

## CONTEXTUALITY VS UNIVERSALITY OF THE HADITH: METHODOLOGICAL PROBLEM

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### Abstract

Difference and variation in interpretation of a text is a methodological problem, in particular on how to understand and interpret a text. This article focuses on the methodological analysis in understanding and interpreting the Text of the Prophet Muhammad, Peace be upon him, which was stated more than 1400 years ago and from different geography and culture.

**Keywords:** Hadith, contextuality, universality, methodology

### Introduction

Etymologically, the Hadith has several meanings such as *jaded* - instructor, *qarib* – close, something that happens recently, and *khobar* - news – something being talked to others. The Qur'an consists of the word "the Hadith" which shows different meaning; news (QS. the Thur: 34), story or history (QS. Thaha: 9), and religious talks and message (QS. the An'am: 68, al-Tahrim: 3, dan the Zumar: 23). (Darmalaksana, 2004: 17-18) In etymological term, Sunnah means a way, attitude, behavior, or act of living a life. (Hasan, 1970: 8) In this point, sunnah can be interpreted as a way of how the earlier people lived which was followed by the next generation through times. In English glossary, sunnah and the Hadith generally mean tradition. Since it contains the element of habit, sunnah is interpreted as an earthly tradition though it is full of bad habits. (al-Khatib, N.d.: 17) Sunnah Rasul itself is everything that the Prophet had ever done as if the actions were his habit. (Zuhri, 2011)

The question relies on how we understand and interpret everything that Prophet Muhammad had said and done. In the 7<sup>th</sup> century, in Arabian peninsula, as *uswah hasanah*", the first Islamic model interacted in certain time and space in which throughout the change of geographical and cultural change, it has passed 1400 years ever since. Logically, there are two possible attitudes towards historical text; (1) rejecting with the argument that the text has gotten outdated, (2) accepting the text that has been interpreted. Logically, in order to get the text accepted, there are two interpretations; (1) literal interpretation; (2) substantial meaning interpretation. In term of idea meaning, there are various meanings; (a) past idea or historical context, (b) current or brand new idea, (c) the Hadith text universality idea which relatively does not exist yet.

The differences and variations in text interpretation are a kind of methodological problems which focus on how to understand and interpret a text. Its focus is on methodological analysis especially Prophet Muhammad's textual the Hadith which is 1400 years old which also comes from different geographical and cultural era.

**Discussion:**

**Mahram Hadith** (Data used is based on Hasanah, 2017)

<p>"Let not a woman travel except with mahram, and let no man meet her except she (the woman) is with the mahram". Someone said, "O Messenger of Allah. I want to get involved in war, but my wife wants to do hajj", then the Prophet replied, " go with her (your wife)."</p>		
Name	Method	Interpretation result
Abdullah bin Bâz	Textual	A woman who travels a long way with no mahram.
Masnun Tahir	Feminism approach; (social gender bias: men – women)	The Hadith which stigamatize women a weakling. (the the Hadith tends to be ignored)
Atiyatul Ulya	<input type="checkbox"/> Ulama's opinions; Imam Nawawi dan Syafi'i: (Woman's Mahram has no particular rules) <input type="checkbox"/> Historical contexts at the time: (Riding camels, threatening area and dangerous wars) <input type="checkbox"/> Current contextual analysis: (many transportations, possible traveling to a more secure area).	1. Normative literal meaning; women restrain, 2. Empirical philosophical meaning; protection towards women that becomes joint responsibility to build a safe and friendly system that support all kinds of activities.
Hermeneutika Ricoeur	<input type="checkbox"/> Semiology; (textual meaning) <input type="checkbox"/> Textual horizon; (a description in which women are forbidden to go outside freely without mahram and the virtue of accompanying your own wife to do hajj rather than go on wars. <input type="checkbox"/> Readers' horizon; (crime existency & sexual harassment, Laws & woman protection department in United Nations and Indonesia)	<input type="checkbox"/> Appropriation interpretation; 1. Institutional protection (Laws & Government) 2. Practical precaution from crime by one's mahram 3. The Hadith universality (>1400 <sup>th</sup> ); still relevant to current situations ( <i>sholihun likulli zaman wa makan</i> ).

Table: A critical review of The Hadith which women are not allowed to travel alone

In reviewing an understating of the Hadith about women traveling with no mahram, the researcher found the Hadith understating discussion by Abdul Azîz bin Abdullâh bin Bâz, Atiyatul Ulya through psychological approach, and Masnun Tahir through gender fairness analysis.

Abdul Azîz bin Abdullâh bin Bâz, (bin Bâz, 2008: 393) in his book *Al-Fatawâ asy-Syar'iyah fi Al-Masâ'il Al-Ashriyyah min Fatawâ 'Ulama Al-Balad Al-Harâm* describes the explanation about women do hajj with or without mahram. In this book, there is one question in which about a woman who wanted to travel a long way to Jeddah to do Umrah. Her Mahram accompanied her only until they reached Riyadh and she went to Mekah by crossing Jeddah by plane. Her other mahram had waited for her in Mekah. Is it permitted in Islam? Then, Abdul Azîz bin Abdullâh bin Bâz gave his answer that according to Islam the action is considered haram. Abdul Azîz bin Abdullâh bin Bâz states that this kind of situation could happen, yet the question is who sat next to her on the plane? It could a nice

man, but it might be a bad man. It could turn into a threatening situation as Allah says in His verse "And do not let yourself near Zina", it is an obligatory for each individual to give a chance for anyone who wants to accompany the woman in her journey except the mahram. Hence, Abdul Azîz bin Abdullâh bin Bâz explains his understanding related to the situation where a woman travels without her mahram in accordance to the the Hadith textual meaning.

Atiyatul Ulya in her article entitled "The concept of Mahram: Safety guarantee or Woman restrain" (Ulya, 2013) conducted several approaches such as *takhrij* (investigation) *hadith*, ulama's opinion, historical context approach (In era of Prophet Muhammad) when the the Hadith being said (*asbab al-wurud*), and the last, repeated interpretation of the Hadith meaning which was being fitted to the current situation. In explaining ulama's opinion related to the Hadith about the role of Mahram in a woman's travel, this the Hadith discusses hajj for women. Imam Syâfi'is' dan Imam al-Nawawî's opinion which state that women could do hajj with no mahram, still she needs to be sure of her safety in the process of hajj itself. It can be concluded from those two Ulamas' opinion that there is an indication of sociological approach in comprehending the Hadith. In his further comprehension step, Atiyatul Ulya implemented sociological historical approach at the moment the the Hadith being said, and compared the situation with the correct ones.

Furthermore, he explains the situation in the past and present based on Shahîh Bukhâri no 3595 in Fathul Bâri written by Ibnu Hâjar al-Atsqolâni as follows: ", "While we were with the Prophet, suddenly a man came to complain to him about poverty, then came another who complained about the road disruption (no security). So the Prophet said: 'Have you ever seen the village of Hirah, O' Adi? I have not, but I have heard the news ", he continued if it would be your longevity you would experience the era where a woman is traveling from the village of Hirah until thawaf surrounding the Ka'bah, with nothing to fear except Allah" .... Later on Adi said "I saw a woman traveling from the village of Hirah to Ka'bah, there was nothing to fear except God Himself." (al-Asqalâni, n.d.) From this the Hadith it can be concluded that women were really used to the outside world at the time . It would not be wise for Prophet Muhammad to allow a woman went on her own. The reason for prohibiting women is for their won safety. However, nowadays, there are so many kinds of transportation which are saver for the women that lessen the danger of women going alone. Nevertheless, it is an obligation to travel with a woman who lives in remote area. In conclusion, if the Hadiths related to mahram are reviewed from normative literalist point of view, it would appear as a restrain toward women. Yet, in empirical philosophies view, they actually reflect an important responsibility of community to build a friendly system which can protect women in order to make them be able to do activities like any other men.

Masnun Tahir (Tahir, 2010: 76-79) coveys the understanding related to Mahram the Hadiths through feminism perspective, by using gender fairness as a *key to approach the study of religion*. The main and basic emphasis is the analysis is used to bring up proofs of women oppression known as feminism. Masnun Tahir explains the history of how feminism occurred. It comes from the historical reality where people adhere patriarchy system and the vision in which women are under men. In addition, some of discussion in The Qur'an and the Hadiths also represents some views that seem to have gender bias. Because of the misunderstanding that keeps on continuing, feminists try to fight and overturn the social construction of women. Islam is rahmatan lil 'alamin that also presents the fairness and equality in it's the Qur'an and the Hadiths.

However, if there is no further revision or discussion about mahram the Hadiths, it can possibly trigger a bad stigma where Islam views women as a weak human being who will always need men's protection.

If people view the the Hadiths about the way women travel textually, it will trigger a huge misunderstanding and u fairness between men and women. It will lead to discrimination of Islam in the public eyes who consider it as something restraining the development of women's life. Aside from this issue, the criminal acts toward women keep on happening that need to be taken care of immediately. Because of the problems that continually grows, the interpretation of mahram the Hadiths have to be done immediately so that Islam as a religion which is rahmatan lil 'alamin can guarantee woman's right, safety, and security. Admitted or not, most of Muslims still holds on to the verse of the Qur'an and the Hadiths. Nevertheless, they should not have to be trapped to the formalistic legal way of comprehending the teks. Instead, the focus should be on the way to extract moral value of the text. One of the Hadiths, which roles are as one of the essential sources of Islam, contain roles which have. (Ismail, 2009: 4)

To analyze the case of this the Hadith, the researcher used the hermeneutic method, Ricoeur performed several steps of procedural process, namely, (1) semiological meaning, (2) identification of the quasi world horizon, (3) identification of the current horizon of the reader, and (4) appropriation of meaning (belonging to the current reader) of the text. In the semiological meaning, a text is a meaning of denotation of the text, in the context of this the Hadiths, it is a translation of the Arabic text of the Hadiths to its literal meaning in Indonesian. Whereas the quasi-world horizon of the text of this the Hadith is describing the prohibited form of the Prophet Muhammad, about traveling for women unaccompanied by her mahram, and accompaniment to the wife who is about to do Hajj is more important than fighting a war.

Currently (as the horizon of the reader), various social institutions with the mission to protect the welfare of women are easily found. In Indonesia, there is the Ministry of Women Empowerment and Child Protection (KEMENPPPA), there are special laws to protect women including violence, and there is the National Commission on Violence Against Women (KOMNAS WOMAN). At the world level, the United Nations has a women's special division, the UN Women, which was formed in 2011. However, the diversity of criminal cases to women and children is still common and is still in the spotlight. Some of the cases that the researchers got were, among other cases, about sexual violence, domestic violence, theft and kidnapping, both in Indonesia and in other countries. These various women's institutions, national-international, show concern for women living in this era (the new millennium of the 21st century) are still important, but violence against women still happens everywhere. Thus, the institutional function is to provide protection and equality to women, as well as to show discrimination and even violence against women is still happening now. However, such institutions are incapable of "practical prevention", especially violence against women.

Thus, the fusion of the two horizons (text and reader) results in the appropriate interpretation of the text in the Hadith about the participation of mahram on the journey with women. The act itself is considered primarily as a form of protection and even at the same time functioning as "practical prevention" against violence toward women. Thus, this tradition also shows its relevance to the current era, which the Prophet Muhammad revealed 1400s years ago, not only for Muslims but by the world, represented by the United Nations (United Nations).

### **The Hadith about Woman's Lacking in terms of Reason and Religion (Data used based on Andriyani, 2017)**

"Sa'id bin Abu stated that Maryam said Muhammad bin Ja'far has been informed by Zaid who said Ibn Aslam - from 'Iyadl bin' Abdullah from Abu Sa'id Al Khudri said that," Prophet sallallaahu 'alaihi wasallam on the feast' Iedul Adlha or Fitri on his way out to the

Sholat's area, had passed some groups of women and said: "O women! Let yourself give Shodaqoh, for it shows me that most of you are the inhabitant of hell. "We asked," Why, O Messenger of Allah? "He replied:" You curse many and deny the gifts from your husbands. And I have never seen from the bones of men whose minds fade away faster and religion weaker being possessed than you. "We asked again," O Messenger of Allah, what is the mark of being less in a sense and weak in religion? "He replied:" Isn't the testimony of a woman half of male? "We replied," Right. "He said again:" That's the lack of reason. And Isn't a woman when she is in her period she is not praying and fasting? "We replied," Right. "He said:" That's the lack of religion."

<b>Nama</b>	<b>Metode</b>	<b>Hasil</b>
Traditional	Literal	Accepted as undenial facts
Abū Syuqah	Earlier history	Anshar's women are brave and talkative, yet the process of interpretation is still not finished.
Hamim Ilyas	□the history at that time; (QS 24:30-31;& the habit of gathering on the street)	The meaning: as a warning (for the people's attitude)
Nawang Rofik Kholis (NRKh)	□history at that time; other the Hadiths about women, & the value of their good behaviors, woman's physiological the Hadiths)	The meaning: advising the women to eliminate bad attitude and suggesting them to do charity to avoid punishment and sin
The research (Hermeneutik Gadamer)	Horizon text: 1. Horizon history (sda NRKh) 2. Horizon in the present; (Theoretically: menstruation affects emotion; & women dominated by the limbic system of feeling)	Fusion of horizon ; 1. Women's physiologies are all the same, dominant feelings' system and lack of objectivity. 2. Advice related to the change of attitude toward their husbands to be able to avoid hell. 3. The use of sene (holistically); a. Do not sholah during their period as their religion's command, becomes a woman with good attitudes b. Witnessing with the numbers of 2:1 as a solution.

In Takhrij Hadith, by examining the Hadith in terms of *sanad*, the Hadith about women lacking in reason and religion was narrated in six books of the Hadiths such as al-Bukhārī, Muslim, Aḥmad bin Hambal, Ibn Mājah, Abū Dāwud, and At-Tirmīzi, its value saḥih.

The views of traditional Ulama in understanding the Hadiths tend to be textual. Understanding the content of this the Hadiths is that many women will be put in hell due to their cursed behavior and rejection of their husbands' gift. The condition is in its worst state by other additional weaknesses of women, namely lack of reason and religion. Lack

of reason is proved by the law of testimony in Islam, which is the testimony of two women equal to one man, and proving the lack of religion through the prohibition of fasting and fasting laws for women in their period. This interpretation of textual understanding is a fact of absolute truth.

Aside from literalist textual method, historical contextual analysis method can actually be used in comprehending the Hadiths (*sabab wurud*), such as Abū Syuqqah, Hamim Ilyas, and Nawang Rofiq Kholis. Even though these three Ulama analyzed contextual the Hadiths, there are differences in their contextual identification.

Abū Syuqqah's analysis of the text has not done yet. (Hanif, [http://www.academia.edu/20309569/Hermeneutika\\_Hadis\\_Abu\\_Syuqqah](http://www.academia.edu/20309569/Hermeneutika_Hadis_Abu_Syuqqah). Assessed September 29, 2016) As He only focused the analysis on historical text by looking at the cause that triggered the producing of the Hadiths and took a look at the reality surrounded the woman at that time. However, Abū Syuqqah offers a very interesting explanation related to how to understand the Hadiths about women who are less knowledge and religion. According to him, the Hadith has a special context that cannot be generalized carelessly. Abū Syuqqah also asserted that the the Hadiths was declared by the Prophet on the day of Eid al-Fitr, when the Prophet and his companions were having a conversation in the mosque after performing the Ied prayer. In such an atmosphere, it was impossible for the Prophet to deliberately reveal words that harmed his people, in this case, to harm women. Especially analyzing his daily behavior, the Prophet was known to be very polite in treating his wife and daughters. Abū Syuqqah also observes that in terms of audience or people who listen to the words of the Prophet, the the Hadith was shown to the Ansar women who were generally known to be brave and articulate. Abū Syuqqah recounts that such a trait had troubled Umar bin Khattab. Umar was worried that the Muhajirin women were imitating their temperament.

By looking at the character of such audiences, the Prophet pronounced the the Hadiths to be a warning to the well-spoken woman, especially the Ansar woman. That is the reason why the Prophet said such things to women.

Hamim Ilyas, in the book "Oppressed Women? Study of Misogynical the Hadith, "explains the macro situation of the historical context of the haditsts. That the Prophet declared his word being implemented when he was on his way to perform the Eid prayers. Both of these circumcision prayers are prescribed after the HIjrah, which is to say that the prophet engaged in that dialogue in one of the streets of Medina. The streets of Medina at that time, like the streets of other settlements, were commonly used by both men and women to sit in front of the house while chatting to each other, such a habit later on became the cause of God sent down an-Nur / 24: 30-31 which contains commands to Mu'minin to bowed their eyes down. The custom seemed to be strongly rooted among the people of Medina, the Prophet once intended to ban the habit. But many people objected it, so he allowed the companions to continue to do so on condition that they must fulfill the attitude of proper walking. The attitudes mentioned by the Prophet include: subjecting the eyes, refraining from hurting others, responding to greetings, advocating the ma'ruf and forbidding munkar. The history can be seen in the narrations of Imam al-Bukhari, Muslim, and Abu Dawud from Abu Sa'id al-Khudri). Thus, the meaning of the the Hadith is as a warning against the behavior of women at the time. Furthermore, the research conducted by Nawang Rofik Kholis which is one of the women observers. In her research she did not only examine the Hadith in terms of sanad and matan, she also examined the physiological and psychological differences of men and women. In the study of the terms matan Hadith, if the Hadiths were comprehended in a textual course the meanig would be misunderstood. Why women are mentioned more to be sent to hell, whereas women are created just like men, that is, without sin. Therefore, this the Hadith must be understood together with

another the Hadith which becomes meaningful to it. So there are some things that must be considered. First, does this the Hadith mean women are more dominantly dominated by crime in their fitrah while men do not? The answer is certainly not, if indeed the crime has been inside them, of course they will not be held accountable for it. However, the Hadith states that they are responsible for what they do themselves, such as the disobedience to the husband. Second. The Prophet's warning in this the Hadith is easily accepted by Muslim women during the particular time because they were often reminded of the resurrection day, the mahshar, heaven and hell. Therefore, it is advisable to understand this the Hadith according to the society's atmosphere when it is spoken. Third. this the Hadith is beneficial to all Muslims, both men and women, so that they will try their best to avoid the punishment of hell. For women, it can be done by multiplying goods and leaving a lawless attitude towards the husband or being kafir against them. As for men, by nurturing mothers, wives, daughters, and sisters well, he is obliged to provide sufficient opportunities for them to gain instruction and perform various worship and obedience to God, so that their hearts are filled with the values of faith and piety. In this the Hadith there is a suggestion to convey advice to women because advices and suggestions can eliminate reprehensible traits, while charity recommended to women can avoid the punishment and eliminate the sins that occur between the human beings.

Meanwhile, currently the research conducted by researchers is related to analysis and interpretation of the the Hadith text of Prophet Muhammad by using Hans-Georg Gadamer hermeneutic theory as a theory of interpretation. In the context of the Gadamer hermeneutical method there are several procedural processes undertaken in the interpretation of the text, namely, (1) identification of the horizon of historical awareness of historical texts at the time; (2) identification of the current horizon of reader consciousness; and (3) smelting horizons.

The horizon of historicity of the text in the Hadith is essentially the same as the description of the historical context or the asbab of the the Hadith when it is expressed, as has been described by the interpreters; Abu Syuqqoh, Hamim Ilyas, and Nawang Rofiq Kholis above. The current horizon of reader consciousness can be elaborated from several aspects, namely, female physiology, current women's abilities and movements, as well as religious knowledge of women. Physiologically, women are created by God with a special anatomical body structure which is different from men, including menstruation. The process of this change makes women who are initially healthy became sick which affects their psychological state, and in the context of Islamic law, they are prohibited to prayer and fast. In addition, women have a larger limbic system (neural structure in the brain that regulates human feelings) than men, indicating they tend to be involving feelings more than their logical mind. However, if you look at the reality today, many women have more intelligence than men. In addition, there are Laws of the Republic of Indonesia no. 23 in 2004 to regulate and protect women, and feminism movements and UN conferences that ratify anti-discrimination and equal rights and opportunities in various fields, and women's special divisions, namely UN Women, which was formed in 2011.

Based on these two horizons of awareness among the reader (researcher), the history of the text of the Hadith at that time (1400 years ago) and the horizon of the present situation, the fusion of horizons in the reader becomes a new consciousness for the reader today. The combining results include; (1) The Hadith of the Prophet that most women go to hell because their cursed behavior and rejection of their husbands' gift, are expressed in the joys of Islamic festivals, and preceded by the suggestion of charity (as gratitude for the rizq given to their husbands). Attitudes toward the behavior of rizqi obtained by husband, in general, there are only two choices; feeling grateful or rejecting it. The choice of this attitude will occur forever in family relationships, for religious purposes or not. Islamic

Shari'ah forbids such a bad attitude, for being the cause of entering hell. Thus, women today have equal chances to become dwellers of hell if they make similar mistakes. Even Islam teaches the importance of giving charity from rizq given to their husbands which would lead them straight to heaven's door. (2) Women do not pray and fast during haidh is the command in shari'at Islam, and the act upon the command is part of goodness (taqwa), not a sin or deficiency. They will receive the opposite result if they do praying and fasting at the time of menstruation, which is a sin. It can be said that the obedience of women in menstruation period for not fasting and fasting is a proof of the superiority of women's nature and devotion. Thus it can be concluded the word lack of religion as well as reason in the the Hadith is indicated as a warning to behave, both a warning to learn religious knowledge as well as warning in the use of reason (holistic). (3) In the less intellectual context evidenced by the testimony of two women equal to one man, the fusion of two conscious horizons into a new consciousness for the reader today is as follows. Generally and physiologically there are two elements that significantly affect the soul of woman, that is haidh and dominance of limbic brain system, which makes their attitude tend to be driven by feeling (can be positive or negative). Meanwhile, in the context of the witness, it requires an objective and firm stance according to the facts. Thus, a woman's case-witnessed testimony required two women, serving the practical prevention of the attitude's hesitancy by the dominance of the feelings, so as not to fall into the assumption of false testimony.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the two cases of interpretation of the the Hadith above, in interpreting the the Hadith by using the interpretation method of the Hadith literal meaning, it produces two contradictory attitudes, namely, (1) the editorial of the Hadith which is summed up as the fact of absolute truth, which can be understood by looking at Abdullah bin Baz's discussion related to the Hadith mahram; and (2) the editorial of the the Hadith that is rejected because it is inconsistent with the current context, as Masnun Tahir's view toward the the Hadith of mahram is inconsistent with the current feminist perspective. As for the interpretation of the the Hadith by using the interpretation methodology the idea meaning, as what Atiyatul Ulya had done (by calling it as empirical philosophical meaning), Masnun Tahir and Nawang Rofiq Kholis, the editors of the Hadith should be related to the historical context of Prophet Muhammad, at that time (al-asbab al-wurud), which would result in the meaning of abstract ideas as interpretations of the Hadith expressed by all three as the "intention" of the Hadith, which in the context of the "hermeneutical" methodology, is a part of the "hermeneutic reconstruction", which is not mentioned by all three. The abstract meaning of the text 'idea' makes the text still relevant to the current situation although there are differences and changes that are contrary to the tradition of the the Hadith. The author uses the methodology of "hermeneutics production" which is the production of interpretation of the meaning of the text, developed by Ricoeur for the Hadith mahram and Gadamer for women's lack of reason and religion, as well as the development of scientific methodology and philosophy of science for the tradition of fasting time. The use of these three different methodologies is able to produce and prove that the editors of the Hadith, literal meaning and idea, are still relevant today, so the universality of the Hadith is proved both ideally and practically.

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