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Efforts to Moderate Islamic Law through Hadith Studies Gathering in Aceh and West Sumatra Mosques

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Abstract

This study aims to portray mosques' contribution in Islamic study gatherings; examine preferred subjects of the gathering in Acehese and West Sumatra mosques; and acquire a moderate understanding of hadith and Islamic law at the locus. It uses an empirical legal method combined with Weber's theory of social action. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observation, and document studies. The study found that the mosque has long been playing a big role in facilitating *pengajian* (Islamic study gathering), including that of Islamic law and hadith subjects. However, the intensity or frequency is still

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relatively low in both Aceh and West Sumatra, so hadith studies are still rarely held in these two regions. The role of mosques as a place to gain a moderate understanding of Islamic law from the study of hadith study gathering (*pengajian hadith*) is important even though it is not yet optimal. In Weber's perspective, a person's social actions will be influenced by an understanding one considers correct, which will then become a religious practice. A moderate understanding of Islamic law will emerge then lead to harmony and tranquility in society.

Keywords:

Islamic law; Moderate understanding; Hadith; Mosque

Introduction

Understanding Islamic law can lead to many possibilities. Contextual one will create harmonious peace, while textual understanding will create a rigid and even tense social atmosphere. It furthermore tends to give birth to inclusivism and claim of the dominance of truth in one group, while other groups were deemed astray, heretics, and even infidels. This textual understanding later became the ideology of radical and terrorist groups beyond the Bali Bombing, JW Marriott, and the Stock Exchange Bombing, also targeting the Police and Churches from the 2000s to 2022.¹ The emergence of ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) Movement and the Al Qaeda Group in the Middle East which then had an impact on Indonesia as a transnational movement was also motivated by an understanding of Islamic law that was textual and rigid.²

¹ Azman Arsyad, Mahmuddin, and Daud Aisyah Idris, "Religious Moderation, Pela Gandong and Jihad Reconstruction: Conflict Prevention in Maluku from the Perspective of *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah*," *Samarah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga dan Hukum Islam* 9, no. 1 (2025): 34–55, <https://doi.org/10.22373/sjhk.v9i1.26416>; Nunu Burhanuddin and Darul Ilmi, "Typologies of Religious Moderation in Indonesian Higher Education Institutions," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 16, no. 2 (2022): 455–79, <https://doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2022.16.2.455-479>.

² Noorhaidi Hasan, "The Salafi Movement in Indonesia: Transnational Dynamics and Local Development," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 27 (2007): 83–94, <https://doi.org/10.1215/1089201x-2006-045>; Abdul Majid et al., "Salafi, Hadith, and Islamic Law: Identity Politics and Wahabi Movement in East Kalimantan," *Ahkam: Jurnal Ilmu Syariah* 23, no. 1 (2023): 147–70, <https://doi.org/10.15408/ajis.v23i1.32139>; Faisal A Rani, Fikri Fikri, and Mahfud Mahfud, "Islam and National Law: A Formal Legal Review on Sharia Laws in Aceh,"

Likewise, accusations of heresy and deviance against several Acehnese community practices such as *samadiyah* (or *salamatan*), *tahlilan* and *ziara kubur*, including the belief that parents of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH went to hell are often conveyed in religious studies at the *Majelis Taklīm*. As a result, religious studies conducted by Wahabi group in several mosques in Banda Aceh were disbanded by the masses and so were *ustaz* and *da'i* who clearly made accusations of heresy and infidelity.³ This does not only happen in Aceh but also in East Java, West Nusa Tenggara, South Sulawesi, West Sumatra, and Riau.

In this context, efforts to understand moderate Islamic law through the study of hadith study gathering (*pengajian hadis*) become urgent by wisely socializing it to the community. Otherwise, what likely happens is disharmony and social conflict in the name of religion. The space and media for conveying understanding of Islamic law to the community is the mosque, because, in addition to being a place of worship, the mosque is also a medium to gain knowledge, socialize with each other, empower the community and socio-religious activities and even to become a center of civilization.⁴

In a more specific scope, the mosque is a place where people can get religious understanding from preachers about Islamic teachings. When religious understanding is conveyed in a peaceful and harmonious manner, society will understand it in the same way. On the other hand, when religious understanding is conveyed textually, the mosque turns into a medium for disbelieving and criticizing certain religious practices, resulting in conflicts, and the expulsion of certain preachers. This is based on understanding the Qur'an and hadith by forcing one's own opinions, even though the issue is *khilāfiyyah*.

Al-Risalah: Forum Kajian Hukum dan Sosial Kemasyarakatan 20, no. 1 (2020): 47, <https://doi.org/10.30631/al-risalah.v20i1.521>.

³ Akhmad Sagir et al., "Indonesian Hadith Scholars' Contribution to the Establishment of Hadith Authority in Malay Archipelago," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 18, no. 2 (2024): 532-57, <https://doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2024.18.2.532-557>.

⁴ Iskandar Usman, "Revitalizing the Role and Function of the Mosque as a Center for Da'wah Activities and Community Development," *Samarah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga dan Hukum Islam* 4, no. 1 (2020): 1-24, <https://doi.org/10.22373/sjhk.v4i1.7050>.

Several studies on understanding of Islamic law from the perspective of hadith have been conducted. Some can be used as a basis for determining the state-of-the-art of this current article. Majid et.al.,⁵ and Husain et.al.⁶ discuss the typology of understanding hadith in different perspectives which causes different results. Both of them focus on hadith about how Islamic law can interpret and solve some problems. Meanwhile, Helmy⁷ explained that the internalization of moderate understanding of hadith has gone well, especially in several Islamic boarding schools in Java. Students have learned about the hadiths about interfaith relations and moderate values mainly from their teachers although they have read directly from books and sometimes from social media. Moreover, Musyafiq⁸ tried to figure out the understanding of textual hadith in al-Bani which later gave birth to the militant Islamic movement in Indonesia emerging from a literal model of understanding.

Different from that research, this research tried to explore the understanding of moderate Islamic law based on hadith studies gathering which held in several mosques. The reason for choosing the study areas, namely Aceh and West Sumatra, is because both

⁵ Majid et al., "Salafi, Hadith, and Islamic Law: Identity Politics and Wahabi Movement in East Kalimantan"; Saiful Risky, Sholahuddin Al-Fatih, and Mabarroh Azizah, "Political Configuration of Electoral System Law in Indonesia from State Administration Perspective," *Volksgeist: Jurnal Ilmu Hukum dan Konstitusi* 6, no. 1 (2023): 119–30, <https://doi.org/10.24090/volksgeist.v6i1.7940>.

⁶ Rahmin Talib Husain et al., "Happiness Permissibility: Negotiating Hadith on Polygamy as Perfection of Worship in Wahdah Islamiyah Muslim Women," *Al-Ihkam: Jurnal Hukum dan Pranata Sosial* 19, no. 2 (2024): 329–55, <https://doi.org/10.19105/al-lhkam.v19i2.11352>.

⁷ Muhammad Irfan Helmy, Achmad Darajat Jumadil Kubro, and Muhamad Ali, "The Understanding of Islamic Moderation (*Wasatiyyah al-Islam*) and the Hadiths on Inter-Religious Relations in the Javanese Pesantrens," *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies* 11, no. 2 (2021): 377–401, <https://doi.org/10.18326/ijims.v11i2.377-401>; Muntasir et al., "Power Structures and Religious Legitimacy: The Influence of Dayah Ulama in the Politics of Aceh Analyzed Using Powercube Theory," *Jurnal Ilmiah Peuradeun* 13, no. 1 (2025): 437–62, <https://doi.org/10.26811/peuradeun.v13i1.1625>.

⁸ Ahmad Musyafiq, "The Impact of Al-Albānī's Revolutionary Approach To Hadith on Islamic Militancy in Indonesia," *Al-Jami'ah* 61, no. 1 (2023): 81–105, <https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2023.611.81-105>; Issa Babatunde Oba, "The Dynamics of Islamic Marital Jurisprudence in Islamic Courts: The Experience of the Kwara State and Zanzibar," *IJoReSH: Indonesian Journal of Religion, Spirituality, and Humanity* 2, no. 1 (2023): 43–67, <https://doi.org/10.18326/ijores.v2i1.43-67>.

regions have a history of heroism and dynamics between Islamism and nationalism. The struggle between textual and contextual understanding has long occurred in both regions.⁹ It is not impossible that the seeds of textual, rigid and radical understanding will re-emerge as something that threatens the social order if serious efforts are not made. Researchers have three goals based on these issues will be covered in this study. These include: (1) Portraying mosques' contribution to Islamic study gathering; (2) Investigating the subject preference of mass studies in mosques of Aceh and West Sumatra; and (3) Searching for a moderate understanding model of Islamic law and hadith.

Methods

This study uses an empirical legal method analyzed using Weber's social action theory to explore the intensity of study gathering in the mosques, particularly for hadith subjects, and understanding of hadith toward moderate Islamic law, especially in Aceh and West Sumatra.¹⁰ Data collection was carried out by interview methods, observation, and analysis of documents. Interviews were conducted with mosque administrators, preachers, community and religious leaders, and academics. At the same time, document studies refer to journal articles, books, and various documents that support this research.

Result and Discussion

Portraying the Role of Mosques in Islamic Study Gathering

It should be reiterated that since its inception, the mosque has had a central role as a center for Islamic studies in Indonesia, including in the field of hadith studies. The study of hadith gatherings conducted within mosques is closely intertwined with the crucial role played by mosque administrators. Various terminology is employed to designate those responsible for overseeing mosques, including the

⁹ Zulfadli et al., "From Islamic Modernism to Islamic Conservatism: The Case of West Sumatra Provinces, Indonesia," *Cogent Social Sciences* 10, no. 1 (2024): 1-18, <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2024.2406297>.

¹⁰ Fuad Thohari, *Hadis Ahkam: Kajian Hadis-Hadis Hukum Pidana Islam, Hudud, Qishash dan Ta'zir* (Jakarta: Deepublish, 2016); M. Syuhudi Ismail, *Hadis Nabi Yang Tekstual dan Kontekstual: Telaah Ma'anil Hadits tentang Ajaran Islam Yang Universal, Temporal dan Lokal* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1994).

Mosque Prosperity Board (*Badan Kemakmuran Masjid/BKM*), the Mosque Prosperity Council (*Dewan Kesejahteraan Masjid/DKM*), and the mosque manager. However, all of these institutions essentially refer to an organization overseen by the mosque congregation and entrusted with managing the financial well-being of the mosque.

The organization of hadith studies gathering within Indonesian mosques is naturally tied to reasons because motives serve as a catalyst or source of incentive for individuals to engage in a certain action. Experts assert that these impulses might operate either consciously or unconsciously within an individual. These two motivational states serve as the origin of an individual's drive and impetus to fulfill their wants through their activities.¹¹

In Alfred Schutz's phenomenological investigation, motivation beyond an action can be observed from two perspectives: cause motive, which pertains to the reason for the action, and goal motive, which pertains to the intended outcome of the action. Motive is the underlying reason that drives someone to carry out an activity. The actions taken are motivated by past events. Motivation is the desired outcome that an individual aims to obtain via their activities. This activity pertains to a forthcoming period.¹² The significance of the mosque-based hadith study gathering, as derived from the information provided by informants, can be succinctly described in Table 1.

Table 1. Motives of Mosque Administrators for Conducting Hadith Studies Gathering according to Alfred Schutz's Theory

No	Because Motive	In Order to Motive
1	Fulfilling the required task	Execution of mosque administration
2	The economic well-being of the mosque	Dedication to God and society
3	Sustaining established customs	Broadening perspectives on moderate Islam

¹¹ Dedi Gunawan et al., "Implementasi Aplikasi Informasi Kajian Islami di Masjid Nurul Iman," *Jurnal Pengabdian Nasional (JPN) Indonesia* 4, no. 2 (2023): 245–52, <https://doi.org/10.35870/jpni.v4i2.173>.

¹² Alexis Gros, "A Phenomenology of Modernity? Alfred Schutz's Contributions to a Theory of Modern Society," in *The Anthem Companion to Alfred Schutz*, ed. Michael Editor Barber (London: Anthem Press, 2022), 115–136.

No	Because Motive	In Order to Motive
4	Incorporating the congregation's recommendations	Attaining rewards and benevolence
5	Providing room for personal growth and fulfillment	Reinforcement of Islamic law

It can be seen in Table 1 that five points in the 'because motives' exhibit apparent theological, humanist, and traditionalist aspects. The first and second motives are of a theological nature, as they pertain to the belief in an individual's responsibilities towards God. The comprehension of this matter is facilitated by the fact that engaging in mosque-based hadith studies gathering is intricately linked to one's faith in Allah. The humanistic nature of the congregation is evident in the third and fourth motives, as they willingly incorporate the suggestions of the congregation and enhance the enforcement of Islamic law. This purpose is rooted in the sense of accountability for constructing an improved social existence focused on the concept of serving and prioritizing the welfare of fellow individuals. Furthermore, the motive of sustaining tradition exhibits traditional motives. The informant's objective for carrying out the hadith study gathering was to uphold the established traditions of the mosque. Activities that are deemed commendable serve as a catalyst for engaging in these acts. Islam inherently embraces societal customs that are deemed positive and advantageous.

Within the objective theme, there are additionally five more motives that can be observed. They exhibit theological, humanist, and humanitarian motives. The first and final themes in the table possess a humane essence, namely encompassing religious, humanist, and humanistic elements. The evident theological element is a profound dedication to God. Humanism entails the act of serving society. The primary objective of humanism is to serve society, while the secondary objective is to attain personal excellence and self-fulfillment.

Through the examination of mosque administrators as participants as well as organizers in hadith studies gathering, it was discovered that their motivations for engaging in such studies were not solely religious in nature. Although this mosque-based study of hadith gathering has a predominant theological focus, it is not just

driven by religious grounds but also encompasses other reasons as mentioned before. The presence of diverse motivations behind engaging in religious practices can be attributed to a range of human needs. Abraham Maslow proposed a hierarchy of human needs consisting of five levels: physiological needs, the need for security, the need for belonging and affection, the need for esteem, and the need for self-actualization.¹³

In the current context, motivation will not only be in the theological aspect but also in the aspect of the need for esteem, and the need for self-actualization, this can be found humanly even in the realm of mosques. However, when someone has gone through a long process of time, they will slowly move towards a theological-divine motivation.

Subject Preference of Studies Gathering in Mosques of Aceh and West Sumatra

Understanding Islamic law gives birth to two different poles, namely textual and contextual. Textual understanding can lead to sectarianism, exclusivism, and disbelief outside of one's group. Likewise, understanding hadith also gives birth to two typologies: First, the textualist group, focuses on understanding the Prophet's hadith without appreciating the historical process that gave birth to it. This group is primarily interested in the external meaning of the text. In this situation, the emphasis of the hadith text is only on the linguistic components.¹⁴ The second typology is contextual understanding, namely understanding that prioritizes the principles of moderation, and tolerance and can accommodate customary law practices that develop in society in Indonesia. Contextual understanding is usually called Islam *Waṣaṭiyyah* which is widely developed by Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah circles.¹⁵

¹³ Abraham H. Maslow, *Motivation and Personality* (New York City: Harper and Brothers Publisher, 1954).

¹⁴ Zunly Nadia Nadia, "Perilaku Keagamaan Komunitas Muslim (Pemahaman Hadis dalam NU dan Salafi Wahabi di Indonesia)," *Jurnal Living Hadis* 2, no. 2 (2018): 141, <https://doi.org/10.14421/livinghadis.2017.1327>; Hazar Kusmayanti et al., "Judges' Acceptance of Sharia-Inspired Laws in Indonesia," *Al-Manahij: Jurnal Kajian Hukum Islam* 17, no. 2 (2023): 199-214, <https://doi.org/10.24090/mnh.v17i2.7716>.

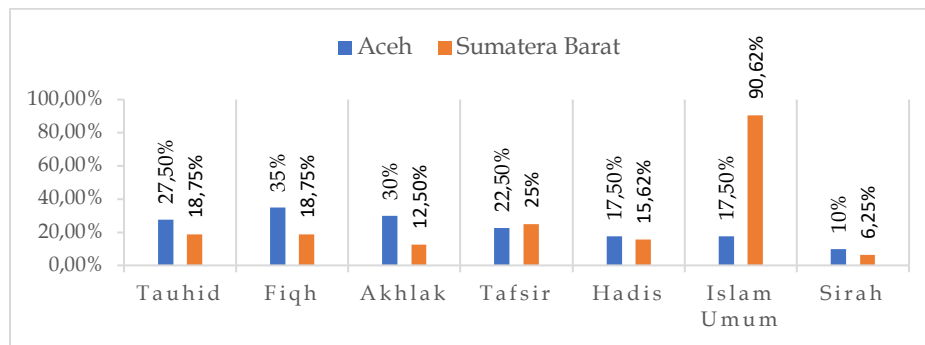
¹⁵ Zuly Qodir, Haedar Nashir, and Robert W. Hefner, "Muhammadiyah Making Indonesia's Islamic Moderation Based on *Maqāsid Shari'ah*," *Ijtihad: Jurnal Wacana Hukum Islam dan Kemanusiaan* 23, no. 1 (2023): 77-92,

This moderate group is very influential in Indonesia because the NU and Muhammadiyah organizations are the organizations that are most widely followed by the community.

In line with that, according to Kamil, a textual understanding of Islamic law will lead to fundamentalism as understood by followers of *salafi jihadists* such as Sayyid Qutb and Abdullah Azzam. Their works or writings turned out to influence the religious understanding of Bali I Bombing perpetrators, especially Imam Samudra, who was a follower of *Jama'ah Ansharu Tawhīd* (JAT) led by Abu Bakar Baashir. Therefore, to combat this kind of textual understanding of religion, a deradicalization approach is needed by providing a contextual understanding of Islamic law, not just law and military.¹⁶

In Aceh and West Sumatra, with 40 mosques as the research samples, it was found that the level of intensity and focus of hadith studies is quite low. Specifically, the percentage value is 17.50% in Aceh Province and 15.62% in West Sumatra as can be seen in Figure 1.

Figure 1. The intensity of studies (by subject) conducted in mosques in Aceh and West Sumatra



Sources: Analyzed from interview data and document analysis

<https://doi.org/10.18326/IJTIHAD.V23I1.77-92>; Ahmad Faisal et al., "Strengthening Religious Moderatism Through the Traditional Authority of Kiai in Indonesia," *Cogent Social Sciences* 8, no. 1 (2022), <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2022.2150450>.

¹⁶ Sukron Kamil, "Terrorism and Religion in Indonesia: A Comparative Study of the Two Literary Works," in *International Conference on Culture and Language in Southeast Asia (ICCLAS)*, vol. 154 (Atlantis Press, 2018), 93-97, <https://doi.org/10.2991/icclas-17.2018.23>.

Figure 1 reveals that a limited number of mosques engage in the study of hadith. Out of the total of 40 mosques in Aceh, only 7 mosques conduct hadith studies. Similarly, in West Sumatra, there are 6 mosques that engage in hadith studies. This indicates that hadith studies in mosque forums are quite rarely held, implying that people's understanding on both Islam and its law rarely comes from hadith studies gathering. Therefore, the hadith plays an important role in formulating Islamic law as the second main source for Islamic teaching. By understanding hadith as the 'raw material' of the law, people can figure out a specific law more wisely.

The limited engagement in mosque-based hadith studies can be attributed to various factors. *Firstly*, financial constraints faced by mosques in funding the organization of hadith studies gathering. According to an informant:

"...If multiple areas of Islamic studies were conducted within the mosque, the management would struggle to finance them, as other essential needs of the mosque must also be met..."¹⁷

This financial limitation has been acknowledged by previous researchers as well.¹⁸ Mosques situated in housing complexes and on the outskirts of urban areas tend to experience these financial constraints, whereas those located in urban areas do not encounter this issue. However, this financial challenge can be addressed by managing the field of Islamic studies on a rotational basis, as reported by several informants who are involved in overseeing mosque-based Islamic studies.

Secondly, the level of congregational attendance. The low level of congregational attendance at the mosque is one of the factors beyond the declining popularity of mosque-based hadith studies gathering. The study is considered a segmented one for those who understand Arabic or Islamic teaching in depth. It is even found that Islamic studies are no longer carried out in a few mosques. The local

¹⁷ DM, *Interview*, Banda Aceh, July 21, 2023.

¹⁸ Anang Walian, "Optimalisasi Pengajian Rutin Masjid Al-Aqobah 7 Palembang Sebagai Upaya Pemberdayaan Masyarakat," *Yonetim: Jurnal Manajemen Dakwah* 4, no. 1 (2021): 18–39, <https://doi.org/10.19109/yonetim.v4i1.9144>.

community is less interested in participating in the activities. The lack of interest of the congregation to attend this assembly is due to the lack of awareness and self-confidence in studying the subjects, in addition to a variety of occupations thus making their time outside work limited.¹⁹

Thirdly, less priority on hadith studies. Mosque staff tend to consider hadith study gathering as less important compared to other subjects, namely three main branches of Islamic teaching: monotheism (*tawhīd*), *fiqh* (jurisprudence), and morals (*akhlāq*). The Mosque Prosperity Board (BKM) prioritizes the three areas of consideration monotheism as the foundation of a Muslim's religious life, *fiqh* contains practical rules, while *akhlāq* consisting of pragmatic daily tasks and ethical principles that provide guidance on appropriate behavior in everyday situations. Of these three components, the study of *fiqh* is the most prominent, followed by the study of *tawhid* and then the study of *akhlāq*.

Fourthly, some mosque administrators hold the belief that the examination of the two primary sources of Islamic law, namely the Al-Qur'an and the hadith, should be limited to the *ulama*, rather than being accessible to the general public. This is very clear in the following excerpt;

“...The authority to provide an opinion based on the main sources of Islamic law, namely the Qur'an and Hadith, may only be carried out by scholars who have the capacity for religious knowledge, not by the general public.”²⁰

This view implies a common belief that the two main sources of Islamic teachings, the Qur'an and the hadith, as very difficult to understand.²¹ Therefore, here lies the urgency of the importance of

¹⁹ Rika Malia Panjaitan and Maulana Andi Surya, “Manajemen Majelis Taklim dalam Meningkatkan Minat Perempuan Mengikuti Pengajian Rutin di Hawariyyun Community Rantau Prapat, Labuhanbatu,” *JRMDK: Jurnal Riset Mahasiswa Dakwah dan Komonikasi* 6, no. 1 (2024): 54–65, <https://doi.org/10.24014/jrmdk.v6i1.29458>.

²⁰ AM, Interview, Banda Aceh, July 17, 2023.

²¹ Sulfan Wandi Sulfan Wandi, “Eksistensi 'Urf dan Adat Kebiasaan Sebagai Dalil Fiqh,” *Samarah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga dan Hukum Islam* 2, no. 1 (2018): 181, <https://doi.org/10.22373/sjhk.v2i1.3111>.

hadith study gathering in mosques with a contextual understanding in order to give rise to a moderate understanding of Islamic law namely by explaining to the public the meaning of hadith contextually by explaining it using relevant sciences, such as *fiqh al-ḥadīṣ*, *asbāb al-wurūd al-ḥadīṣ*, and others using easy-to-understand delivery.

Achieving a Moderate Understanding of Islamic Law and Hadith

The characteristics of moderate Islamic law are born from a moderate understanding of the Qur'an and hadith.²² Regarding the resuscitation of flexible and moderate Islamic law, it is intriguing to consider the motivation behind enhancing understanding of the second source of Islamic teachings, namely hadith. The study of hadith gathering in the mosque turns out to have furnished audiences with novel insights. An informant reported:

“...In multiple hadith study gatherings, so far, we have found information that was not previously heard. The preachers do not interpret the hadith textually but there are also other perspectives explained from various views of scholars...”²³

The informant's statement shows how congregation members are enthusiastic to find out that hadith as the second source of Islamic teaching has another side other than the textual approach understanding they knew before. Another excerpt even reveals how a more comprehensive understanding of hadith can lead to broader insight closer to the truth. An informant told the story as follows;

“...There is a widespread belief that if a child memorizes the Qur'an, it brings honor and recognition to both parents. However, after studying the hadith, I finally realized that simply memorizing the Qur'an is not

²² Ardiansyah; Ahmad Zayyadi, “Dinamika Modernisasi Hukum Islam: Tinjauan Historis dalam Pembacaan Mazhab Sociological Jurisprudence,” *Al-Manahij: Jurnal Kajian Hukum Islam* 14, no. 1 (2020): 99–112, <https://doi.org/10.24090/mnh.v14i1.1800>.

²³ KK, *Interview*, Banda Aceh, July 22, 2023.

enough; the child also needs to practice the teachings of the Qur'an..."²⁴

The informant's statement revealed that new information was obtained through the study of hadith within the mosque. It furthermore shows how gaining new more valid information related to a problem happens in a discussion using a thematic approach by comparing the opinions of scholars used in the study of hadith. Thematic hadith studies involve collecting a large number of hadiths related to a particular problem and analyzing the relationships and similarities between one another before delivering it in the simple matter to the audiences so that they can grasp the meaning more easily. For example, a specific theme is explained in the books of al-Bukhari and Muslim followed by a question-and-answer session so that the congregation can ask anything when they have something they wonder about.

In a more general scope, the presence of this hadith study gathering is counted as an opportunity to establish a closer relationship with the teachings of the Prophet. An informant explained that:

"...The hadith contains many examples and customs of the Prophet Muhammad's behavior, including his role as a prophet, husband, leader, and a mature person. These examples are truly valuable and must be shared with society. We follow the Prophet's behavior by studying his hadith to imitate and follow his exemplary actions..."

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However, what is still a challenge today is when the teachings are delivered by preachers and teachers who tend to narrow down the comprehensive teachings of Islam into a certain version, with the aim of simplifying the learning process for the audience. For example, there are preachers who say that there is no legal basis for reading *al-Fātiḥah* after prayer, even though the scholars have agreed that it is *sunnah* because it is part of *dhikr*.

²⁴ TM, *Interview*, Banda Aceh, July 13, 2023.

²⁵ MS, *Interview*, Banda Aceh, July 25, 2023

The last quoted excerpt indicates how hadith studies gathering have actually big potential to influence people's mindset and behavior, a part of few numbers of mosques organizing the study. Therefore, some parts of Prophet's habits need to get more attention such as respecting differences, whether in tribe, nation, language, as well as religion. The Medina Charter agreed upon by the Prophet Muhammad PBUH together with the Jews and Christians is part of the *sunnah* that Muslims need to know and reflect.²⁶ Moreover, Prophet PBUH also respects the Jews in many narrations, such as in a story narrated by Bukhari.²⁷

A sample of moderate and contextual hadiths deserves to be conveyed to the community. This can lead them to a diverse and multi-perspective understanding instead of one and singular one in dealing with multicultural situations. This is where the importance of moderation or *wasatīyyah* approach in hadiths and Islamic studies in general lies.²⁸ In its turn, moderate understanding will then be applied to social actions and the world of reality with moderate and *tasāmuḥ* (tolerance) nuances will appear.

In addition to prioritizing contextual hadith with easy-to-understand delivery, the selection of used references or curricula of the study is particularly necessary. Moreover, the study of hadith gathering is still very rare to find at the research location, so the existence of a few needs to get much attention because it will influence how people understand Islamic teaching in general or hadith in particular. In other words, the thoughts, scholars, and books studied will greatly influence a person's understanding and social actions. In the context of science, the source where one

²⁶ Mursyid Djawas et al., "The Position of Non-Muslims in the Implementation of Islamic Law in Aceh, Indonesia," *Ahkam: Jurnal Ilmu Syariah* 23, no. 1 (2023): 95-120, <https://doi.org/10.15408/ajis.v23i1.32127>; Kharisatul Janah, Siti Fatimah, and Hajar Salamah Salsabila Hariz, "The Role of Aceh Local Parties in the 2024 General Election in Realizing Democratization," *Volksgeist: Jurnal Ilmu Hukum dan Konstitusi* 6, no. 1 (2023): 33-47, <https://doi.org/10.24090/volksgeist.v6i1.7532>.

²⁷ Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Ismail Al-Bukhari, *Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī* (Bairut: Dar Ibnu Kathir li al-Tibā'ah wa al-Tauzī', 2002).

²⁸ Ardiansyah, "Islam Wasatīyah dalam Perspektif Hadis: Dari Konsep Menuju Aplikasi," *Mutawatir: Jurnal Keilmuan Tafsir Hadis* 6, no. 2 (2018): 232-56, <https://doi.org/10.15642/mutawatir.2016.6.2.232-256>.

studies is called *sanad* or genealogy of science.²⁹ In this context, works of *ahlu sunnah wa al-jamā'ah* scholars in the archipelago, such as the works of Imam al-Ghazali, Imam Nawawi, Abdurrauf al-Singkili, Nawawi al-Bantani, and Abdul Samad al-Palembangi deserve for consideration to prioritize among others.³⁰ They are known as moderate scholars with moderate thought and works as well.

In line with that, the findings of this study indicate that the community believes that studying the Prophet's hadith can promote a moderate application of Islamic law. By referring back to the source of Islamic teachings, namely the hadith, one can realize that there is indeed diversity in religious teachings in certain cases. Therefore, herein lies the importance of providing a moderate and contextual understanding of hadith, so that people do not get trapped in a textual understanding which can cause conflict in religious and social life.³¹

An informant expressed another good comment about the study of hadith gathering, namely that it highlights the diversity and adaptability of Islamic teachings as the following excerpt indicates:

“...The hadith study gathering offers a broader understanding of Islam. We can know, for instance, there is a scholar who explains the meaning of Islamic law comprehensively and without blaming others or claiming the truth so that society will be educated to understand and accept the differences...”³²

Likewise, SA tried to emphasize TM's argument by stating as follow:

²⁹ Ahmad Musyafiq, *The Impact of Al-Albānī's Revolutionary Approach to Hadith*. Arrazy Hasyim, *Teologi Islam Puritan: Geneologi dan Ajaran Sufi* (Jakarta: Maktabah Darussunnah, 2019).

³⁰ Jajat Burhanudin, “Two Islamic Writing Traditions in Southeast Asia: Kitab Jawi and Kitab Kuning with Reference to the Works of Da'ud Al-Fatani and Nawawi al-Bantani,” *Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies* 60, no. 1 (2022): 1–28, <https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2022.601.1-28>.

³¹ Jafar and Fitria, “Understanding Multiple Interpretations on the Hadith that Husbands Allow Wives to Have Outdoor Activities: A Study of Islamic Law Perspectives.”

³² TM, *Interview*, Banda Aceh, July 13, 2023.

“...There are many new insights we can gain from the hadith study gathering. It can open our eyes to the fact that scholars use various arguments and explanations to explain meaning beyond hadith according to their own interpretations and perspective...”³³

The whole excerpts suggest how hadith study gathering can give new and broader perspectives to the audiences. This perspective, which turns into understanding, will shape how they behave in real life. This is in line with Weber's theoretical framework that a person's understanding will influence social actions rationally. Social action itself, based on its motives, is divided into four categories: conventional actions, emotional actions, instrumental rational actions, and value rational actions. This theory of social action provides a framework for understanding various types of behavior. Hadith study gathering in the mosque has explicit goals based on its social context and involves anticipated outcomes to achieve through a particular action.

The need to enhance understanding of hadith as a secondary source of Islamic teachings arises from the fact that not all Islamic communities possess sufficient knowledge about hadith due to limited educational opportunities. Similarly, the reinforcement of Islamic law is rooted in the public's belief that its implementation has been inadequate with numerous neglected issues that have contributed to a bad perception of the law. In order to accomplish this objective, the establishment of mosque-based hadith studies gathering is regarded as a means to expand individuals' understanding of the second source of Islamic teachings and enhance the enforcement of Islamic law in Aceh and West Sumatra Province.

Another thing as a challenge today is the fact that Islamic teachings are sometimes delivered in a narrow perspective that it limits the comprehensive teachings of Islam to a certain version, with the aim of simplifying the learning process for the audience. For example, some preachers say that there is no legal basis for reading *al-Fātiḥah* after prayer, even though the scholars have agreed that it is

³³SA, *Interview*, Banda Aceh, July 22, 2023.

sunnah because it is part of *dhikr*. Therefore, efforts need to be encouraged and supported so that contextual understanding of hadith can be implemented by preachers and mosque administrators so that moderate Islamic sharia values bring wider benefits to society.

Likewise, preachers and mosque administrators need to have insight into nationalism and tolerance, so that in delivering study gathering materials, they emphasize values of moderation while avoiding elaborating *khilāfiyyah* problems exaggeratedly. To manifest this, mosque administrators must also be selective in having preachers they will let talk at the forum so that the message conveyed does not cause controversy and conflict in society. This becomes a must considering that contextual understanding³⁴ of hadith, Islamic law, or Islamic teaching in general will give birth to moderate and tolerant religious life in the midst of life with an attitude of respect, giving benefits, safety, and peace while preventing danger, damage, and even hatred.

Conclusion

This study found that understanding of Islamic law is partly influenced by understanding of hadith. Understanding of hadith itself, meanwhile, consists of two typologies, namely textual and contextual. The characteristics of textual understanding are relying merely on how a hadith reads which gives rise to sectarian and radical understanding, while contextual gives rise to a moderate and inclusive understanding because it considers many factors beyond the text, namely context of the past and nowadays context. Unfortunately, the study of mosque-based hadith gathering is still low in frequency and intensity, while the existing few still need enforcement so that it might lead to the mainstreaming of moderate understanding of Islamic teaching, hadith, and Islamic law in particular. This is mainly because, as in Weber's perspective, a person's social actions will be influenced by the understanding that is considered correct, which will then become a religious practice. For that, an effort to socialize a moderate understanding of Islamic law through hadith study-gathering becomes very important. If a moderate understanding of Islamic law emerges, it will then lead to creating harmony and

³⁴ Ismail, *Hadis Nabi Yang Tekstual dan Kontekstual: Telaah Ma'anil Hadits tentang Ajaran Islam Yang Universal, Temporal dan Lokal*.

tranquility in society. This article is still limited in portraying local Islamic study centers such as *meunasah* (a local term for a place of prayer) in Aceh and *Surau* (a local term for a place of prayer) in West Sumatra. Therefore, the focus of future research can be carried out in other areas to get a broader picture of how Islamic law is understood within society.

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