

Recitation Gatekeeping for Quality Qur'anic Learning Environments

Shahrul Naem Abdul Mukti¹, Haziah Sa'ari^{2*}, Muhammad Ichsan Budi Prabowo³

**Corresponding Author*

¹ Faculty of Information Science, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Puncak Perdana, Malaysia, ² Faculty of Information Science, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Rembau, Malaysia, ³ Kurator Museum Muhammadiyah, Universitas Ahmad Dahlan, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

2026738761@student.uitm.edu.my, haziah095@uitm.edu.my, muhammad.ichsan@staff.uad.ac.id
Tel: 6011-65420112

Abstract

Qur'anic recitation preparation draws on official criteria, references, recordings, digital tools, and artificial intelligence (AI)-supported feedback. This conceptual paper develops the Recitation Gatekeeping Model through literature mapping and analysis of official competition documents. The synthesis positions guiding teachers and external Qur'anic recitation trainers as verification actors applying five checks: official alignment, source credibility, technical accuracy, pupil suitability, and preparation value. The model explains how these checks authorise information as pupil guidance and links source selection to correction reliability, feedback continuity, competition alignment, and pupil readiness. It frames Qur'anic learning guidance as an educational dimension of Quality of Life.

Keywords: Recitation gatekeeping; Qur'anic recitation preparation; Information verification; Quality of Life.

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1.0 Introduction

Primary-school Qur'anic recitation preparation draws on official requirements, prescribed verses, Tajwid and Tarannum references, judging criteria, recordings, and digital feedback. Guiding teachers and external Qur'anic recitation trainers assess these materials before selecting them for pupil rehearsal. Repeated practice carries the selected guidance into correction priorities, feedback continuity, performance habits, and readiness. Learning quality therefore depends in part on the reliability and suitability of the information pupils practise. Qur'anic recitation studies address Tajwid accuracy, correction, repetition, feedback, assessment, and digital learning support (Al-Azani et al., 2026; Gökdemir & Gürel, 2024; Ismail et al., 2024; Mustapa et al., 2025). Learning-environment studies associate information and system quality, feedback, trust, and learner support with learner satisfaction and continuity (Abd Aziz et al., 2024; Alsulami et al., 2024; Huang et al., 2025). Information management literature addresses source credibility, accuracy, relevance, and accountable judgement in using information (Gergul et al., 2025; Huang et al., 2023). Across these fields, the professional decisions that connect verification with pupil guidance in musabaqah preparation remain underexplained. In particular, the literature offers limited explanation of how guiding teachers and external Qur'anic recitation trainers assess official requirements, oral instruction, recordings, and digital or artificial intelligence (AI)-supported feedback before endorsing rehearsal material.

Computational research addresses a related technical problem. A systematic review maps speech-recognition methods, verification applications, datasets, and unresolved technical issues (Alrumiah & Al-Shargabi, 2023). Recent work develops speech-recognition models for Qur'anic recitation (Al-Fadhli et al., 2024), while watermarking research addresses the integrity of digital recitation audio files

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(Gutub, 2022). These studies clarify what systems recognise or authenticate in audio. The instructional decision remains distinct: how to assess each source's credibility, official alignment, technical accuracy, suitability for a pupil, and preparation value before it informs rehearsal. This conceptual paper explains the verification route through which Qur'anic recitation information gains authority as pupil guidance during primary school musabaqah preparation. Its objective is to develop the Recitation Gatekeeping Model, specifying the verification actors, five checks, and proposed quality outcome linking source assessment with pupil guidance. By connecting verified information with reliable correction, feedback continuity, competition-aligned preparation, and pupil readiness, the model frames its Quality-of-Life relevance through the quality of pupils' Qur'anic learning experience.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Key Concepts and Conceptual Positioning

Qur'anic recitation preparation involves selecting and interpreting information before using it to guide pupils. Recitation studies link preparation with correction, repetition, feedback, and assessment (Gökdemir & Gürel, 2024; Ismail et al., 2024). Information management research frames this task in terms of source credibility, content accuracy, relevance, information quality, and professional judgment (Gergul et al., 2025; Huang et al., 2023). Islamic information studies distinguish source credibility from content credibility: a source's authority and the accuracy or relevance of its claims require separate appraisal (Ab Kadir et al., 2019; Wan-Chik, 2015).

Gatekeeping theory explains how information intermediaries select material for circulation in communicative and institutional settings (Erzikova, 2018). Applied to recitation preparation, this perspective focuses on how guiding teachers and external Qur'anic recitation trainers assess information and decide whether to adopt, adapt, or set it aside for pupil guidance. This study defines recitation gatekeeping as that professional verification process.

2.2 Qur'anic Recitation Information and Correction Feedback

Recitation guidance draws on standards for tajwid, makhraj, sifat huruf, waqaf and ibtida', tarannum, fasahah, Voice, and competition scoring (Gökdemir & Gürel, 2024; Ismail et al., 2024). Specialist texts provide structured technical and melodic references, including *Tuhfat al-Atfāl* and *Matn al-Jazariyyah* for tajwid, and *Qawā'id al-Tarannum* for tarannum (Khalid bin Isa, 2019; Mursyid & Mustautina, 2019). These standards inform error identification, example selection, and feedback planning. Musabaqah preparation also requires attention to prescribed verses, recitation methods, judging domains, timing, scoring forms, and error records. The instructional value of a correction rests on its technical accuracy, alignment with competition criteria, and fit with prior feedback and pupil readiness.

2.3 Digital and AI-Supported Recitation Sources

Digital tools extend access to recitation examples and feedback beyond live sessions. Mobile applications, online videos, qari recordings, automated tajwid tools, AI-supported feedback, and pupil recordings support repeated listening, error detection, independent practice, and progress tracking (Al-Azani et al., 2026; Birgün, 2026; Mustapa et al., 2025). Automated outputs require expert interpretation against tajwid, tarannum, fasahah, voice control, and competition standards (Aljabr, 2025; Alrumiah & Al-Shargabi, 2023). Before these outputs inform rehearsal, pupils' Voice, technical content, and relevance to the prescribed verse must be assessed.

2.4 Quality Qur'anic Learning Environments and the Verification Gap

Quality Qur'anic learning environments depend on reliable information, effective feedback, learner support, and continuity. Research on learning environments and AI-supported education links information, system, and service quality with feedback and learner satisfaction (Abd Aziz et al., 2024; Alsulami et al., 2024; Huang et al., 2025). Library-focused research further reports that deep-learning algorithms support personalized information retrieval, resource recommendation, and enhanced user experience, while raising issues concerning dataset selection, ethical judgment, and human intervention (Sa'ari et al., 2023). Islamic and Qur'anic learning studies associate structured management, murajaah, assessment, and supportive settings with continuity in guided learning (Ab Jalil et al., 2021; Ismail et al., 2024; Subki, 2025). To conclude, the synthesis organises source appraisal around five checks: official alignment, source credibility, technical accuracy, pupil suitability, and preparation value. The literature offers limited explanation of how guiding teachers and external Qur'anic recitation trainers apply these checks together when official criteria differ from specialist interpretation, digital feedback conflicts with recitation-based correction, or technically accurate material exceeds a pupil's readiness. This unresolved verification process motivates the Recitation Gatekeeping Model.

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Conceptual Model Development

This conceptual paper develops the Recitation Gatekeeping Model through focused literature mapping and analysis of official competition documents. Conceptual model development suits the study's purpose: to organise related concepts, specify their connections, and explain how verification links recitation information with pupil guidance and quality Qur'anic learning environments. Jaakkola (2020) identifies model development as an approach for conceptual articles, and Jabareen (2009) describes framework building as a way to integrate concepts across knowledge domains. The analysis brought together literature on Qur'anic recitation preparation, correction and feedback, digital recitation, artificial intelligence (AI), information verification, source credibility, teacher

judgment, and learning-environment quality. The study presents a conceptual synthesis; empirical testing of the model falls outside its scope.

3.2 Literature Mapping and Documentary Evidence

The literature map recorded each source's central concept, verification issue, disciplinary focus, intervention type, and contribution to the identified gap. This structure supported comparison across recitation, information verification, teacher judgment, digital learning, and learning-quality literature (Snyder, 2019).

Four documents formed the documentary corpus. The national-level materials comprised the 2026 Tilawah adjudication form for Mahrajan Al-Quran, Nasyid dan Khat Sekolah-Sekolah (MQNKSS; Quran Recitation, Nasyid and Calligraphy Festival for Schools), issued by Bahagian Pendidikan Islam, Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia (BPI KPM), and the 2024 materials for Majlis Tilawah dan Hafazan al-Quran Peringkat Kebangsaan (MTHQK; National Quran Recitation and Memorisation Assembly), issued by Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia (JAKIM). The state-level source was the 2026 Program Pengukuhan Kurikulum Pendidikan Islam Adab dan Nilai Sekolah-Sekolah (PEMANIS; Islamic Education, Adab and Values Curriculum Strengthening Programme for Schools) Tilawah guideline, issued by the Sabah State Education Department (Jabatan Pendidikan Negeri Sabah; JPNS). The district-level source was a 2026 notice from the Kuala Kangsar District Education Office (Pejabat Pendidikan Daerah Kuala Kangsar; PPD Kuala Kangsar).

The MQNKSS form documents four judging sections, deduction criteria, error-record fields, and jury validation (Bahagian Pendidikan Islam, Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia [BPI KPM], 2026, pp. 1–4). The PEMANIS guideline provides state-level evidence on online Tilawah procedures and assessment domains (Jabatan Pendidikan Negeri Sabah [JPNS], 2026, pp. 13–14). The MTHQK materials provide national competition context (Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia [JAKIM], 2024). The Kuala Kangsar notice records local arrangements for in-person participation and recorded submissions (Pejabat Pendidikan Daerah Kuala Kangsar [PPD Kuala Kangsar], 2026, pp. 1–2). It serves as an example of district-level event administration; its procedures are not treated as Sabah requirements or recitation-scoring criteria. The analysis retained the distinctions among national, state, and district evidence.

The PEMANIS guideline states, “Tilawah Al-Quran akan dijurikan berdasarkan 4 bahagian berikut” (“Qur’anic recitation will be judged across the following four domains”; JPNS, 2026, p. 14). The district notice states, “Penghantaran video rakaman hendaklah dihantar melalui pautan yang akan diberikan” (“Recorded videos are to be submitted through the link that will be provided”; PPD Kuala Kangsar, 2026, p. 1). The MQNKSS judging form is written in Jawi, so its criteria are presented as paraphrases with page citations. The table below summarises the supporting sources, their analytical contribution, and their relevance to model development.

Table 1. Evidence Matrix for Recitation Gatekeeping Model Development

Evidence strands and key supporting sources	Analytical contribution	Relevance to the model
Quality learning-environment literature: Abd Aziz et al. (2024); Alsulami et al. (2024); Huang et al. (2025); Ismail et al. (2024); Subki (2025)	Addresses information quality, feedback, trust, learner support, and continuity.	Informs the model's proposed quality outcomes, including feedback continuity, pupil confidence, and preparation readiness.
Information verification and credibility literature: Ab Kadir et al. (2019); Gergul et al. (2025); Huang et al. (2023); Wan-Chik (2015)	Frames appraisal through accuracy, credibility, relevance, suitability, and usability.	Provides concepts for assessing recitation information before it informs pupil guidance.
Gatekeeping and teacher-judgment literature: Erzikova (2018); Gergul et al. (2025); Huang et al. (2023)	Explains information filtering and professional judgment in instructional settings.	Supports the model's positioning of guiding teachers and external Qur'anic recitation trainers as accountable decision-makers.
Qur'anic recitation literature: Gökdemir and Gürel (2024); Ismail et al. (2024)	Specifies recitation standards, correction, feedback, and assessment.	Connects technical accuracy with feedback reliability and pupil readiness.
Digital and AI-supported recitation literature: Al-Azani et al. (2026); Aljabr (2025); Birgün (2026); Mustapa et al. (2025)	Identifies the functions and risks of recordings, automated tools, and AI-supported feedback.	Grounds professional review of digital outputs before they inform pupil practice.
Official competition documents and procedural notices: BPI KPM (2026); JAKIM (2024); JPNS (2026); PPD Kuala Kangsar (2026)	Specifies assessment domains, technical requirements, deduction logic, validation records, and submission procedures.	Anchors the model in formal criteria while preserving distinctions among national, state, and district procedures.

3.3 Analytical Coding, Synthesis, and AI-Assisted Model Development

Following Bowen's (2009) document-analysis procedures, we coded the MQNKSS judging form for assessment of domains, technical requirements, deduction logic, and validation records. We examined the PEMANIS guideline, MTHQK materials, and PPD Kuala Kangsar notice for relevant recitation, scoring, submission, and administrative evidence, retaining the jurisdictional context of each document. We compared the documentary analysis with the literature map represented by the evidence strands in Table 1. This cross-source synthesis yielded five checks, applied in sequence: official alignment, source credibility, technical accuracy, pupil suitability, and preparation value. The resulting model positions verified guidance as the immediate outcome of these checks and a quality Qur'anic learning environment as the broader proposed outcome (Figure 1). Methodological studies describe structured-prompt use in content analysis and emphasise researcher review of AI-generated categories (Domínguez-Díaz et al., 2025; Mazzoni et al., 2026). In this study, prompts asked ChatGPT to group evidence by analytical function, compare candidate checks with official criteria, and identify overlaps or unsupported categories. We assessed each proposed grouping against the cited literature and official documents before revising or retaining it. ChatGPT helped organise and compare evidence; the cited sources remained on the evidentiary basis, and we retained responsibility for final coding, interpretation, and model development.

4.0 Findings

4.1 Official Assessment Architecture and Pre-Performance Risk

The MQNKSS adjudication form allocates 35 marks to Tajwid, 30 to Tarannum, 20 to Fasahah, and 15 to Voice (BPI KPM, 2026). Tajwid and Tarannum therefore account for 65 of 100 marks, giving technical accuracy and melodic execution the greatest combined weight. Fasahah and Voice assess oral clarity and vocal control as distinct domains. In Sabah, the PEMANIS guideline directs schools and districts to read state guidance alongside the MQNKSS framework. For provisions marked “mengikut ketetapan daerah” (“according to district-level decisions”), it permits district clarification and requires decisions to be reported to the Sabah State Education Department (JPNS, 2026, pp. 2–4). PEMANIS also reproduces the four MQNKSS domains and their weightings (JPNS, 2026, pp. 8, 13). Considered alongside the Kuala Kangsar notice on district event delivery (PPD Kuala Kangsar, 2026, pp. 1–2), these documents distinguish a shared scoring core from local procedures. The analytical risk is conflating event-delivery instructions with recitation-scoring criteria. Specialist recitation texts provide technical and melodic knowledge; the MQNKSS form defines the performance domains that carry competition marks (BPI KPM, 2026; Khalid bin Isa, 2019; Mursyid & Mustautina, 2019). Preparation must align specialist instruction with the assessed domains. The adjudication form leaves rehearsal-source provenance, selection rationale, and pupil-specific adaptation outside its scoring record (BPI KPM, 2026). Recitation studies link correction and repeated practice with assessment (Gökdemir & Gürel, 2024; Ismail et al., 2024). Pre-performance risk lies at this information-to-rehearsal transition: adjudication records errors after performance, while source choices shape rehearsal beforehand.

4.2 Recitation Gatekeeping as a Verification Mechanism

The Recitation Gatekeeping Model places professional verification between recitation-information sources and pupil guidance. Musabaqah preparation draws on official guidelines, prescribed verses, Tajwid references, Tarannum examples, scoring criteria, reciter recordings, digital platforms, artificial-intelligence-supported feedback, pupil recordings, and correction notes (Al-Azani et al., 2026; BPI KPM, 2026; JAKIM, 2024; JPNS, 2026; Mustapa et al., 2025). Source availability confers no instructional authority. Guiding teachers and external Qur’anic recitation trainers assess credibility, competition alignment, technical accuracy, pupil suitability, and preparation value before adopting, adapting, or setting aside materials. A recording beyond a pupil’s vocal capacity requires adaptation; automated feedback requires expert interpretation against Tajwid, Tarannum, and Fasahah standards (Aljabr, 2025; Alrumiah & Al-Shargabi, 2023). This accountable filtering extends actor-led gatekeeping theory (Erzikova, 2018). Five checks organise this verification: official alignment, source credibility, technical accuracy, pupil suitability, and preparation value. They guide correction, example selection, rehearsal priorities, feedback, and readiness review. Figure 1 maps the pathway from recitation sources through professional verification to pupil guidance and the proposed quality outcomes discussed in Section 4.4.

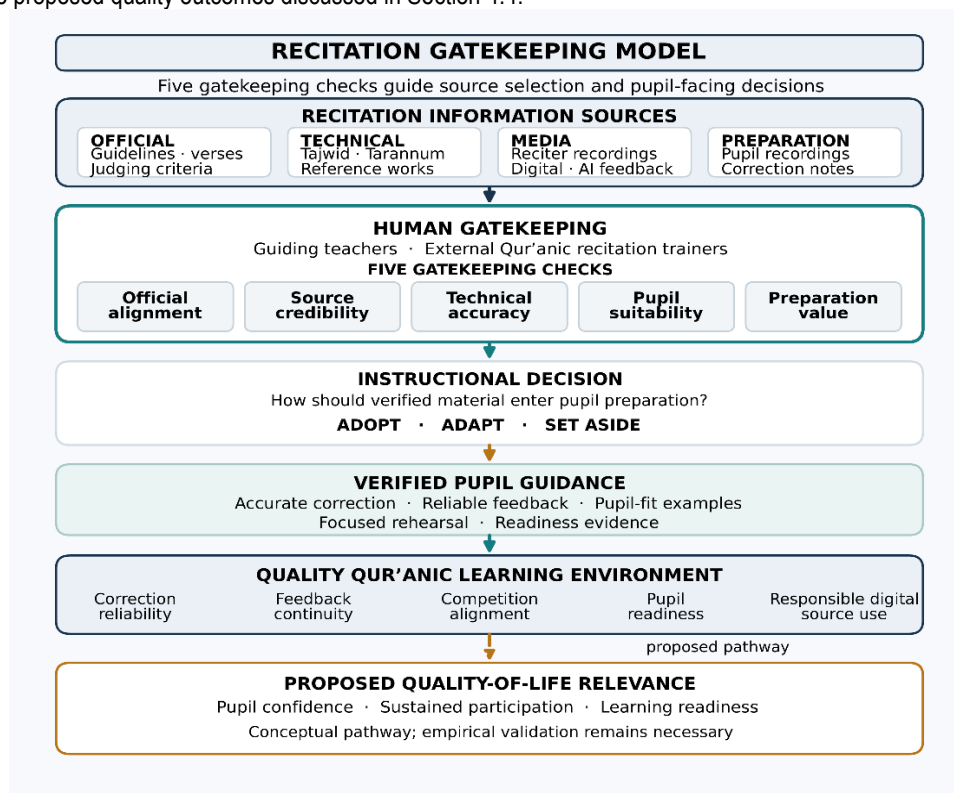


Fig. 1: Recitation Gatekeeping Model for Quality Qur'anic Learning Environments

4.3 Verification Sequence

The five checks form a risk-control sequence for recitation information moving from source access to pupil guidance. Official alignment verifies fit with prescribed verses, recitation methods, timing, judging domains, scoring logic, submission rules, and validation procedures. It anchors rehearsal to competition requirements when informal examples circulate among teachers, trainers, pupils, and parents. Source credibility assesses the authority and reliability of materials before rehearsal. Official documents, qualified teachers, experienced trainers, trusted qari or qariah recordings, credible digital platforms, and validated tools carry different evidential weight. This screening keeps informal or unverified materials from gaining instructional authority.

Technical accuracy covers tajwid, makhraj, sifat huruf, waqaf and ibtida', tarannum movement, fasahah, voice control, and scoring expectations. Errors in rule explanations or corrections can recur in practice and may alter meaning or lead to mark deductions. Pupil suitability matches recitation input to the pupil's Voice, breath control, confidence, fluency, tarannum exposure, learning pace, and readiness stage. Examples beyond the pupil's capacity risk vocal strain, unstable pitch, weak fluency, or loss of confidence. Preparation value prioritises correction, feedback continuity, rehearsal focus, progress review, and evidence of readiness. It distinguishes useful input from attractive content that increases volume without strengthening preparation. Table 2 maps the checks to their decision questions, controlled risks, and intended quality effects.

Table 2. Verification Logic of the Recitation Gatekeeping Model

Gatekeeping check	Verification decision	Risk controlled	Intended quality effect
Official alignment	Does the guidance align with prescribed verses, judging domains, scoring logic, timing, submission rules, and validation procedures?	Preparation departs from official competition requirements.	Competition-aligned guidance
Source credibility	Does the source carry recognised authority through official documents, qualified trainers, trusted reciters, juror validation, or validated digital tools?	Informal or unverified sources gain instructional authority.	Credible source use
Technical accuracy	Does the guidance support correct tajwid, makhraj, sifat huruf, baris, waqaf, ibtida', tarannum movement, fasahah, and voice control?	Inaccurate correction enters repeated practice, risking altered meaning and mark deductions.	Reliable correction and meaning protection
Pupil suitability	Does the guidance fit the pupil's Voice, breath control, fluency, confidence, tarannum exposure, learning pace, and readiness stage?	Pupils imitate examples beyond their vocal, technical, or readiness capacity.	Learner-fit guidance
Preparation value	Does the source improve correction priorities, rehearsal focus, feedback continuity, progress review, and readiness evidence?	Materials accumulate without clearer correction priorities or readiness evidence.	Focused rehearsal and readiness evidence

4.4 Information Flow and Quality Outcome

The model defines a quality Qur'anic learning environment through reliable correction, continuous feedback, responsible digital-source use, competition alignment, and pupil readiness. These are proposed guidance features verified before rehearsal. Digital and artificial-intelligence-supported tools expand access to examples and progress tracking; expert review determines whether their outputs fit recitation standards and pupil needs (Aljabr, 2025; Alrumiah & Al-Shargabi, 2023).

4.5 Model Contribution

The Recitation Gatekeeping Model reframes Qur'anic recitation preparation as a verified information environment. It clarifies who verifies information, what they assess, and how verification connects source selection with pupil guidance and quality outcomes. The model shifts quality analysis upstream from visible performance and feedback delivery to the information decisions that shape correction, rehearsal, and readiness. Its contribution spans information management, Islamic education, and learning-environment research through source credibility, technical accuracy, learner-fit guidance, responsible digital-source use, and assessment accountability.

5.0 Discussion

5.1 Assessment Information as Upstream Quality Risk

Formal judging criteria precede performance and structure the correction and rehearsal that prepare pupils for it. Adjudicators assess pupil performance against those criteria. This sequence creates an interpretive interval between rubric and rehearsal: scores capture performance, whereas the sources and reasoning that shaped preparation remain outside those scores. Traceability links prescribed competition requirements to preparation guidance and observable recitation evidence to pupil readiness judgements. MQNKSS records scores, deductions, and juror validation (BPI KPM, 2026). The scoring form establishes performance accountability, leaving source selection and pupil-specific adaptation to be documented during preparation. Ilmu dan Seni Qiro'atil Quran links technical recitation knowledge with musabaqah and adjudication, illustrating the cross-domain traceability required from assessment criteria to pupil guidance (Mursyid & Mustautina, 2019).

5.2 Information Reliability as a Quality Condition

Source reliability depends on the fit between a reference and the correction claim. Works such as Matn al-Jazariyyah and Qawā'id al-Tarannum address distinct technical and melodic domains (Khalid bin Isa, 2019; Mursyid & Mustautina, 2019). Their relevance rests on scope: which source supports a correction, for which recitation issue, and at what learner stage. Tajwid, tarannum, and voice corrections each require domain-relevant sources. Beginner-level material also needs separate justification for competition-specific use. The model

frames source credibility as claim-specific appraisal, with authority judged by relevance to the correction. When technical interpretations differ, teachers and external Qur'anic recitation trainers should identify the reference governing the correction and explain how it fits assessment requirements. This claim-source fit makes the basis of instructional decisions explicit and reviewable.

5.3 Human Verification Under Digital Expansion

Digital preparation involves distinct evidence types. Written references specify standards, trusted qari or qariah recordings model delivery, pupil recordings document current performance, and automated tools flag patterns within their documented functions. A flag or recommendation directs attention to a pattern for expert review. Recitation expertise determines whether that pattern constitutes an error and merits correction. Teachers and external Qur'anic recitation trainers assess tool outputs against recitation standards and pupil readiness, consistent with research on teacher judgement in digital learning (Razouki et al., 2025). The model implies a concise, auditable correction record linking tool output, source, professional decision, and evidence from the pupil's next recitation. This record makes the reasoning behind accepted, adapted, or rejected feedback traceable and supports review across rehearsal sessions and competition preparation.

5.4 Contribution and Boundary

The Recitation Gatekeeping Model explains how recitation information gains instructional authority through five verification checks. It specifies the verification pathway within broader information practices spanning access, selection, organisation, sharing, application, and review. At the conceptual level, the model frames verified guidance matched to learner needs as relevant to Quality of Life through proposed links with learning continuity, confidence, and readiness. These links remain propositions pending empirical testing. Such research should trace each correction from source through professional reasoning and rehearsal to subsequent performance, assessing decision traceability alongside pupil outcomes. Cases of agreement or conflict among official criteria, specialist references, reciter models, and AI outputs would test how the model explains decision authority in practice.

6.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

The model raises an institutional question: how do schools and competition organisers establish the authority of recitation knowledge pupils are expected to reproduce? Its relevance extends beyond musabaqah, since religious education draws on formal requirements, specialist instruction, recorded exemplars, and digital feedback. Institutions must explain how they select, adapt, and review guidance. The model offers a lens on institutional responsibility in religious learning. It also frames a cautious connection to Quality of Life through learner confidence, participation, and continuity in Qur'anic education. The model remains a conceptual synthesis of literature and official documents. Primary-data studies should test its explanatory value through interviews with guiding teachers and external Qur'anic recitation trainers, rehearsal observation, and adjudication records. Comparative research should assess how preparation decisions vary across competitions and which principles transfer to other forms of oral religious learning.

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AI Use Declaration

ChatGPT was used to generate candidate groupings of mapped evidence, compare proposed verification checks with official assessment criteria, and identify overlapping or unsupported categories. The authors checked its outputs against the cited literature and official documents and made the final coding and model-development decisions.

Paper Contribution to Related Field of Study

The Recitation Gatekeeping Model contributes to Information Management and Islamic education by positioning verification as an upstream condition for accountable Qur'anic recitation guidance. It extends learning-quality discussions and frames a conceptual link to Quality of Life.

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