



The Exegetical Reception of Imām al-Tirmidhī's *al-Shamā'il al-Muḥammadiyah* in Indonesian Cybermedia

Al-Shamā'il al-Muḥammadiyah is one of the most significant sources of Prophetic history. The book's popularity is indisputable, spanning from classical traditional discussions to its development in the digital realm. This interdisciplinary study examines the recent transmission of *al-Shamā'il* disseminated through cyberspace, employing the concept of exegetical ḥadith reception. The question spans from how videos cover and reach the audience to how the Indonesian ulama explores *al-Shamā'il* complex settings and local direct audience. These all are examined through online observation of Indonesian ulama playlist videos on *al-Shamā'il al-Muḥammadiyah*. The results indicate that the study of *al-Shamā'il* in Indonesia has shifted from traditional teacher-led classrooms to decentralized digital networks such as YouTube. These digital platforms treat sacred third-century texts both as in-depth scholarly resources and as quick-access information for the masses, creating a unique tension between viral popularity and academic rigor. While scholars have successfully adapted these teachings into practical daily guidance for millions, the current one-way nature of online videos still lacks the deep personal connection characteristic of traditional face-to-face learning.

Keywords: Exegetical reception, *al-Shamā'il al-Muḥammadiyah*, Indonesian cybermedia, tradition of hadith commentary.

Al-Syamā'il al-Muḥammadiyah merupakan salah satu sumber sejarah kenabian yang signifikan. Popularitasnya tidak terbantahkan, mulai dari diskusi klasik hingga perkembangannya di ranah digital. Studi interdisipliner ini mengkaji transmisi mutakhir *al-Syamā'il* yang disebarluaskan di dunia maya dengan menggunakan konsep resepsi hadis eksegetis. Pertanyaan penelitian ini mencakup bagaimana video menjangkau khalayak hingga bagaimana ulama Indonesia mengeksplorasi *al-Syamā'il* dalam konteks yang kompleks dan berinteraksi secara langsung dengan audien lokal. Seluruh persoalan tersebut dianalisis melalui observasi daring terhadap playlist video para ulama Indonesia mengenai *al-Syamā'il al-Muḥammadiyah*. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa studi tentang *al-Syamā'il* di Indonesia telah bergeser dari ruang kelas tradisional yang berpusat pada guru menuju jaringan digital terdesentralisasi seperti YouTube. Platform digital ini memperlakukan teks sakral abad ketiga sebagai sumber daya ilmiah sekaligus informasi instan yang mudah diakses masyarakat luas. Ia menciptakan performansi unik antara popularitas viral dan kedalaman akademis. Meskipun para ulama berhasil mengadaptasi *al-Syamā'il* menjadi panduan praktis harian bagi jutaan viewers, sifat video daring yang cenderung satu arah masih belum mampu menghadirkan kedalaman relasi personal yang menjadi ciri pembelajaran tatap muka tradisional.

Kata Kunci: Resepsi eksegesis, *al-Syamā'il al-Muḥammadiyah*, media siber Indonesia, syarh hadis.

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Introduction

Studying *al-Shamā'il al-Muḥammadiyyah* by al-Tirmidhī (hereafter referred to as *al-Shamā'il*) and its role in the transmission of knowledge from Central Asia to the Nusantara region is a promising research project. Al-Tirmidhī (d. 892), from Tirmiz, was a master of several disciplines who studied under renowned scholars such as al-Bukhārī, Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj, Abū Dāwūd, and others in the Hijaz, Iraq, and Khorasan. Although al-Tirmidhī authored several works, the two most significant are *Sunan al-Tirmidhī* and *al-Shamā'il al-Muḥammadiyyah* (Special Qualities of the Prophet, peace be upon him). As noted by АМОHOV, B. M. in *History of the Emergence and the Development of the Science of Hadith in Transoxiana (mā warā' al-nahr)*, studying *al-Shamā'il* not only deepens our understanding of this classical source but also provides valuable insight into the history of the dissemination of Islamic knowledge, its influence across diverse cultural contexts, and its relevance to the contemporary transmission of hadith.¹

Researchers have examined the transmission process of al-Tirmidhī's work through various thematic and methodological perspectives, which can be broadly categorized into three main aspects. The first facet of the study focuses on the

textual and historical examination of the *al-Shamā'il*. This analysis includes an in-depth study of the book, such as the hadiths narrated, the chains of narration, and, most importantly, the *matn* (text) of the hadiths. The study also explores the historical context of the book's composition in the third century of the *hijri* calendar, in the region now known as Uzbekistan. Huffaz and Sulthonie examine the intrinsic components of the book, focusing on its Arabic structure and grammatical form, highlighting how the linguistic aspects influence the reception of the book among non-Arabic readers.² Other scholars investigate the influence of Transoxiana's ulama (Karimov, 2024; АМОHOV, 2020), where al-Tirmidhī and his works became central to hadith studies.³

Second, scholars have studied *al-Shamā'il* using an interdisciplinary approach. For example, Juyushi examined the Sufism aspects in both al-Tirmidhī and *al-Shamā'il*.⁴ Abdullah explored *al-Shamā'il* within the pedagogical principles of the Islamic tradition⁵, while Rahmatullah et al. focused on the attitudes and morality taught by *al-Shamā'il*.⁶ The reception of *al-Shamā'il* extends further into its commentary (*sharh*) and vernacular translations into local languages, as exemplified by Guru Mughni al-Batawi.⁷ The

¹ Барот Муродович Амонов, 'History of the Emergence and the Development of the Science of Hadith in Transoxiana (Mā Warā' Al-Nahr)', *Актуальные научные исследования в современном мире* 5, no. 11 (2020): 81–92.

² Tb Badrul Huffaz, 'Al-Af'āl Al-Thulāthiyyah Al-Mazīdah Wa-Ma'ānīhā Fī Al-Ḥadīth Al-Sharīf Li-Al-Imām Al-Tirmidhī "Kitāb Al-Shamā'il Al-Muḥammadiyyah" (Dirāsah Ṣarfīyyah)' (UIN Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten, 2020); Ilham Aji Sulthonie, 'Al-Tamyīz Wa-Istrāṭijīyyat Tarjamatih Fī Kitāb Al-Shamā'il Al-Muḥammadiyyah Li-Al-Imām Al-Tirmidhī Tarjamah Turshī Hāwī (Dirāsah Naḥwiyyah Dalāliyyah)' (UIN Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten, 2023).

³ N. Karimov, 'Prominent Hadith Scholars of Central Asia', *The American Journal of Social Science and Education Innovations* 6, no. 5 (May 1, 2024): 223–225, <https://www.theamericanjournals.com/index.php/tajssei/article/view/5105/4761>; АМОHOV, 'History of the Emergence and the Development of the Science of Hadith in Transoxiana (Mā Warā' Al-Nahr)', 81–92.

⁴ Muhammed I. Juyushi, 'Al-Tirmidhi, His Works and His Opinions on Sufism' (SOAS University of London, 1970),

<https://www.proquest.com/openview/39cb10c34cef1cbdb9e34dc6b9e55d24/1?cbl=2026366&diss=y&pq-origsite=gscholar>.

⁵ Muhammad Abdullah, 'A Prophetic Pedagogical Framework for Islamic Schools', in *Proceedings of the International Conference on Education in Muslim Society (ICEMS 2017)* (Paris: Atlantis Press, 2018), 148–153, <http://www.atlantis-press.com/php/paper-details.php?id=25895142>.

⁶ Fahrurrozy Rahmatullah et al., 'Pendidikan Akhlak Bagi Remaja Dalam Perspektif Kitab Al-Syama'il Muhammadiyah Imam Tirmidzi', in *Prosiding Kajian Islam Dan Integrasi Ilmu Di Era Society 5.0 (KIIIES 5.0)* (Pascasarjana Universitas Islam Negeri Datokarama Palu, 2024), 467–472.

⁷ Umaiyatus Syarifah, 'Lokalitas Tarjamah Hadits Bahasa Betawi: Respon Guru Mughni Terhadap Nilai Religius Dalam Kitab Taudhih Al-Dalail Fi Tarjamah Hadits





family educational aspect has been the most frequently examined feature by Indonesian scholars⁸, with particular emphasis on the specific prophetic education found in *al-Shamā'il*.⁹ Additionally, research has explored how the values and descriptions of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) in this book can be internalized and reflected in character education and community development in both countries.

While the dual aspects of research have consistently remained crucial for the study of *al-Shamā'il* and are expected to continue growing, this prophetic record has also been examined more deeply for its day-to-day influence, which can be considered a third key area of study. *Al-Shamā'il* continuously inspires Indonesian Muslims to apply hadith in practical, everyday life¹⁰, highlighting the importance of exploring the living sunnah and hadith in daily practice. This approach aligns with studies on the recitation of other primary hadith collections, such as *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*.¹¹ Another line of research focuses on the contextual aspects by introducing the human and social dimensions of the Prophet, including explorations of his humorous and lighthearted side.¹² This latter

cluster of research, while still part of the traditional scientific study of hadith, acknowledges the significant role of contemporary knowledge production processes that extend beyond traditional modes of transmission. Furthermore, this cluster demonstrates that the book of *al-Shamā'il* can serve both as a source of inspiration and as an object of study in the development of contemporary Islamic knowledge.

In line with the latest research project, this study elaborates how the third-century work of al-Tirmidhī is transmitted and interpreted to suit the Indonesian day-to-day context. This study departs from the previous feature by exposing on the expansion of day-to-day practice of transmitting hadith through social media. Scholars have documented the integration of religious communities into the digital realm, a phenomenon they term.¹³ With the widespread availability of *al-Shamā'il* online, this study explores reception practices, specifically exegesis.¹⁴ YouTube videos are considered a contemporary mode of transmission, enabling texts such as the Qur'an, hadith, and other scripture-related publications to be transmitted,

Al Syamail', *ULUL ALBAB Jurnal Studi Islam* 13, no. 1 (September 17, 2013): 18–34, <http://ejournal.uin-malang.ac.id/index.php/ululalbab/article/view/2384>.

⁸ Ibnu Ahmad Al-Bantani and Ikhris Muhammad, *Seni Berkeluarga Dalam Islam (Telaah Atas Kitab as Syamail Al Muhammadiyah Karya Imam At-Tirmizi)* (Kab. Bogor: Guepedia, 2021); Anita Aprilia, Samsul Azwar, and Muhammad Zaid Adnan, 'Nilai-Nilai Pendidikan Karakter Dalam Kitab Al-Syamail Muhammadiyah', *Equilibrium: Jurnal Pendidikan* 10, no. 1 (January 5, 2022): 48–56, <https://journal.unismuh.ac.id/index.php/equilibrium/article/view/6312>; Rohmat Fadholi, 'Analisis Nilai-Nilai Pendidikan Karakter Dalam Kitab Syamail Muhammadiyah Karya Imam at-Tirmizi' (Institut Ilmu al-Qur'an (IIQ) An Nur Yogyakarta, 2022).

⁹ Muhammad Rifki Sofa Izurrohan, Mohammad Zakki Azani, and Hakimuddin Salim, 'The Concept of Prophetic Education According to Imam Tirmidzi in the Book of Syamail Muhammadiyah', *Solo International Collaboration and Publication of Social Sciences and Humanities* 1, no. 1 (March 1, 2023): 52–61, <https://journal.walideminstitute.com/index.php/sicopus/article/view/33>.

¹⁰ Dede Rifani Vajab, 'Pembelajaran Hadits-Hadits Nabi Shalallahu Alaihi Wasallam Dari Kitab Syamail Muhammadiyah At-Tirmidzi Tentang 10 Do'a Penting Dalam Aktifitas Harian Serta Penerapannya Dalam Kehidupan Sehari-Hari Pada Santri Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliah Ihyaul Huda Tasikm' (Sekolah Tinggi Dirasat Islamiyah Imam Syafii Jember, 2024).

¹¹ Alis Muhlis and Norkholis Norkholis, 'Analisis Tindakan Sosial Max Weber Dalam Tradisi; Pembacaan Kitab Mukhtashar Al-Bukhari (Studi Living Hadis)', *Jurnal Living Hadis* 1, no. 2 (October 1, 2016): 242–258, <https://ejournal.uin-suka.ac.id/ushuluddin/Living/article/view/1121>.

¹² Khalid Ramdhani, 'Akhlaq Humor Dalam Pendidikan Islam', *Ta'lim* 1, no. 1 (May 3, 2019): 34–51, <http://journal.uml.ac.id/TLM/article/view/83>.

¹³ Heidi A. Campbell, 'Introduction', in *Digital Religion: Understanding Religious Practice in New Media Worlds* (Routledge, 2013), 1–20.

¹⁴ Ahmad Rafiq, 'The Reception of the Qur'an in Indonesia: A Case Study of the Place of the Qur'an in a Non-Arabic Speaking Community' (Temple University Philadelphia, 2014).





expanded, and accessed in a hybrid digital format. This potential study is reflecting the attempt being done by Gary R. Bunt, who described this as the cyber environment of Muslim society.¹⁵

This facet of study has expanded significantly since the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, Dewi and Huda discuss Indonesian Muslims' awareness of the role of online media as an influential source for accessing *du'ā'* or *dhikr* during periods of physical distancing.¹⁶ However, informants differ in how they perceive the authority of the information obtained. Akmaluddin highlights the growth of religious gatherings, such as *halaqah* and *madrakah*, that traditionally involved face-to-face transmission of Hadith, known as *tawajjuh*, but have increasingly adapted to online environments.¹⁷ Similarly, Qudsy et al. examine virtual Friday prayer worship that certain groups in Indonesia adopted during the pandemic. The discussion around virtual Friday prayers, supported by internet-savvy proponents as a way to cope with the pandemic, suggests they should replace traditional Friday prayers.¹⁸ However, this shift from offline to online practices raises questions about their legitimacy according to *fiqh*, which has sparked social discussion.

The Nature of Oral Hadith Commentary in Muslim Society

This study maps the historical and interdisciplinary reception of *al-Shamā'il* to demonstrate how a 3rd-century prophetic record is dynamically reinterpreted and transmitted

within the modern, day-to-day context of Indonesian Islamic life. By adopting al-Bājī's 11th-century precedent of prioritizing social relevance over strict chronological reading, this section establishes a theoretical framework for understanding how oral hadith commentary functions as a dynamic, responsive tool for communal guidance in both traditional and modern cyber settings. This part of the paper is inspired by Blecher's review of the tradition of unwritten hadith commentary, *sharḥ al-ḥadīth*, which dates back to 11th-century Andalusia. His innovative approach encourages renewed discussion of public verbal commentary by Andalusian ulama (11th–15th centuries).¹⁹ Following Blecher's observation that many scholars historically performed live *sharḥ* orally, this paper examines the work of al-Tirmidhī, as studied by several scholars.

Blecher discusses examples of live hadith commentary practices, such as those of Abū al-Walīd al-Bājī (d. 474/1081) from the Andalusian period. Al-Bājī was a prominent figure among Mālikī hadith scholars who dedicated years of study to the greatest authorities of hadith from Herat, Mecca, and Afghanistan before returning to Andalusia in the 15th century CE. During his return, he traveled from town to town, addressing local audiences where he taught, transmitted, and interpreted the canonical collection of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*. According to Blecher, this Andalusian ulama practice of live hadith commentary "established him as an enduring authority in the cumulative tradition of

¹⁵ Gary R. Bunt, *IMuslims: Rewiring the House of Islam*, Islamic Civilization and Muslim Networks (University of North Carolina Press, 2009).

¹⁶ Subkhani Kusuma Dewi and M. Johan Nasrul Huda, 'Indonesian Muslims' Reception toward Wirid, Zikr and Shalawat during Covid-19 Outbreak; A Mediated Living Hadith', *DINIKA: Academic Journal of Islamic Studies* 5, no. 2 (November 30, 2020): 135–168, <https://ejournal.uinsaid.ac.id/index.php/dinika/article/view/2769>.

¹⁷ Muhammad Akmaluddin, 'Sanad Digital: Ijazah Hadis Musalsal Dalam Kajian Hadis Virtual Di Grup Dan

Halaman Facebook', *Nabawi: Journal of Hadith Studies* 2, no. 1 (November 2, 2021): 141–161, <http://journal.tebuieng.ac.id/index.php/nabawi/article/view/44>.

¹⁸ Saifuddin Zuhri Qudsy, Mahbub Ghazali, and Abd. Aziz Faiz, 'Virtual Friday Prayer Practices During the Covid-19 Pandemic in Indonesia', *Islāmiyyāt: International Journal of Islamic Studies* 45 (2023): 143–155.

¹⁹ Joel Blecher, *Said the Prophet of God: Hadith Commentary across a Millennium*, 1st ed. (University of California Press, 2018).





hadith commentary (*sharḥ*, authors)".²⁰ In the context of al-Bājī's direct *sharḥ al-ḥadīth*, several aspects can be discussed in this paper, particularly the characteristics of spoken-*sharḥ* hadith. Abū al-Walīd al-Bājī employed a deductive approach to commentary, which later became integrated into daily practice. He noted that the hadith collection is quite difficult to understand, especially for those lacking the necessary background. Al-Bājī observed that even individuals who had studied the texts found them challenging, as evidenced in *al-Muwatta'*. For those without prior study, comprehension was even more difficult. His intention to deliver *sharḥ* verbally and in everyday contexts was part of his effort to help the *'awām* (general public) understand and grasp the hadith kitab more easily. Only later, after conducting a series of oral *sharḥ* sessions across various regions, did he compile his teachings into a book, *al-Muntaqā Sharḥ al-Muwatta'*. This is directly reflected in the book's introduction, which states:

(أَمَّا بَعْدُ) وَقَفْنَا اللَّهُ وَإِيَّاكَ لِمَا يُرْضِيهِ فَإِنَّكَ ذَكَرْتَ أَنَّ الْكِتَابَ الَّذِي أَلْفَتْ فِي شَرْحِ الْمُوطَأِ الْمُتَرْجَمِ بِكِتَابِ الْإِسْتِيفَاءِ يَتَعَدَّرُ عَلَى أَكْثَرِ النَّاسِ جَمْعُهُ وَيَبْعُدُ عَنْهُمْ دَرْسُهُ لَا سِيَّمَا لِمَنْ لَمْ يَتَقَدَّمَ لَهُ فِي هَذَا الْعِلْمِ نَظَرٌ وَلَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ فِيهِ بَعْدُ أَثَرٌ فَإِنَّ نَظْرَهُ فِيهِ يَبْلُغُ خَاطِرَهُ وَيَحْزِنُهُ وَلِكَثْرَةِ مَسَائِلِهِ وَمَعَانِيهِ يَمْنَعُ تَحْفُظَهُ وَفَهْمَهُ.

"(Now then) May God grant us and you success in what pleases Him. You mentioned that the book I authored explaining *al-Muwatta'*, translated as the *Book of Completion*, is difficult for most people to compile and its study is beyond their reach, especially for those who have not previously studied this field of knowledge and have not yet found any trace of it. For them, studying it would dull their minds and confuse them. Because of the abundance of its questions and meanings, it is difficult to memorize and understand it."²¹

al-Bājī's orientation toward oral explanation is evident in the method he presented in *al-Muntaqā*, which does not include or recite the sanad of the hadiths contained in *al-Muwatta'*. The method employed is based on objective contextual relevance. He also integrated and presented the material according to the needs of his society. Therefore, on this basis, *al-Muntaqā* began with responses to issues occurring within the society in which he recited the book. This model of prioritizing contemporary concerns would later become a tradition in Muslim society.

From this very vantage point, the unwritten *sharḥ al-ḥadīth* demonstrates the phenomenon of differing perspectives among scholars. Verbal hadith commentary, particularly the live *sharḥ* method with its emphasis on actuality, reflects the extensive interaction and interpretation of unwritten discourse shaped by communal needs. This is further supported by al-Bājī's statement in the introduction to *al-Muntaqā*. He stated that his writings did not include "the arguments used as excuses by opponents," indicating that although *al-Muntaqā* was intended to address the issues and challenges faced by the community, particularly the Mālikī community, it was not based on subjective desires or mere scholarly disagreements. He then continued:

وَقَدْ قَدِّمْتُ فِي الْكِتَابِ الْمَذْكُورِ مَا لَا أُخْلِي هَذَا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ حَرْفٍ مِنْ ذِكْرِهِ وَذَلِكَ أَنَّ فَنَوَى الْمُفْتِي فِي الْمَسَائِلِ وَكَلَامِهِ عَلَيَّهَا وَشَرَحَهُ لَهَا إِنَّمَا هُوَ بِحَسَبِ مَا يُوفِّقُهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى إِلَيْهِ وَبُعِينُهُ عَلَيْهِ وَقَدْ بَرَى الصَّوَابَ فِي قَوْلٍ مِنَ الْأَقْوَالِ فِي وَقْتٍ وَبَرَاهُ خَطَأً فِي وَقْتٍ آخَرَ وَلِذَلِكَ يَخْتَلِفُ قَوْلُ الْعَالِمِ الْوَاحِدِ فِي الْمَسْأَلَةِ الْوَاحِدَةِ فَلَا يَعْتَقِدُ النَّاطِلُ فِي كِتَابِي أَنَّ مَا أَوْزَدْتَهُ مِنَ الشَّرْحِ وَالتَّأْوِيلِ وَالْقِيَاسِ وَالتَّنْظِيرِ طَرِيقُهُ الْقَطْعُ عِنْدِي حَتَّى أَعِيبَ مَنْ خَالَفَهَا وَأَدُّمَ مَنْ رَأَى غَيْرَهُ

"As I mentioned in the book I mentioned earlier, what I will not omit in this book is that the mufti's fatwa on a matter, his discussion of it, and his explanation are only in accordance with what Allah guides and helps him with. He may see the truth in a statement at one

²⁰ Blecher, *Said the Prophet of God: Hadith Commentary across a Millennium*, 23.

²¹ Abū al-Walīd Sulaymān ibn Khalaf ibn Sa'd ibn Ayyūb ibn Wārith al-Tujībī al-Qurṭubī Al-Bājī, *Al-Muntaqā*

Sharḥ Al-Muwatta', 7 vols. (Cairo: Maṭba'at al-Sa'ādah bi-Jiwār Muḥāfaẓat, 1914), 2, <https://shamela.ws/book/6684>.





time and see it as wrong at another. That is why the statements of scholars differ. On any one issue, the reader of my book should not assume that what I have presented in the form of explanations, interpretations, analogies, and reasoning is the definitive path according to my view, to the point that I will criticize anyone who disagrees with it and condemn anyone who sees otherwise."²²

Finally, al-Bājī's approach to the live *sharḥ* showed the open-mindedness of the ulama in a more dialogical condition occurred during the activity of live-*sharḥ*. The open-mindedness of scholars like al-Bājī in conducting *sharḥ al-ḥadīth* was witnessed during his exchanges of opinions and debates that frequently took place. Al-Dhahabī recounted one of them, that during his Hajj, al-Bājī debated al-Juwaynī on the topic of Muslim leadership. Al-Bājī's mastery was so profound that he was described as "an ocean of knowledge without shores," affirming that West's scholars were peers to the great masters of the East.²³ Al-Bājī's knowledge beyond the Mālikī school of thought became a significant scholarly asset. It was successfully delivered as a scientific adjustment to certain regions and also evidenced as material to defend the Mālikī school of thought.

Al-Bājī's intellectual ability extended beyond mere textual mastery; he was adept at enlivening the dialogical aspect through unwritten explanation, a skill he honed during thirteen years of travel to major centers of Islamic knowledge, including the Hijaz (Mecca and Medina), Iraq, Sham (Syria and Palestine), Egypt, and Qairawan.²⁴ His experience debating with world-renowned figures such as al-Juwaynī in Mecca not only proved his intellectual resilience but also formed his maturity in reconciling and

harmonizing subtle hadith discourses (*al-jam' u wa al-tawfiq*) that seemingly contradicted one another. His mode of debate evidenced that differences among schools of thought were not viewed as clashes, but rather as a space for scholars to find integrated opinions. Ultimately, this synthesis between the sharpness of verbal dialectics and the depth of legal reconciliation was systematically outlined in *al-Muntaqā*, which transformed the arguments of debate into a methodology of *taḥlīlī* and harmonious discourse tailored for Andalusian society.

Indonesian Muslims' Reception of Hadith

Building upon these historical examples of communal reception, the following section establishes the theoretical framework of 'Living Hadith'—incorporating exegetical, aesthetic, and functional models—as the primary lens for analysing the contemporary digital transmission of *al-Shamā'il*. The above fourfold characteristics study of 11th CE Andalusian verbal and live *sharḥ al-ḥadīth* is engaging for the current study of Indonesian Muslims' reception of the Islamic scripture. Known as Living Quran and Living Hadith, the study has been gradually elaborated by Indonesian scholars, who emphasize more the Muslim society's active response toward the transmission of text.²⁵ Living Quran and Hadith (LQH) is a multidisciplinary study that sees the relationship between the significant scripture and its society as always active, where Muslim individuals and groups continuously take it as a guide (*al-hudā*), normative aspects that lead their lives. It stresses: "...how people accept and perceive textual meaning. Reception theory is grounded in people's role in contextualizing the meaning of a text within their daily social practices and lives".²⁶

²² Al-Bājī, *Al-Muntaqā Sharḥ Al-Muwatta'*, 3.

²³ Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn 'Uthmān Al-Dhahabī, *Siḥar A'lām Al-Nubalā'*, 25 vols. (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risālah, 3rd ed., 1985), 18/468, <https://shamela.ws/book/10906>.

²⁴ Muḥammad ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn Abī Bakr al-Qudā'ī al-Balansī Ibn al-Abbār, *Al-Takmilah Li-Kitāb Al-Ṣilah*,

ed. 'Abd al-Salām Al-Harrās, 4 vols. (Lebanon: Dār al-Fikr, 1995), <https://shamela.ws/book/6608>.

²⁵ M. Mansur, ed., *Metodologi Penelitian Living Qur'an Dan Hadis* (Teras, 2007).

²⁶ Saifuddin Zuhri Qudsy et al., 'The Making of Living Ḥadīth: A New Direction of Ḥadīth Studies in Indonesia', *Culture and Religion* 23, no. 4 (October 2, 2023): 353–372,





Among the subject material of this research are a variety of Muslims' expressions; from way of thought in writing and verbal communication to attitude; from their rites to daily life practice.²⁷ With the recent living hadith more detailed its tools and method of inquiries, there are threefold reception models; exegetically, aesthetically and functionally. While the last two models have been extensively discussed by academia, exegetic reception commonly refers to the act of interpretation of certain sacred text that assumes another two receptions (aesthetic or functional). The act may comprise a series of intellectual perception, conceptual understanding, and even making-meaning process toward al-Quran and hadith.²⁸ Research utilising this concept in Quranic Living examination was done by Nugroho, who examine a complex presentation of functional and exegetic analysis toward the practice of reciting Quranic Surah al-Kahfī where a group of Central Javan Muslim set a sequences of reciting, *tafsīr* with contextual understanding by utilising helpful resources of Tafsir literature, as well as Q&A sessions.²⁹

Khusna also examines the dual reception of functional and exegetical in cultivating the morality of the Quranic reciter group, where a set of literature such as *al-Tibyān fī 'Amalāt al-Qur'ān* and *Tafsīr al-Munīr fī al-'Aqīdah wa al-Sharī'ah* are exegetically delivered through a sequence of practices, including *ziyādah*, *murāja'ah*, *murāqabah*, and *tasmī'* of various Quranic surahs [*Yāsīn* and *al-Wāqī'ah*], as well as practicing Islamic calligraphy from those pieces of verses.³⁰ Finally, Sa'diyah, who explores the exegetical practice of

hadith literature, refers to one of the primary hadith texts, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*. The Islamic Mataram Palace in Yogyakarta facilitated an exegetical reception of hadith through the *Majelis Bukhoren*. In this assembly, selected matn and their explanations were interpreted by a collective of *penghulu*, *kyai*, and *ulama*. To bridge the gap between the monarchy and the populace, these scholars from the Mataram Ulama Kingdom provided contextual interpretations that transformed prophetic traditions into accessible messages for the public.³¹

In addition to this growing exegetical reception concept, it is worth understanding the area of study by considering the extensive use of digital and cyberspace by Muslim society. This is particularly significant, as the society has also been utilizing digital and cybermedia as part of their lives.

The Characteristics of the Islamic Cyber Environment in Indonesia

It is worth mentioning *al-Shamā'il* in the theoretical frameworks of the Islamic cyber environment to understand how they explain the connections between the transmission of *al-Shamā'il*—as a practice—and the usage and effects of digital technology [Pict. 1].

Scholars like Qudsy et al. and Zabidi (2013) analyze phenomena such as “meme hadith” within Indonesian Muslim communities. This exemplifies the third space of digital religion, characterized by religious adherents actively embracing digital media. In this phase, they utilize technology to digitize scriptures and spiritual literature and to mediate their religious

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14755610.2024.2336461>.

²⁷ Muhammad Alfatih Suryadilaga, 'Kajian Hadis Di Era Global', *ESENSIA: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Ushuluddin* 15, no. 2 (September 22, 2014): 199–212, <https://ejournal.uin-suka.ac.id/ushuluddin/esensia/article/view/152-4>.

²⁸ Rafiq, 'The Reception of the Qur'an in Indonesia: A Case Study of the Place of the Qur'an in a Non-Arabic Speaking Community'.

²⁹ Sapta Wahyu Nugroho, 'Resepsi Kajian Surat Al-Kahfi Di Dusun Kuwarisan, Kebumen (Studi Living Qur'an)', *Living Islam: Journal of Islamic Discourses* 5, no. 1

(June 25, 2022): 79–92, <http://ejournal.uin-suka.ac.id/ushuluddin/li/article/view/2659>.

³⁰ Kholifatul Khusna, 'Tipologi Resepsi Al-Quran Di Pondok Pesantren Tahfidz Al-Quran Oemah Al-Quran Malang: Studi Living Al Quran' (Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, 2021), <http://etheses.uin-malang.ac.id/27024/>.

³¹ Halimatus Sa'diyah, 'Majelis Bukhoren Di Kasultanan Ngayogyakarta Hadiningrat (Studi Living Hadis)' (UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, 2013), <https://digilib.uin-suka.ac.id/id/eprint/12088/>.





life and practices through cybermedia.³² Furthermore, as discussed by Bunt, this digital landscape fosters complex cultural mixing within online discourse. While this presents opportunities for broadening the reach of traditional teachings, it also poses challenges for preserving religious authenticity.³³

The data collection process of this study has three research periods, and different instruments of digital ethnography and content analysis are used to collect data. The main part of this study involves pre-observation, which entails posting a YouTube vlog and regularly examining the YouTube social media platform, emphasizing reviewing YouTube accounts that provide the learning process of *al-Shamā'il* in general. The next step is to determine the credentials of the *al-Shamā'il* reviewer account. To do this, researchers used socialblade.com to gather comprehensive details about the account's features and its impact on the community at large. Researchers can classify the account's trustworthiness and the reviewer using the YouTube account ranking in education.

The second criterion is typically used as the primary category for identifying potential areas for further investigation in communication studies, which is where the third phase of this research distinguishes itself. This study highlights the diverse representation of ulama from different audiences, religious preferences, and modes of communication. Using this method, researchers can identify different patterns of exegetical reception and variations in digital religious expression from selected YouTube content. However, this study cannot identify gender differences from the perspective

of ulama due to the limited availability of relevant data.

In general, Figure I shows that the 11 YouTube accounts being pre-observed are Indonesian, with seven of them established in the 2010s and the other four created during and after the COVID-19 outbreak. Firstly, *Buya Yahya Off.*, with 160,617,609 views, has the highest number of viewers, while the *al Hawthah al Jindawiyah* account is the most subscribed by Indonesian netizens (more than 2,000). There are three video channels with similar features, where their videos were viewed by hundreds but gained millions of subscribers. These are *Pondok Leteh* (viewed by 394 and subscribed by 1,689,000) and *Ustad Adi Hidayat* playlist videos through the *Masjid Baiturahim* channel, which has 613 subscribers while the videos were viewed by more than 6.4 million people. Similarly, *Amrullah Tekko* collected 752 viewers for his videos, yet has subscribers exceeding 4 million. Such data contrast with another two social media channels: *Sayap Dakwah*, which attracted 300 subscribers with more than 41 million views, as well as *Nurul Fajr*, with 470 subscribers; the channel's videos have been seen by netizens surpassing 14.5 million. Such variety in subscriber and viewer features is currently shaping the cyber environment, particularly the role of transmission of *Al-Shamā'il* in the Indonesian-Islamic cyber environment.³⁴

Based on such broad-spectrum observation of the *al-Shamā'il* virtual setting, researchers then decided to deep dive into the variety of features that every channel covers, to further understand how *al-Shamā'il* is explained to the relatively hybrid audience (on-site and online settings),

³² Saifuddin Zuhri Qudsy, Irwan Abdullah, and Mustaqim Pabbajah, 'The Superficial Religious Understanding in Hadith Memes: Mediatization of Hadith in the Industrial Revolution 4.0', *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies* 20, no. 60 (2021): 92–114; Ahmad Zahiruddin Mohd Zabidi, *Hebatnya Rasulullah* (Selangor: Karya Bestari, 2013).

³³ Soleh Hasan Wahid, 'Exploring the Intersection of Islam and Digital Technology: A Bibliometric Analysis', *Social Sciences & Humanities Open* 10 (2024): 1–28,

<https://linkinghub.elsevier.com/retrieve/pii/S2590291124002821>.

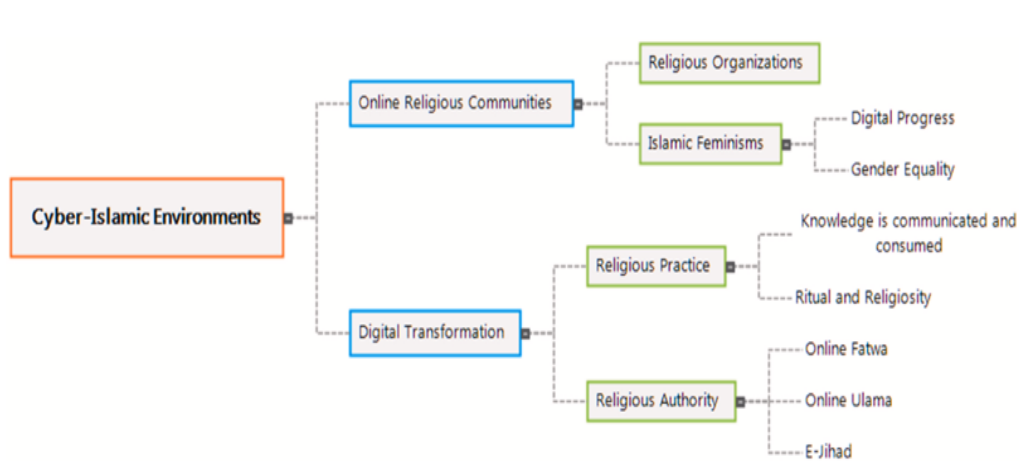
³⁴ The researchers are fully aware that some results of this pre-observed credentials and review might stimulate assumptions for some readers, where there might be a set of mechanisms used by YouTube channels to increase their views and subscribers. However, this big data analysis is beyond the scope of this research expertise





and how Indonesian ulama, as central figures in this cyber environment, shape and assemble the audience through their reading of the Hadith in the *al-Shamā'il*. This explains the social and cultural condition of Indonesian Muslim viewers regarding the unwritten syarh of the Andalusian case. To do so, we as researchers set several criteria to find identifiable video instances for

further study, thus finding: the credibility of the account, the continuity of *al-Shamā'il* videos being posted by certain accounts, and their variation in explaining and exploring the book before the audience. Using these criteria, researchers found tripartite ulama events of *ngaji*, or *kajian*, which will be explored in Figure II.



Picture 1. Muslims utilize cyberspace partly as a medium to disseminate Islamic knowledge.³⁵

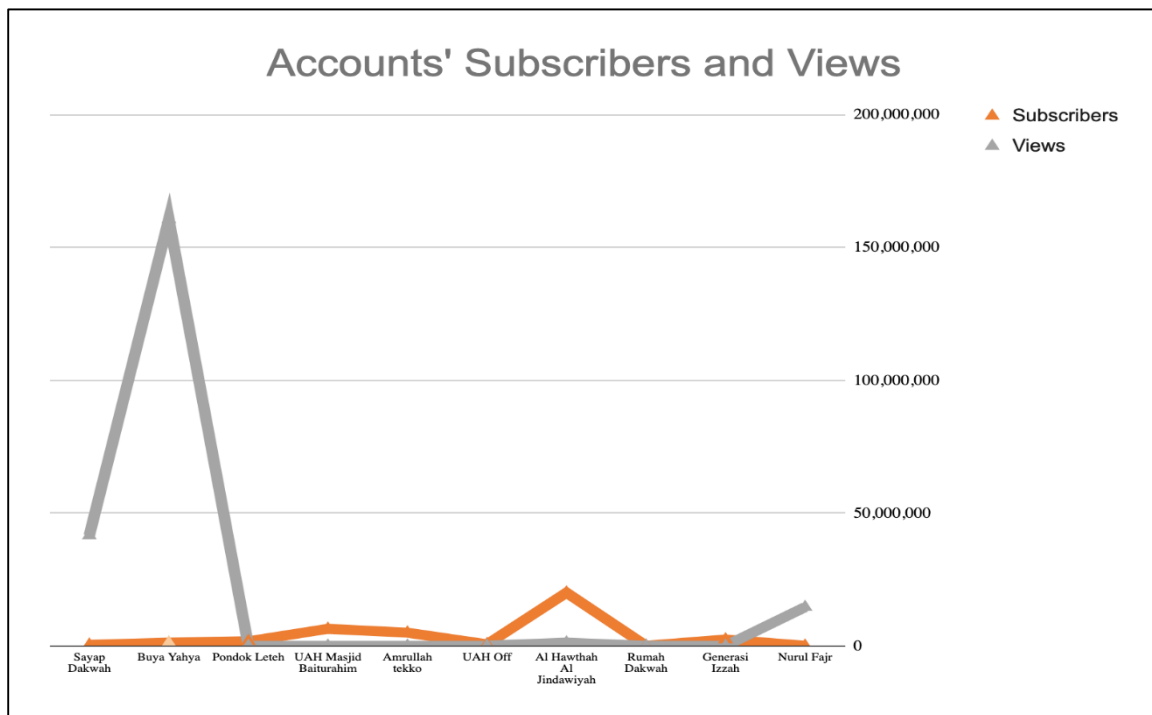


Figure I. Views and Subscribers of YouTube Channels Providing Videos of *al-Shamā'il* Transmission in Indonesia [Observation, 25 April 2025]

³⁵ Wahid, 'Exploring the Intersection of Islam and Digital Technology: A Bibliometric Analysis', 22.





Ulama	Ustad Adi Hidayat Lc, MA	Al Habib Ahmad bin Novel bin Jindan	KH. Bisri Adib Hattani
Title	<i>Syarah Kitab As Syamail Muhammadiyah Imam Tirmidzi</i>	<i>Kajian Kitab asy-Syamail al Muhammadiyah Karya Al Imam Muhammad Isa bin Saurat at Tirmidzi</i>	<i>Ngaji Selasa - as-Syamail al-Muhammadiyah -</i>
Playlist	3 videos	177 videos	95 videos
Time	02/11/2021/after Şubḥ prayer/Sunday	21/08/2016/after Şubḥ prayer/Ramadan	07/02/2023/Tuesday night
Views	5,601	37,716	2,317
Subscribers	20,000,000	6,400,000	6,900,000
Language	Indonesian, Arab	Indonesia, Arab	Indonesia, Arab, Jawa
Place	Masjid Galaxy, Jakarta	Al Hawthah Al Jindawiyah, Bogor, West Java	Pesantren Leteh, Central Java

Figure II. Ulama with playlists of videos offer the transmission process of the *Al-Shamā'il* [observation, 05/May/2025].

The Reception of *al-Shamā'il* in Indonesian Cybermedia

Although the medium has evolved from physical *riḥlah* to digital packets, the core objective remains the negotiation of religious authority and the contextualization of sacred texts. Just as al-Bāḥī used his journeys and debates to defend the Mālikī school against an Eastern elite, modern digital activists leverage social media to project interpretations across borders, bypassing traditional geographic constraints. This “rewired” discourse finds its precursor in al-Bāḥī’s unwritten and everyday live *sharḥ*, where the dialogic exchange once reserved for seasonal gatherings like the Hajj has transformed into a perpetual, real-time digital corpus of dialoguing ideas. Consequently, while al-Bāḥī represented the elite authority of a *qāḍī*, his method of *al-jam' wa al-tawfiq* mirrors the modern necessity for reconciliation; in a digital landscape flooded with potentially conflicting *sharḥ al-ḥadīth*, the scholarly skill of harmonizing seemingly contradictory explanations is now vital to prevent the fragmentation of virtual Muslim networks.

This tripartite playlist of videos—UAH, Kiai Adib, and Habib Ahmad bin Novel—explored in this research attracts audiences ranging from

600,000 to 1,000,000 views, ranking around 2000th in the educational category on social media. This ranking is relatively low compared to the overall education rankings within the Islamic cyber-environment in Indonesia. Yet, seeing the overall audience that the spread of *al-Shamā'il* in the digital sphere that produced around Global audience of these YouTube video playlists of *al-Shamā'il* have amassed approximately 1,216,413,020 subscribers, producing more than 171 playlisted videos and have been seen by 41,500,403 (41 million) viewers. This significant audience suggests considerable influence on the development of hadith literature, particularly the third-century works of the ulama. Detailed information about the videos is provided below.

A. *Al-Shamā'il* three videos by Ustad Adi Hidayat

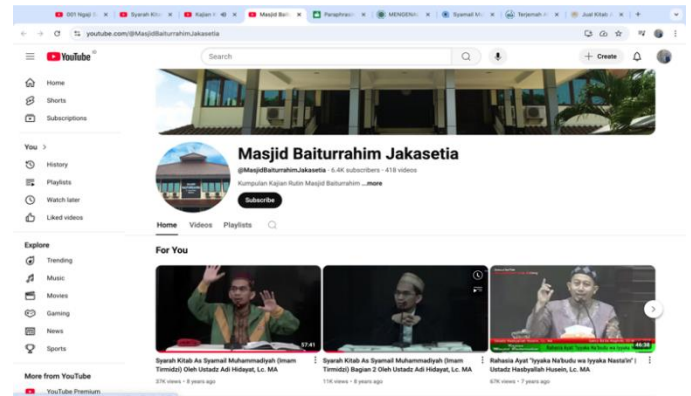
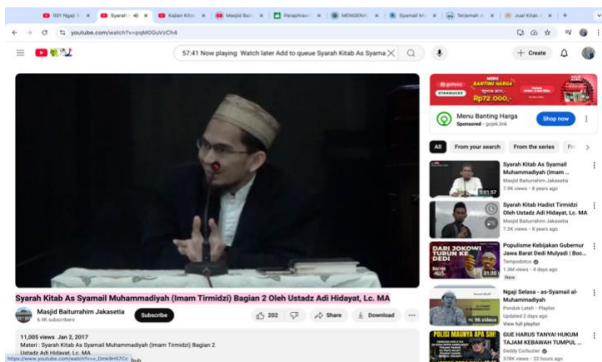
Ustad Adi Hidayat (UAH) is a religious preacher who uses a compassionate, soft-spoken yet firm communication style. He has been known for his lectures on *akhyar.com* and other social media channels since the early 2000s, when he finally created his own YouTube account in 2019. UAH was born in Banten, his initial religious education was obtained at Madrasah Salafiyah Sanusiyyah, Pandeglang, then to Darul Arqam, Muhammadiyah, Garut.





He had participated in preaching at Taruna Al Quran, Yogyakarta. Before continuing his studies at Kulliyat al-Da'wah al-Islāmiyyah, Libya, he had studied at the Faculty of Islamic Studies, UIN Syarif Hidayatullah, Ciputat. Sheikh Muḥammad al-Dokālī, Sheikh 'Alī al-Libbiy, Sheikh 'Alī Aḥmar and Sheikh 'Alī Tanzania, and Sheikh Ṭaḥṭāwī Jawharī for his specific learning of tafsīr. He is well known for his capacity in *'ulūm al-ḥadīth*, *'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, and *fiqh*. In various of his *da'wah*, he elaborates an extensive quantity of Arabic grammatical so his audience might have a more comprehensive information of Islamic knowledge. Since 2022, he has been listed as one of the Deputy Chairmen of the Majelis Tabligh, of the Muhammadiyah Central Board [2022–2027].³⁶

sīrah nabawiyyah. To gain such a comprehensive outlook of information, for example, UAH emphasised the Prophet's particular companions' vital role in verbally narrating hadith during their youth, inspiring the audience to study hadith and memorise the Qur'an, considering the potential reward that Allāh has promised to His *ummah*.



Likewise, in the first video UAH explain the hadith on the most valuable days being loved by Allah was during the first ten days of the Dhū al-Ḥijjah, where he mentioned the principle of the *'ibādah* that Allah loved is on the Quran, Sūrah Āl Imrān [3]: 31:

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

"Say, If you love Allah, follow me. Allah will love you and forgive your sins. Allah is the most forgiving, most merciful."

Then, he continues by pointing to the sacredness of the month of Dhū al-Ḥijjah in the Islamic calendar by showing the hadith:

مَا مِنْ أَيَّامٍ الْعَمَلُ الصَّالِحِ فِيهَا أَحَبُّ إِلَى اللَّهِ مِنْ هَذِهِ الْأَيَّامِ. يَعْنِي أَيَّامَ الْعَشْرِ. قَالُوا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَلَا الْجِهَادُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ قَالَ «وَلَا الْجِهَادُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ إِلَّا رَجُلٌ خَرَجَ بِنَفْسِهِ وَمَالِهِ فَلَمْ يَزِجْ مِنْ ذَلِكَ بِشَيْءٍ»

"There are no days in which righteous deeds are more beloved to Allah than these days," meaning the ten days [of Dhū al-Ḥijjah]. They said, "O Messenger of Allah, not even *jihād* in the path of Allah?" He replied,

Ustad Adi Hidayat's preaching of the *al-Shamā'il* was covered in 2017 during his after Fajr Prayer sessions in Masjid Baiturrahim Jakasetia. He explores the *al-Shamā'il* by firstly and extensively the features of Abū 'Isā Muḥammad ibn 'Isā ibn Sawrah al-Tirmidhī and reasons of codifying the physical, spiritual and moral features of the Prophet Muhammad. The method being used to explain in three captured videos were mostly general model of exegesis (*ijmālī*), where UAH focuses only on hadith themes, succinct, and broader meaning of the *matn al-ḥadīth*. Yet, he added in a far-reaching facet of Arabic grammatical analysis, to comprehend with the *tafsīr* of certain *sūrah* and *āyah*, and expose relevant explanations of the stories in the

³⁶ Rusydie Anwar, *Ustadz Adi Hidayat* (Yogyakarta: Laksana, 2021), 13–16.



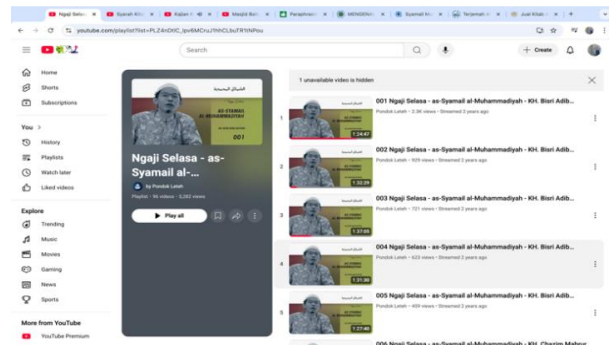
“Not even jihād in the path of Allah, except for a man who goes out with his life and wealth and returns with nothing from them.”

B. The traditionalists Pesantren’s way of reading *al-Shamā’il* on public congregation

Pesantren Raudlatut Thalibin, often referred to as Pondok Leteh, is a renowned traditional pesantren located in Rembang, Central Java, Indonesia. It was founded by KH. Cholil Harun, the second Indonesian ulama to migrate to Hijaz for hajj and knowledge-seeking religious and spiritual connection. The pesantren was then developed by his son-in-law, KH. Bisri Mustofa, in the 1940s. The pesantren has a well-known history of having produced many influential figures in Indonesia. Pesantren Raudlatut Thalibin is known for its distinguished lineage of scholars and influential figures. KH. Bisri Mustofa was a prolific scholar and writer; he established the pesantren and laid its foundational principles. He authored numerous works, including the well-known Tafsir Al-Ibriz. The figure of this study, Kiai Adib Bishri, is one of Kiai Bisri Mustofa’s sons and is part of the extended descendants who narrate the ijaza connection of knowledge of Kiai Cholil Harun and Kiai Bisri Mustofa. Kiai Adib Bishri Hattani is currently one of the leading pesantren figures and is also active in religious and social activities in Rembang.

Pondok Leteh has maintained its “*salafiyah*” or traditional approach, focusing on the study of classical Islamic texts, often referred to as *kitab kuning*. Its motto is “*ta’allama al-‘ilm wa-‘allamahu al-nās*,” learn knowledge and teach it to the people. It emphasises the study of Islamic sciences, particularly *naḥw* and *ṣarf*, to provide students with a deep understanding of how to analyse classical texts. While it traditionally did not have formal *madrasah*, it does offer *madrasah dīniyyah* and accommodates *santri* who also attend formal schools outside the pesantren. The *pesantren* is also known for fostering an

environment of peace and tolerance. Due to its urban location, *santri* and the pesantren community often live in proximity and harmony with non-Muslim neighbours, embodying principles of peaceful coexistence and mutual



respect, making this *pesantren* a center for Islamic learning and a significant contributor to the intellectual and religious landscape of Indonesia.

The reading of *al-Shamā’il* was formerly conducted internally for the students. The study was conducted on Tuesday night in front of the male congregation of Pesantren Leteh; the audience sat on the floor, and Kiai Adib sat on a seat slightly higher than the congregation. This kind of study model is called *bandongan*. This method is a learning approach involving a *kyai* or *ustādh* who reads a book, translates, and explains it, while the students listen and take notes. This method emphasizes collective and in-depth learning, in contrast to the more individual sorogan method. Unlike UAH, who conveyed more general information about *al-Shamā’il*, Kiai Adib’s way of reading involves translating Arabic text into Javanese using linguistic symbols, symbolic language, and the grammatical features of the source language in the target language (Javanese).³⁷ The *ijāzah* that Kiai Adib engaged from this book was only carried out at the last meeting [video 89], conducted in front of senior students, and ended with the reading of the *tahlīl*:

“*Mbah Mustofa Bishri, from Mbah Bishri Musthofa, from Kiai Khalil Harun, from Kiai Umar Harun, from*

³⁷ Pondok Leteh, ‘001 Ngaji Selasa - as-Syama'il Al-Muhammadiyah - KH. Bisri Adib Hattani’, *Youtube*.



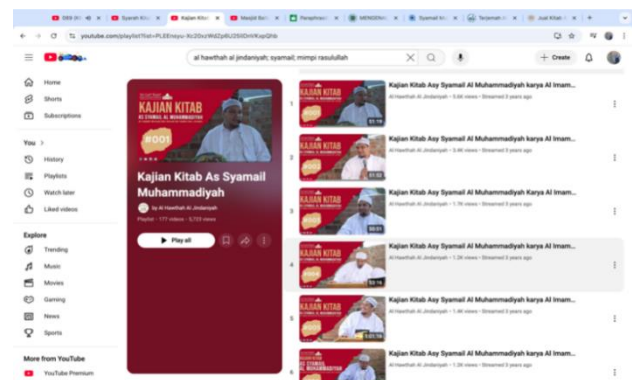
Kiai Ghozali, from Sayyid Ahmad bin Dahlan from Sayyid Dimiyati Shatho'"³⁸

So, by studying *al-Shamā'il*, we can guess what the Prophet's character is like. Strong, solid, full, with a beard and wavy hair with a round, proportional shape. Searching for religious issues should find a clear history, to be awake in our practice. In order not to patent the torch, lose the roots and roots from the origin and the teacher's *sanad* (intellectual pedigree) from the knowledge we get from him. The series of videos of *al-Shamā'il* is then completed by *tawassul* without mentioning the *sanad*, the activity ends with the recitation of *tahlil*.

C. The public reading of the Yamani's descendants.

Lastly, this paper examines the public reading of *al-Shamā'il* conducted by Habib Ahmad bin Novel bin Jindan, who was born in Jakarta on January 16, 1982. He received his early education at SD Islam Meranti, continued at MTs Darun Najah Pertukangan until the second grade, and later studied at *Dār al-Muṣṭafā* Tarim Hadramaut. He is well known for his scholarly work and *da'wah* activities, including leading the Pondok Pesantren Al Fachriyah Al Habib Novel bin Salim bin Jindan. Following in his father's footsteps, he serves as Khodim Majelis Rasulullah SAW and is a part of Majelis Al Wafa bi Ahdillah. Most notably, he founded the Yayasan Al Hawthah Al Jindaniyah in Tajur Halang, West Java, which serves as a center for religious activities adhering to the *manhaj* of *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah*, the *madhhab* of *al-Shāfi'ī*, *'Aqīdah Ash'ariyyah*, and the *Ṭarīqah 'Alawiyyah*. Habib Ahmad bin Novel bin Jindan also leads several regular study sessions and has authored several works, such as *Fiqh Zakat Fitrah* and *Dzikir Memancing Rezeki yang Halal dan Berlimpah dari Allah Ta'ala*, among others.

The Hadrami Yamani ways of publicly reading *al-Shamā'il* takes place during the month of Rabi' al-Awwal as a commemoration of the Prophet Muhammad's birthday, held at dawn on Mondays and Thursdays. The setting of the first public reading provided information about the *isnād* of the teachers connected to the reading of this work by al-Tirmidhī. Habib introduced the audience to Imām Tirmidhī, highlighting him as a great scholar and a prominent figure in the *sīrah* of scholars. He also discussed Imām Tirmidhī's character, including his status as a student of Imām al-Bukhārī, his blindness, his memorization of the Qur'an (*ḥāfiz*), and his expertise in narrating hadiths from his teacher.



"IJAZAH"

KITAB SYAMAIL AL MUHAMMADIYAH

Karya Imam Abu Isa Muhammad bin Isa bin Saurat at-Tirmidzi (w. 279 H)



Saya Al Habib Ahmad bin Novel bin Jindan dari saudara saya Syarifah Assakinah, dari Al Habib Salim bin Jindan, dari Abdul Sattar bin Abdul Ahmad Al Kandahlawi Al Hindi, dari Muhammad bin Salim Al Ahdal, dari Sayyid Alwi bin Abbas Al Maliki, dari Abdul Sattar bin Abdul Wahab Addahlawi, dari Sayyid Ali bin Thahir Al Qodri Al Madadi, dari Sahid Al Mujaddidi Muhammad Abid bin Ahmad Al Sindi Al Anshori, dari Al Sholeh Al Fulani Muhammad Said Safar, dari Abi Thahir bin Ibrahim Al Quroni Al Burhani, dari Abi Thahir Muhammad bin Ibrahim Al Quroni, dari Asshofi Ahmad bin Muhammad bin Abdinnabi Al Qusyasyi, dari Syamsuddin Muhammad bin Ahmad bin Hamzah Arramli, dari Zakaria bin Muhammad Al Anshari, telah mengabarkan kepadaku Abu Al Fatah bin Abu Bakar bin Husein Al Maddadi, telah menerima (dalam keadaan bersalaman) Abu Al Hasan Al Haitami, telah menerima (dalam keadaan mendengarkan) berkata Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Ismail bin Khobbas, berkata telah mengabarkan kepada kami Abdullah bin Muhammad bin Abdullah Assokhrowi, (hadir pula kemudian dan berkata) telah mengabarkan kepada kami Al Iftikhar Abdul Muthalib bin Abu Al Fadh al Hasyimi, berkata telah mengabarkan kepada kami Abu Syuja' Umar bin Abdullah Al Bushthami, berkata Abu Al Qasim Ahmad bin Muhammad Al Balkhi, berkata telah mengabarkan kepada kami dengannya Abu Al Qasim Ali bin Ahmad bin Ali bin Al Khuza'i, berkata telah mengabarkan kepada kami Abi Abu Said Al Haitsami bin Kullab Asyasyasi, berkata telah menceritakan kepada kami Al Hafidz Abu Isa bin Muhammad bin Isa bin Saurat Attirmidzi Radhiyallahu'anhum .

³⁸ Pondok Leteh, '089 (Khataman) Ngaji Selasa - as-Syamail Al-Muhammadiyah - KH. Bisri Adib Hattani', *Youtube*.





The diversity within this tripartite selection—categorized here as modern, traditional, and Yamani-Hadrami—is not merely biographical but fundamentally shapes the exegetical reception of *al-Shamā'il* in the digital space. For instance, UAH represents a 'modern-salafi-leaning' or reformist approach, characterized by a structured, almost academic dissection of Arabic grammar and thematic mapping, appealing to an urban, logic-driven audience. In contrast, the 'traditional' approach exemplified by Kiai Adib maintains the *bandongan* or *sorogan* style of the Javanese pesantren, where the reception is deeply rooted in the sanctity of the *kitab kuning's* physical text and a slow, meditative reading that prioritizes the continuity of the local *sanad*. Meanwhile, the 'Yamani-Hadrami' reception, as seen in Habib Ahmad bin Novel, shifts the focus toward an aesthetic and devotional experience, where the description of the Prophet is transmitted through a lens of *mahabbah* (love) and spiritual longing typical of the Ba'Alawi tradition. These distinctions suggest that the 'missed complexity' of digital reception is not merely about viewer numbers but about how different intellectual lineages (modernist, traditionalist, and Sufi-Hadrami) utilize the same digital medium to project distinct pedagogical 'flavors' that resonate with specific segments of the fragmented Indonesian Muslim network.

Digital Transformation Analysis: From Traditional Authority to Cyberspace

The transformation of *al-Shamā'il* transmission in Indonesia signifies a fundamental shift from a hierarchical structure to a networked pattern. Historically, the understanding of this sacred text was centralized within the linear relationship between teacher and student in the strictly regulated environment of the pesantren. However, data from eleven observed YouTube accounts demonstrate that this model of religious authority is currently evolving into a more diverse ecosystem. The scale of these "digital assemblies" has reached massive proportions, as evidenced by the *Buya Yahya Off.* account, which

boasts over 160 million views. In this environment, the transmission of knowledge is no longer unidirectional; anyone can reshare content, reinterpret it, and even become a commentator through interactive comment sections. This creates a fluid network of knowledge distribution, where the boundaries between the ulama as authority figures and the public as consumers become increasingly blurred.

Crucially, the diversity within this digital landscape—categorized through the lenses of modern, traditional, and Yamani-Hadrami backgrounds—is not merely biographical but fundamentally shapes the exegetical reception of the text. For instance, the "modern" approach, exemplified by UAH, often utilizes structured thematic mapping and academic analysis of Arabic grammar to appeal to logic-driven urban audiences. In contrast, the "traditional" approach, rooted in the Javanese pesantren tradition (such as the recordings of Kiai Adib at *Pondok Leteh* or similar figures), preserves the *Bandongan* or *Sorogan* style, often accompanied by Javanese-style humor. This reception is grounded in the sanctity of the physical text and the continuity of the local *sanad*, frequently reflecting a clear influence of Sufi spirituality. Meanwhile, the "Yamani-Hadrami" reception shifts the focus toward an aesthetic and devotional experience, where the Prophet's description is conveyed through a lens of *mahabbah* (love) and spiritual longing. These distinctions reveal that the "missed complexity" of digital reception lies in how different intellectual lineages utilize the same medium to project distinct pedagogical 'flavors' that resonate with specific segments of the Indonesian Muslim network.

This phenomenon reveals an intriguing contradiction between popularity and content depth. The pattern is non-uniform: accounts such as *Pondok Leteh* possess a substantial subscriber base (reaching 1.6 million), yet the view counts on specific videos are relatively lower compared to other popular ulama accounts. This indicates





distinct audience segmentation; pesantren-based accounts likely attract loyal “digital viewers” who subscribe to maintain the continuity of the *sanad*, whereas accounts with millions of views tend to be driven by algorithms targeting a general audience seeking viral video snippets. This divergence suggests that *al-Shamā'il* in cyberspace is consumed not only as a subject of in-depth study but also as a brief informational commodity for urban society.

However, this rapid digitalization presents significant challenges to a comprehensive understanding of the text. As noted by Qudsy et al., within the emergence of “hadith memes,”³⁹ this playlist model of video delivery risks presenting *al-Shamā'il* in fragments. This fragmentation may degrade the holistic portrayal of the Prophet Muhammad if viewers do not engage with the entire sequence of the study. In the realm of cybermedia, which prioritizes visual appeal and speed, there are concerns about the loss of *barakah* (blessing) and *adab* (ethics) that are typically preserved through physical encounters. Text fragments detached from their original context have the potential to distort a comprehensive understanding of the Prophet Muhammad, who remains the central figure of the book.

Furthermore, the acceleration of this phenomenon cannot be separated from the role of the COVID-19 pandemic as a primary catalyst. Data indicate that four of the observed accounts emerged or expanded rapidly following the outbreak. The pandemic was not merely a health crisis but also a “digital accelerator” that compelled traditional hadith studies to migrate into cyberspace. Religious scholars and institutions, who may have previously been reluctant to use social media, have now embraced this technology as an emergency measure that has since become permanent. This proves that the transmission of *al-Shamā'il* in Indonesia exhibits high resilience, successfully

adapting from enclosed physical spaces to an infinite digital network.

From this very vantage point, the massive engagement reflected in the millions of views and subscribers across these YouTube channels underscores an evolution from Andalusian scholar al-Bāḥī's traditional *sharḥ* to a 'rewiring' of religious authority within the contemporary Islamic cyber-environment.⁴⁰ While this 15th-century ulama utilized a hierarchical scholarly framework to harmonize texts, today's digital reconstruction of *al-Shamā'il* highlights a shift toward an intensely participatory culture, where viral sharing and grassroots engagement increasingly replace the formal *majlīs*. In this transition, the 'online religion' sphere allows the *syarḥ* to be curated by individuals or collectives rather than institutions or *madhhabs*, mirroring al-Bāḥī's dialogic spirit while disrupting the rigid hierarchies of his era to enable diverse voices to reshape contemporary Islamic understanding.

Conclusion: Negotiating Authority in the Digital *Sharḥ*

The transformation of *al-Shamā'il* transmission in Indonesia signifies a fundamental shift from a hierarchical structure to a networked pattern. Historically, the understanding of this sacred text was centralized within the linear relationship between teacher and student in the strictly regulated environment of the pesantren. However, as this study demonstrates, the physical *riḥlah fī ṭalab al-ḥadīth* undertaken by al-Bāḥī has been replaced by “digital packets,” wherein the negotiation of authority remains constant but is restructured. Data from eleven observed YouTube accounts—such as Buya Yahya Off., with its staggering 160 million views—demonstrate an influential shift in traditional authority. In this ecosystem, transmission is no longer unidirectional; the “digital assembly” allows anyone to become a commentator or distributor, creating a fluid

³⁹ Qudsy, Abdullah, and Pabbajah, “The Superficial Religious Understanding in Hadith Memes: Mediatization of Hadith in the Industrial Revolution 4.0”, 92–114.

⁴⁰ Bunt, *IMuslims: Rewiring the House of Islam*.





network where the boundaries between the ulama and the public become increasingly blurred. This study shows that such a process is mediated through diverse linguistic symbols (such as Javanese) and distinct intellectual lineages (*sanad*), ensuring that *al-Shamā'il* remains an active, dialogical text.

This research highlights an intriguing contradiction between popularity and content depth within the digital landscape. The non-uniform statistical patterns—where accounts like Pondok Leteh maintain a massive subscriber base (1.6 million) despite lower view counts on specific technical videos—reveal distinct audience segmentation. While pesantren-based channels attract loyal “digital viewers” who seek the continuity of *sanad* (scholarly lineage), larger-scale accounts are often driven by algorithms targeting a general audience. This suggests that *al-Shamā'il* in cyberspace functions both as a subject of in-depth study and as a brief informational commodity for internet-savvy viewers. By treating these digital packets as modern manuscripts, this research offers a novel perspective on how religious authority is negotiated in real time, harmonizing third-century texts with twenty-first-century cyber culture.

However, the rapid transition to a “rewired” digital environment, significantly accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, poses serious challenges. These challenges range from the risk of diminishing the profound significance of the Prophet’s physical and personal descriptions to valid concerns about the loss of *barakah* (blessing) and *adab* (ethics) traditionally preserved in physical *majelis*. Yet, by reviving the spirit of reconciling contextual situations—reflected in the concept of *al-jam' wa-al-tawfiq*—Indonesian ulama act as essential “reconcilers,” ensuring that *al-Shamā'il* remains an active, dialogical text.

Theoretically, this study advances the theory of Living Hadith by taking complex and classic teachings of the *al-Shamā'il* by turning them into simple, practical guides for daily life. The reach of *al-Shamā'il* teachings is now massive—

reaching over 41 million people online, far more than any physical classroom ever could—there is a challenge. Most YouTube videos are a one-way mechanism: the ulama explains, and the audience simply views. This lack of real-time interaction means we are still missing the deep, personal connection found in traditional face-to-face learning. Thus, this “missing link” creates an opportunity for future research to explore how the digital religious learning might capture more of a two-way conversation.

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Competing Interests

The authors agreed with the collective agreement between co-authors in all matters regarding manuscript publication.

Author’s Contributions

ESENSIA also allows one set of co-authors to be specified as having contributed equally to the work and another set of co-authors to be specified as having jointly supervised the work. Other equal contributions are best described in this section.

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