



The Relationship Between Prophetic Hadith and Intellect: A Critical Examination of the Scholarly Discourse

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Abstract

If authenticity of a Hadith is uncertain and contradicts intellect, it can be deemed weak. However, if a Hadith is deemed authentic by Hadith scholars, two distinct theories emerge among Muslim scholars. The first theory argues that a correct Hadith never opposes the intellect. According to this perspective, a sound and clear intellect will never contradict an authentic Hadith. In contrast, the second theory posits that a prophetic Hadith should be considered weak if it conflicts with intellect. The study employs analytical and library research methods, drawing on a range of scholarly works including books, academic articles, and writings by Muslim scholars. The findings of this paper indicate that when a Hadith, narrated through a strong chain of narrators tracing back to the Prophet, cannot inherently contradict the intellect. However, if a Hadith contradicts sound intellect, it can be served as a valid reason to question its authenticity and consider it weak. Through a comprehensive analysis of the scholarly discourse, this study provides a deeper understanding of the complex relationship between Hadith and intellect and how Islam values the intellect. It underscores the importance of rigorous authentication processes, emphasizing the need to consider the reliability of the Hadith chain and the principles of intellectual reasoning when assessing the strength or weakness of a prophetic Hadith.

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INTRODUCTION

Hadith, which are reports of the words, actions, and tacit approvals or disapprovals of the Prophet Muhammad, is regarded as a significant source of Islamic law and theology, second only to the Qur'an. However, not all hadith can be considered authentic, as some are fabricated or have become corrupted over time. Matn criticism, the study of the content of a hadith report,

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is a valuable approach to assessing their authenticity. This involves examining the language, style, and content of the hadith to determine its consistency with the teachings of the Qur'an, other authentic hadiths, and the known facts about the Prophet Muhammad.

Several criteria are utilized in evaluating the *matn* of a hadith. Firstly, the content should align with the teachings of the Qur'an and other authenticated hadith. Any contradictions or errors may indicate that the hadith is not authentic. Secondly, the language and style employed should be consistent with those attributed to the Prophet Muhammad. Any deviations or use of phrases that are uncharacteristic of him may raise doubts about the hadith's authenticity. Additionally, the content of the hadith must conform to the known facts about the Prophet Muhammad. Any information that contradicts established knowledge about his life raises concerns regarding authenticity (Saeed, 2020). Finally, support from other sources, such as intellect, historical accounts, or the biographies of the Prophet Muhammad, can lend credibility to a hadith.

Moreover, *Matn* criticism plays a crucial role in the authentication of hadith, helping identify fabricated or corrupted reports. However, it is essential to recognize that *matn* criticism alone is insufficient. It should be complemented by *sanad* criticism, which focuses on the chain of transmission of the hadith report. By employing both, *matn* criticism and *sanad* criticism, a more accurate evaluation of the authenticity of hadith reports can be achieved.

In addition to the criteria, several other factors should be taken into consideration when evaluating the *matn* of a hadith. These include the context in which the hadith was narrated, including the period, location, and intended audience. The purpose of the hadith, whether it provides legal guidance, theological instruction, or moral guidance, should also be considered. Furthermore, the specific audience for whom the hadith was intended, whether it was a general audience or a specific group of people, can offer insights into its authenticity (Jafari, 2012).

Certain scholars argue that there is ultimately no inherent conflict between intellect and the *Shari'ah*. This is because the *Shari'ah*, comprised primarily of the Holy Qur'an, is unanimously agreed upon by scholars to contain no verses that contradict sound reasoning. Additionally, the other source of the *Shari'ah* is the prophetic *Hadiths*. In the event of a perceived conflict between a *Hadith* and intellect, two possibilities arise: either the *Hadith* is deemed invalid or the intellect is considered unsound (Karagözoğlu, 2018).

The relationship between intellect and revelation is a complex and nuanced issue that has been debated by Muslim scholars for centuries. There are two main approaches to this relationship: the balanced approach, which rejects any distinction between reason and revelation, and the conflict approach, which presents rational evidence in response to transmitted evidence when there is a conflict. The balanced approach, embraced by theologians such as Imam al-Ghazali, argues that there is no contradiction between reason and religious law (*Shari'ah*), but rather a close connection between them. They believe that knowledge is derived from both reason and revelation, and that reason should not be exceeded beyond linguistic and fundamental principles.

On the other hand, philosophers like Ibn Rushd (Averroes) believe that revelation is a source of knowledge, just as intellect is a source of knowledge. If they contradict, then the intellect is presented as a support for transmission

because humans have faith in their reason and subsequently accept revelation. The two approaches outlined above provide a helpful framework for understanding the different ways in which reason and revelation have been understood in the Islamic world. However, it is important to note that there is no single, agreed-upon answer to the question of how reason and revelation should be understood. The issue of the relationship between reason and revelation is a complex and nuanced one, and there are many different perspectives on this issue (Haltinner & Sarathchandra, 2021).

Similarly, a faction of moderate Islamic scholars, such as the Mu'tazila, led by *Wāṣil ibn 'Aṭā'*, have placed an exaggerated emphasis on the significance of intellect. They consider intellect to be one of the primary sources of the *Shari'ah*, even surpassing the Quran and the Sunnah of the Prophet. Among their adherents, there are varying beliefs regarding the acceptance of *Ḥadīths* that seemingly contradict the intellect. Some argue that such *Ḥadīths* cannot be accepted under any circumstances, while others contend that they may be disregarded solely in matters concerning beliefs (*al-'Aqā'id*), but remain valid in other domains. Furthermore, they assert that discernment between good and evil is determined by intellect rather than the *Shari'ah*. In contemporary times, certain Muslim scholars have adopted a similar approach to that of the Mu'tazila, rejecting a majority of the prophetic *Ḥadīths* because they are inconsistent with intellect. From their perspective, intellect holds precedence over *Ḥadīth* in terms of existential primacy. They argue that something that emerged later in existence cannot supersede a phenomenon that has existed since the beginning (حسين, 2019).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Islamic Perspective on the Importance of Intellect:

The Islamic Shariah places significant emphasis on intellect and asserts the superiority of human beings over animal instincts. It upholds the notion that the Islamic creed is built upon rational foundations and does not contradict human reasoning. Intellectual evidence, which encompasses rational and sensory proofs, holds an important position within this framework, complementing the textual evidence and jointly leading to the discovery of truth.

Indeed, Islam has elevated the status of Intellect, making it the basis of religious obligations, as well as the focal point for rewards and punishments. Muslim scholars have determined that reason is the foundation of revelation. If the existence of Allah and the truthfulness of the Prophet were not established through intellect, the validity of divine revelation would not be confirmed. Therefore, intellect is what substantiates prophethood and verifies the truthfulness of the Prophet through rational evidence, such as miracles that serve as intellectual indicators. However, after establishing these truths, reason then defers to revelation, which holds superior authority. Based on this understanding, knowledgeable scholars of Islam have concluded that blind adherence to faith without critical thinking is unacceptable. Such blind adherence lacks a solid foundation, fails to provide a clear argument, and instead relies solely on uncritical imitation (Emad & Mutalqa, 2013).

The Importance of intellect from the Islamic point of view can be understood from some points. First, intellectual evidence is classified as one of the various forms of evidence, comprising both rational and sensory proofs. It is noteworthy that textual evidence can either align with or complement rational

evidence, as they often converge to indicate the completeness and perfection of knowledge. Each type of evidence holds its significance: textual evidence serves to reveal divine guidance, while rational evidence represents the intellect's capacity to comprehend and grasp the truth.

Moreover, the Quran, as a source of knowledge within Islamic teachings, encompasses reason and intellect, actively encouraging the pursuit of knowledge and rational contemplation. Remarkably, every Surah (chapter) of the Quran contains elements of rationality and intellectuality, underscoring their indispensability in the quest for truth. The Quran explicitly states:

وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُولَٰئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْئُولًا

It means: *"And do not pursue that of which you have no knowledge. Indeed, the hearing, the sight, and the heart – about all those [one] will be questioned."* (Surah Al-Isra: 36)

Intellect is an inherent attribute of human beings, enabling them to transcend the confines of the material world. It facilitates the acquisition of knowledge, fosters critical thinking, and facilitates the abandonment of ignorance. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) articulated this concept by stating: "The superiority of the learned person over the worshiper is like that of the full moon over the rest of the stars" (Al-Bukhari: Sahih Al-Bukhari, 1 hadith number 10).

Furthermore, safeguarding reason is deemed essential within the Islamic framework, acknowledged as one of the five recognized necessities. Islam promotes the development of intellect and addresses various aspects related to reason. Measures aimed at preserving reason within the scope of Sharia law include nurturing the intellect through the acquisition of knowledge and scientific methods, safeguarding it from harmful substances such as alcohol and drugs, and shielding it from corrupting influences like evil companionship. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) cautioned against seven destructive sins, among which were polytheism, sorcery, unjust killing, usury, exploiting the wealth of orphans, fleeing from the battlefield, and slandering chaste women (Al-Tyālysy: 1999, 6/455). Both textual and rational evidence highlights the significance of reason in Islam, whether through religious texts or the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

Finally, within the Islamic Sharia, there is a strong emphasis on the preservation and protection of the human intellect, commonly referred to as "Aql." This is evident in the prohibition of consuming wine and other substances that have intoxicating effects, as these are recognized to have detrimental impacts on one's intellectual capacities. Additionally, the Sharia strictly prohibits engaging in any activities that may cause harm to the intellect, underscoring the signing placed on its safeguarding (Gonibala, 2019).

The proper utilization of the intellect in carrying out actions that are beneficial and contribute to the improvement of humanity is of utmost importance within Islamic teachings. It is believed that on the Day of Judgment, Allah will inquire about how individuals employed their intellect, assessing whether it was utilized for the betterment or detriment of humanity. This highlights the moral and ethical responsibility placed on individuals to utilize their intellectual capacities in ways that positively impact society (Floridi et al., 2021;

Gonibala, 2019). When asked about the greatest gift bestowed upon a person, Ibn Al-Mubarak responded by stating that it is intellect (*'Aql*). Subsequently, he was questioned about someone who lacks intellect, to which he replied that possessing good manners becomes crucial. When further asked about someone devoid of good manners, he emphasized the importance of having a righteous brother to seek counsel from. Lastly, when inquired about someone lacking a righteous brother, Ibn Al-Mubarak responded with a prolonged silence, indicating the gravity of the situation. Ultimately, when questioned about someone deprived of prolonged silence, he remarked that an immediate death becomes a preferable alternative.

'Aql (intellect) is a pivotal attribute in humans that enables them to discern between right and wrong. The term originates from Arabic and encompasses various definitions: In some contexts, "*'Aql*" is associated with medicine. For instance, Arabs use the expression "*wa-al-'Aql min aldwā*" to refer to a medicinal component that aids in keeping the stomach alert (Abdu Zahid n.d). Similarly, it conveys the notion of tightening, as demonstrated by the phrase "*Qla alb'yrā*," which depicts someone securing a camel's reins (Ibn Faris, 1970, Vol.6, p.72). Additionally, in Arabic, "*'Aql*" is employed about "*al-Diyah*," the compensation paid for a life taken by a murderer.

Another facet of "*'Aql*" pertains to cessation or interruption. When someone stops speaking, Arabs use the expression "*T'qal Lisān fulān*". Furthermore, the term can denote a tribal leader or wise individuals within a tribe, exemplified by the phrase "*'Aqltu alqvmi*" (Ibn Faris, 1970, Vol.6, p.72). Furthermore, "*'Aql*" conveys the concept of restraint. It is referred to as "*'Aql*" because it prevents a person from uttering offensive words or engaging in negative actions (Ibn Faris, Vol. 4, p. 69). Khalil suggests that "*'Aql*" stands in contrast to "*Jahl*," and Arabs employ the phrase "*Qla flānun*" to indicate comprehension of something previously unknown (Geramopour, 2020).

The term "*'Aql*" encompasses various definitions. According to Oxford University, it is defined as "the part of a person that enables awareness, thinking, and emotional experiences," as well as "the capacity for reasoning and intelligence, and the unique cognitive processes of an individual". The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines "*'Aql*" as "the composite of faculties, including perception, cognition, rationality, volition, and particularly reasoning, within an individual."

These definitions highlight the multidimensional nature of "*'Aql*," encompassing faculties such as awareness, thought, emotion, reasoning, and intelligence. It signifies the cognitive and perceptive abilities that contribute to an individual's understanding, decision-making, and mental processes.

There are two distinct types of intellect: acquired intellect, which is acquired through learning and experience during a person's lifetime, and innate intellect, which exists within individuals without any external instruction. The intellect, or *'Aql*, by which judgments are made, pertains to the acquired intellect rather than innate intellect. The innate intellect is a common attribute shared by all individuals. To make informed decisions and provide opinions within a specific field of study, individuals must possess a comprehensive understanding of the foundations and various aspects of that discipline. Moreover, they should possess the necessary qualifications and expertise. In cases where an individual's acquired intellect alone is insufficient, they may supplement it by drawing from the acquired intellect of

others. For instance, when seeking medical advice, a rational person would not consult just any mentally sound individual, nor would they solely rely on the experiences of someone who has had a similar illness. Instead, they would seek consultation from a specialized doctor who, through their acquired intellect gained from studying medicine, can diagnose the ailment and prescribe appropriate treatment.

The term "Aql" is extensively mentioned in various verses of the Holy Qur'ān, holding significant praise, and serving different purposes (Crow, 2006). Undoubtedly, the intellect plays a crucial role in enabling human beings to comprehend the existence of Allah and discern between what is good and what is evil. In the Holy the Qur'ān, Allah describes the regretful state of nonbelievers on the Day of Judgment, expressing their remorse by acknowledging that had they listened to the words of the Prophet and employed their intellect, they would have avoided being among the inhabitants of Hell (Al-Mulk, V.10). Extensive research reveals that the term "Aql" appears 49 times in the Qur'ān, while related words or terms denoting intellect, such as "Allub" and "Al-Fouad," are mentioned in 16 verses of the Qur'ān (Al-Amin, 2018).

Intellect is not an Independent Source of Shariah

Intellect is a means by which knowledge is obtained, but it is not the exclusive means. There are three avenues through which knowledge is acquired: sensory perception, intellect, and transmitted knowledge. Each of these has its limitations, and none should be disregarded or overstepped. The intellect, as a tool for acquiring knowledge, has its limitations and should be utilized in conjunction with Islamic teachings to attain a balanced understanding of the truth. It is important to recognize that the intellect does not hold ultimate authority in matters of Islamic teachings. It is restricted in its ability to comprehend certain aspects and cannot transcend its inherent capabilities. Just as the eye has limitations in perceiving beyond its range, the intellect has its realm and constraints. Consequently, the intellect has its limitations in comprehending the truths embedded within Islamic teachings and should not be solely relied upon as the ultimate judge in religious matters (Abou, 2015; Aydin, 2020; Kamri et al., 2014).

Ibn Khaldun argues that the intellect is fallible and has limitations in understanding the unseen, the Hereafter, the nature of prophethood, and the divine dimensions of religious teachings. It is unable to grasp certain matters and has its inherent boundaries. The intellect can only perceive within its capacities and should not be regarded as the final arbiter (Khaldun, n.d.).

Moreover, it is imperative to rely on the guidance provided by divine sources, such as the Qur'an and the Sunnah, which encompass knowledge and wisdom that surpass the limitations of the human intellect. These sources offer guidance on matters of faith, ethics, and the principles of religious teachings that go beyond the intellectual capacity of human beings. Thus, achieving a comprehensive and holistic understanding of religious matters necessitates balancing the intellect with the guidance of divine sources.

A balanced approach is fundamental when dealing with religious matters, acknowledging the role of the intellect while being aware of its limitations. The intellect should not be the sole criterion for judging the authenticity or validity of religious teachings. Instead, it should be considered as a complementary tool alongside the guidance provided by the devine sources. By adopting this approach,

a comprehensive and harmonious understanding of religious teachings can be achieved. Likewise, the Sunnah of the Prophet can be viewed as a manifestation of the intellect's interaction with the contemporary reality during its evaluation. The Sunnah is influenced by the temporal circumstances prevailing in that era, underscoring the overarching influence of the intellect over the Sunnah. However, it is important to note that the claim regarding the dominance of intellect over the Sunnah requires further scholarly examination and a nuanced understanding of the context.

METHODS

This paper employs analytical research methods and draws upon a variety of scholarly sources, including *Hadith* literature, principles of *Hadith*, works of moderate scholars, and academic articles published in national and international journals. The study primarily focuses on exploring the relationship between Islamic Sharia and intellect, specifically investigating whether intellect is deemed desirable or undesirable within the framework of Islamic Sharia (Mustafa et al., 2018; Toor & Ofori, 2009). The paper addresses the following key questions: What is the nature of the relationship between intellect and Shariah? Do they align or diverge? Additionally, the study delves into the perspectives of Muslim scholars regarding the compatibility of intellect with the *Hadiths* of the Prophet (PBUH). It examines whether a *Hadith* that contradicts reason can be considered weak or not. Finally, the article concludes by synthesizing the viewpoints of scholars who reject the supremacy of intellect over *Hadith* and those who advocate for the prioritization of intellect over Prophetic *Hadith*.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Methods of Authentication of a Prophetic Hadith

Verify the authenticity of a *Hadith*, scholars specializing in *Hadith* studies have developed systematic methods to evaluate its credibility. These methods serve the purpose of determining the accuracy or weakness of a *Hadith*:

The first method involves examining the *Isnad*, which refers to the chain of narrators tracing back to the original source. Through a meticulous scrutiny of the *Isnad*, scholars assess various aspects related to the narrators, such as their reliability, consistency, potential biases, integrity, and their ability to accurately transmit the *Hadith*. This examination encompasses evaluating factors such as *Ittisāl* (continuous transmission), *Inqitā'* (discontinuity), *Tadlis* (concealment of a narrator's identity), as well as any indications of leniency or moral flaws within the chain.

The scholars of *Hadith* examine the credibility and trustworthiness of the narrator from whom the *Hadith* was heard. This involves scrutinizing the narrator's character, reputation, and reliability in transmitting information. In this stage the scholars of *Hadith* evaluate the integrity and reliability of the narrators throughout the entire chain of transmission, considering whether they are known for their honesty and trustworthiness.

In this method the scholars investigate whether the first narrator in the chain was present at the time of the event or when the *Hadith* was originally conveyed. They assess whether the narrator could have understood the information accurately and faithfully transmitted it.

The scholars consider whether the narrated *Ḥadīth* is suitable for the time and place when it was transmitted. They examine whether the narration aligns with the context and circumstances of the era in which the narrator relayed it. This analysis helps determine the likelihood of the incident occurring during the narrators' era.

The second method involves analyzing the content of the *Ḥadīth*, this entails comparing narrations from different companions of the Prophet, contrasting the accounts of *Ḥadīth* scholars across different periods, comparing the narratives of a scholar's students with each other, and assessing the consistency between the accounts of different contemporary scholars.

In this method the text of the *Ḥadīth* may be compared to verses from the Qur'ān, other *Ḥadīth* narrations, books, and reliable sources. This rigorous process of comparative analysis enables scholars to discern the authenticity of the *Ḥadīth*, differentiate between accurate and fabricated elements, and critically evaluate the reliability of the narrators involved. According to Al-A'zamī, this process of comparison and assessment, aimed at determining the authenticity of *Ḥadīth*, has been practiced since the time of the Prophet (PBUH). Over time, it has evolved, branched out, and become a fundamental methodology employed by contemporary scholars for evaluating the veracity of *Ḥadīth* narrations (Farida, 2020).

Can the Opposition of Intellect to a Ḥadīth be Regarded as an Indicator of its Inherent Weakness?

This research addresses the fundamental question of whether *Ḥadīth*s of the Prophet (PBUH) can be considered weak when they appear to contradict intellect. Some Muslim scholars argue that no *Ḥadīth* of the Prophet, conflicts with intellect. According to Imam Ibn Taymīyah, no *Ḥadīth* can contradict sound intellect or the clear verses of the Holy Qur'an. If a *Ḥadīth* appears to do so, it must either be weak or fabricated. He further asserts that texts found in the Qur'an and the authentic Sunnah, transmitted through reliable chains, can never be in opposition to intellect (Ibn-Taymīyah, n.d.).

Similarly, in his book *Sharḥ Nukhbah Al-Fikr*, Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī identifies indicators that can aid in identifying fabricated *Ḥadīth*s. These indicators include cases where the condition of the narrator contradicts the text of the Qur'an, the mutawatir Sunnah (widely transmitted reports), the consensus of scholars, or explicit reasoning (Al-'Asqalānī, n.d.).

Certain orientalist, such as Goldziher, Nicholas, William Muir, and Sprenger, have criticized scholars of *Ḥadīth* methodology, claiming that they neglect the content of *Ḥadīth*s and excessively focus on the chain of transmission. Nicholas Agendas argues that *Ḥadīth* scholars largely overlooked the content of *Ḥadīth*s and considered any *Ḥadīth* with a connected chain (Mutasil) to the Prophet as authentic. External criticism of a *Ḥadīth* is closely connected to its internal criticism, which involves scrutinizing its textual aspects. Merely establishing the trustworthiness of a narrator based on their honesty and integrity is insufficient. Instead, their narrations must be cross-referenced with other reliable narrators known for their accuracy and precision. Furthermore, these narrations should be evaluated against the principles, rules, and objectives of *Sharī'ah* (*Maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*), sound intellect, and historical consistency.

Narrations that align with these principles are accepted, while those conflicting with them are rejected (*Al-Aḥḍab*, n.d.).

In the realm of Islamic scholarship, the objective of utilizing sound reasoning in evaluating Ḥadīth is to distinguish authentic traditions from unreliable ones. Overall, the use of reasoning in assessing Ḥadīth serves to establish a rigorous framework for discerning the authenticity, relevance, and applicability of traditions attributed to the Prophet Muhammad. It enables scholars to navigate the vast corpus of Ḥadīth literature and ensure its alignment with the principles of Islam, thereby enhancing the integrity and reliability of Islamic scholarship (*Azaddin*, 2022).

Scholars who argue for the existence of Ḥadīths in the books of Ḥadīth, including *Ṣaḥīḥ* al-Bukhārī, that seemingly contradict intellect have provided numerous examples to support their argument. The following are a few illustrations of such instances. One of the hadiths that some scholars claim contradicts reason is the hadith narrated by Imam Muslim in his *Saḥīḥ*, from Aisha, she said: "Sahla bint Suhail came to the Prophet (peace be upon him) and said, "O Messenger of Allah, I see something in the face of Abu Hudhayfah from Salim's entrance, and Salim is his freed slave." The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "Breastfeed him." Sahla replied, "How can I breastfeed him when he is a grown man?" Upon this, the Prophet (peace be upon him) smiled and said, "I knew that he is a grown man." (Muslim 1453, Abu Dawood 2061). This hadith was not exclusively narrated by Imam Muslim; it was also narrated by Abu Dawood, Al-Nasa'i, Al-Bayhaqi, and Abdul Razzaq, among others.

Critics have raised objections to this hadith, stating that it goes against reason. They question how the Prophet (peace be upon him) could command a woman to breastfeed an adult man and how this breastfeeding would make him impermissible to her in marriage. They find this difficult to accept and mock the hadith (*Arifin*, 2018).

Other scholars believe that this hadith is not against the intellect. They think the objection against this hadith is a result of ignorance because they fail to understand the hadith and the reasons behind it. If they knew the context, they would realize that this ruling is a manifestation of the mercy and greatness of Islam and its noble Messenger (peace be upon him). This hadith can be approached from two perspectives. Firstly, this hadith is a unique and exceptional case that is not repeated nor can it be generalized. It pertains specifically to Salim and Sahla, the wife of Abu Hudhayfah. None of the companions reported or acted upon this except for Lady Aisha, who recognized the permissibility of using this concession for someone in a similar situation. Moreover, the Prophet's wives responded to her before these critics made their claims. Secondly, when we understand the reason behind this hadith, the objection is resolved. This hadith provided a solution to a problem that arose due to a legal ruling. The issue was that the Arabs had the custom of adoption, which was not problematic for them. Even the Prophet (peace be upon him) himself adopted Zaid bin Harithah. Abu Hudhayfah had adopted a child named Salim, who was considered part of their family and lived with Abu Hudhayfah and his wife, Sahla. However, Allah revealed a prohibition on adoption, stating that these children were not their biological children but rather their brethren. Therefore, Abu Hudhayfah faced a dilemma regarding what to do with Salim after all those years. Should he be expelled from their home? Where would he go? At the same time, how could Abu Hudhayfah

forbid Salim from entering upon his own wife? Sahla approached the Prophet (peace be upon him) seeking a solution to this difficult problem. The Prophet (peace be upon him) then informed her of this unique solution, which was for her to breastfeed Salim, making him her legally recognized son through breastfeeding.

Another example that scholars often refer to is a *Ḥadīth* found in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*. This narration recounts that Allah sent the angel of death to Moses (peace be upon him) to take his life. In response, Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) became angry and struck the angel, resulting in the loss of his sight. Some scholars consider this incident to conflict with intellect due to the idea of a prophet physically assaulting an angel. This raises questions about the divine wisdom behind such an event and the expected behavior of a prophet in that situation.

This *Ḥadīth* narrated by *Abu Hurairah* that the prophet said: "The Angel of Death was sent to Moses when he came to Moses, Moses slapped him in the eye. The angel returned to his Lord and said, you have sent me to a Slave who does not want to die. Allah said: Return to him and tell him to put his hand on the back of an ox and for every hair that will come under it, he will be granted one year of life. Moses said, "O Lord! What will happen after that?" Allah replied, "Then death. Moses said: Let it come now. Moses then requested Allah to let him die close to the Sacred Land so much so that he would be at a stone's throw from it." (*Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 1993, p1250, *Ḥadīth* number 3226)

While most Sunni scholars uphold the authenticity of all the *Hadiths* included in *Sahih al-Bukhari*, as evident from the title Imam Bukhari assigned to his book, "*Al-Jāmi' al-Shayḥu Almsndu Min Aḥādīthi Rasūl Allāh Wsmnb Wa-Ayyāmub*" [Rizapoor & Zafari \(2021\)](#), there exists a divergence of opinions among scholars regarding certain narrations. One specific *Hadith* has come under scrutiny due to its perceived contradiction to rational thinking. Certain scholars contend that this particular *Hadith* is weak and cannot be deemed acceptable, providing the following arguments to support their position.

It seems unlikely that the angel of death could be blinded by a prophet as great and esteemed as Moses. Considering the hierarchy of creation, angels are generally perceived as larger and stronger than humans. Hence, it raises questions as to how Moses was able to blind the angel of death. In the *Ḥadīth*, it is mentioned that the angel approached Allah and expressed surprise at encountering someone who did not wish to die. This implies a lack of knowledge on Allah's part, whereas it is well-known that nothing is concealed from Allah's awareness. Based on these arguments, some scholars challenge the authenticity of this *Ḥadīth*, citing its perceived inconsistency with reason and intellect.

There is another *Hadīth* that has been the subject of controversy among scholars due to its apparent contradiction with rationality. This *Hadith* revolves around the account of the moon being split into two parts, as narrated by *Anas*: The people of Makkah asked the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, to show them a sign. So, he showed them the splitting of the moon, until they saw the mountain of Hira' between its two halves. (*Al-Bukhārī*, V.5, p.49, *Ḥadīth* Number 3868)

The scholars who hold this viewpoint argue that the authenticity of this *Ḥadīth* is questionable. According to their perspective, the intellect raises doubts about the occurrence of such a monumental event in history, especially considering the absence of any mention of it in the accounts of common people

or in the historical records of civilizations worldwide.

There is another *Ḥadīth* narrated by *Abu Hurairah* in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* that the prophet said:

إذا وقع الذباب في شراب أحدكم فليغمسه ثم لينزهه، فإن في إحدى جناحيه
داء والأخرى شفاء

It means: “When a fly falls in the drink of one of you, he should fully dip it and then throw it away because there is a disease in one of its wings and cure in the other” (*Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 1993, vol. 3, p.1206, *Ḥadīth* number: 3142)

Some moderate scholars contend that this *Ḥadīth* may be questionable as it appears to contradict common sense. Their argument stems from the assertion that modern science has demonstrated that flies are one of the primary carriers of diseases and epidemics among humans. Consequently, they question the rationale behind the Prophet (peace be upon him) instructing people to dip flies into their drinks before removing them (*Al-Dawsarī*, 2023).

The other *Ḥadīth* that scholars think it is against the intellect is the *Ḥadīth* narrated by Anas bin Malik that: A group of individuals from the tribes of Al‘ukul Wa Al‘rynh approached the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and embraced Islam. They expressed their difficulty in adapting to the climate of Medina, as they were accustomed to a lifestyle centered around livestock rather than farming. In response, the Prophet (peace be upon him) made provisions for them by providing camels and a shepherd. He instructed them to rely on the milk and urine of these camels for sustenance. However, upon reaching a place called Alḥarah, these individuals renounced their faith, committed apostasy, and engaged in heinous acts. They killed the appointed shepherd and stole the camels. Upon learning of these events, the Prophet (peace be upon him) dispatched a group to pursue them, and they were subsequently apprehended and brought back. Considering their grave offenses, the Prophet (peace be upon him) issued a punishment. Their eyes were branded with heated iron bars, and their hands were amputated. They were then left in Alḥarah until they perished in that state (*Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 1993, vol.4, p. 1535, *Ḥadīth* Number: 3956).

These contemporary scholars hold the view that the practice of consuming camel urine for therapeutic purposes is both illogical and incorrect. They argue that it lacks reason and is not deemed acceptable by individuals of sound judgment. In their perspective, the idea of drinking camel urine as a remedy for illnesses is regarded as irrational and is unlikely to be embraced by individuals who possess a rational mindset.

The scholars of today have raised concerns about the authenticity of a particular *Hadith* narrated by Aumi Sharik in *Saḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, as they believe it contradicts rationality and reasoning, she says: Allah’s messenger ordered geckos to be killed, saying the gecko blew on Abraham (*Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol.3, p.1226, *Ḥadīth* Number: 3180)

These scholars argue that the mentioned *Hadith*, which narrates the Prophet ordered the killing of a gecko, raises concerns due to its contradiction with observable natural behavior. They assert that geckos, being creatures with an aversion to fire, would not willingly approach a blazing fire to blow on it as it would result in their own harm. Moreover, they highlight those animals and

insects, in general, do not possess emotions such as hatred and revenge, and they only cause harm in response to being harmed unless they have been specifically trained, such as in the case of a trained dog. Therefore, these scholars find it difficult to reconcile the reported action of the Prophet with the behavior and nature of geckos and other animals (Karmish & Mohibi, 2021).

There is another Ḥadīth in which it is said that the Prophet Suleiman said: 'Tonight, I will sleep with seventy ladies each of whom will conceive a child who will be a knight fighting for "Allah's Cause.' His companion said, 'If Allah will.' But Solomon did not say so; therefore, none of those women got pregnant except one who gave birth to a half-child.' The Prophet further said, "If the Prophet Solomon had said it (i.e., 'If Allah will') he would have begotten children who would have fought in Allah's Cause (Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, 1993, vol.4, p162, Ḥadīth number: 3424).

Some Scholars argue that these statements go against common sense and require objective evidence to be considered valid. They provide the following reasons to support their viewpoint. From a logical standpoint, it appears highly improbable for a single individual to possess the physical endurance and the necessary amount of time to engage in sexual intercourse with 70 or 90 women in a single night. Considering the elevated moral standards expected of a prophet chosen by Allah, it becomes challenging to accept that such explicit and intimate language would be publicly uttered by a prophet. It appears inconsistent for a revered prophet like Suleiman to make a request to Allah, stating that He would grant him 70 or 90 sons who would all fight in the way of Allah. The ability to determine the number and gender of children is considered a divine power that is beyond human influence. Based on these observations, scholars argue that these statements lack credibility and coherence with established principles of reason and logic.

Likewise, some scholars contend that the companions of the Prophet voiced their objections to certain Hadiths that appeared to contradict common sense. They provide examples to support their stance, such as the Hadith narrated by Abu Hurairah in which the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated, "Anyone who has washed a dead body must bathe himself, and he who carries it must perform ablution." These scholars argue that this Hadith raises rational concerns, and they present the following points as evidence. From a logical standpoint, there seems to be no apparent justification as to why someone who has washed a deceased person's body would need to undergo a complete body bath. The act of washing a dead body does not inherently contaminate the person performing the task. Similarly, it is not immediately clear why someone who has carried a deceased person would need to perform ablution. Carrying a dead body does not require ritual purification, as the body itself lacks the capacity to invalidate ablution.

These scholars contend that these aspects challenge the rationality of the mentioned Hadith, highlighting potential inconsistencies between its teachings and logical reasoning. Based on these considerations, the scholars assert that the reported Hadith seems to contradict rationality and lacks a clear rationale for the prescribed actions. They contend that the companions of the Prophet, known for their sound intellect, would have expressed their concerns, or sought clarification when faced with such instances (Al-Tayalisi, 1999, vol. 4, p. 75, Hadith number: 2433).

Moreover, when this Hadith was brought to the attention of Aisha, she

strongly objected and expressed her disapproval. Aisha's reaction was one of astonishment as she exclaimed, "Glory be to Allah! Are Muslim dead bodies impure and filthy to the extent that the person who washes them must then perform a complete ablution? The person who washes the deceased only touches the staff upon which the body was placed. Why should ablution be required merely for handling a dead body?" Aisha's response highlights her surprise and disbelief regarding the implications of the Hadith. She questions the notion that Muslim corpses would be inherently impure or contaminated to the extent that those who handle them require additional purification through ablution. Aisha's argument focuses on the fact that the individual involved in the ritual washing of the deceased primarily touches the staff or support upon which the body rests, rather than directly touching the body itself. Therefore, Aisha challenges the rationale behind mandating ablution for such an act, considering the absence of any apparent transfer of impurity or contamination. Her strong objection further strengthens the position of the scholars who argue against the acceptability of this specific Hadith. It emphasizes that even esteemed companions of the Prophet raised concerns and voiced their reservations when encountering narratives that appeared to contradict sound reasoning (Al-Baihaqi, 2003, vol. 1, p. 458, Hadith number: 1472).

However, scholars who challenge the superiority of intellect over the Hadiths of the Prophet contend that the objections raised by companions like Aisha, who held esteemed positions as both the wife and mother of the believers, were not solely based on perceived conflicts with reason. They argue that additional factors were taken into consideration, including the presence of contradictory narrations associated with the criticized Hadith.

According to these scholars, the companions' objections were not solely rooted in the apparent contradiction with reason but were also influenced by their comprehensive understanding of the Prophetic traditions. They meticulously examined the entire corpus of narrations and critically assessed the authenticity, reliability, and consistency of the Hadiths. In cases where conflicting reports or alternative narratives existed, the companions, including Aisha, carefully weighed the overall context and supporting evidence before arriving at their conclusions. By emphasizing the existence of other contributing factors, these scholars highlight the comprehensive approach adopted by the companions in evaluating Hadiths, suggesting that their criticisms were not solely driven by intellectual disagreements. They argue for a more nuanced perspective, acknowledging that multiple factors, including the presence of contradictory narrations, played a role in shaping the companions' responses to specific Hadiths.

Likewise, certain scholars contend that intellect alone is not an authoritative criterion for matters pertaining to the Shari'ah (Islamic law). In support of this viewpoint, Ibn Taymīyah argues that the intellect cannot independently serve as a guiding principle in comprehending the complexities of divine affairs and matters of judgment. Consequently, he asserts that he will not accept intellectual evidence unless it is validated and endorsed by the Shari'ah. According to Ibn Taymīyah, he refrains from placing excessive trust in his personal opinions or interpretations concerning these profound and sacred subjects. He also expresses skepticism towards individuals who rely solely on their intellect to determine what they perceive as right or correct. Instead, he emphasizes the importance of aligning one's understanding with the teachings and principles of the Shari'ah, which holds

ultimate authority in guiding and shaping religious matters (Ibn Taymīyah, 1991, vol. 1, p. 108).

Similarly, Ibn al-Qayyim asserts that anyone who opposes divine revelation with their intellect is susceptible to having their mind corrupted, leading them to make statements that wise individuals in society would find laughable (Ibn Alqyim, n.d., vol. 2, p. 636).

Furthermore, advocates of this theory contend that the assessment of the authenticity or inauthenticity of Hadiths should not be reliant on the judgment of intellect alone. They raise a crucial question: if we were to establish intellect as the standard for determining the authenticity or inauthenticity of prophetic Hadiths, then we must consider which intellect should be deemed as the criterion. What defines the criteria of intellect that would classify a Hadith as weak or accurate? If we were to consider all intellects as the basis, not only prophetic Hadiths but also numerous verses of the Holy Quran would be rejected, as they may contradict the intellect of certain individuals. For instance, would intellect accept the idea that a person can be thrown into a fire unharmed, without being burnt? Would intellect accept that a mere stick can transform into a snake? Hence, the most reasonable approach is to accept and uphold the words of Allah and His Prophet without seeking alternatives.

Similarly, critics of the theory advocating the supremacy of intellect over prophetic Hadiths present counterarguments against granting the intellect the authority to determine the authenticity and reliability of such narrations. They support their viewpoint by referring to a narration attributed to Ali bin Abi Talib, which serves as evidence in favor of their argument. According to Ali, he states: If the religion were based on opinion, it would be more important to wipe the under part of the shoe than the upper, but I have seen Allah's messenger wiping over the upper part of his shoes (Abu Daud, 1332, vol. 1, p.63, Ḥadīth number:162).

Another aspect that challenges the precedence of intellect over the Hadiths of the Prophet is the inherent variability in individuals' comprehension and understanding. What may appear ambiguous to one person may be clear to another, and this disparity is evident even in mundane worldly matters. Ibn Taymīyah aptly captures this idea, stating, "Undoubtedly, some individuals possess intellectual knowledge that others may lack, even if they cannot articulate it to others. What is clearly comprehensible to the intellect will not contradict the principles of the Shari'ah. In essence, an authentic narration will not conflict with sound reasoning". In his article titled "Even Ibn Taymīyah Considers Intellect to be Based on Narration," Rashid Barakat discusses the perspective that if a Hadith attributed to the Prophet includes content that is impossible or irrational, it cannot be considered authentic since Prophets do not advocate actions that defy reason or go beyond the realm of possibility. In support of this notion, Imam Ibn Taymīyah asserts, "We comprehend that prophets do not enjoin actions that are logically impossible" (Al-Barakat, 2023).

According to Imam al-Ghazali, the intellect is inherently limited and incapable of fully comprehending the intricacies of many matters. While it may grasp general concepts, it falls short of understanding the specifics of Shari'ah-related issues. Consequently, there are instances where Shari'ah confirms the conclusions of intellect, while in other cases, it rebukes the intellect for its errors and lack of knowledge. Furthermore, Shari'ah serves as a reminder to the intellect regarding forgotten matters and enlightens it on subjects that it fails to grasp

independently. An example of this is the detailed understanding of prayer, including the specific number of rak'ahs required for Zuhur prayer and the way it should be performed, as well as matters concerning the afterlife. Due to the limited capacity of the intellect to comprehensively grasp most matters, the superiority of Shari'ah, particularly prophetic Hadith, becomes apparent (Azahari et al., 2021; Safdar et al., 2022). Similarly, Imam Shāṭibī states: Allah has defined a limit for the understanding of intellects, which cannot be surpassed. If the field of knowledge for the intellect were endless and it could comprehend all subjects, then it would be equal to Allah in this aspect. On the contrary, human intellect has finite knowledge while the knowledge of Allah is infinite (Padela & Qureshi, 2019).

The superiority of Shari'ah over intellect is also demonstrated by the limitations inherent in the judgments of intellect. We do not consider the judgments of intellect to be absolute and infallible in all worldly matters and aspects of life. If this is the case, then how can we attribute absolute authority to intellect in matters of religion and worldly life?

Muhammad bin Ali bin Jameel, in his article titled "The Hypothetical Conflict between Al-Naql Wa-Al-'aql" emphasizes that when there is a conflict between intellect and Shari'ah, Shari'ah takes precedence. This is because intellect is a human faculty that is imperfect and fallible, while Shari'ah is divinely related and encompasses completeness and comprehensiveness. The apparent conflict observed between intellect and Shari'ah is superficial, and, there is no genuine conflict between intellect and the authentic Hadiths of the Prophet. Essentially, the limitations and imperfections of human intellect render it inadequate to be the ultimate authority in matters of religious guidance and worldly affairs. The all-encompassing nature of Shari'ah, being derived from Allah, surpasses the limitations of human intellect, and provides a comprehensive framework for guidance. There exists a very close relationship between Shari'ah and intellect; intellect is like the eye, and Shari'ah is like light. Just as one cannot benefit from their eyes without light, similarly, a wise person cannot correctly and perfectly utilize their intellect without the guidance of revelation.

CONCLUSION

The value of intellect is a central tenet of Islam. The Quran and Hadith both emphasize the importance of using reason and logic to understand the world and to live a moral life. This emphasis on intellect has led to a rich tradition of Islamic scholarship, in which scholars have used their intellects to interpret the Quran and Hadith, to develop legal and theological frameworks, and to engage in philosophical and scientific discourse. The existence of an inseparable connection between intellect and Shari'ah is evident in the scholarly discourse, where the principle of the intellect is a criterion for assessing the authenticity of Hadiths has been established. The consensus among scholars is that if a Hadith contradicts clear and sound intellect, it should be considered weak. Uncertainty about the authenticity of a Hadith, coupled with its conflict with intellect, strengthens the argument for its weakness. It is widely accepted that the Prophet Muhammad would not convey anything to his Ummah that goes against sound intellect. In cases where a Hadith is both Sahih (authentic) and conflicts with intellect, there are differing opinions among Muslim scholars. The majority opinion asserts that

priority should be given to the Ḥadīth, as it is viewed as a divine revelation and connected to the Prophet. They argue that intellect, being a human faculty, is prone to limitations and imperfections. However, there is a perspective represented by Muslim modernists and rationalists who advocate against accepting any Ḥadīth that contradicts intellect. They argue for the superiority of intellect and emphasize the importance of rationality in interpreting religious texts. In summary, while the majority of scholars prioritize the Ḥadīth over intellect in cases of conflict, there is a significant debate within the Muslim scholarly community. The ongoing discourse underscores the dynamic nature of Islamic scholarship and the diverse perspectives on the role of intellect in interpreting religious teachings. Further research and dialogue are necessary to explore and reconcile these differing viewpoints for a comprehensive understanding of the intellectual framework within Islam.

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