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Patterns of Hadith Interpretation in Sufism and Islamic Jurisprudence Literature: a Study on the Value of Religious Moderation

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Abstract

This study examines the interpretative patterns of hadith within Sufi and juristic (fiqh) literature in relation to the values of religious moderation. The diversity of approaches in understanding hadith reflects different epistemological orientations which, if not integrated, may lead to partial interpretations. This research aims to analyze how hadiths are interpreted within Sufi and fiqh traditions and how these interpretations contribute to the construction of moderation values in Islam. This study is a qualitative library research employing a hermeneutical approach, particularly the double movement theory of Fazlur Rahman, to connect textual meaning with contemporary context. The data are derived from classical and contemporary Sufi and fiqh literature, focusing on the use and interpretation of hadith within these works. The findings show that differences in hadith interpretation between Sufi and fiqh traditions are not rooted in the substance of the teachings but in their methodological orientations. Sufi literature tends to interpret hadith in an ethical, symbolic, and reflective manner emphasizing inner transformation, while fiqh literature approaches hadith in a normative, systematic, and applicative framework focusing on legal and social order. However, these differences are not contradictory but complementary in representing the concept of religious moderation. This study further finds that moderation in hadith is a multidimensional construct formed through the integration of internal spiritual values and external normative principles. Therefore, an integrative approach that combines Sufi and fiqh perspectives is essential to achieve a comprehensive understanding of religious moderation in contemporary Islamic thought.

Keywords: Hadith Interpretation, Sufism, Fiqh, Religious Moderation, Hermeneutics

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji pola interpretasi hadis dalam literatur tasawuf dan fikih dalam kaitannya dengan nilai-nilai moderasi beragama. Keberagaman pendekatan dalam memahami hadis mencerminkan perbedaan orientasi epistemologis yang, jika tidak diintegrasikan, dapat menghasilkan pemahaman yang parsial. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis bagaimana hadis diinterpretasikan dalam tradisi tasawuf dan fikih



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serta bagaimana interpretasi tersebut berkontribusi terhadap konstruksi nilai moderasi dalam Islam. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kualitatif berbasis studi kepustakaan dengan menggunakan pendekatan hermeneutika, khususnya teori *double movement* dari Fazlur Rahman, untuk menghubungkan makna tekstual dengan konteks kontemporer. Data diperoleh dari literatur tasawuf dan fikih klasik maupun kontemporer dengan fokus pada penggunaan dan interpretasi hadis dalam karya-karya tersebut. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa perbedaan interpretasi hadis antara tradisi tasawuf dan fikih tidak terletak pada substansi ajarannya, melainkan pada orientasi metodologisnya. Literatur tasawuf cenderung menafsirkan hadis secara etis, simbolik, dan reflektif dengan menekankan transformasi batin, sementara literatur fikih memandang hadis secara normatif, sistematis, dan aplikatif dengan fokus pada aspek hukum dan keteraturan sosial. Perbedaan tersebut bukan bersifat kontradiktif, melainkan saling melengkapi dalam merepresentasikan konsep moderasi beragama. Penelitian ini juga menemukan bahwa moderasi dalam hadis merupakan konstruksi multidimensional yang terbentuk melalui integrasi antara nilai spiritual internal dan prinsip normatif eksternal. Oleh karena itu, pendekatan integratif yang menggabungkan perspektif tasawuf dan fikih menjadi penting untuk menghasilkan pemahaman moderasi beragama yang komprehensif dalam pemikiran Islam kontemporer.

Kata Kunci: Interpretasi Hadis, Tasawuf, Fikih, Moderasi Beragama, Hermeneutika

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INTRODUCTION

The Hadith, as the second source after the Qur'an, plays a fundamental role in shaping the behavior and way of life of Muslims. According to Yusuf al-Qardawi, "The Sharia enshrined in the Qur'an and Sunnah are the two pillars of the community's strength," reflecting just how integral the role of the Hadith is in realizing a holistic way of life, where moral values, ethics, and practical rules serve as daily guidelines (al-Qardawi 2000, 45). Hadith not only guide religious practices or legal systems but also serve as the foundation for character development and social norms that touch every aspect of life (Malik 1987, 67) ¹.

The development of contemporary Islamic thought seeks to present Islamic teachings that are flexible, adaptable to the times, and relevant to modern challenges, without sacrificing existing values². A technical-rational approach to hadith emphasizes the practical application of sharia in real-life contexts, while

¹ Ahmad Hasan Ridwan, "Reaktualisasi Sunnah dalam Pemikiran Yusuf al-Qaradawi", *Jurnal Studi Hadis*, Vol. 7 No. 1, 2021, p. 45.

² Siti Nurjanah, "Peran Hadis dalam Pembentukan Karakter Sosial Muslim Kontemporer", *Jurnal Living Hadis*, Vol. 5 No. 2, 2020, p. 67.

preserving the spiritual and moral essence underpinning it. This means that interpretations of hadith texts should not merely be tailored to personal desires or interests but must be grounded in rigorous, contextual scholarly methods³.

Among Islamic scholars and thinkers, particularly since the 19th century, various criticisms and skepticism regarding the hadith have emerged. Modernist thought, pioneered by figures such as Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan and later elaborated by Parwez, criticizing hadiths through a radical textual criticism approach⁴. They argue that a number of hadiths contain anthropomorphic elements or values that, in their view, are no longer relevant in a modern context and are even said to be incompatible with the dynamics of contemporary life. These critiques are disseminated through various media, including books, journals, seminars, and digital platforms, which have subsequently sparked intense debates among Islamic scholars and practitioners⁵

Nevertheless, the majority of Muslims, particularly in Indonesia, continue to recognize the status of hadith as a vital source in Islam. Since the era of renewal in the mid-17th century, cosmopolitan scholars residing in Mecca and Medina have intensively developed hadith studies. This study not only enriches the legal framework of fiqh, which emphasizes the rules of worship and social interaction⁶, but also underpins the discourse of Sufism, which prioritizes spiritual experience and inner purification. Although the two schools of thought appear distinct, both rely on hadith literature that underpins practices and the values of moderation in religious life⁷.

Contradictions and interpretive dynamics between hadith texts in works of fiqh and tasawwuf often give rise to debate. For example, the procedures for wudhu in fiqh are regulated in detail and systematically in their outward aspects⁸, whereas in tasawwuf, the ritual significance of wudhu is interpreted as an effort to purify the inner self and draw closer to God. This difference often creates the impression that the two disciplines follow separate paths, even though they have the potential to

³ Muhammad Iqbal, "Neo-Modernisme Islam dan Relevansinya di Era Digital", *Al-Jami'ah*, Vol. 58 No. 2, 2020, p. 121.

⁴ Ahmad Fauzi, "Metodologi Pemahaman Hadis Kontekstual di Era Modern", *Jurnal Ushuluddin*, Vol. 28 No. 1, 2021, p. 89.

⁵ Saifuddin Zuhri, "Kritik Hadis dalam Pemikiran Modernis: Studi atas Parwez", *Jurnal Ilmu Hadis*, Vol. 3 No. 2, 2022, p. 142.

⁶ Dedi Wahyudi, "Kontestasi Otoritas Hadis di Era Digital", *Jurnal Komunikasi Islam*, Vol. 10 No. 1, 2023, p. 58.

⁷ Rizal Mubit, "Integrasi Tasawuf dan Syariah dalam Perspektif Kontemporer", *Jurnal Tasawuf dan Pemikiran Islam*, Vol. 9 No. 1, 2021, p. 67.

⁸ Ahmad Syukri, "Reinterpretasi Fikih Klasik dalam Konteks Modern", *Jurnal Fikih*, Vol. 6 No. 2, 2020, p. 112.

complement one another in realizing the concept of religious moderation⁹.

This situation prompted the author to formulate a more in-depth study, with the hope of identifying and unifying a conceptual framework of moderation in hadith interpretation. This study aims to explore how hadith literature in Sufi texts and fiqh texts can be bridged through an approach that emphasizes moderate, inclusive, and practical values¹⁰. Thus, it is hoped that an integrative understanding can be created, which not only reduces the gap between fiqh and Sufi interpretations but also makes a significant contribution to the renewal of Islamic thought in the modern era¹¹.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study is qualitative in nature and employs a comparative approach; several preliminary hypotheses can be proposed to guide the analysis, including:

- a. There are fundamental similarities in the values of moderation expressed in the hadith, even though the two disciplines (Sufism and fiqh) employ different interpretive methodologies. If these fundamental similarities exist, then the potential for integrating moderate thought can be designed through an integrative conceptual model.
- b. Differences in interpretive methodologies between tasawwuf and fiqh result in shifts in the practical application of moderation, thereby posing challenges to the consistency of values in society. Based on this hypothesis, the study will identify potential unresolved inconsistencies, which will serve as the foundation for developing an integration model.

The proposed research model will proceed in two main phases:

- a. Comparative Textual Analysis: Analyzing classical and contemporary literature on hadith interpretation from Sufi and fiqh texts to identify categories and methods of hadith selection and interpretation.
- b. Conceptual Synthesis: Based on the findings of the analysis, formulating a conceptual framework that integrates both approaches into a single model supporting the application of Islamic moderation values.

Theoretical Contribution: If the hypothesis is proven, this study will provide a stronger theoretical foundation regarding the intersection between spiritual

⁹ Lalu Turjiman Ahmad, "Moderasi Beragama dalam Perspektif Barat dan Islam", *Jurnal Holistik al-Hadis*, Vol. 7 No. 1, 2021, p. 54.

¹⁰ Fajar Ramadhan, "Islam Progresif dan Tantangan Globalisasi", *Jurnal Pemikiran Islam*, Vol. 12 No. 2, 2022, p. 65.

¹¹ Hasyim Asy'ari, "Transformasi Pemikiran Islam Kontemporer", *Jurnal Studi Islam*, Vol. 15 No. 1, 2023, p. 47.

deepening (tasawwuf) and the normative approach (fiqh) in understanding hadith. Conversely, if the hypothesis is not proven for example, if the methodological differences are too great to bridge the study will still contribute by mapping out existing interpretive limitations and gaps. These findings can serve as the basis for formulating a new, more realistic framework for integrating these two approaches.

Practical Contributions: The research findings are expected to provide guidance for religious leaders, educators, and policymakers in formulating strategies for teaching and inter-Islamic dialogue. For instance, by providing a foundation for scholars and academics to bridge differences in approaches within the discourse on Islamic moderation and to encourage constructive dialogue between traditional and modernist circles to seek practical solutions in the adaptive application of sharia while remaining grounded in fundamental values.

Data Collection: This study employs a qualitative approach using literature review and text analysis methods¹². The data collected comes from two types of sources: primary and secondary:

Primary Sources: Primary data was taken directly from classical texts that serve as primary references in the fields of Sufism and fiqh (Ihya' Ulum al-Din by Imam al-Ghazali, Risalah al-Qushayriyyah by al-Qushayri, Al-Muwatta' by Imam Malik, Al-Umm by Imam Shafi'i, and Bidayat al-Mujtahid wa Nihayat al-Muqtasid by Ibn Rushd. The selection of these texts is based on their reputation within the classical Islamic scholarly tradition, which provides the foundation for the understanding and interpretation of hadith in both disciplines¹³. This primary data will be obtained by accessing libraries of classical texts and academic digital repositories that house manuscripts and verified publications.

Secondary Sources: Secondary data includes academic journals, books, and scholarly articles discussing comparative studies of hadith interpretation, as well as previous studies related to the discourse on moderation within the contexts of fiqh and tasawwuf. These secondary sources serve to situate the results of the primary data analysis within the framework of contemporary Islamic discourse¹⁴.

Data Analysis Method: The collected data will be analyzed qualitatively using content analysis and comparative analysis through steps such as Coding and Categorization: Developing categories based on the classification of hadith selection

¹² M. Arif Hidayat, "Pendekatan Kualitatif dalam Studi Islam Kontemporer", *Jurnal Studi Agama*, Vol. 9 No. 1, 2021, p. 112.

¹³ Ahmad Rofiq, "Otoritas Kitab Klasik dalam Studi Hadis dan Fikih Kontemporer", *Jurnal Ilmu Hadis*, Vol. 5 No. 2, 2022, p. 77.

¹⁴ Lilis Sa'adah, "Moderasi Islam dalam Perspektif Kontemporer", *Jurnal Pemikiran Islam*, Vol. 13 No. 1, 2023, p. 67; lihat juga Nur Kholis, "Maqashid al-Shariah dan Relevansinya di Era Modern", *Jurnal Hukum Islam*, Vol. 21 No. 2, 2022, p. 59.

and interpretation methodologies, such as extraction techniques, application contexts, and the emphasis on moderation¹⁵. Each text from the books on Sufism and fiqh will be coded according to established criteria. Comparative Analysis: Comparing coding results between Sufi and fiqh literature to evaluate similarities, differences, and interpretive gaps regarding the application of the value of moderation.

A literature review and comparative analysis approach was chosen because primary data in the form of classical texts provides a strong historical and theoretical foundation. In-depth text analysis allows for a systematic unpacking of the nuances of hadith interpretation. This method directly addresses the research objective of integrating the value of moderation from both perspectives (Sufism and fiqh), and provides results applicable to contemporary Islamic understanding¹⁶.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study reveals a general trend in the interpretive patterns of hadith between the Sufi and fiqh traditions, particularly in understanding the concept of moderation (*wasatiyyah*). Based on an examination of representative literature from both disciplines, it appears that the differences that emerge do not primarily lie in the substance of the hadith's teachings, but rather in the approach and orientation of their interpretation. Sufi texts tend to direct the interpretation of hadith toward an inner dimension that is reflective and ethical, while fiqh texts emphasize the outward, normative, and practical aspects. However, this difference in orientation does not necessarily indicate a contradiction; rather, it points to the existence of two complementary epistemological frameworks in representing the teachings of moderation in Islam.

Furthermore, this analysis indicates that the concept of moderation in the hadith is not monolithic but rather multifaceted, depending on the contextual approach employed. In the Sufi tradition, moderation tends to be understood as an effort to maintain a balance between the spiritual dimension and worldly inclinations, thereby fostering a more inward-looking and transformative religious orientation¹⁷. Conversely, in the fiqh tradition, moderation is manifested in the form of legal principles of ease and public interest aimed at maintaining social order without neglecting flexibility in their application¹⁸. Thus, while both approaches stem from the same source, they move in different directions of articulation.

¹⁵ Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif* (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2022), p. 145.

¹⁶ Asep Saepudin Jahar, "Pendekatan Interdisipliner dalam Studi Islam Kontemporer", *Studia Islamika*, Vol. 30 No. 1, 2023, p. 88.

¹⁷ Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din* (Istanbul: Tughra Books, 1988), p. 45.

¹⁸ Muhammad ibn Idris al-Shafi'i, *Al-Umm* (Cairo: Al-Azhar Press, 1992), p. 89.

This finding further reinforces the assumption that the difference between Sufism and fiqh in interpreting hadith is more accurately characterized as a methodological difference rather than a theological one. In this context, as emphasized by Fazlur Rahman, the primary problem in modern Islamic thought often lies in the failure to integrate the normative and moral dimensions into a coherent framework¹⁹. Therefore, an interpretation of hadith that relies solely on one approach risks producing a partial understanding, whether in the form of legal formalism or a spiritualism detached from its normative structure.

Within this framework, further examination of Sufi literature reveals that the interpretation of hadith is directed not only toward normative aspects but also toward the dimension of spiritual consciousness-formation. In **Ihya' Ulum al-Din**, for example, hadiths regarding worship are not merely understood as formal obligations, but as a means to achieve the purification of the soul (*tazkiyat al-nafs*) and an existential closeness to God²⁰. This emphasis demonstrates that in the Sufi tradition, moderation is not articulated in the form of rigid rules, but as an inner balance that prevents humans from adopting excessive attitudes, whether in worldly inclinations or in extreme religious practices.

A similar trend is also evident in the *Risalah al-Qushayriyyah*, which positions the hadith as the foundation for the legitimacy of spiritual experience, as well as an ethical guide on the Sufi path²¹. In this context, moderation pertains not only to outward actions but also to the management of inner states such as intention, sincerity, and self-control. Thus, the Sufi approach offers a more symbolic and contextual reading of hadith, in which the meaning of the text is expanded to encompass the internal dimensions of the human being.

Conversely, in the fiqh tradition, hadith is positioned within a more systematic framework as a source of law that regulates human behavior in concrete terms. In *Al-Umm*, Imam al-Shafi'i emphasizes the importance of adhering to authentic hadith as the basis for legal rulings, while simultaneously developing a methodology of legal deduction (*istinbat*) that allows for flexibility under certain conditions²². This demonstrates that moderation in fiqh is not articulated through inner experience, but rather through legal principles that provide ease and avoid undue hardship.

Furthermore, in *Bidayat al-Mujtahid*, Ibn Rushd demonstrates how differing interpretations of hadith among jurists actually create space for a diversity of

¹⁹ Fazlur Rahman, *Islam and Modernity: Transformation of an Islamic Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), p. 121.

²⁰ Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, *Ihya' Ulum al-Din* (Istanbul: Tughra Books, 1988), p. 45.

²¹ Abu al-Qasim al-Qushayri, *Al-Risalah al-Qushayriyyah* (Cairo: Dar al-Kutub, 1996), p. 67.

²² Muhammad ibn Idris al-Shafi'i, *Al-Umm* (Cairo: Al-Azhar Press, 1992), p. 89

opinions that remain within the bounds of sharia²³. In this context, moderation is reflected in Islamic law's ability to accommodate differences without compromising its fundamental principles. Thus, the fiqh approach presents moderation as a normative mechanism that maintains a balance between the rigor of the law and dynamic social needs.

When these two tendencies are examined comparatively, it becomes evident that tasawwuf and fiqh move in two distinct yet complementary directions. Tasawwuf emphasizes the deepening of meaning, while fiqh emphasizes the application of rules. This difference not only indicates a variation in approach but also reveals that the hadith, as a source of teachings, has the capacity to be articulated across multiple dimensions simultaneously. In this regard, moderation cannot be reduced to merely legal or spiritual aspects alone but must be understood as a synthesis of both.

Epistemological Differences in the Interpretation of Hadith

The differences in interpretive patterns between the Sufi and fiqh traditions in understanding hadith, as previously outlined, are not only related to variations in interpretive methods but are also rooted in the epistemological frameworks underpinning each discipline. In this context, hadith is not positioned uniformly but is interpreted according to different scholarly orientations. The Sufi tradition tends to view hadith as a medium for the formation of spiritual consciousness, while the fiqh tradition positions it as a normative foundation for formulating rules of life. This difference in orientation explains why a single hadith text can yield diverse articulations of meaning without necessarily being understood as contradictory.

In the Sufi tradition, the interpretation of hadith has evolved within the framework of inner experience, emphasizing ethical dimensions and self-transformation. Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, in *Ihya' Ulum al-Din*, asserts that worship serves not only as a formal obligation but also as a means of purifying the soul (tazkiyat al-nafs), guiding humanity toward closeness with God²⁴. Thus, hadith is not merely understood at the literal level but also through its inner meaning, which shapes an individual's spiritual qualities. This tendency indicates that in Sufism, hadith texts are read reflectively and symbolically, thereby opening up broader possibilities for interpretation. In contemporary scholarship, such an approach is often understood as a hermeneutic reading of the hadith, in which meaning is not singular but is influenced by the context of religious experience and the surrounding social conditions²⁵.

²³ Ibn Rushd, *Bidayat al-Mujtahid wa Nihayat al-Muqtasid* (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1994), p. 112.

²⁴ Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, *Ihya' Ulum al-Din* (Istanbul: Tughra Books, 1988), p. 45.

²⁵ Alwi Padly Harahap et al., "Transformasi Pemahaman Hadis di Era Kontemporer," *Jurnal*

Conversely, in the fiqh tradition, hadith is situated within an epistemological framework that demands legal certainty and consistency. Muhammad ibn Idris al-Shafi'i, in *Al-Umm*, emphasizes the importance of relying on authentic hadith as the primary basis for legal rulings, while also developing a systematic methodology of *istinbat* to ensure their validity and applicability in social life²⁶. From this perspective, attention is directed not only toward the meaning of the text but also toward the authenticity of the isnad and the strength of the matn as prerequisites for legal legitimacy. Ibn Rushd, in *Bidayat al-Mujtahid*, even demonstrates that differences in hadith interpretation among jurists are part of a methodological dynamic that remains within the framework of sharia²⁷. This demonstrates that the epistemology of fiqh, though seemingly textual, actually possesses structured flexibility.

In contemporary scholarly developments, this fiqh approach is increasingly understood as a system that is not merely normative but also considers the aspect of public interest through the framework of maqāṣid al-sharī'ah. A number of recent studies indicate that the principle of moderation in Islamic law is reflected in efforts to balance the strictness of the text with the contextual needs of society²⁸. Thus, the fiqh approach cannot be viewed merely as legalistic, but rather as a system possessing rational and adaptive dimensions in responding to the changing times.

The epistemological differences between Sufism and fiqh ultimately give rise to two primary orientations in understanding hadith: the internal-reflective orientation and the external-normative orientation. However, these two orientations are not dichotomous but rather complementary in forming a more comprehensive understanding of Islamic teachings. In this regard, as pointed out by Fazlur Rahman, separating the normative and moral dimensions in interpreting religious texts would result in a reduction of meaning that overlooks the ethical purpose of the teachings themselves²⁹. Therefore, the epistemological differentiation between tasawwuf and fiqh should not be understood as a source of conflict, but rather as an integrative potential that allows the hadith text to remain relevant in various contexts of life.

Thus, this analysis affirms that the diversity of ways of understanding the

Living Hadis, Vol. 9 No. 1, 2024, p. xx.

²⁶ Alwi Padly Harahap et al., "Transformasi Pemahaman Hadis di Era Kontemporer," *Jurnal Living Hadis*, Vol. 9 No. 1, 2024, p. xx.

²⁷ Ibn Rushd, *Bidayat al-Mujtahid wa Nihayat al-Muqtasid* (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1994), p. 112.

²⁸ M. Ilham Tanzilulloh and Abdul Mun'im Saleh, "Religious Moderation in Islamic Jurisprudence," *Journal of Islamic Studies*, Vol. 10 No. 2, 2022, p. xx.

²⁹ Fazlur Rahman, *Islam and Modernity: Transformation of an Islamic Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), p. 121.

hadith reflects the methodological richness within the Islamic scholarly tradition. Sufism provides a depth of meaning that preserves the ethical and spiritual dimensions, while fiqh provides a normative framework that ensures the orderliness of religious practice. When both are read in a dialogical manner, hadith functions not only as a source of law but also as a moral and spiritual foundation capable of supporting a more comprehensive construction of religious moderation.

Upon closer examination, the epistemological differentiation between Sufism and fiqh is also closely linked to differences in understanding the function of religious language in the hadith. In the Sufi tradition, the language of the hadith is often understood not only in a denotative sense, but also in a connotative and symbolic sense, thereby allowing for an expansion of meaning that is transcendental in nature. This is evident in the way Sufis interpret hadiths regarding asceticism, divine love, and sincerity, which are not interpreted literally as a rejection of the world, but rather as an effort to control one's inner attachment to it³⁰. This approach demonstrates that the language of hadith in Sufism functions as a bridge between text and spiritual experience, so that meaning does not stop at its linguistic structure alone.

Conversely, in the fiqh tradition, the language of hadith is understood within a more prescriptive framework, where clarity of meaning is a primary prerequisite for legal determination. Therefore, analysis of the wording, the context of transmission, and consistency with other evidence are integral parts of the process of legal deduction. In this regard, the fiqh approach seeks to ensure that the hadith text retains a scope of meaning that is methodologically accountable³¹. Nevertheless, developments in contemporary fiqh studies indicate that the interpretation of hadith is no longer strictly literal, but has begun to take contextual dimensions into account through the *maqāsid* approach and socio-historical analysis³².

Furthermore, this epistemological differentiation is also linked to differing orientations of purpose (*ghāyah*) in understanding hadith. Sufism places its primary goal on the cultivation of individuals possessing a high level of spiritual awareness, so that the interpretation of hadith is directed toward the internalization of ethical values. In this context, the success of understanding hadith is measured by the extent to which it is able to transform an individual's inner state. Conversely, fiqh is more oriented toward the establishment of social order through a legal system that can be collectively applied. Therefore, the validity of hadith interpretation in fiqh is measured more by its consistency with the principles of *usul al-fiqh* and its ability

³⁰ Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din* (Istanbul: Tughra Books, 1988), p. 67.

³¹ Muhammad ibn Idris al-Shafi'i, *Al-Risalah* (Cairo: Dar al-Turath, 2005), p. 112.

³² Jasser Auda, *Maqasid al-Shariah as Philosophy of Islamic Law: A Systems Approach* (London: IIT, 2008), p. 145.

to address the practical needs of society³³.

In contemporary scholarship, this difference in orientation is increasingly understood as a form of methodological plurality within the Islamic tradition. A number of recent studies in hadith scholarship indicate that the diversity of approaches to understanding the text is, in fact, a factor that allows Islamic teachings to remain adaptable to the changing times³⁴. From this perspective, tasawwuf and fiqh are no longer viewed as two opposing poles, but rather as two approaches operating at different levels, yet sharing interconnected objectives.

Thus, the epistemological differentiation between tasawwuf and fiqh not only reveals differences in the ways of understanding hadith but also highlights the diversity in how Muslims construct the relationship between text, reason, and experience. Tasawwuf emphasizes the depth of meaning through inner experience, while fiqh underscores the importance of normative structures in maintaining the order of life. When both are understood in a dialogical manner, these differences no longer become a source of tension but rather a foundation for the formation of a more comprehensive and balanced understanding of hadith.

Moderation as an Integrative Construction: A Synthesis of the Outer and Inner Dimensions

Based on the preceding discussion, it is evident that the differences between Sufism and fiqh in understanding hadith do not lead to substantial contradictions, but rather indicate a differentiation in approach rooted in their respective epistemological orientations. In this context, moderation in hadith cannot be understood partially through just one approach, but must be viewed as an integrative construct that simultaneously connects the external and internal dimensions. In other words, moderation is not merely a middle ground between two extremes, but rather the result of a synthesis between the normative framework and ethical-spiritual depth in understanding Islamic teachings.

In the fiqh tradition, moderation is reflected in the principles of ease (*taysir*) and public interest, which allow Islamic law to remain relevant under various circumstances. Principles such as *al-masyaqqah tajlib al-taysir* demonstrate that Sharia is not intended to impose a burden, but rather to maintain a balance between religious demands and human capacity³⁵. However, without spiritual depth, the application of this principle risks being reduced to mere technical flexibility that loses its ethical orientation. This is where Sufism plays a crucial role by introducing

³³ Ibn Rushd, *Bidayat al-Mujtahid wa Nihayat al-Muqtasid* (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1994), p. 130.

³⁴ Muhammad Fitri and Nurhadi, "Moderasi Beragama dalam Tafsir Sufistik," *Jurnal Studi Islam*, Vol. xx No. xx, 2025, p. xx.

³⁵ Ibn Rushd, *Bidayat al-Mujtahid wa Nihayat al-Muqtasid* (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1994), p. 112.

an inner dimension that ensures religious practices are not only legally correct but also spiritually meaningful.

From a Sufi perspective, moderation is realized through a balance between self-control and engagement in worldly life. Al-Ghazali emphasizes that the attitude of *zuhud* does not mean completely abandoning the world, but rather placing it in its proper proportion within human life³⁶. Thus, moderation in Sufism is not a form of withdrawal from reality, but rather the management of one's inner orientation to avoid falling into extremes. This approach provides an ethical foundation that enriches the normative framework established by *fiqh*.

When these two approaches are brought together, moderation in the hadith can be understood as a holistic balance between the outward and inward aspects, between law and morality, and between the individual and society. In this context, as articulated by Yusuf al-Qaradawi, the concept of *wasatiyyah* in Islam reflects a principle of balance that is not merely normative but also encompasses the ethical and spiritual dimensions comprehensively³⁷. This perspective aligns with contemporary approaches that emphasize that religious moderation must be built through the integration of various dimensions of doctrine, not through the reduction of any one of them.

Furthermore, the synthesis between *tasawwuf* and *fiqh* can also be interpreted as an effort to address the tendency toward fragmentation in modern Islamic thought. In many cases, the separation between the legal and spiritual dimensions has given rise to two extreme tendencies: rigid formalism on one hand, and spiritualism detached from normative structures on the other. By integrating these two approaches, the hadith functions not only as a source of law but also as an ethical guide that shapes religious consciousness in its entirety. In this regard, moderation serves as the principle that bridges adherence to rules and the depth of meaning in religious practice.

In contemporary scholarship, this kind of integrative approach is increasingly seen as essential for addressing the complexities of modern life. A number of studies indicate that effective religious moderation depends not only on a textual understanding of religious teachings but also on the ability to internalize the ethical values they contain³⁸. Therefore, the integration of *tasawwuf* and *fiqh* in understanding hadith holds not only theoretical significance but also practical relevance in fostering an inclusive, adaptive, and welfare-oriented religiosity.

³⁶ Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din* (Istanbul: Tughra Books, 1988), p. 67.

³⁷ Yusuf al-Qaradawi, *Al-Wasatiyyah fi al-Islam* (Doha: The Islamic Foundation, 2000), p. 45.

1.³⁸ Muhammad Fitri and Nurhadi, "Moderasi Beragama dalam Tafsir Sufistik," *Jurnal Studi Islam*, Vol. xx No. xx, 2025, p. xx.

Thus, it can be affirmed that moderation in hadith is a holistic construct, emerging from a dialogue among various approaches within the Islamic scholarly tradition. Sufism provides depth of meaning that preserves the spiritual dimension, while fiqh provides a normative framework that ensures the orderliness of religious practice. When the two are combined within a single integrative interpretive framework, moderation is no longer understood as an abstract concept, but as an operational principle capable of bridging the gap between text and context, between the ideal of doctrine and the reality of life.

Based on the overall analysis, it can be asserted that moderation in hadith does not exist as a standalone concept, but rather as a construction of meaning formed through the interaction of various approaches within the Islamic scholarly tradition. In this regard, tasawwuf and fiqh do not merely represent two distinct disciplines but also two complementary approaches to interpreting the same hadith texts. Therefore, moderation cannot be understood merely as a normative middle ground but as the outcome of an integrative process between the outward and inward dimensions in understanding and actualizing the hadith.

This finding becomes more concrete when traced through the hadiths that are explicitly or implicitly used as references in both disciplines. In the Sufi tradition, one of the hadiths often used as a foundation is:

"إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ"

"Indeed, every deed depends on its intention." (Narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim)

Within the framework of Sufism, this hadith is understood not only as the basis for the validity of deeds but as a fundamental principle in the formation of inner consciousness. Al-Ghazali positions this hadith as the starting point for understanding all acts of worship, where the value of an action is not determined solely by its outward form but by the inner orientation that underlies it³⁹. In this context, moderation is understood as the ability to maintain a balance between outward actions and inner sincerity, so as not to be trapped in meaningless formalism or spirituality without action.

Conversely, in the fiqh tradition, the hadith often cited as a reference within the framework of moderation is:

"لَا ضَرَرَ وَلَا ضِرَارَ"

"One must not harm oneself, nor must one harm others." (Narrated by Ibn Majah)

³⁹ Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din* (Istanbul: Tughra Books, 1988), p. 45.

and Malik)

This hadith serves as a crucial foundation for the formulation of fiqh principles oriented toward the public interest. In *Bidayat al-Mujtahid*, Ibn Rushd demonstrates how this principle is used to balance legal provisions with social realities, ensuring that Islamic law is neither rigid nor burdensome⁴⁰. Thus, moderation in fiqh manifests as measured flexibility, which remains within the bounds of sharia.

Interestingly, both hadiths—though used in different disciplines—actually converge on the same point: balance. The first hadith emphasizes internal balance (intention and inner awareness), while the second emphasizes external balance (social relations and public interest). From this perspective, moderation in the hadith cannot be reduced to just one dimension but must be understood as an integration of both.

Furthermore, within this integrative framework, another hadith that reinforces the concept of moderation is the Prophet's saying:

”يَسِّرُوا وَلَا تُعَسِّرُوا“

”Make things easy and do not make them difficult.” (Narrated by al-Bukhari)

In the tradition of fiqh, this hadith serves as the basis for the principle of taysir (ease), while in Sufism it is understood as a call to practice a religion that is welcoming and does not burden the soul. Thus, a single hadith can function on two levels simultaneously: as a normative foundation and as an ethical-spiritual guide.

In this context, as emphasized by Yusuf al-Qaradawi, moderation (wasatiyyah) in Islam is not merely a compromise between two extremes, but an active and dynamic principle of balance in all aspects of life⁴¹. This perspective reinforces the finding that the integration of tasawwuf and fiqh is not only possible but is, in fact, a necessity in building a comprehensive understanding of the hadith.

Thus, the synthesis between tasawwuf and fiqh demonstrates that moderation in hadith has two inseparable main dimensions: an internal dimension that shapes an individual's inner qualities, and an external dimension that regulates social relations through legal norms. When these two dimensions are combined, the hadith functions not only as a normative text but also as a source of ethical transformation capable of bridging the gap between the ideal of the teachings and the reality of life.

Therefore, the main contribution of this study lies in affirming that moderation in hadith must be understood as an integrative construct arising from a dialogue among various Islamic academic disciplines. Such an approach not only enriches

⁴⁰ Ibn Rushd, *Bidayat al-Mujtahid wa Nihayat al-Muqtasid* (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1994), p. 112.

⁴¹ Yusuf al-Qaradawi, *Al-Wasatiyyah fi al-Islam* (Doha: The Islamic Foundation, 2000), p. 45.

hadith studies theoretically but also provides a practical foundation for formulating a balanced, contextual, and responsive approach to religion in the face of contemporary challenges.

CONCLUSION

This study confirms that the patterns of hadith interpretation in Sufi and fiqh literature reveal methodological and epistemological differences, rather than substantive contradictions with the teachings of the hadith themselves. The Sufi tradition tends to develop an interpretive approach that is ethical, reflective, and symbolic, emphasizing the inner dimension and individual spiritual transformation, as seen in the work **Ihya' Ulum al-Din**. Conversely, the fiqh tradition exhibits a normative, systematic, and applied interpretive pattern oriented toward the formulation of law and social order, as reflected in *Al-Umm* and *Bidayat al-Mujtahid*.

This distinction indicates the existence of two primary orientations in understanding hadith: an internal-reflective orientation and an external-normative orientation, both of which contribute to shaping a comprehensive religious understanding. Therefore, religious moderation in hadith cannot be understood in isolation but rather as a multidimensional construction of meaning. In this context, the value of moderation emerges as the result of the integration between the spiritual-ethical and normative-legal dimensions, enabling a balance between individual piety and social order.

Furthermore, this study affirms that the integration of Sufi and fiqh approaches is a crucial step in avoiding reductionism in the understanding of hadith, whether in the form of legal formalism or spiritualism detached from a normative framework. Thus, the main contribution of this study lies in affirming that an integrative pattern of hadith interpretation not only enriches the body of Islamic scholarship but is also relevant in building a comprehensive, contextual, and responsive paradigm of religious moderation that addresses the dynamics of contemporary life.

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