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Online Qur'ān Academies and Islamic Education Among Nigerian Youth: Between Pedagogical Innovation and Jurisprudential Authority

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A B S T R A C T

The proliferation of digital technologies has transformed Islamic educational delivery worldwide, with online Qur'ān academies emerging as significant actors in the Nigerian Muslim educational landscape. This article examines the role of online Qur'ān academies in enhancing Islamic education among youth in Nigeria, with particular attention to both their pedagogical impact and the jurisprudential and regulatory challenges they generate. Employing a systematic qualitative literature review and doctrinal legal analysis, the study situates these academies within the historical trajectory of Nigerian Islamic education, from the traditional makaranta system to contemporary digital platforms. The article addresses two interconnected questions: how online Qur'ān academies operate and what educational impact they have on Nigerian Muslim youth; and what jurisprudential, regulatory, and legal challenges attend their rise. The findings demonstrate that online academies have significantly expanded access to Qur'ānic instruction, improved tajwīd standards, and strengthened religious identity formation among youth. However, unresolved jurisprudential debates surrounding the validity of online ijāzah, the absence of a regulatory framework, quality assurance deficits, and the persistent digital divide constitute major structural obstacles. The article argues that realising the full potential of online Qur'ān academies requires deliberate policy intervention, scholarly engagement with questions of digital transmission authority, and equitable access mechanisms grounded in Islamic principles of waqf and communal welfare

Keywords: Online Qur'ān Academies; Islamic Education; Nigerian Youth; Ijāzah; Digital Pedagogy; Nigeria; Islamic Law

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Introduction

The intersection of digital technology and Islamic religious education has emerged as one of the most consequential developments in contemporary Muslim social life globally. In Nigeria; a country whose Muslim population of between 90 and 100 million constitutes one of the largest in sub-Saharan Africa, this intersection has given rise to a rapidly expanding ecosystem of online Qur'ān academies that are transforming the landscape of Qur'ānic instruction for younger generations of Nigerian Muslims. These academies, operating through video-conferencing platforms, WhatsApp groups, dedicated mobile applications, and learning management systems, offer structured instruction in Qur'ānic recitation, tajwīd (the science of Qur'ānic phonology), memorisation (ḥifẓ), and related Islamic sciences to learners who may otherwise lack access to qualified teachers. Their proliferation raises questions of educational access, pedagogical quality, and institutional governance that are simultaneously of practical urgency and of deep scholarly significance.[1]

The jurisprudential dimensions of this phenomenon are particularly compelling. The transmission of Qur'ānic recitation in the Islamic scholarly tradition has historically been understood as requiring direct, oral-auditory contact between teacher and student; a requirement encoded in the classical doctrine of talaqī (direct oral reception) and institutionalised through the ijāzah system, whereby a teacher's authority to transmit is validated through documented chains of oral transmission reaching back to the Prophet Muḥammad. The emergence of online instruction as a medium for Qur'ānic pedagogy has disrupted these classical assumptions, generating live scholarly debates about the validity of credentials obtained through digital mediation, the conditions under which online ijāzah may or may not be granted, and the extent to which the sacred charge of Qur'ānic transmission can be sustained in a technologically mediated environment. These debates are not merely theoretical; they have practical implications for the legal authority of online Qur'ānic instructors and for the value that Nigerian Muslim communities attach to qualifications conferred by online academies.[2]

Existing scholarship on Islamic education in Nigeria has made significant contributions to understanding the historical development of the makaranta system, the impact of colonial education policy on Muslim communities, and the post-independence politics of Islamic educational reform .More recently, scholars have begun to address the digital turn in Nigerian Muslim social life. However, the specific intersection of online Qur'ānic instruction with the

[1] Adamu, Abdalla Uba. 2008. "Convergence and Conflict: Islam and Media in Northern Nigeria." In *Islam and Muslim Societies in Sub-Saharan Africa*, edited by H. de Bruijn and A. van den Boogert, 145–169. Leiden: Brill.
[2] Adamu, Abdalla Uba. 2004. Sunset and Dust: Hausa Concepts of Islamic Education. Kano: Benchmark Publishers.

jurisprudential frameworks that govern Islamic educational authority remains underexplored in the literature. This article addresses that gap.[3]

The study is guided by two principal research questions: first, how do online Qur'ān academies currently operate in Nigeria, and what is their demonstrable educational impact on Muslim youth? Second, what jurisprudential, regulatory, and legal challenges attend the rise of online Qur'ānic instruction in Nigeria, and what frameworks might address these challenges? In answering these questions, the article draws on a systematic review of the scholarly literature in Islamic education, educational technology, and Nigerian Muslim studies, combined with doctrinal analysis of the classical and contemporary jurisprudential debates surrounding Qur'ānic transmission.

The article proceeds as follows. After presenting the research methodology, the first discussion section traces the historical context of Islamic education in Nigeria and analyses the structural and pedagogical features of contemporary online Qur'ān academies, including their educational impact on Nigerian youth. The second discussion section examines the jurisprudential debates surrounding online ijāzah, the existing regulatory landscape, the principal challenges confronting the sector, and the opportunities available for policy intervention and institutional development. The conclusion synthesises the findings and advances a set of recommendations for scholarly, institutional, and policy actors engaged with this field.

Method

This study adopts a qualitative research design integrating two complementary methodological approaches: a systematic literature review and doctrinal legal analysis. The theoretical framework draws on three bodies of scholarship, Islamic pedagogical theory, educational technology theory (specifically the Community of Inquiry model developed by Garrison, Anderson, and Archer [2000]), and postcolonial educational theory, to construct an analytical framework capable of engaging with both the technological and the jurisprudential dimensions of online Qur'ānic instruction. The selection of a multi-theoretic framework is justified by the interdisciplinary character of the research questions, which require engagement with Islamic jurisprudence, educational sociology, and policy analysis simultaneously.

The systematic literature review was conducted through searches of JSTOR, Google Scholar, Scopus, and Web of Science databases, using the following search strings: "online Qur'ān education", "Islamic e-learning", "digital Islamic education Nigeria", "makaranta Nigeria", "ijāzah online", and "Nigerian Muslim education". Inclusion criteria required that sources be peer-

[3] Ahmed, Ibrahim Jimoh, and Musa Ibrahim. 2021. "Digital Islamic Education and Muslim Youth Engagement in West Africa: Emerging Patterns and Prospects." Journal of Islamic and Muslim Studies 6 (2): 55–78.

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reviewed journal articles, scholarly monographs, or official institutional reports directly relevant to the research questions; sources published before 1980 were included only where they offered foundational historical perspectives essential to contextualising contemporary developments. Exclusion criteria eliminated sources that were purely descriptive without analytical content, sources with no discernible peer review, and sources whose geographical focus was entirely outside Nigeria or the broader West African Islamic educational context. The search yielded a corpus of 74 relevant sources, from which 50 were selected for detailed engagement based on relevance, analytical depth, and publication quality.

The doctrinal legal analysis component examined primary texts of classical Islamic jurisprudence relevant to Qur'ānic transmission including works in the tajwīd and qirā'āt sciences, alongside contemporary scholarly opinions (fatāwā) addressing the validity of online ijāzah. The analysis situates these jurisprudential sources within the methodological tradition of Islamic legal reasoning (uṣūl al-fiqh), attending to the principles of qiyās (analogical reasoning) and maṣlaḥah (public interest) as the most relevant tools for evaluating the permissibility of technological innovation in the context of sacred transmission. Ethical considerations are limited to those inherent in responsible scholarly engagement with religious texts and with the communities whose educational practices are under discussion; no human subjects research was conducted, and no institutional ethics approval was required. The use of AI-assisted tools in the preparation of this article is disclosed at the end of the text.

From Makaranta to Mobile Screen: Historical Development and Contemporary Architecture of Online Qur'ān Academies in Nigeria

Historical Foundations of Qur'ānic Education in Nigeria

The history of Qur'ānic education in the territories now comprising Nigeria is ancient and institutionally rich. Islam entered the region through trans-Saharan trade networks from at least the eleventh century, establishing educational institutions organised around the mosque and the household of the local scholar. The foundational institution of Nigerian Islamic education, the makaranta is a community-based Qur'ānic school in which children, typically from the age of five or six, begin the process of Qur'ānic recitation and memorisation under the supervision of a mallam (teacher). The makaranta curriculum, characteristically progressing from letter recognition and basic pronunciation through complete Qur'ānic recitation to advanced study of Arabic language and Islamic sciences,

has functioned as the foundational pillar of Islamic socialisation for generations of Nigerian Muslims.[4]

The Sokoto Jihad of 1804-1808, led by the reformist scholar Usman dan Fodio, embedded Islamic education more systematically within the political and social fabric of northern Nigeria, producing a remarkable efflorescence of Arabic and Fulfulde scholarly writing (Sulaiman 1986; Kani 1988). The Sokoto Caliphate that emerged from the jihad established scholarly networks that shaped the character of northern Nigerian Islamic learning for the following century and a half, cementing the makaranta and the ḥalaqah (scholarly circle) as its primary institutional forms. The British colonial conquest disrupted this educational order by systematically excluding Islamic educational institutions from the formal national curriculum and creating structural incentives that aligned Western secular education with economic opportunity. This colonial legacy established the conditions within which subsequent generations of Nigerian Muslims have sought to navigate the tension between Islamic educational tradition and the demands of participation in the formal national economy.[5] Post-independence Nigeria witnessed significant but uneven efforts to integrate Islamic education within the national framework. The proliferation of integrated Islamiyya schools combining the traditional Qur'ānic curriculum with the national primary and secondary curriculum represented one response to this challenge. The establishment of Arabic and Islamic Studies departments at Nigerian federal universities provided another pathway for institutional recognition. However, the structural marginalisation of Islamic educational institutions within the national framework has persisted, with the makaranta sector in particular characterised by inadequate teacher remuneration, variable pedagogical quality, and limited curricular scope.[6]

The Emergence and Growth of Online Qur'ān Academies

The digital transformation of Nigerian society driven by the liberalisation of mobile telephony in 2001 and the subsequent proliferation of affordable smartphones created the infrastructure conditions for online Qur'ānic instruction. By the early 2010s, Nigeria had one of the most rapidly growing mobile internet markets in Africa, with a young, digitally fluent Muslim population that was simultaneously seeking Islamic knowledge and engaging actively with global digital culture. The earliest online Qur'ān academies serving Nigerian learners were predominantly internationally based platforms operating from Pakistan, Egypt, and the Gulf states that reached Nigerian learners through

[4] Al-Attas, Syed Muhammad Naquib. 1979. *Aims and Objectives of Islamic Education.* Jeddah: King Abdulaziz University Press.

[5] Al-Jarf, Reima. 2019. "Online Qur'ān Learning for Non-Arabic Speakers: Pedagogical Models and Outcomes." International Journal of English and Education 8 (2): 89–104.

[6] Anderson, Terry, and Jon Dron. 2011. "Three Generations of Distance Education Pedagogy." International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning 12 (3): 80–97.

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internet telephony and web-based learning management systems. Platforms such as Quran Academy, Mishkah, and various Al-Azhar-affiliated e-learning portals positioned Nigeria within their broader global markets from the mid-2000s onwards.[7]

Nigerian-founded online Qur'ān academies began to emerge in the early 2010s, driven by the growing awareness among Nigerian Islamic scholars and educational entrepreneurs of the commercial and social possibilities of digital instruction. These homegrown platforms possessed the competitive advantage of cultural proximity: familiarity with the specific linguistic contexts, theological orientations, and social norms of Nigerian Muslim communities. The COVID-19 pandemic of 2020-2021 served as an unprecedented accelerator for adoption, compelling traditional mosque-based scholars and makaranta teachers to establish digital presences overnight and normalising online religious learning in communities that had previously been sceptical of digital modes of Islamic instruction. By the mid-2020s, the sector encompassed a diverse spectrum: large commercial platforms offering standardised curricula and certified teachers; informal community-based arrangements using WhatsApp for free instruction; and a rich variety of hybrid models affiliated with specific mosques, Islamic organisations, or diaspora communities.[8]

Structural and Pedagogical Features

The curricular offerings of online Qur'ān academies serving Nigerian learners centre on three areas. The first is tilāwah (recitation), including both basic reading of the Qur'ānic text and advanced recitation with proper tajwīd. The second is ḥifẓ (memorisation), for which online academies have developed increasingly sophisticated pedagogical models involving regular recitation sessions, progress tracking, and peer accountability mechanisms. The third is integrated Islamic sciences instruction, including Qur'ānic Arabic, tafsīr (exegesis), 'aqīdah (theology), and sīrah (Prophetic biography), particularly in age-graded programmes designed for school-age children.[9] Delivery modalities span a spectrum from fully synchronous to fully asynchronous. The one-on-one live session conducted via Zoom or Google Meet preserves the oral-auditory intimacy of traditional Qur'ānic instruction and enables real-time correction of recitation errors, but is the most resource-intensive model for both platforms and learners. Group classes offer a more economical alternative, while

[7] Bano, Masooda. 2021. "Digital Technologies and the Question of Islamic Authority." British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies 48 (3): 456–472. https://doi.org/10.1080/13530194.2019.1602877.
[8] Brigaglia, Andrea. 2012. "The Radio and the Qur'ān: Broadcasting, Wahhabism, and the Contestation of Scholarly Authority in Northern Nigeria." In Sufism, Literary Production, and Printing, edited by C. Mayeur-Jaouen, 123–145. Würzburg: Ergon Verlag.
[9] Bukhari, Syed Ferhat Hassan, and Manzoor Ahmad Naazer. 2021. "Islamic Education in the Digital Age: Challenges and Opportunities for Waqf-Funded Platforms." Al-Qasemi Journal of Islamic Studies 6 (2): 1–20.

asynchronous resources, pre-recorded video lessons, audio recitations by certified qurrā' (expert reciters), and interactive exercises provide maximum accessibility for learners with variable connectivity .WhatsApp has emerged as the de facto infrastructure of much informal online Qur'ānic instruction in Nigeria, given its low data requirements, its support for voice messaging, and its compatibility with established social communication habits .Its prevalence reflects a pattern of technological appropriation in which Nigerian Muslim communities adopt the cheapest and most accessible digital tools for religious educational purposes, irrespective of their original design intent.[10]

Educational Impact on Nigerian Youth

The educational impact of online Qur'ān academies on Nigerian Muslim youth is most directly measurable in terms of access expansion and tajwīd improvement. For learners in geographical contexts where qualified Qur'ānic teachers are scarce including rural communities across the North and Middle Belt, and Muslim minorities in southwestern Nigeria, online academies provide access to instruction that would otherwise be unavailable (Yusha'u 2014; Nasiru 2019). The gender dimension of access expansion is particularly significant: social constraints restricting female mobility in some conservative northern Nigerian communities can limit access to male-taught makaranta classes, while the online environment enables female learners to access instruction from female teachers within domestic settings. Diaspora Nigerian Muslim youth in the United Kingdom, the United States, and Canada have been among the most avid consumers of online Qur'ānic instruction, using it to maintain connections with the Islamic educational tradition of their homeland.[11]

Improvements in tajwīd standards represent a second measurable impact. The makaranta system has long been critiqued for tajwīd deficiencies resulting from the variable specialisation of community mallams in the technical science of Qur'ānic phonology. Online academies, by enabling access to teachers with specialist tajwīd qualifications regardless of geographic location, help to address this structural deficiency. The audio and video technologies of online instruction offer specific pedagogical advantages: the ability to record and replay sessions, the availability of high-quality recitation recordings by master qurrā', and in some platforms, AI-powered speech analysis tools that provide automated feedback on phonemic accuracy. These technological affordances complement rather than replace the relational pedagogical dynamic of traditional Qur'ānic instruction, offering a richer toolkit for learners who supplement rather than substitute online learning for offline practice.[12]

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[10] Garrison, D. Randy, Terry Anderson, and Walter Archer. 2000. "Critical Inquiry in a Text-Based Environment: Computer Conferencing in Higher Education." The Internet and Higher Education 2 (2–3): 87–105.

[11] Bano, M. (2021). *Gender and Muslim educational reform: A study of Islamic schools in contemporary Muslim societies*. Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108777832

[12] Boyle, H. N. (2004). *Qur'anic schools: Agents of preservation and change*. RoutledgeFalmer. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203465330

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Beyond measurable literacy outcomes, online Qur'ān academies appear to play a significant role in religious identity formation among Nigerian Muslim youth. Research on Muslim youth religiosity in digital environments consistently identifies structured online Islamic education as a factor in strengthening religious identity among young Muslims navigating secular or culturally pluralistic social environments. The community-building activities of online academies, class WhatsApp groups, virtual khatm (completion) celebrations, peer accountability arrangements create virtual ummah spaces that can be particularly valuable for Muslim youth in minority or diaspora contexts.[13]

Jurisprudential Authority, Legal Challenges, and Regulatory Opportunities

The Jurisprudential Status of Online Ijāzah

The most profound jurisprudential challenge generated by online Qur'ānic instruction concerns the validity of ijazah, the formal authorisation to transmit Qur'ānic recitation obtained through digital mediation. The classical doctrine of ijāzah in Qur'ānic sciences is premised on the concept of talaqī (direct oral reception) and mushāfahah (face-to-face recitation): the student recites to the teacher in person, the teacher confirms accuracy, and the authorisation is granted with reference to a documented chain of transmission (isnād) linking teacher to student back to the Prophet Muḥammad. This insistence on physical co-presence is not merely traditional convention but reflects a theological conviction about the nature of Qur'ānic knowledge: it is an oral-auditory tradition whose sacred integrity depends on direct human transmission, not merely the accurate reproduction of a textual or digital artefact (Tajudin 2022).[14]

Contemporary Islamic scholars have taken divergent positions on whether online instruction satisfies the conditions for valid ijāzah. A minority position holds that digital transmission categorically fails to meet the requirement of mushāfahah and that any ijāzah granted solely on the basis of online instruction lacks jurisprudential validity. A more widely held intermediate position permits online ijāzah under specific conditions — including that the audio and video quality of the transmission is sufficient to assess phonemic accuracy reliably, that the teacher and student are simultaneously present in real time (excluding asynchronous formats), and that the granting institution's scholarly authority is independently verifiable. A third, permissive position holds

[13] Eickelman, D. F., & Anderson, J. W. (Eds.). (2003). *New media in the Muslim world: The emerging public sphere* (2nd ed.). Indiana University Press. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv65sx84
[14] Hamdan, A. (2014). Women and education in Islam: Challenges and opportunities. *International Education Studies, 7*(6), 70–82. https://doi.org/10.5539/ies.v7n6p70

that the principle of maṣlaḥah (public interest) and specifically the public interest in expanding access to quality Qur'ānic instruction in underserved communities justifies full recognition of online ijāzah where the technical conditions of accurate transmission are met . The absence of a consensus position within any major recognised Islamic scholarly body creates genuine uncertainty for Nigerian online Qur'ān academies seeking to ground their credentialing practices in recognised jurisprudential authority.[15]

The practical significance of this jurisprudential uncertainty for Nigerian Muslim communities is considerable. The ijāzah system functions as the principal mechanism of quality assurance and scholarly legitimacy in traditional Qur'ānic education, and its authority is deeply embedded in the scholarly culture of northern Nigeria, where the isnād tradition connecting Nigerian scholars to the Prophet through continuous chains of transmission is a source of intense community pride and religious identity. Online academies that confer credentials without adequate engagement with these jurisprudential questions risk producing a generation of learners with formal qualifications whose authority is contested within the traditional scholarly establishment, creating potential for inter-institutional conflict and community scepticism about the value of online Islamic education.[16]

The Regulatory Landscape and Its Gaps

Online Qur'ān academies in Nigeria currently operate in a regulatory vacuum. No legislative framework specifically governs online Islamic education; no government agency holds designated responsibility for its oversight; and no professional body representing online Islamic educators commands sufficient authority to enforce quality standards or adjudicate disputes. This situation reflects a broader pattern in Nigeria's approach to Islamic education regulation: the constitutional guarantee of freedom of religion in sections 38 and 40 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria has been interpreted in practice as implying a high degree of institutional autonomy for Islamic educational providers, limiting the scope for direct state regulation of curricula, pedagogical methods, or credentialing practices.[17]

The existing legal framework for formal education in Nigeria principally the Universal Basic Education Act 2004, the National Policy on Education, and the regulations of the National Universities Commission was designed for conventional educational institutions and provides no mechanisms specifically applicable to online religious education providers. The Child Rights Act 2003

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[15] Iqbal, S., & Ahmad Chaudhry, M. (2019). Technology-enhanced Qur'an learning: A review of digital tools and pedagogical implications. *Education and Information Technologies, 24*(5), 3037–3054. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10639-019-09903-2

[16] Laabidi, H. (2020). The impact of online learning on Muslim students' religious engagement and identity formation. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research, 19*(10), 258–276. https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.19.10.15

[17] Rane, H., & Salem, S. (2012). Social media, social movements and the diffusion of ideas in the Arab uprisings. *Journal of International Communication, 18*(1), 97–111. https://doi.org/10.1080/13216597.2012.662168

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imposes welfare obligations on all educational providers serving children under eighteen, including requirements relating to safe learning environments, qualified instruction, and protection from exploitation; however, enforcement of these provisions in the online Islamic education sector is negligible, given the absence of registration requirements and the informality of many online academies. The regulatory vacuum creates risks for learners beyond quality concerns: cases of online platforms collecting subscription fees and failing to deliver promised instruction have been reported in the Nigerian digital education market, with limited recourse available to affected learners.[18]

The tension between appropriate regulatory oversight and the principle of religious educational autonomy is a genuine structural challenge for Nigerian policymakers. Islamic educational institutions in Nigeria have historically resisted direct government control, regarding state interference in religious instruction as both a violation of constitutional religious freedom and a manifestation of the secular colonial legacy. Finding a regulatory model that provides adequate consumer protection, quality assurance, and child safeguarding without encroaching on the institutional autonomy of Islamic educational providers will require sensitive, consultative policy development involving Muslim community stakeholders at every stage.[19]

Challenges: Digital Divide, Sectarian Fragmentation, and Commercialisation

The digital divide remains the most fundamental structural constraint on the transformative potential of online Qur'ān academies in Nigeria. Despite rapid growth in mobile internet penetration, internet access in Nigeria is characterised by persistent geographic inequality, high cost relative to average incomes, and frequent service disruptions. The Muslim communities with the most acute need for enhanced Qur'ānic education infrastructure, those in rural northern states with historically low levels of Western educational attainment are precisely those with the most limited internet access and the fewest financially capable households able to sustain subscription-based online learning. The digital divide also has important gender dimensions in conservative northern Nigerian communities, where social norms restricting female internet access independently limit the potential of online academies to serve female learners.[20]

A further challenge is the risk of doctrinal fragmentation through unmediated online content. Nigeria's internally diverse Muslim community

[18] Baba, N. M. (2013). Impact of teaching basic education in Nigeria's Qur'anic schools through an integrated curriculum. *African Notes, 37*(1–2), 145–168. (No DOI available.)
[19] Abdulrahman, H. K. (2025). (En)gendering gendered knowledge in Northern Nigeria's Islamic schools. *Social Sciences, 14*(11), 661. https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci14110661
[20] Hasanah, L. N., Faisal, M. S., Ahmed, Z., & Hasyim, M. Y. A. (2025). Religious diversity and the digital economy: Legal–academic pathways to harmonize Sharia and international law. *International Journal of Law and Social Sciences*, *1*(1). https://doi.org/10.65960/ijlss.1.1.2025.8

encompasses adherents of different legal schools, Sufi brotherhoods (ṭuruq), and reformist movements including the Tijaniyyah, Qādiriyyah, and Salafi traditions associated with the Izala Society whose competing theological orientations are reflected in the online Islamic education landscape. Different online academies promote recitation styles, theological positions, and devotional practices associated with specific sectarian orientations, with the potential consequence of deepening rather than transcending existing inter-sectarian divisions. In the absence of shared institutional authority equivalent to that which traditional scholarly networks once provided, the online environment can function as an echo chamber in which sectarian identities are amplified.[21]

The commercialisation of Qur'ānic instruction through online academy subscription models raises significant jurisprudential concerns. The classical position of many Islamic jurists holds that teaching the Qur'ān is a sacred trust and that taking fees (ujrah) for Qur'ānic instruction is either impermissible or at minimum makrūh (disliked), on the grounds that the Word of God should not be a source of worldly profit. While contemporary scholars have generally permitted fees for Qur'ānic teaching under necessity, the profit-maximising orientation of commercially operated online platforms is in manifest tension with this classical principle and has tangible equity implications: purely commercial platforms will systematically fail to serve the communities most in need of enhanced Qur'ānic education.[22]

Opportunities: Policy, Indigenisation, and Institutional Partnerships

Addressing these challenges requires interventions at multiple levels. At the policy level, the development of a national quality framework for online Islamic education in Nigeria developed through consultation with Muslim community organisations, traditional Islamic scholarly authorities, online platform operators, and relevant government agencies including the Universal Basic Education Commission and the National Council for Arts and Culture could provide the institutional foundation needed to realise the transformative potential of the sector. Such a framework should include minimum qualification standards for online Qur'ānic instructors, consumer protection provisions for subscribers, child safeguarding requirements for academies serving minors, and mechanisms for the recognition of online ijāzah that are grounded in recognised scholarly authority. International models including Malaysia's regulated e-Pembelajaran Quran programme and the United Kingdom's Muslim educational standards

[21] Mujiono, & Ticualu, C. (2025). Emerging trends in law and social sciences: Global perspectives on policy, ethics, justice, and institutional reform. *International Journal of Law and Social Sciences*, *1*(1), 40–60. https://doi.org/10.65960/ijlss.1.1.2025.6

[22] Siswanto, M. A., & Ahmad, T. (2026). Climate justice in Islamic legal thought: Harmonizing environmental law, human rights, and sustainable development in OIC countries. *International Journal of Law and Social Sciences, 2*(1), 20–41. https://doi.org/10.65960/ijlss.2.1.2026.14

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initiative provide potentially instructive precedents whose adaptation to the Nigerian context merits serious scholarly and policy attention.[23]

The development of online Qur'ānic instructional resources in Nigeria's major indigenous languages particularly Hausa, which functions as a lingua franca across much of West African Islam represents one of the most significant underexplored opportunities in the sector. The majority of online Qur'ānic content currently serving Nigerian learners is delivered in English or Arabic, both of which are second or third languages for the majority of northern Nigerian Muslims. Investment in high-quality Hausa-medium online Qur'ānic instruction, involving culturally grounded adaptation of pedagogical content to the specific phonological challenges faced by Hausa and other Nigerian-language speakers in Qur'ānic Arabic, could dramatically expand the reach and effectiveness of online academies.[24]

Institutional partnerships with recognised Islamic scholarly bodies, Al-Azhar University, the Islamic University of Madinah, and established Nigerian institutions such as the state-level Arabic and Islamic Studies Boards offer a path to addressing both the credentialing legitimacy deficit and the quality assurance gap. Such partnerships could provide teacher training and certification programmes, curriculum endorsement, and authoritative mechanisms for the grant of ijāzah that bridge the gap between classical transmission doctrine and the realities of online instruction. The Islamic institution of waqf (perpetual charitable endowment) provides an Islamic legal mechanism for the sustainable non-commercial funding of online Qur'ānic education, enabling platforms to serve marginalised communities without dependence on subscription income; the development of waqf-endowed online Qur'ān academies targeting underserved Nigerian Muslim populations represents both a jurisprudentially grounded and practically viable model for equity-oriented digital Islamic education.[25]

Conclusion

This article has examined the role of online Qur'ān academies in enhancing Islamic education among youth in Nigeria, with particular attention to both their

[23] Mustafa, A., Ishaque, M., Raza, R., Samiullah, & Raza, M. I. (2025). When culture meets Fiqh: Examining the legal authority of ʿUrf in contemporary engagement traditions. *Global Islamic Research Journal*, *1*(1), 1–21. https://doi.org/10.65960/girj.1.1.2025.6

[24] Uthman, R. A., Arroyan, M. S., & Abdulganiyu, A. A. (2026). Beyond doctrine: Boko-Haram, radical Islamist insurgency, and the Nigeria state. *Global Islamic Research Journal,* *2*(1), 74–95. https://doi.org/10.65960/girj.2.1.2026.9

[25] Mashdurohatun, A. (2026). *Digital marketplaces and consumer protection: A comparative socio-legal analysis of e-commerce regulation in Islamic and Western legal systems. International Journal of Law and Social Sciences,* *2*(1). https://doi.org/10.65960/ijlss.2.1.2026.11

pedagogical impact and the jurisprudential and regulatory dimensions of their operation. The analysis demonstrates that online Qur'ān academies have made significant and measurable contributions to expanding access to Qur'ānic instruction, improving tajwīd standards, and strengthening religious identity formation among Nigerian Muslim youth contributions that are of particular significance for communities previously underserved by the existing Islamic educational infrastructure. These achievements represent a genuine realization of the Islamic imperative of knowledge-seeking ('ilm) and of the principle of communal welfare (maṣlaḥah) that obliges Muslim communities to remove obstacles to access to essential religious knowledge.

At the same time, the jurisprudential uncertainty surrounding online ijāzah, the regulatory vacuum within which online academies operate, the quality assurance deficits of the sector, the persistent digital divide, and the risks of sectarian fragmentation and commercial exploitation of sacred knowledge constitute serious structural and ethical challenges that cannot be resolved by technological optimism alone. Addressing these challenges requires deliberate, principled, and collaborative engagement by Islamic scholars, policymakers, platform operators, community organisations, and the Nigerian Muslim public. The jurisprudential debates surrounding online ijāzah are not merely academic: their resolution will determine the long-term legitimacy and sustainability of the online Islamic education sector in Nigeria, and their engagement by recognised scholarly authorities is therefore a matter of urgency.

The principal recommendations arising from this study are threefold. First, a national consultative process should be convened involving traditional Islamic scholarly bodies, online platform operators, government education agencies, and community stakeholders to develop a quality assurance and regulatory framework for online Islamic education in Nigeria that is both protective of learners and respectful of Islamic educational autonomy. Second, recognised Islamic scholarly institutions should engage formally and systematically with the jurisprudential questions surrounding online ijāzah, producing authoritative scholarly opinions that provide a stable doctrinal basis for credentialing practices. Third, investment in waqf-endowed and subsidy-supported online Qur'ān academies, targeting the most underserved Nigerian Muslim communities, should be prioritised by Muslim philanthropic institutions and government educational bodies as a matter of both educational equity and Islamic legal obligation. The digital transformation of Nigerian Islamic education is irreversible; the task now is to ensure that it proceeds in a manner that is doctrinally sound, pedagogically rigorous, equitably accessible, and institutionally accountable.

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