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Living Hadith in the Digital Age: Exegetical and Aesthetic Reception of Hadith in Gita Wirjawan's YouTube Podcast

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Abstract

Digital media, particularly dialogic podcasts on YouTube, have emerged as new spaces for the dissemination and interpretation of the Prophet's hadith. This article examined the phenomenon of living hadith in religious podcasts on the Gita Wirjawan YouTube channel, featuring dialogues with Habib Husein Ja'far Al Hadar and Muhammad Quraish Shihab. The study aimed to analyze the reception of hadith by the speakers in the form of oral discourse and audio-visual representation, focusing on hadith concerning intention as well as the teachings of Islam, īmān, and iḥsān. This research employed a descriptive-analytical approach through content analysis, using the reception theory framework developed by Saifuddin Zuhri Qudsy and Subkhana Kusuma Dewi. The findings revealedl that exegetical reception was reflected in contextual interpretations linking relate the Prophetic tradition to contemporary ethical, philosophical, and social issues. Meanwhile, aesthetic reception appears through visual elements such as natural landscapes, spatial design, bookshelves, and symbolic representations of ulama, which fostered emotional engagement while reinforcing religious authority. These findings suggested that digital podcasts function not only as a medium of da'wah but also as a dynamic arena for the construction of hadith meaning. Academically, this study contributes to the development of living hadith studies by positioning digital media as a significant locus in the transformation of religious authority and reception in the contemporary era.

Keywords: Aesthetic Reception, Exegetical Reception, Living Hadith, YouTube Podcast

Abstrak

Media digital, khususnya podcast dialogis di YouTube, menjadi ruang baru dalam penyebaran dan pemaknaan hadis Nabi. Artikel ini mengkaji fenomena living hadis dalam podcast keagamaan pada kanal YouTube Gita Wirjawan yang menghadirkan dialog bersama Habib Husein Ja'far Al Hadar dan Muhammad Quraish Shihab. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis resepsi hadis oleh narasumber dalam bentuk diskursus lisan dan representasi audio-visual, dengan fokus pada hadis tentang niat serta ajaran Islam, iman, dan ihsan. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif-analitis melalui analisis konten, dengan kerangka teori resepsi dari Saifuddin Zuhri Qudsy dan Subkhana Kusuma Dewi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa resepsi eksegesis hadis tampak dalam penafsiran kontekstual yang mengaitkan tradisi kenabian dengan isu etika, filosofis, dan sosial kontemporer. Sementara itu, resepsi estetis hadir melalui elemen visual seperti lanskap, desain ruang, rak buku, dan simbol ulama yang membangun kedekatan emosional sekaligus memperkuat otoritas keagamaan. Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa podcast digital tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai media dakwah, tetapi juga sebagai arena konstruksi makna hadis yang dinamis. Secara akademik, penelitian ini berkontribusi pada pengembangan studi living hadis dengan menempatkan media digital sebagai locus penting dalam transformasi otoritas dan resepsi keagamaan di era kontemporer.

Kata kunci: *Resepsi Eksegesis, Resepsi Estetis, Living Hadis, Podcast YouTube*

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A. INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of digital platforms, particularly video-based social media, has transformed the transmission of Islamic knowledge and the formation of religious authority. YouTube, as a long-form audio-visual medium, is no longer merely a space for entertainment. It has evolved into a site where Islamic discourse is produced, circulated, and negotiated through dialogical formats such as public conversations and podcast-style discussions (Jima'ain, 2023). For instance, interviews and reflective dialogues on channels like Gita Wirjawan bring together media figures and religious scholars in ways that differ significantly from conventional sermon-based preaching.

This transformation extends beyond technology to the epistemological level, reshaping how religious texts, especially the Prophet's hadith, are interpreted and authorized. The "negotiation" occurring in this context involves the interaction between religious authority and public intellectual discourse, where the meanings of hadith are not simply transmitted but also reframed through ethical reasoning, philosophical reflection, and contemporary relevance. Unlike traditional da'wah settings that tend to be hierarchical and monologic, this dialogical space fosters what may be called *hybrid authority*, in which a media host and a recognized religious scholar collaboratively construct meaning. In such a setting, hadith are no longer positioned solely as doctrinal texts but are articulated as universal ethical values accessible to broader audiences, including those outside formal religious circles. This makes the study of such platforms particularly significant, as they reveal shifting patterns of authority, interpretation, and reception of Islamic teachings in contemporary digital culture.

Within the context of digital da'wah, a number of religious figures have adopted dialogical formats to communicate Islamic teachings in a more argumentative and contextual manner. Among those frequently discussed in recent scholarship are Habib Ja'far Al Hadar and M. Quraish Shihab. Habib Ja'far is known for his reflective preaching style, which integrates Islamic discourse with popular philosophical themes (Maulani et al., 2025). Meanwhile, M. Quraish Shihab, a distinguished exegete and author of *Tafsir al-Mishbah*, consistently presents interpretations that are moderate, dialogical, and accessible to wider audiences (Adeni & Mudhofi, 2022).

However, the growing visibility of such figures in digital spaces raises an important question: does popularity on mediated platforms necessarily translate into

religious authority? Their presence in formats such as podcasts and public dialogues suggests a shift from monological and normative preaching toward more open and interdisciplinary exchanges. Yet, this shift also involves a reconfiguration of authority, where credibility is shaped not only by scholarly expertise but also by communicative ability, media presence, and audience engagement. In this context, digital da'wah becomes a contested space in which religious knowledge, including hadith, is not merely delivered but also negotiated, reframed, and recontextualized.

However, in the so-called post-truth era, where information circulates rapidly without adequate verification, serious academic concerns emerge regarding how the Prophet's hadith are reproduced, interpreted, and received in digital environments. In this context, religious authority, which was traditionally grounded in chains of transmission (*sanad*) and institutional legitimacy, now intersects with algorithmic visibility, media performance, and fluid audience engagement. As a result, the circulation of religious knowledge is no longer strictly controlled by scholarly gatekeeping but is increasingly shaped by digital dynamics.

Amid this condition, the role of long-form dialogical platforms such as the Gita Wirjawan podcast becomes particularly significant. Unlike short-form content (e.g., TikTok or YouTube Shorts) that tends to fragment religious messages, podcast formats offer extended, reflective discussions that allow for contextualization, clarification, and critical engagement. In this sense, such podcasts may function as a form of curation by filtering, rearticulating, and stabilizing religious meanings, including hadith, within a more deliberative communicative space. Nevertheless, the massive flow of online da'wah is not always accompanied by critical studies that examine its implications for ethical formation, religious moderation, and patterns of religiosity among audiences (Setia & Dilawati, 2024). Therefore, research is needed not only to observe the dissemination of hadith in digital media but also to analyze how hadith are received, negotiated, and actualized within contemporary digital interactions.

One relevant digital dialogical space in this context is the Gita Wirjawan channel, which features podcast-style conversations with figures from diverse backgrounds, including religious scholars. This study focuses on two selected episodes featuring Habib Ja'far Al Hadar (Endgame Lyceum Vol. 4) and M. Quraish Shihab (Endgame #112, Luminaries). These episodes demonstrate how Islamic teachings rooted in the Prophet's

hadith are articulated in a dialogical, reflective, and contextual manner, even when not explicitly presented through direct textual citation. In this setting, hadith function not merely as textual references but as ethical frameworks that guide reasoning within the dialogue. They are translated into arguments, analogies, and reflections that respond to contemporary existential, moral, and social questions. Through this process, hadith are recontextualized as living values that shape public discourse, enabling audiences to engage with them not only as doctrinal sources but also as interpretive resources in navigating modern life.

This phenomenon can be examined through the framework of *living hadith*, which explores how hadith are practiced, interpreted, and represented within specific social contexts (Qudsy, 2016). Existing studies on living hadith have predominantly focused on ritual practices, local traditions, and cultural expressions, leaving digital contexts relatively underexplored. Within the emerging scholarship on digital Islam, several thematic strands can be identified. First, studies on Islamic podcasts tend to emphasize the revitalization and dissemination of hadith values in contemporary media environments (Maliki & Nazar, 2023; Zanuba, 2025). These works highlight how podcasts serve as accessible platforms for translating religious teachings into everyday discourse. Second, research on digital da'wah focuses on communication strategies, examining how religious messages are framed, adapted, and circulated to engage broader audiences (Nasibah et al., 2024). Third, studies on the mediatisation of hadith analyze the transformation of religious authority and meaning as hadith enter technologically mediated spaces (Fauziyyah & Halwaini, 2024).

Despite these developments, the intersection between *living hadith* and reception theory remains insufficiently explored, particularly in relation to dialogical and interdisciplinary formats such as long-form podcasts. No study has specifically examined how hadith are interpreted, negotiated, and recontextualized through interactive conversations on the Gita Wirjawan YouTube channel. This gap highlights the need for an integrated analytical approach that captures both the lived dimension of hadith and the dynamics of audience-oriented reception in digital settings.

This gap constitutes the novelty of the present study. By combining the perspectives of *living hadith* and reception theory, this research examined not only how hadith are conveyed but also how they are interpreted in digital dialogical contexts. It

further explored how hadith are aesthetically framed as ethical guidance through audio-visual elements, such as spatial setting, visual composition, tone of conversation, and symbolic representations that shape audience perception. Reception theory is employed to analyze the interaction between the hadith text, the message communicator, and the audience. This approach enables a deeper understanding of how meanings are negotiated and how interpretive horizons shift within contemporary digital communication environments.

The selection of these two episodes is guided by three interrelated considerations. First, both episodes explicitly represent the contemporary actualization of the Prophet's hadith: the hadith on intention ("*innamā al-aʿmālu bi al-niyyāt*") is reflectively elaborated in dialogue with Habib Ja'far, while the Hadith of Gabriel, concerning īmān, Islam, and iḥsān, is systematically interpreted by M. Quraish Shihab. Second, the episodes demonstrate significant audience engagement, as reflected in their high view counts and active comment sections. This reception dimension is crucial, as it provides an empirical ground for analyzing how meanings are negotiated, appropriated, and responded to by digital audiences within the framework of reception theory. Third, the channel's wide public reach and dialogical format position it as a site where classical religious authority interacts with diverse audiences, enabling a dynamic interplay between textual tradition, communicative practice, and audience interpretation.

Based on this background, this study aimed to analyze how the values of the Prophet's hadith, particularly the hadith on intention and the Hadith of Gabriel, are received and actualized within digital religious dialogue on the YouTube channel of Gita Wirjawan. More specifically, it examined the forms of exegetical and aesthetic reception emerging in these two episodes, as well as their implications for the development of *living hadith* studies in the era of digital media. This research proceeded from the assumption that contemporary religious understanding is shaped not only by written texts and formal education but also by digital content that presented contextual, reflective, and dialogical readings of hadith.

B. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative approach using the *living hadith* framework within the context of digital media. *Living hadith* is understood as an approach that

examines how hadith are presented, interpreted, and function within contemporary socio-religious practices, not merely as normative texts but as living traditions embedded in social spaces (Qudsy, 2016; Kurniawan et al., 2024). In this study, the social space under investigation was YouTube as an audio-visual platform that facilitates open interaction between speakers and audiences.

To analyze the dynamics of meaning-making in this digital environment, this study adopted the reception theory developed by Saifuddin Zuhri Qudsy and Subkhana Kusuma Dewi (2018). The analysis focused on two forms of reception: exegetical and aesthetic. These categories were applied deductively as initial analytical lenses to classify and interpret the data. Their relevance and applicability were subsequently refined through repeated observation, transcription, and close reading of the selected podcast episodes.

The object of this study consisted of two religious dialogue videos published on the Gita Wirjawan channel, featuring Habib Ja'far Al Hadar (*Endgame Lyceum Vol. 4*) and M. Quraish Shihab (*Endgame #112: Luminaries*). The videos were selected through purposive sampling based on three criteria: the presence of explicit or implicit references to hadith, whether quoted verbatim or paraphrased; the argumentative function of hadith within the dialogue; and significant public engagement reflected in the comment section and audience interaction.

Primary data consisted of the speakers' statements containing direct quotations, paraphrases, and conceptual elaborations of hadith, as well as audience comments responding to hadith-related discussions. The two selected videos, each exceeding one hour in duration, were repeatedly reviewed and transcribed to identify forms of hadith representation and interpretive patterns within the dialogue.

Audience comments were not analyzed exhaustively due to the large volume of responses. Instead, comments were selected purposively based on their relevance to hadith-related discussions, interpretive engagement, and representativeness of recurring audience responses. Comments containing only emojis, unrelated remarks, or repetitive statements without interpretive content were excluded from analysis. The selection process continued until thematic saturation was achieved, indicated by the recurrence of similar patterns of reception and interpretation among users.

Data collection was conducted through non-participatory observation, involving repeated viewing of the videos, transcription of relevant segments, categorization of

hadith representations, and documentation of audience responses. All analytical procedures were systematically recorded to ensure transparency and consistency throughout the research process.

Data analysis was conducted through three stages: reduction, categorization, and interpretation. The units of analysis consisted of speakers' statements, audio-visual representations, and audience comments related to hadith discussions. Speakers' statements were treated as units for identifying interpretive constructions of hadith, while visual settings, conversational tone, and symbolic elements were analyzed as forms of aesthetic representation. Audience comments were examined to capture patterns of digital reception and audience engagement.

In the first stage, segments containing direct or indirect hadith references, interpretive explanations, visual symbolism, and audience responses were identified and coded. In the second stage, the data were categorized into two forms of reception: (1) exegetical reception, involving interpretation, contextualization, and argumentative elaboration of hadith; and (2) aesthetic reception, including visual, rhetorical, and affective elements such as spatial setting, tone of delivery, symbolic imagery, and emotional audience responses (Zuhri & Dewi, 2018; Annisa et al., 2024). The coding process was conducted iteratively by comparing recurring themes and interpretive patterns across the selected episodes and audience interactions.

Finally, the findings were interpreted within the broader framework of *living hadith*, digital da'wah, and the transformation of religious authority in contemporary media environments. Through this approach, the study seeks to demonstrate how hadith are not only transmitted in digital spaces but also negotiated, aesthetically mediated, and socially recontextualized through interactive online communication.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

1. The Endgame Podcast on the Gita Wirjawan YouTube Channel

Gita Wirjawan is an Indonesian public figure who previously served as the Minister of Trade of the Republic of Indonesia. Beyond his political background, he is also known as an entrepreneur and musician. Through his personal YouTube channel, he initiated a dialogue program titled *Endgame*, which functions as a discursive space for in-

depth public conversations. The program addresses issues such as geopolitics, digital transformation, leadership, education, and Indonesia's future development toward 2045, frequently featuring discussions on topics like artificial intelligence, global economic shifts, and democratic challenges.

The channel is based in Indonesia and has been operating since 6 November 2013. As of 2025, it had approximately 1.18 million subscribers, more than 600 uploaded videos, and over 139 million total views. These figures indicate the channel's broad visibility and significant audience engagement within Indonesia's digital media landscape. The channel description, which carries the slogan "Proud Indonesian. Bangga Berbangsa.", reflects a strong national orientation and a commitment to shaping public narratives about Indonesia's future.



Figure 1. Gita Wirjawan YouTube Channel
Source: YouTube channel of Gita Wirjawan

Figure 1. illustrates the interface and profile of the Gita Wirjawan YouTube channel, including its visual presentation and the *Endgame* program format. The *Endgame* program adopts a long-form interview model that enables comprehensive and in-depth exploration of various issues. Its invited speakers come from diverse backgrounds, including economists, academics, diplomats, public officials, industry practitioners, as well as religious and cultural figures. The dialogical pattern developed within the program is analytical and reflective, emphasizing rational argumentation and the empirical experiences of the speakers (Khan et al., 2025). With these characteristics, the podcast functions not only as a medium of intellectual entertainment but also as a discursive arena that shapes and reproduces public opinion within digital spaces.

In a religious context, the program is not specifically designed as a conventional platform for normative preaching. Instead, Islamic values are presented through thematic discussions on humanitarian concerns, ethics, philosophy, and contemporary social issues. References to the Prophet's hadith emerge in a dialogical and contextual

manner, either through the speakers' personal reflections or through argumentative discussions on themes such as existential anxiety, morality, sincerity, and spiritual meaning (A'yun & 'Ubudiyah, 2025).

This format allows hadith to function beyond formal textual citation. Rather than being delivered through one-way sermon narration, hadith are rearticulated as ethical and reflective frameworks within interdisciplinary public conversations. Such a pattern reflects the ongoing transformation of religious authority in digital spaces, shifting from hierarchical and monological communication toward more open, participatory, and audience-oriented discourse.

With its dialogical character, the *Endgame* podcast provides a space in which the Prophet's hadith are not treated merely as normative textual quotations. Instead, hadith are interpreted, discussed, and contextualized as ethical values within contemporary public conversations. In this setting, digital platforms mediate the interaction between hadith texts, speaker authority, and audience responses, thereby creating new forms of religious engagement in online spaces. This dynamic highlights the growing significance of digital religion studies, particularly in understanding how Islamic authority and hadith reception are reshaped through interactive media cultures.

2. The Hadith on Intention in the Dialogue with Habib Ja'far

The first video analyzed in this study is *Habib Ja'far Login Filsafat* (*Endgame Lyceum Vol. 4*, hereafter HJ–EL4), published on the Gita Wirjawan YouTube channel on 14 March 2023. The episode has a duration of nearly three hours and, as of 2025, had attracted more than 5.9 million views, around 36,000 likes, and over 2,000 audience comments. These quantitative indicators suggest not only broad public visibility but also active audience engagement within digital religious discourse. From the perspective of reception theory, such engagement is significant because it reflects how audiences respond to, negotiate, and reinterpret religious messages presented in dialogical media formats. In this sense, the episode provides an important site for examining the contemporary reception and actualization of hadith within digital culture.

In this episode, the conversation centers on philosophy, epistemology, and their relationship to religion. One segment discusses how humans determine truth and construct meaning through reflective reasoning. In response to this issue, Habib Ja'far relates epistemological awareness to the Islamic concept of *niyyah* (intention),

emphasizing that human actions derive their moral and spiritual value from inner consciousness and purpose. Within this framework, the hadith on intention is not presented merely as a doctrinal quotation but as an epistemic and ethical principle that guides self-understanding and human action. The discussion positions *niyyah* as a form of reflective awareness through which individuals evaluate motives, knowledge, and responsibility in everyday life. This contextualization demonstrates how the hadith can be reinterpreted within philosophical discourse while remaining relevant to contemporary existential concerns.

The Prophet's hadith emerges when Habib Husein Ja'far Al Hadar explains that human actions originate from thought and the inner orientation underlying them. In discussing the relationship between reason, intention, and action, he explicitly refers to the well-known hadith *"innamā al-aʿmālu bi al-niyyāt"* ("actions are judged by intentions"). At minute 08:37, he states:

> "Likewise in religion, thought is very decisive. That is why from the beginning faith, which becomes the foundation of religion, is determined by rational thinking. Therefore, the Prophet Muhammad said, *'Innamā al-aʿmālu bi al-niyyāt'*, that everything depends on its intention." *(Begitu juga dalam agama, pikiran itu sangat menentukan. Karena itu dari awal iman yang menjadi dasar agama itu ditentukan oleh pikiran yang rasional. Karena itu Nabi Muhammad mengatakan, segala sesuatu itu tergantung kepada niatnya).*



Figure 2. The moment when Habib Ja'far cites the hadith "Innamā al-aʿmālu bi al-niyyāt" in the HJ–EL4 dialogue
Source: YouTube channel of Gita Wirjawan

In this dialogue, the hadith functions not merely as a textual citation but as a form of contextual exegetical reception. Habib Ja'far reinterprets the hadith within the framework of modern rationality by linking *niyyah* to reflective consciousness and intellectual awareness. The prophetic tradition is therefore positioned not only as a moral injunction but also as an epistemological foundation for understanding human responsibility and meaning-making. This interpretation is significant because it reframes the hadith in philosophical terms, connecting religious faith with rational inquiry and existential reflection. At the same time, the statement that faith is related to rational thinking reflects an attempt to negotiate Islamic teachings within contemporary intellectual discourse, illustrating how hadiths are actualized and recontextualized in digital dialogical spaces.

This quotation shows that the hadith on intention does not appear as a lengthy textual exposition but rather as a normative reference employed to strengthen the relationship between inner consciousness and human action. In the dialogue, the hadith becomes part of Habib Ja'far's broader explanation of how thought shapes intention, intention influences action, and action ultimately forms personal character and an individual's direction in life.

This pattern reflects exegetical reception, in which the hadith is interpreted contextually rather than explained through conventional textual commentary. The prophetic tradition is rearticulated within philosophical discourse and contemporary reflections on human existence, allowing the hadith to function as an ethical and argumentative framework in digital public conversation. In this context, the meaning of *"innamā al-aʿmālu bi al-niyyāt"* shifts from a primarily legal-doctrinal formulation to a reflective discourse on rationality, self-awareness, and moral responsibility.

Such reinterpretation illustrates how hadiths are actualized in digital media environments, where religious authority is negotiated not only through textual citation but also through communicative relevance and intellectual engagement with contemporary audiences.

3. The Hadith of Gabriel in the Dialogue with M. Quraish Shihab

The second video analyzed in this study is *Prof. Quraish Shihab: Benahi Hati, Baca Alam Raya* (*Endgame #112: Luminaries*, hereafter PQS–E112), published on 28 December 2022. As of 2025, the episode had gained more than one million views, around 18,000

likes, and over 1,200 comments. These indicators suggest substantial public engagement and demonstrate how religious discussions in digital media generate active audience reception toward contemporary Islamic authority figures. From the perspective of reception theory, such interaction reflects the audience's participation in negotiating and responding to religious meanings conveyed through dialogical media formats.

Unlike the philosophically reflective style found in Habib Ja'far's dialogue, Quraish Shihab's presentation is more systematic and instructional, resembling an oral form of hadith commentary. The discussion centers on spiritual development, knowledge, and the relationship between faith and religious practice, eventually leading to the three foundational concepts of Islam: *īmān* (faith), *islām* (submission), and *iḥsān* (spiritual excellence). In this context, the Hadith of Gabriel functions as a comprehensive conceptual framework for explaining the structure of Islamic teachings and their relevance to everyday religious life.



Figure 3. The moment when M. Quraish Shihab cites and explains the Hadith of Gabriel on Islam, faith (īmān), and excellence (iḥsān) in the PQS–E112 dialogue
Source: YouTube channel of Gita Wirjawan

At minute 06:16, Quraish Shihab refers to the Hadith of Gabriel, summarizing the concepts of *īmān*, *islām*, and *iḥsān* as the core dimensions of Islamic belief, practice, and spirituality. Rather than merely quoting the hadith text, he reorganizes and explains it pedagogically to make it more accessible accessible to contemporary digital audiences. This presentation reflects a form of structured exegetical reception, in which the hadith is interpreted systematically through oral explanation and contextual simplification.

At the same time, the dialogue also demonstrates aesthetic reception. Quraish Shihab's calm tone of speech, authoritative manner of explanation, and the intimate podcast setting contribute to the construction of religious credibility and emotional resonance. Here, authority is not built solely through textual mastery but also through communicative performance in digital space. The hadith therefore functions not only as a doctrinal reference but also as a living ethical framework mediated through audio-visual interaction.

Compared with Habib Ja'far's philosophical contextualization of the hadith on intention, Quraish Shihab's explanation tends to preserve the normative and pedagogical structure of classical Islamic teaching. This contrast illustrates two distinct modes of *living hadith* reception in digital media: one reflective-philosophical and the other systematic-instructional. Together, they demonstrate how prophetic traditions are recontextualized through different styles of digital religious communication while remaining relevant to contemporary audiences.

Discussion

1. Exegetical Reception of Hadith in YouTube Religious Podcasts

In the study of *living hadith*, exegetical reception refers to the ways in which hadiths are understood, interpreted, and rearticulated within particular social contexts (Ihsan & Ashshiddieqi, 2024; Nurmansyah & Oktaviana, 2022). Rather than functioning as static normative texts, hadith operate as dynamic sources of meaning that continuously undergo reinterpretation in response to changing communicative environments, including digital media (Naila & Rohimi, 2024).

The findings of this study demonstrate that exegetical reception in digital podcasts differs from conventional forms of religious interpretation. In the *Endgame* dialogues, hadith are not primarily explained through formal textual analysis or sanad-based discussion. Instead, they are contextualized through philosophical reflection, ethical reasoning, and conversational narratives that connect prophetic traditions with contemporary concerns. This indicates a shift in the mode of hadith interpretation: authority is constructed not only through mastery of classical texts but also through the ability to communicate religious meanings in intellectually accessible and dialogical forms.

From this perspective, the study argues that digital dialogic media expand the scope of *living hadith* beyond ritual practice and communal tradition into the sphere of mediated public discourse. Podcasts such as *Endgame* function as interpretive spaces where hadith are continuously negotiated, simplified, and recontextualized for contemporary audiences. This process simultaneously broadens the reach of religious discourse while also transforming the ways Islamic authority and prophetic traditions are experienced in digital culture.

One example of exegetical reception in the digital sphere appears in Habib Ja'far Al Hadar's explanation of the hadith *"innamā al-aʿmālu bi al-niyyāt"* ("Indeed, actions are judged by intentions"), narrated by 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb and recorded in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*. In the podcast dialogue, the hadith is not treated merely as a normative textual authority but is reinterpreted through a philosophical framework that links intention to reflective consciousness, rationality, and the formation of human action.

This reinterpretation occurs through the dialogical structure of the podcast itself. Rather than presenting the hadith through formal doctrinal exposition, Habib Ja'far explains it in response to questions concerning epistemology, meaning, and human existence. As a result, the hadith shifts from a primarily legal-moral formulation into a broader ethical discourse on self-awareness and responsibility. This pattern reflects exegetical reception, in which the meaning of hadith is reconstructed contextually according to contemporary intellectual concerns and communicative settings.

The podcast format plays an important role in this transformation. The conversational and interactive nature of digital dialogue enables hadith to be understood not only as formalized religious doctrine but also as a reflective discourse negotiated through public reasoning. In this sense, digital media reshape the mode of religious interpretation by encouraging audiences to engage with hadith through philosophical conversation, personal reflection, and contemporary social experience rather than through one-way sermon delivery alone (Qoyyim & Syihab, 2025).

Habib Ja'far's explanation positions thought as the primary foundation shaping human behavior. He constructs a causal relationship in which thought influences action, repeated actions form habits, habits develop into character, and character ultimately shapes one's destiny. Within this framework, the hadith *"innamā al-aʿmālu bi al-niyyāt"* is

received not merely as a legal or ritual principle but as an ethical and psychological foundation for understanding human selfhood and responsibility.

This pattern clearly reflects exegetical reception, as the hadith is interpreted contextually through philosophical reasoning and contemporary reflections on human consciousness. The prophetic tradition is rearticulated beyond its classical juridical association with intention in worship and redirected toward broader existential concerns related to morality, identity, and personal transformation. In this sense, the hadith functions as a living ethical discourse continuously negotiated within contemporary social realities (Al-Maududi et al., 2025).

At the same time, this reinterpretation also raises important critical questions. By emphasizing rational consciousness and self-reflection, the dialogue potentially broadens the accessibility of the hadith for contemporary audiences, especially younger listeners accustomed to philosophical and motivational discourse. However, such contextualization may also simplify the multidimensional theological and juridical dimensions traditionally embedded in the hadith. This tension illustrates how digital religious communication simultaneously expands the relevance of hadith while reshaping the boundaries of religious authority and interpretation in contemporary Muslim public spheres.

The exegetical reception of the hadith becomes more evident when Habib Ja'far contextualizes the concept of intention through social examples closely related to contemporary digital culture. He explains that arrogance may develop from repeated habits of displaying possessions, such as vehicles or gadgets, in ways that seek social recognition and psychological validation from others. Over time, such practices shape habits, influence character formation, and affect social relationships. In this context, the hadith on intention is interpreted not only as a religious principle concerning worship but also as an ethical critique of self-representation and performative identity in contemporary society.

This interpretation reflects exegetical reception because the hadith is recontextualized through everyday social experiences familiar to digital audiences. Rather than discussing intention in purely theological or juridical terms, Habib Ja'far connects it to the culture of online visibility and identity construction that characterizes social media ecosystems (Ramadhan et al., 2025). As a result, the prophetic tradition

becomes relevant to contemporary concerns regarding authenticity, recognition, and moral responsibility in digital interaction.

From the perspective of reception theory, such contextualization also shapes how audiences understand and internalize the hadith. By relating *niyyah* to ordinary experiences of social media behavior, the dialogue invites audiences to interpret the hadith through their own daily practices and emotional experiences. This demonstrates that reception in digital religious communication is not limited to textual understanding alone but also involves the negotiation of ethical meaning within contemporary patterns of online social life.

In addition to presenting social examples, Habib Ja'far also connects the discussion of intention with philosophical reflections on how humans understand truth and evaluate their actions. He argues that the way people think ultimately influences how they judge something as morally good or bad. For example, a person who constantly seeks public recognition through social media may gradually view validation and popularity as measures of personal worth. In this context, intention becomes central because it shapes not only actions but also the moral significance attached to those actions.

Through this explanation, the hadith *"innamā al-aʿmālu bi al-niyyāt"* is interpreted as more than a doctrinal statement about worship. It becomes an epistemological and ethical framework for understanding how human consciousness, motivation, and judgment influence everyday behavior. This pattern reflects exegetical reception, in which hadith are recontextualized through dialogue with philosophical and social issues relevant to contemporary audiences.

Such an approach demonstrates the growing tendency of hadith interpretation to interact with broader academic and intellectual discourses within modern Islamic thought (Haikal & Musaddad, 2025). In digital dialogical spaces, hadith are therefore not only transmitted as sacred texts but also negotiated as reflective tools for interpreting modern human experience.

In contrast to Habib Ja'far's reflective and philosophical interpretation of the hadith on intention, Muhammad Quraish Shihab approaches the Hadith of Gabriel through a more systematic and instructional style. Drawing from narrations recorded in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* and *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, he explains the concepts of *īmān*, *islām*, and *iḥsān* not merely as theological categories but as an integrated framework that structures Muslim

religiosity. In his explanation, faith represents the dimension of belief, Islam refers to religious practice, and *iḥsān* emphasizes spiritual consciousness and ethical excellence in worship.

This pattern reflects a different mode of exegetical reception. While Habib Ja'far contextualizes hadith through existential and philosophical reflection, Quraish Shihab tends to preserve the pedagogical and doctrinal structure of classical Islamic teaching. However, the interpretation is still adapted to the digital public sphere through concise oral explanation, accessible language, and conversational delivery. As a result, the hadith becomes easier for contemporary audiences to understand without requiring formal religious training.

The contrast between these two speakers demonstrates that exegetical reception in digital media is not singular but plural and dynamic. The same digital platform can accommodate different interpretive styles: one emphasizing reflective contextualization and the other emphasizing systematic instruction. This plurality illustrates how *living hadith* in digital environments involves ongoing negotiation between classical religious authority, media communication styles, and the expectations of contemporary audiences (Muliawan et al., 2025). Moreover, platforms such as YouTube expand the reach of such interpretations, transforming hadith from texts primarily studied in formal religious settings into publicly accessible ethical and spiritual discourse (Handayani & Alifida, 2025).

Quraish Shihab explains that *īmān* represents the affirmation of the heart toward truths conveyed through revelation. According to him, certain religious realities, such as the afterlife, angels, and divine decree, cannot be fully understood through rational inquiry alone. Faith, therefore, is understood as trust in the authority of revelation rather than solely as the result of empirical or logical verification.

This explanation clearly reflects exegetical reception, as the Hadith of Gabriel is interpreted not merely as a textual narration but as an epistemological framework that explains the relationship between knowledge, belief, and the limits of human reason. Through this interpretation, the hadith functions as a living discourse that guides contemporary audiences in negotiating the balance between rational understanding and spiritual submission. Such a perspective also aligns with broader developments in

modern hadith scholarship that position hadith as a continuously interpreted source of religious authority within evolving intellectual contexts (Rohman, 2025).

Importantly, this interpretation contrasts with Habib Ja'far's earlier explanation of the hadith on intention. While Habib Ja'far tends to connect faith and intention with reflective rational consciousness, Quraish Shihab emphasizes the limitations of reason and the necessity of trust in revelation. This contrast represents a significant finding of the study because it demonstrates that digital *living hadith* discourse does not produce a single mode of interpretation. Instead, digital dialogical spaces accommodate multiple exegetical orientations: one oriented toward rational contextualization and the other toward revelational authority.

The coexistence of these approaches within the same digital platform illustrates how religious authority in contemporary media environments is increasingly negotiated through diverse communicative styles and intellectual frameworks. Hadith, therefore, remain authoritative not because they are presented uniformly, but because they are continuously reinterpreted in ways that resonate with different segments of modern Muslim audiences.

Within a broader social horizon, Quraish Shihab also connects the Hadith of Gabriel to the importance of knowledge and reading culture in shaping religious life. Using a simple analogy about the need for appropriate measuring instruments, he argues that every object of knowledge requires a suitable method of understanding. In this context, the limitations of human reason do not negate the pursuit of knowledge; rather, they highlight the necessity of methodological awareness in approaching truth and religious understanding.

This explanation reflects exegetical reception because the hadith is interpreted not only as a theological narrative but also as an epistemological guide for navigating contemporary intellectual life. Quraish Shihab recontextualizes the prophetic tradition into a discourse on literacy, critical thinking, and methodological discipline, making the hadith relevant to modern educational and social concerns (Fatimah et al., 2025). At the same time, this interpretation subtly responds to the challenges of the digital era, where information circulates rapidly and religious knowledge is often consumed without adequate verification.

From a critical perspective, this mode of interpretation also demonstrates how religious authority is constructed through intellectual moderation and communicative accessibility. By employing simple analogies and conversational language, Quraish Shihab transforms complex theological concepts into publicly accessible discourse. This communicative strategy potentially strengthens audience reception because viewers are invited to connect abstract religious teachings with practical experiences of learning and everyday reasoning.

In the context of digital society, online platforms further amplify this reception process by expanding access to religious discourse beyond conventional study circles (Maesura' & Khumaedi, 2024). Audience engagement in comment sections and online discussions indicates that the reception of hadith in digital media is not passive consumption alone, but also involves active interpretation, reflection, and negotiation of meaning among contemporary Muslim audiences.

Based on the discussion above, this study demonstrates that hadith in digital dialogical media undergo dynamic processes of exegetical reception that reposition them as sources of ethical, intellectual, and spiritual reflection in contemporary Muslim life. The findings reveal two distinct patterns of reception. Habib Ja'far tends to reinterpret hadith through philosophical and existential reflection, emphasizing rational consciousness, self-awareness, and the moral dimensions of everyday social behavior. In contrast, Quraish Shihab presents hadith through a more systematic and pedagogical approach that highlights the authority of revelation, the structure of Islamic teachings, and the limitations of human reason.

This contrast constitutes one of the central findings of the study. It shows that *living hadith* in digital spaces is not expressed through a single interpretive model but through multiple communicative styles shaped by different intellectual orientations and audience expectations. In both cases, hadith are no longer positioned merely as normative textual citations; rather, they function as interpretive frameworks negotiated through philosophical discourse, social analogies, oral explanation, and audio-visual interaction.

The study further argues that digital platforms such as YouTube have transformed the practice of *living hadith* into an interactive form of mediated religious discourse. In this context, hadith are continuously contextualized through public conversation,

audience engagement, and communicative performance. This finding expands the scope of *living hadith* studies beyond ritual and communal practices into the sphere of digital religion, where Islamic authority is increasingly constructed through dialogical accessibility, interpretive flexibility, and audience reception within contemporary media culture.

2. Aesthetic Reception of Hadith in Audio-Visual Media

In the study of *living hadith*, aesthetic reception refers to forms of receiving hadith that emphasize the visual, sensory, and affective dimensions of the interaction between audiences and religious messages. Hadith are therefore not experienced solely through intellectual understanding of textual meanings, but also through atmospheres, visual settings, sound, and emotional impressions that shape how religion is felt in everyday life. From this perspective, religious communication operates not only cognitively but also sensorially, through what Meyer (2009) describes as "sensational forms," namely media elements that enable audiences to experience religious meaning through sensory engagement.

This perspective is particularly relevant to the *Endgame* podcasts analyzed in this study. In both dialogues with Habib Ja'far and Quraish Shihab, the reception of hadith is supported not only by verbal explanation but also by audio-visual presentation. The calm conversational tone, intimate studio setting, organized book displays, soft lighting, and reflective atmosphere collectively create an aesthetic environment that strengthens the audience's emotional engagement with the religious discussion. In this context, the authority of hadith is mediated not only through textual citation but also through visual and performative elements that construct credibility, intimacy, and contemplative experience.

The findings of this study therefore suggest that aesthetic reception in digital religion differs from conventional forms of religious transmission. On YouTube, hadith are experienced simultaneously as textual references and as mediated sensory experiences shaped by camera framing, spatial composition, tone of speech, and the interactive digital atmosphere. This demonstrates that the contemporary practice of *living hadith* in digital media involves not only interpretive negotiation but also aesthetic mediation that influences how audiences emotionally connect with religious messages.

The development of digital media has significantly expanded the aesthetic reception of hadith, particularly through audio-visual formats such as Islamic podcasts and dialogical religious videos. In the *Endgame* podcasts analyzed in this study, hadith are not transmitted solely through verbal explanation but are accompanied by carefully constructed visual and atmospheric elements. The studio setting, bookshelf displays, soft lighting, camera framing, and calm conversational rhythm collectively shape how audiences experience the religious message emotionally and symbolically.

In the dialogues featuring Habib Ja'far and Quraish Shihab, these aesthetic elements reinforce different forms of religious authority. Habib Ja'far's relaxed and reflective conversational style creates an atmosphere of intellectual intimacy that makes philosophical discussions on hadith appear accessible to younger digital audiences. Meanwhile, Quraish Shihab's composed delivery, formal tone, and scholarly visual presentation strengthen perceptions of pedagogical authority and spiritual credibility. In both cases, the reception of hadith is mediated not only by textual content but also by sensory and performative dimensions that influence audience perception and emotional engagement.

These findings indicate that the aesthetic reception of hadith in digital podcasts differs from conventional religious study circles. On platforms such as YouTube, hadith become part of a mediated audio-visual experience in which meaning is constructed through the interaction between speech, visual composition, atmosphere, and audience interpretation. This demonstrates that digital religion does not merely relocate religious discourse into online space, but also transforms how hadith authority and spiritual experience are aesthetically produced and received in contemporary Muslim society (Widjanarko, 2025).

In this context, digital platforms such as YouTube can be understood as hypermediated religious spaces, where visual presentation, technological features, and communication style simultaneously shape audience religious experience (Evolvi, 2022). In the *Endgame* podcasts, for example, the use of warm lighting, neatly arranged bookshelves, close-up camera angles, and calm conversational pacing creates an atmosphere of intellectual reflection and emotional intimacy. These elements encourage audiences to perceive the discussion not merely as entertainment content, but as a credible and contemplative form of religious discourse.

Consequently, visual aesthetics function not only as decorative additions but also as part of a broader strategy of religious communication. The audio-visual setting helps maintain audience attention, creates a sense of comfort, and strengthens perceptions of the speaker's authority and authenticity. In this way, the reception of hadith in digital media is shaped not only by what is said, but also by how the religious message is visually and emotionally mediated to audiences.

This phenomenon can be observed in the HJ–EL4 episode, where Habib Ja'far Al Hadar quotes the hadith *"innamā al-aʿmālu bi al-niyyāt"* ("actions are judged by intentions"). In this video, the reception of the hadith operates not only at the level of textual interpretation but also through aesthetic reception shaped by the audio-visual environment of the podcast. The visual presence of green trees and natural scenery behind Habib Ja'far creates a calm, reflective, and intimate atmosphere that supports the philosophical tone of the discussion.

This aesthetic setting functions as more than a decorative background. It reinforces the ethical message of the hadith by constructing an atmosphere associated with contemplation, sincerity, and inner awareness, values closely related to the concept of *niyyah* itself. The combination of relaxed visual composition, conversational delivery, and natural landscape encourages audiences to experience the hadith as a reflective life ethical principle rather than merely as a formal religious doctrine.

Such a pattern clearly reflects aesthetic reception, where the meaning of hadith is mediated through sensory and visual experience. In this context, the authority and emotional impact of the religious message are strengthened not only through verbal explanation but also through the atmosphere produced by digital visual aesthetics. This demonstrates how *living hadith* in digital media involves the integration of textual meaning, emotional engagement, and visual mediation in shaping contemporary religious experience.



Figure 4. Visual background of Habib Ja'far's podcast (HJ–EL4)
Source: YouTube channel of Gita Wirjawan

The presence of the natural background functions as an aesthetic element that constructs a relaxed yet reflective communicative atmosphere. In digital religious communication, visually comfortable spaces often help foster emotional proximity between speakers and audiences, making religious discussions appear more personal, accessible, and contemplative (Raya, 2024). In the HJ–EL4 episode, the garden-like setting, open visual composition, and informal conversational style collectively support Habib Ja'far's image as a reflective and approachable religious figure rather than a distant formal preacher.

This pattern demonstrates that aesthetic reception also contributes to the construction of religious authority in digital media. Authority is shaped not only through mastery of religious texts but also through the ability to create emotionally engaging and visually persuasive communication environments. The calm natural setting reinforces the philosophical and introspective discussion on *niyyah*, allowing audiences to experience the hadith as part of a reflective life conversation rather than a rigid doctrinal lecture.

Audience responses further strengthen this interpretation. Several comments express appreciation for the relaxing atmosphere, visual comfort, and conversational tone of the podcast. One viewer, for example, the account @Opopo.p commented that the garden-like setting felt "refreshing" and particularly suitable for reflective discussion. Such responses indicate that audiences do not engage solely with the verbal content of the hadith explanation but also with the sensory and emotional atmosphere

accompanying it. This finding suggests that aesthetic reception in digital *living hadith* involves a broader process in which visual environment, emotional resonance, and communicative style shape how religious messages are perceived, trusted, and internalized by contemporary audiences.

At the same time, audience responses also reveal that viewers actively evaluate the visual quality of the podcast as part of their engagement with the religious message. One viewer, for instance, the account @vfs7215 criticized the rapid camera movement and overly bright lighting, arguing that these elements reduced visual comfort and made it difficult to maintain focus on the discussion. The same viewer suggested that additional shots featuring green trees would create a calmer and clearer viewing experience.

These responses explicitly reflect aesthetic reception because the audience does not engage with the hadith solely through its verbal or doctrinal content. Instead, viewers assess how visual composition, lighting, camera movement, and spatial atmosphere influence their ability to emotionally and cognitively engage the religious message. In this context, the reception of hadith becomes inseparable from the sensory experience created by digital media presentation.

More importantly, such comments demonstrate that audiences function not merely as passive consumers of religious discourse but also as co-interpreters who actively negotiate the effectiveness of religious communication. Through their evaluations of visual comfort and presentation style, viewers participate in shaping expectations regarding how religious authority and spiritual reflection should appear in digital spaces. This finding strengthens the argument that aesthetic reception in digital *living hadith* involves interactive processes in which audiences contribute to constructing the meaning, credibility, and emotional resonance of religious messages.

A similar form of aesthetic reception can also be observed in the PQS–E112 episode featuring Muhammad Quraish Shihab. Unlike the natural and informal outdoor atmosphere in Habib Ja'far's podcast, this dialogue is recorded inside Quraish Shihab's home, with neatly arranged bookshelves and photographs of prominent Islamic scholars displayed in the background. This visual composition creates a more formal, intellectual, and scholarly atmosphere that reinforces his image as an authoritative religious figure.

This contrast is significant because it demonstrates two different aesthetic strategies in the digital reception of hadith. Habib Ja'far's natural setting emphasizes

intimacy, reflection, and accessibility, while Quraish Shihab's scholarly environment highlights intellectual depth, textual authority, and academic credibility. In both cases, visual aesthetics function not merely as decoration but as communicative devices shaping how audiences perceive religious authority and interpret the religious message being conveyed.

From the perspective of aesthetic reception, the arrangement of books, study-room atmosphere, and portraits of respected scholars serve as symbolic markers of scholarly legitimacy in digital religious communication (Seifali & Fahimifar, 2020). The visual environment implicitly communicates that Quraish Shihab's interpretation is grounded in a long-standing Islamic intellectual tradition. Consequently, audiences are encouraged to receive the Hadith of Gabriel not only as spiritual advice but also as knowledge delivered through recognized scholarly authority.

This finding demonstrates that in digital *living hadith*, authority is increasingly mediated through visual-symbolic representation alongside textual explanation. The aesthetics of the room strengthen Quraish Shihab's position as a Qur'anic exegete and Muslim intellectual, while simultaneously shaping audience trust and emotional reception toward the hadith being discussed.



Figure 5. Bookshelves and scholars' portraits in Quraish Shihab's podcast setting (PQS–E112)
Source: YouTube channel of Gita Wirjawan

Audience responses further demonstrate that viewers pay attention not only to the verbal explanation of the hadith but also to the symbolic visual elements embedded in the podcast setting. One viewer, using the account @prhatamaak, observed that the

paintings displayed in the background portrayed scholars who had shaped Quraish Shihab's intellectual journey, namely Abdul Qadir bin Ahmad Bilfaqih and Abdul Halim Mahmud. This response is significant because it shows that audiences actively interpret visual symbols and connect them to scholarly lineage, intellectual tradition, and religious authority.

From the perspective of aesthetic reception, this finding indicates that viewers do not passively consume digital religious content. Instead, they interpret visual details as meaningful components of the religious message itself. The portraits of respected scholars function symbolically to reinforce Quraish Shihab's credibility, suggesting continuity between his contemporary explanations and the broader tradition of Islamic scholarship. In this way, authority is aesthetically constructed not only through speech and textual reference but also through visual representations of intellectual genealogy.

This phenomenon constitutes an important finding of the study because it demonstrates that *living hadith* in digital media also operates through symbolic reception. The audience's interpretation of the visual background shows that hadith reception extends beyond textual understanding into the realm of symbolic meaning and visual-cultural association. The podcast setting becomes part of the communicative process through which prophetic traditions are legitimized, emotionally received, and connected to established traditions of Islamic knowledge.

Consequently, the reception of hadith in digital spaces involves a multilayered process that integrates verbal interpretation, sensory experience, and symbolic visual reading. This finding expands the scope of *living hadith* studies by showing that digital religious communication does not merely transmit hadith teachings but also mediates religious authority through carefully constructed aesthetic and symbolic environments.

Therefore, the orderly and symbolically rich interior setting can be understood as a form of aesthetic reception that shapes how audiences experience and interpret the religious message delivered by Quraish Shihab. The reception of hadith occurs not only through verbal explanation but also through visual nuances, such as bookshelves, study-room arrangements, and portraits of scholars, that reinforce perceptions of scholarly lineage, intellectual depth, and religious authority. In this way, the aesthetic environment becomes part of the communicative process through which hadith are legitimized and meaningfully received within digital religious discourse.

Overall, audience responses to the podcasts featuring Habib Husein Ja'far Al Hadar and Muhammad Quraish Shihab demonstrate that the reception of hadith discourse in digital media operates not only at the level of textual understanding but also through aesthetic engagement with visual settings and communicative atmosphere. However, the two speakers construct different aesthetic modes of religious authority. Habib Ja'far's podcast employs natural and informal aesthetics, such as outdoor scenery and relaxed visual composition, which create a reflective, intimate, and approachable atmosphere for younger audiences. In contrast, Quraish Shihab's podcast emphasizes scholarly aesthetics through bookshelves, portraits of scholars, and an orderly study-room setting that reinforce perceptions of intellectual depth and traditional religious authority.

These contrasting visual strategies indicate that aesthetic reception in digital *living hadith* is closely connected to how religious authority is symbolically constructed and publicly negotiated. Elements such as spatial design, visual symbolism, and atmosphere function as markers that shape viewers' perceptions of credibility, authenticity, and intellectual legitimacy. Consequently, hadith reception in digital media involves not only the interpretation of religious texts but also the sensory and symbolic experience through which audiences emotionally and intellectually engage with religious discourse.

D. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrated that the presence of Prophetic hadith in digital religious podcasts represents a contemporary form of *Living Hadith*, where hadith function as dynamic sources of ethical, intellectual, and spiritual meaning within mediated public discourse. Through the analysis of two podcast episodes on the YouTube channel of Gita Wirjawan featuring Habib Husein Ja'far Al Hadar and Muhammad Quraish Shihab, this research found that the reception of hadith in digital spaces operates through two interconnected dimensions: exegetical reception and aesthetic reception.

Exegetical reception appears in the contextual interpretation of two major hadiths discussed in the podcasts: the hadith on intention (*"innamā al-aʿmālu bi al-niyyāt"*) and the Hadith of Gabriel concerning *īmān*, *islām*, and *iḥsān*. However, the study found that the two speakers employ different interpretive orientations. Habib Ja'far presents the hadith on intention through a philosophical and reflective approach that emphasizes

rational consciousness, self-awareness, and ethical reflection in everyday social life. In contrast, Quraish Shihab explains the Hadith of Gabriel through a more systematic and pedagogical framework that stresses the structure of Islamic teachings, the authority of revelation, and the limits of human reason. This contrast constitutes one of the central findings of the study, demonstrating that digital *living hadith* discourse accommodates multiple forms of religious interpretation shaped by distinct communicative styles and intellectual orientations.

At the same time, aesthetic reception demonstrates that the experience of receiving hadith in digital media is also mediated through visual and sensory elements. The two podcasts construct different symbolic environments of religious authority. Habib Ja'far's dialogue employs natural aesthetics, such as green landscapes and informal outdoor settings, that create a relaxed and reflective atmosphere appealing to contemporary younger audiences. Meanwhile, Quraish Shihab's setting emphasizes scholarly aesthetics through bookshelves, portraits of respected scholars, and an orderly study-room environment that reinforce perceptions of intellectual depth and classical religious authority. These visual settings function not merely as decorative backgrounds but as symbolic markers shaping audience trust, emotional engagement, and perceptions of religious legitimacy.

Taken together, these findings expand the scope of *Living Hadith* studies beyond ritual practice and textual interpretation into the realm of digital religious communication. The study argues that hadith reception in contemporary media environments is a multidimensional process involving interpretive discourse, audio-visual aesthetics, symbolic authority, and audience participation. In digital podcasts, hadith are not only explained but also emotionally experienced and publicly negotiated through mediated interaction between speakers, platforms, and audiences.

This study also suggests that digital religious platforms such as YouTube podcasts increasingly function as alternative spaces of religious authority, particularly for younger audiences seeking contextual and dialogical forms of Islamic discourse. Future research may therefore explore more specific issues related to digital religion, including the role of platform algorithms in shaping religious visibility, the fragmentation of religious authority among digital influencers, and the reception of hadith in short-form media such as TikTok, Instagram Reels, or livestream religious broadcasts. Such investigations would

contribute to a deeper understanding of how Islamic knowledge and prophetic traditions continue to transform within the rapidly evolving ecosystem of digital communication.

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