

THE 'ILLAT APPROACH IN ANALYZING THE HADITH ABOUT ISBAL: A STUDY OF THE PROHIBITION

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Abstract:

This study discusses the application of the science of 'illat al-hadith in understanding and analyzing the traditions about the prohibition of isbal, which is extending clothes beyond the ankles. Isbal is a fiqh issue that causes differences in views among scholars, so it requires in-depth study of the historical aspects and context of Islamic law. This research uses a qualitative approach with a literature study method, examining the traditions that mention the prohibition of isbal absolutely and those that relate it to the intention of arrogance (Kibr). The results show two approaches in understanding the prohibition of isbal. First, the absolute prohibition that applies regardless of the intention of the perpetrator. Second, the conditional prohibition that makes the element of pride as illat or cause of the law. This 'illat approach emphasizes the moral purpose of sharia, which is to avoid arrogance, not only assessing external aspects such as the length of clothing. Thus, this approach provides an understanding that is more contextual and relevant to the conditions of modern society. It opens up space for a more flexible interpretation of the law, while still maintaining the basic principles of Islamic sharia. This approach emphasizes the importance of understanding the essence of the law, not just the external form of behavior.

Keywords: Absolute Prohibition, Arrogance, Hadith Science, 'Illat Al-Hadith, Isbal

INTRODUCTION

The birth of hadith science cannot be separated from the widespread circulation of false hadiths, which reached its peak in the 3rd century Hijri (Alfaris, 2024). This condition encouraged scholars to develop various methods and theories in the science of hadith to select, study, and assess the authenticity of the circulating narrations (Al-Siba'i, 1966). As the second source of Islamic teachings after the Qur'an, hadiths play a central role in guiding the community toward the perfection of morals and spirituality (Tathmainnul et al., 2024). Hadiths function not only as historical texts but also as life guidelines that remain relevant across time.

Within the treasury of hadith knowledge, there are several branches of science that are important for researchers to master, one of which is the science of ('Ilm 'Illat al-Hadith) (Amaliyah et al., 2024). This science holds a vital role in determining the validity of a hadith because scholars agree that one of the conditions for accepting a hadith is that it must be free from defects or



anomalies ('Illat). However, detecting the presence of ('Illat) in hadiths is not an easy task (Sultani et al., 2024). This discipline demands strong memorization ability, sharp intuition, comprehensive understanding, and profound experience in hadith studies.

The high complexity of this science shows the urgency to study its aspects, ranging from definitions, scope, to its functions in contemporary research (Alfaris & Supriyanto, 2024). One important approach in hadith studies is the ('Illat) approach, which is a method that traces the cause or motive behind a legal ruling within the hadith. The term 'illat originates from the Arabic word 'Illah (العلّة), which means cause or reason. In the context of hadith science, this approach aims to explore the rational dimension behind the wording of the hadith, so that it can be understood whether the law contained within applies absolutely, conditionally, or can change according to social and historical contexts.

One example of traditions that are often the subject of debate both in terms of fiqh and dress etiquette are those related to isbal, which is the lengthening of clothing beyond the ankles. The prohibition of isbal is found in several narrations with different wording, some of which, such as: are absolute, while others require the presence of pride (Kibr) (Dahlia et al., 2021). This variation demands an in-depth analytical approach so that the legal interpretation remains fair and appropriate to the context. In this case, the 'illat approach becomes very relevant to understand the context and intention behind the prohibition.

Within the framework of *usul fiqh* and Islamic legal theory (*Ushuliyyah*), 'illat is understood as the reason or factor underlying a shariah ruling. By understanding the 'illat of the isbal prohibition, we can determine whether the law applies universally without conditions, or only under certain circumstances, such as the presence of an arrogant intention, as mentioned in some narrations. These aspects will be further analyzed in the discussion section to thoroughly examine how the 'illat approach can be used in understanding hadiths about isbal, as well as how this approach contributes to the development of a contextual and proportional understanding of Islamic law (Ishak Fariduddin, 2022).

RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with the type of library research (Ab Rahim et al., 2024). This approach was chosen because the focus of the research is an in-depth analysis of the hadith text about isbal, with the aim of understanding the wisdom, prohibition, and context of its application based on the approach ('Illat). The data analyzed are in the form of hadith texts related to the theme of isbal, both from the main hadith books and literature that discusses 'Illat in hadith. The primary data sources in this study come from a collection of secondary data sources which include books of classical and contemporary hadith scholars, journal articles, and relevant academic works (Alabood et al., 2023). Data collection techniques are conducted through

documentation and literature study, by identifying, classifying, and reviewing data related to the concept of isbal and ('Illat) hadith (Akbarighatar et al., 2023).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Absolute Prohibition Against Isbal

As previously explained by the researcher, regarding the mechanism of dressing, isbal is one of the fairly controversial topics among Muslims, from the classical period to the present modern era. The assessment of this issue must be made using the correct perspective and standard viewpoint. Therefore, it is necessary to reiterate the hadiths related to isbal, among which are the following:

مَا أَسْفَلَ مِنَ الْكَعْبَيْنِ مِنَ الْإِزَارِ فِي النَّارِ

"Anything below the ankles from the garment will be in the Hellfire."
[Hadith narrated by Bukhari 5797, Ibn Majah 3573, Ahmad 2/96].

مَا أَسْفَلَ مِنَ الْكَعْبَيْنِ مِنَ الْإِزَارِ فِي النَّارِ

Meaning: "Cloth that is below the ankles will be in Hell." (HR. Bukhari no. 5787).

These hadiths and others with similar meanings can be said to indicate that isbal is absolutely prohibited by the Prophet (peace be upon him) without distinguishing whether it is done out of arrogance or without arrogance. This is because the wording of the prohibition is expressed in an absolute form without specifying the reason. From the text, the prohibition regarding isbal in these hadiths is absolute, so the prohibition does not depend on certain conditions but applies universally, whether accompanied by arrogance or not (Hidayat & Markos, 2019).

Among the scholars who hold this view are Imam Abu Hanifah, some Hanbali scholars, and also some contemporary scholars who emphasize the principle of sadd adh-dhari'ah (blocking the means leading to harm) (Alfaris, 2024). According to them, allowing garments to hang below the ankles can become a gateway to arrogance or unnecessary luxury, thus it must be totally avoided.

From the ushul fiqh perspective, this absolute approach employs the principle "Al-'Ibrah bi 'Umum Al-Lafz La bi Khusush As-Sabab" (the consideration is based on the generality of the wording, not the particularity of the reason). Since the wording of the hadith is general and does not mention any conditions, the prohibition applies universally, covering all circumstances. Moreover, the threat of Hellfire punishment for those who commit isbal indicates that this act is not a minor issue in Islamic law but rather an aspect of manners and ethics in dressing that must be maintained. This shows the great attention Islam gives to outward appearances that can reflect the inner condition of a Muslim.

Nevertheless, some scholars who understand this prohibition as absolute still note that it is more of a strong recommendation (taḥdīb) intended to preserve dignity and modesty in clothing, as well as to avoid the emergence of

arrogance in the heart. Therefore, they invite Muslims to strive to maintain the shari'ah boundaries in dressing as an expression of obedience and emulation of the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him). Thus, the understanding of the absolute prohibition of isbal aims to build awareness among Muslims about the importance of maintaining etiquette in dressing, simplicity, and distancing oneself from behaviors that could damage the heart, as well as demonstrating commitment to Islamic values both externally and internally (Afwadzi & Miski, 2020).

Conditional Prohibition (Based on the 'Illat of Pride)

In addition to the hadiths that absolutely prohibit isbal (wearing clothes that are below the ankles), there are also narrations that indicate that this prohibition is closely related to the element of pride. In several hadiths, the Prophet links the prohibition of wearing long clothes with arrogance (*Kibr*), thus implying that the main reason for the prohibition of isbal is because of the arrogant intention or motivation behind the act. Among these hadiths are:

لَا يَنْظُرُ اللَّهُ إِلَى مَنْ جَرَّ ثَوْبَهُ خِيَلًا

"Allah does not look at the one who drags his garment out of pride." (HR. Muslim no. 5574).

إِنَّ الَّذِي يُرْثِي ثِيَابَهُ مِنَ الْإِلَاءِ لَا يَنْظُرُ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ

"Indeed, the one who drags his garment out of pride, Allah will not look at him on the Day of Resurrection." (HR. Muslim no. 5576).

These hadiths explicitly mention the element of *kibr* (arrogance) as the main cause ('illah) of the prohibition of isbal. In other words, the prohibition of wearing clothes that extend below the ankles in these hadiths is not absolute, but depends on the presence of arrogant motivation. If a person practices isbal without arrogance, then the severe threat mentioned in these hadiths does not apply to him.

In the approach of 'illah in hadith studies and *ushul fiqh*, it is stated that if a ruling is based on a cause ('illah), then that ruling applies according to the presence of the cause. When the 'illah exists, the ruling applies; when it does not exist, the ruling does not apply. This principle is known as the rule: "*Al-Hukmu Yadûru Ma'a 'Illatihi Wujûdan Wa 'Adaman*" (the ruling revolves around its 'illah, whether it exists or not) (Hidayat & Markos, 2019).

This conditional understanding also accommodates the principle of *maqâshid al-syarī'ah*, which emphasizes the intention and purpose behind actions rather than merely their outward form. Therefore, the focus of the prohibition is essentially to prevent Muslims from exhibiting arrogance, not merely to regulate the length of clothing rigidly.

Furthermore, in the modern context, clothing that extends beyond the ankles is often no longer associated with symbols of social status or arrogance as it was in the Prophet's time, when wearing long garments was a sign of honor among the wealthy or nobility. Therefore, some contemporary scholars argue that as long as arrogance is absent, wearing clothes that cover the ankles is not included in the prohibition that bears a severe warning (Karnedi, 2021).

This 'Illah based interpretation also provides flexibility (taysir) in religious practice and emphasizes the essence of Islamic teachings based on intention and the state of the heart, not just external appearance. However, some scholars still adopt a cautious stance (ihtiyath) by completely avoiding isbal to remain within the safe bounds of differing opinions and to take a more secure position.

From this overall analysis, it can be concluded that understanding isbal through the 'illah approach offers a deeper, contextual perspective in line with the principles of Islamic law that prioritize the substance and moral objectives behind legal provisions (Armansyah, 2019).

CONCLUSION

The study of hadith is an important aspect of Islamic law as it serves as a source of moral and spiritual guidance for human beings. Hadith, which is derived from the Qur'an, is considered the primary text in understanding human moral and spiritual development. They are not just historical texts but are also important aspects of human life in various situations and contexts. One of the most important aspects of hadith is the concept of ('Illat), which refers to the concept of law or legal reason.

In the context of hadith, ('Illat) helps to understand the effectiveness of the law in interpreting the text. Hadith studies such as the study of ('Illat), is a method for understanding and analyzing hadith, especially in the context of fiqh and adab. This study includes understanding the concept of ('Illat), the role of ('Illat) in a ruling, and the motivation behind its interpretation.

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