلَّبُوا). (رواه البخاري)

Narrated from Mu'adh ibn Jabal, who said: I was riding behind the Prophet saw. on a donkey called 'Ufayr, and he said, "O Mu'adh, do you know what is God's right over His servants, and what is the servants' right over God?" I said, "God and His Messenger know best." He said, "God's right over the servants is that they worship Him and associate nothing with Him; and the servants' right over God is that He will not punish anyone who associates nothing with Him." I said, "Messenger of God, shall I not give the people this good news?" He said, "Do not tell them, lest they rely upon it" (al-Bukhārī, 1993).

Three moves are visible and they occur in order. The teacher poses a question, waits for the learner to reach the limit of what he can answer, and then supplies what lies beyond that limit. The final exchange adds a fourth move, in which the teacher declines to release the conclusion because the learner's inference from it would be wrong. This is a precise instance of instruction pitched at the edge of independent capability and supported by a more capable participant (Vygotsky, 1978).

The proposed adaptation, discussion in Google Meet or a WhatsApp or Telegram group, is conditionally supported, and the condition is demanding. Carrillo and Flores (2020), reviewing 134 empirical studies, find that online practice divides into social, cognitive and teaching presence, and that outcomes depend on the third. Al-husban (2020) analysed students' forum postings and found relevance and importance present but justification and critical assessment weak. Junus, Santoso and Ahmad (2021), working with Indonesian undergraduates, found asynchronous discussion reaching the integration phase but not proceeding to resolution, with teaching presence the rarest of the three. Chen, deNoyelles, Zydney and Patton (2017) show what closes the gap: when discussion protocols, rubrics and exemplars were added in a second iteration, cognitive presence rose measurably.

The evidence and the narration converge. An open group chat produces social presence readily and stalls before resolution, which is the state these studies describe, while what the Prophet supplies in the Mu'adh narration is teaching presence in its strongest form: a question calibrated to the learner, a deliberate pause, a correction, and a judgement about what the learner is not yet ready to receive. Digital hiwar accordingly requires a protocol, a moderating role that closes the discussion rather than merely opening it, and a stated criterion for resolution.

Qashash: narrative and the platform that will not let a story end

Narrative teaching is exemplified in a short account transmitted by Muslim:

وَحَدَّثَنِي أَبُو الطَّاهِرِ ، أَخْبَرَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ وَهْبٍ ، أَخْبَرَنِي جَرِيرُ بْنُ حَازِمٍ ، عَنْ أَيُّوبَ السَّخْتِيَّانِيِّ عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ سِيرِينَ ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ: ((بَيْنَمَا كَلْبٌ يُطِيفُ بِرَكِيَّةٍ قَدْ كَادَ يَقْتُلُهُ الْعَطَشُ إِذْ رَأَتْهُ بَغِيٌّ مِنْ بَغَايَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ، فَزَعَتْ مُوقَهَا فَاسْتَقَتَتْ لَهُ بِهِ فَسَقَتَهُ إِيَّاهُ، فَغَوَرَ لَهَا بِهِ)) (رواه مسلم)

From Abū Hurayrah, who said: The Messenger of God saw. said: *"While a dog was circling a well, close to dying of thirst, a prostitute of the Children of Israel saw it, took off her shoe, drew water for it and gave it to drink; and she was forgiven for that"* (Muslim, 1988).

The narrative is very short, it withholds moralising, and it delivers its lesson through a single reversal. The function is affective: it recruits emotion and imagination in the service of a moral proposition that abstract statement would not carry as far (Subhan, 2019; Tama, Alfiansyah, Masri, Hafidzah, & Albaiyah, 2023). The lesson, the *ibrah*, is drawn after the story stops.

The proposed adaptation is short-form video on YouTube Shorts, TikTok or Instagram Reels, and here the appraisal must be contested rather than positive. On the supporting side, the multimedia principle holds that people learn better from words and pictures together than from words alone, provided the design respects channel separation and capacity (Mayer, 2021, 2024); Hamidalloh (2025), in an experimental study with Indonesian junior secondary students, found audiovisual narrative significantly improved understanding of tauhid relative to conventional delivery. On the countervailing side, the environment in which short-form narrative circulates is not neutral. Shanmugasundaram and Tamilarasu (2023) review evidence that heavy engagement with rapid digital media is associated with disrupted attention and altered patterns of memory and decision-making. Qin, Musetti and Omar (2023), surveying 633 adolescents, found concentration and time distortion positively associated with problematic platform use.

The tension is not between the story and the screen but between the story and the feed. A qashash ends, and its pedagogical work happens in the pause that follows; short-form platforms are engineered to remove that pause, since continuous delivery of the next item is how they retain attention. A moral narrative placed in that stream is formally intact and functionally truncated. The narrative must therefore terminate somewhere the algorithm does not control, in a reflective task, a written response or a classroom discussion, which makes the video a delivery vehicle rather than the site of learning.

Targhib wa tarhib: encouragement, admonition, and an absent evidence base

Encouragement appears in a narration transmitted by al-Tirmizī:

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ مَسْعُودٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: ((مَنْ قَرَأَ حَرْفًا مِنْ كِتَابِ اللَّهِ فَلَهُ بِهِ حَسَنَةٌ، وَالْحَسَنَةُ بِعَشْرِ أَمْثَالِهَا، لَا أَقُولُ الْم حَرْفٌ، وَلَكِنْ أَلِفٌ حَرْفٌ، وَلَا مِيمٌ حَرْفٌ)) (رواه الترمذي)

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd narrated that the Messenger of God saw. said: *"Whoever recites a letter from the Book of God receives a good deed for it, and the good deed is multiplied tenfold. I do not say that alif lām mim is one letter; rather alif is a letter, lām is a letter, and mim is a letter"* (al-Tirmizī, 1998).

Admonition appears in its counterpart:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ ((مَنْ أَفْطَرَ يَوْمًا مِنْ رَمَضَانَ مِنْ غَيْرِ رُخْصَةٍ وَلَا مَرَضٍ لَمْ يَقْضِهِ صِيَامُ الدَّهْرِ كُلِّهِ وَإِنْ صَامَهُ)) (رواه الترمذي و غيره)

From Abū Hurayrah, who said: The Messenger of God saw. said: *"Whoever breaks a day's fast in Ramaḍān without a dispensation or illness will not make it up even by fasting for all time"* (al-Tirmizī, 1998).

The pair works by calibration rather than force: encouragement addresses the learner who fears a small effort is worthless, admonition the learner who treats a small violation as costless, and both are transcendental in reference rather than materially reinforcing (Abdullah, 2022; Ma'rufin, 2015; Yuniartin et al., 2025).

The proposed adaptation is short devotional content distributed through Instagram Reels, status updates and channel posts. This adaptation must be rated not yet evidenced. We located no appraisable empirical study of religious motivational content delivered through social platforms and its effect on the moral dispositions it targets. The Indonesian literature on reward and punishment in Islamic education is normative rather than empirical (Shiddiq & Saefullah, 2024;

Yuniartin et al., 2025), and the nearest adjacent evidence gives grounds for caution rather than confidence: Wang and Tahir (2020) report that competitive, time-pressured digital formats can raise anxiety in some learners, which is a relevant signal for content built around warning. The honest treatment is to hold this correspondence open as a proposition and to say plainly that it currently rests on plausibility.

Uswah: exemplarity and the attribution problem

The Qur'an establishes the Prophet as the model for conduct in Sūrat al-Aḥzāb, verse 21, and the narrations supply the conduct. One instance is transmitted by Muslim:

حَدَّثَنِي عُمَرُو النَّاقِذُ ، حَدَّثَنَا إِسْحَاقُ بْنُ سُلَيْمَانَ الرَّازِيُّ قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ مَالِكًا ، وَحَدَّثَنِي يُونُسُ بْنُ عَبْدِ الْأَعْلَى ، - وَاللَّفْظُ لَهُ - أَخْبَرَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ وَهْبٍ ، حَدَّثَنِي مَالِكُ بْنُ أَنَسٍ ، عَنْ إِسْحَاقَ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ أَبِي طَلْحَةَ ، عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ قَالَ: ((كُنْتُ أَمْشِي مَعَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ ﷺ وَعَلَيْهِ رِدَاءٌ نَجْرَانِي غَلِيظُ الْحَاشِيَةِ، فَأَذْرَكُهُ أَعْرَابِيٌّ، فَجَبَذَهُ بِرِدَائِهِ جَبَذَةً شَدِيدَةً، نَظَرْتُ إِلَى صَفْحَةِ عُنُقِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ ﷺ وَقَدْ أَثَرَتْ بِهَا حَاشِيَةُ الرِّدَاءِ مِنْ شِدَّةِ جَبَذَتِهِ، ثُمَّ قَالَ: يَا مُحَمَّدُ مَرُّ لِي مِنْ مَالِ اللَّهِ الَّذِي عِنْدَكَ، فَأَلْتَقَتَ إِلَيْهِ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ فَضَحِكَ ثُمَّ أَمَرَ لَهُ بِعَطَاءٍ.)) (رواه مسلم)

Anas ibn Mālik said: *I was walking with the Messenger of God saw., who was wearing a Najrānī cloak with a coarse border. A Bedouin overtook him and pulled the cloak so violently that I saw the border leave a mark on the Messenger's neck. Then the man said, "Muḥammad, order that I be given some of God's wealth that you hold." The Messenger of God saw. turned to him, smiled, and ordered that he be given something* (Muslim, 1988).

The teaching happens in the response, not in a statement about the response. What the observer receives is a demonstration of forbearance under provocation, available for imitation because it was witnessed (Mustofa, 2019; Ramadhan, Normuslim, & Hamdanah, 2025). Social learning theory names the sequence, attention, retention, reproduction and motivation, and identifies the observer's judgement of the model as a condition on the last of these (Bandura, 1977).

The proposed adaptation, positive personal branding by Islamic education teachers on social media, is contested, and the reason is more interesting than the usual worry about *riya'*. Vukušić Rukavina and colleagues (2021), in a scoping review of 88 studies of professional self-presentation online, document both benefits and recurrent harms, among them boundary blurring between professional and private roles and reputational exposure. The pedagogical difficulty, however, lies in attribution. Modelling works when the observer reads the model's conduct as authentic. A platform that visibly rewards conduct with engagement metrics supplies the observer with a competing explanation for that conduct, and once a student can attribute the teacher's piety to the audience rather than to conviction, the motivational step in the observational sequence is undercut. This is the classical concern about *riya'* restated in the vocabulary of attribution, and it is empirical rather than merely ethical: it predicts a measurable reduction in imitation.

The design condition therefore concerns verifiability rather than content. Mediated exemplarity is defensible where online conduct is continuous with conduct students observe offline, where the account is not optimised for engagement metrics, and where professional and personal presentation are separated; where those conditions fail, the practice may be self-defeating in exactly the way the tradition warned.

Takrir: repetition and the complexity ceiling

Repetition as deliberate technique is recorded by al-Bukhārī:

حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الصَّمَدِ قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ الْمُثَنَّى قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا ثُمَامَةُ بْنُ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، عَنْ أَنَسِ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ ﷺ: أَنَّهُ ((كَانَ إِذَا سَلَّمَ سَلَّمَ ثَلَاثًا، وَإِذَا تَكَلَّمَ بِكَلِمَةٍ أَعَادَهَا ثَلَاثًا)) (رواه البخاري)

Narrated from Anas, from the Prophet saw., that *"when he gave a greeting he gave it three times, and when he spoke a sentence he repeated it three times"* (al-Bukhārī, 1993).

Repetition here is neither hesitation nor emphasis for its own sake. It is a technique for securing comprehension and retention, and the greeting repeated three times adds an affective dimension of regard for the listener (Aisyah, Rinah, & Syukri, 2025; Haqi, Risfina, Suryana, & Harto, 2023).

The proposed adaptation is gamified quizzing through Quizizz, Kahoot or Wordwall, and this is the only one of the six that can be rated supported, though within a limit that the tarbawi literature has not noticed. Wang and Tahir (2020), reviewing 93 studies, find positive effects on learning performance, classroom dynamics, attitudes and anxiety, while noting studies where the effect was small or absent and documenting practical obstacles including unreliable connectivity and time pressure. Maraza-Quispe (2024) reports gains in knowledge and understanding with these platforms, with Quizizz superior to Kahoot for feedback quality. Almelhes (2024), reviewing gamified Arabic instruction for non-native speakers, reports improved motivation and vocabulary mastery. Trumble, Lodge, Mandrusiak and Forbes (2023), reviewing 63 experiments, find distributed and retrieval practice effective for academic performance.

The limit is decisive for religious education. Van Gog and Sweller (2015) show that the testing effect diminishes as element interactivity rises, and disappears where material is very high in complexity. Recall of a lafal, a term, a chronology or a rule is low in element interactivity and is exactly what gamified quizzing supports. Grasping why forbearance was the right response to the Bedouin, or what the reversal in the story of the dog implies about the reach of mercy, is high in element interactivity, and there is no evidential basis for expecting quiz repetition to deliver it. The design condition is a division of labour: gamified takrir is used for the retrieval of stable, low-complexity content, and the interpretive work is carried by dialogue and reflection, not by the quiz.

Where the six-category frame failed

Directed content analysis obliges the analyst to report material the frame does not accommodate, and one such case is instructive. A narration frequently cited in tarbawi scholarship has the Prophet saying "pray as you have seen me pray," which grounds instruction by demonstration followed by supervised practice. This is a distinct pedagogical form. It is not delivery, since the learner performs; it is not exemplarity, since the imitation is deliberate and monitored rather than incidental; and it is not repetition, since the first performance already counts. Budiyanto (2025) treats hands-on practice as one of his four categories, and the six-category frame used here has no place for it.

This matters beyond bookkeeping. The affordance implied by demonstration and supervised practice, video modelling with recorded learner performance and feedback, is absent from the correspondence tables circulating in this literature and is arguably better evidenced than several of the six that do appear. Different frames generate different digital agendas, so a taxonomy adopted without justification quietly determines which technologies a field will consider.

The reconstructed model

Table 1 restates the six methods with the narration actually analysed for each, replacing the loose correspondences that circulate in this literature.

Method	Narration analysed	Teaching function	Proposed digital affordance
Al-muhadlarah	"Ballighū 'annī wa law āyah" (al-Bukhārī)	Accurate delivery of a bounded unit	Segmented voice notes and recorded explanation; synchronous meeting
Hiwar	Mu'adh ibn Jabal narration (al-Bukhārī)	Question, pause, correction at the edge of capability	Protocol-governed discussion in meeting platforms and messaging groups
Qashash	The dog at the well (Muslim)	Affective engagement leading to ibrah	Short-form video terminating in an off-platform reflective task

Method	Narration analysed	Teaching function	Proposed digital affordance
Targhib wa tarhib	Reward per letter recited; breaking the Ramaḍān fast (al-Tirmizī)	Calibrated encouragement and admonition	Short devotional content in feeds and channels
Uswah	The Bedouin and the cloak (Muslim)	Observable conduct available for imitation	Professional account with offline-verifiable consistency
Takrir	Threefold repetition (al-Bukhārī)	Retention through structured repetition	Gamified retrieval for low-complexity content

Table 1. Prophetic methods, the narrations analysed, and the proposed digital affordances.

Table 2 reports the appraisal. It is the analytic core of the article, and it is where this reconstruction differs from its predecessors.

Method	Evidential status	Evidence consulted	Boundary condition
Al-muhadlarah	Conditionally supported	Mayer (2021, 2024); Brame (2016); Sweller et al. (2019)	Segmented, signalled, coherent, and closed by a generative task
Hiwar	Conditionally supported	Carrillo & Flores (2020); Chen et al. (2017); Al-husban (2020); Junus et al. (2021)	Requires protocol and teaching presence; discussion must reach resolution
Qashash	Contested	Mayer (2024); Hamidalloh (2025); Shanmugasundaram & Tamilarasu (2023); Qin et al. (2023)	Narrative must end where the feed does not continue
Targhib wa tarhib	Not yet evidenced	No appraisable empirical study located; caution from Wang & Tahir (2020)	Hold as proposition; do not claim effectiveness
Uswah	Contested	Bandura (1977); Vukušić Rukavina et al. (2021)	Conduct online must be verifiable offline; no metric optimisation
Takrir	Supported, within a limit	Wang & Tahir (2020); Maraza-Quispe (2024); Almelhes (2024); Trumble et al. (2023); van Gog & Sweller (2015)	Low element interactivity only; interpretation carried elsewhere

Table 2. Evidential appraisal of the six proposed digital adaptations.

Read across the rows, the pattern is not the one the field expects. Only one adaptation is supported, and its support stops where religious education becomes interesting. Two are conditionally supported, and both conditions require more teacher work rather than less, the opposite of the labour-saving promise attached to these tools. Two are contested, and in both cases the countervailing evidence concerns the platform rather than the pedagogy. One rests on nothing we could appraise.

Media transfer is not reconstruction

The correspondence tables that circulate in this literature perform a substitution: a prophetic method is matched to a platform on the basis of surface resemblance, and the match is treated as the reconstruction. Lecture resembles broadcast, so broadcast inherits the legitimacy of lecture. The appraisal shows why the inference does not hold. What transfers, when anything transfers, is a mechanism operating under conditions, and the platform frequently supplies conditions working against the mechanism it is meant to carry. Short-form video delivers narrative and removes the pause narrative needs. A metrics-driven profile displays exemplary conduct and supplies an alternative explanation for it. A quiz application rehearses content and stops short of meaning. Reconstruction properly understood is therefore a design task rather than a matching task, and it recasts the familiar warning that technology must remain instrumental. That warning is correct but under-specified, because instrumentality turns out to be a property of the design rather than of the teacher's intention, and a teacher with impeccable intentions who posts an unsegmented ninety-minute recording has already lost the function.

Propositions for empirical work

Because the study is conceptual, its claims are formulated so that they can be tested and, if wrong, shown to be wrong. Table 3 states six propositions with a suggested design for each.

No.	Proposition	Suggested test
P1	Segmented recorded delivery produces higher retention of hadith content than unsegmented recording of equal total length	Randomised comparison, two formats, delayed post-test
P2	Digital hiwar governed by a discussion protocol reaches resolution more often than unstructured group discussion	Content analysis of forum transcripts coded for cognitive presence phase
P3	Short-form qashash followed by an off-platform reflective task yields greater moral reasoning gain than the video alone	Quasi-experiment with a moral reasoning measure at delayed post-test
P4	Devotional targhib content in feeds changes stated intention but not observed conduct	Intention and behaviour measured separately over an academic term
P5	Perceived metric optimisation in a teacher's account reduces students' attribution of authenticity and reported imitation	Vignette experiment varying visible engagement cues
P6	Gamified takrir improves recall of low-complexity items but not interpretive items from the same material	Within-subject design with items classified by element interactivity

Table 3. Testable propositions derived from the appraisal.

Conclusion

This study asked whether the prophetic teaching methods routinely proposed as models for digital Islamic education survive the transfer. They survive unevenly. Gamified repetition transfers and stops where material becomes complex. Structured delivery and dialogue transfer under design conditions most current practice does not meet. Narrative and exemplarity transfer into environments that work against the functions they carry. Encouragement and admonition rest, at present, on nothing that can be appraised. Three contributions follow. Methodologically, declaring the six-category taxonomy as an a priori instrument rather than a finding removes the circularity characterising this literature, and reporting where it failed identifies a demonstration-and-practice method the standard frame omits. Analytically, the appraisal scale separates what the evidence supports from what remains plausible, so a reader can act on the strong claims and withhold judgement on the weak ones. Theoretically, treating exemplarity as an attribution problem rather than only an ethical one converts the classical worry about *riya'* into a testable prediction about imitation. Four limitations bound the argument. Hadith authenticity was accepted on the authority of the collections, without independent *takhrij*, so the corpus is canonical by convention rather than independently graded here. The evidence consulted for the digital affordances was drawn largely from general education research, and its transfer to religious content is itself an assumption rather than a demonstration. The appraisal was conducted by the author team without independent double-rating, so the ratings in Table 2 reflect a considered judgement rather than a measured consensus. And the study measures no learning outcome at all; every claim about effectiveness in this article is conditional and awaits the tests set out in Table 3. For practice, the implication is a reordering of priorities. Teachers should invest first where the evidence is strongest and the conditions cheapest to meet, in segmenting recorded material and in structuring discussion so that it closes rather than merely opens; treat short-form narrative as a delivery vehicle requiring a landing place off the platform; treat gamified quizzing as an instrument for retrieval rather than understanding; and approach mediated exemplarity with the tradition's own caution, now supported by a mechanism that explains why the caution was warranted. Two lines of research follow. The propositions in Table 3 are stated for testing, and P6 is inexpensive to run and would settle a question the field currently answers by assumption. Beyond that, a study deriving prophetic pedagogical categories inductively from a specified corpus, rather than inheriting them, would tell

the field whether four, six or eight is the defensible number, and would place the digital agenda that follows on firmer ground.

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