

WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN THE VIEWS OF MUḤAMMAD AL-GHAZĀLĪ: Hermeneutical Analysis of The Hadith Narrated by Abū Bakrah

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Abstract

This research is motivated by the existence of female leadership which is always in the spotlight in Islamic society where women are not worthy of being leaders for various reasons. One of them is a hadith narrated by Abī Bakrah regarding the leadership of Kisra which is considered a prohibition on women becoming leaders. This research involved library research which used written data sources. Moreover, this research also conducted the hermeneutic method with a socio-historical approach. The results of this research can be concluded that al-Ghazālī emphasized a specification for women who should not be entrusted with leadership duties by the Prophet Muḥammad saw, were women who did not meet the leadership requirements. Consequently, al-Ghazālī believed that this hadith could not be used as a basis for rejecting and accepting women as leaders.

Keywords: *Women's Leadership, Hermeneutics of Muḥammad al-Ghazālī*



Abstrak

Penelitian ini dilatar belakangi oleh adanya kepemimpinan wanita selalu menjadi sorotan dalam masyarakat Islam. Bahwa wanita tidak layak menjadi seorang pemimpin dengan alasan yang beragam, salah satunya adalah sebuah hadis yang diriwayatkan oleh Abū Bakrah tentang kepemimpinan Kisra yang dianggap sebagai larangan bagi kaum wanita menjadi seorang pemimpin. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kepustakaan (library research), dengan menggunakan sumber-sumber data yang tertulis. Penelitian ini juga menggunakan metode hermeneutika dengan pendekatan sosio-historis. Hasil dari penelitian ini dapat disimpulkan, al-Ghazālī memberikan isyarat bahwa wanita yang tidak boleh diserahi tugas sebagai pemimpin oleh Nabi Muḥammad Saw adalah wanita yang tidak memenuhi syarat kepemimpinan. Oleh karenanya, al-Ghazālī berpendapat bahwa hadis tersebut tidak dapat dijadikan sebagai dasar penolakan dan penerimaan wanita sebagai pemimpin.

Kata Kunci: *Kepemimpinan Wanita, Hermeneutika Muḥammad al-Ghazālī*

Introduction

Women's leadership is an issue that never subsides in every space and time. Changes and current development have brought the position of women participating in the public sphere. Currently, the progress and achievements of women are becoming increasingly visible, and nowadays it is not uncommon for women to become leaders in institutions or organizations. Moreover, they have urgent positions in the public domain.¹

Track records have proven that Islam has never discredited women, even in terms of careers and being in public. At the time of the Prophet (pbuh), women's position was not only as wives, companions, and as complements to men, but women were also considered as human beings who had equality in matters and obligations like other humans before Allah SWT.² A number of ulama have different opinions about the position or place of women as leaders, the verses or hadith that they use as *hujjah* are even the same. There are scholars who see that the leadership of a country is limited to men without women, because men are considered to have advantages in governing, expressing opinion, mental strength and character. Meanwhile, most women are gentle.³

In this modern era, leadership is often found to be controlled by women in countries, institutions, foundations, companies, and so on. Indonesia was once led by a woman, namely Mrs. Megawati Soekarno Putri. As is well known in history records,

¹ M. Quraish Shihab, *Perempuan* (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2010), 367.

² Syarifah Mudrika, "WANITA ANTARA POSISI DEPAN DAN PINGGIRAN: Tinjauan Historisitas Hadis Kepemimpinan Perempuan," *AL-Bukhari: Jurnal Ilmu Hadis* 02, no. 1 (2019): 53–68.

³ Marzaniatun, "Konsep Pemimpin Perempuan Dalam Tafsir Al-Misbah" (UINSU-Medan, 2016), 2.

there are several women who took part in the public sphere, such as the daughter of the king of Jayanegara. When she died in 1328, she had no sons. Therefore, her sister replaced her with the title Ratu Tribuana Tunggadewi Jaya Wisnu Wardhani who ruled for 22 years.⁴

Queen Bilqis, the leader of the country of Saba' who ruled well as described in the Qur'an surah al-Naml verses 20-40 and al-Syifa. She was a woman who was good at writing, assigned by Caliph `Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭab as an officer in charge of the market in the city of Medina and others.⁵ The superiority of men over women which has penetrated into Islamic (as well as Jewish and Christian) traditions is not only based on hadith literature, but also on the ulama's interpretations of the verses of the Koran.⁶ As a result of the understanding of the ulama, which considered by Muslim to be an absolute truth, women are always seen as inferior, demeaned, ostracized and limited in their range of movement so that their movements become narrow.

This type of research conducted library research using data sources from written materials in the form of books, magazines, articles, opinions, etc. that were related to the topic of discussion in this research.⁷ Referring to the hermeneutic theory put forward by Muḥammad al-Ghazālī, the approach that can be used in the hadith hermeneutics of women's leadership is the socio-historical approach. Hermeneutics is an approach to the study of texts that emphasizes the interpretation of meaning, taking into account the historical, social and linguistic context of the text. In the context of hadith, a hermeneutic approach is used to understand hadith texts by concerning the conditions of the time of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, e Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, the meaning of words in classical Arabic, as well as the socio-political situation at that time.

This approach seeks to find the deepest meaning of the hadith that is relevant and applicable in the contemporary context. This approach is the study and assessment of sources in the form of past information by collecting, evaluating evidence to establish facts and obtain strong conclusions.⁸ And also understand it from the aspect of social behavior of society at the time the hadith emerged.⁹

Articulation of Women's Leadership, Methods of Understanding Hadith, and Hermeneutics

According to Hersey and Blanchard, a leader is someone who can influence other people or groups to do maximum work that has been determined in accordance

⁴ Azizah Dkk al-Hibri, *Wanita Dalam Masyarakat Indonesia* (Yogyakarta: UIN Sunan Klijaga, 2001), 282.

⁵ Muḥammad Al-Ghazālī, *Al-Islam Wa Al-Thaqah Al-Mu`aṭṭalah* (Kairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Ḥadithah, 1964), 138.

⁷ Mardalis, *Metode Penelitian; Suatu Pendekatan Proposal* (Jakarta: PT. Bumi Aksara, 1999), 28.

⁸ M Yatimin Abdullah, *Studi Islam Gender* (Jakarta: Sinar Grafika Offset, 2006), 222.

⁹ Abdul Mustaqim, *Ilmu Ma'anil Hadis* (Yogyakarta: Idea Press, 2009), 62.

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with organizational goals.¹⁰ In a simpler perspective, Morgan put forward three types of leadership roles which he called 3-A, namely: alighting (igniting employee enthusiasm with individual goals), aligning (combining individual goals with organizational goals so that everyone is heading in the same direction), allowing (giving workers the freedom to organize and change the way they work).¹¹

Meanwhile, the term of woman comes from Arabic, called امرأة and امرأة, the plurals are نساء and نسوة.¹² The word *al-Nisā`* is usually interpreted as a woman (in terms of gender, not the nature of the woman). In the Koran we find many mentions of the word woman with the term *al-Nisā`*. Even Allah SWT immortalized it in the Koran as the name of one of the letters, namely surah *al-Nisā`*, the fourth surah in the Koran.¹³ The term *Imra'ah* means a woman or wife. The word *Imra'ah* then forms the word *Mar`atun* (woman) which is equivalent to the word *Mir`atun* (mirror). This shows the closeness between women and mirrors, or in other words, if there are women, there will also be mirrors, because women and mirrors are two things that are very difficult to separate. Women who dress up or make themselves up will always carry a mirror in their bag.¹⁴

According to the Great Dictionary of the Indonesian Language, woman means a gender, namely a person or human being who has a uterus, experiences menstruation, is pregnant, gives birth and breastfeeds.¹⁵ Meanwhile, the word woman is usually used to denote an adult woman.¹⁶ Women are the opposite sex of men. Etymologically, woman comes from the word "empu" which means "master", a person who is skilled or powerful, the head, the greatest, some say it means respected. In general, it can be understood that the word woman is a term to express a group or type that is different from other groups.¹⁷

In understanding hadith, there are basic principles in understanding the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). Considering that the Prophet's hadith is not just an ordinary text which then requires focused and intent interpretation, as a hadith scientist should understand the basic principles for understanding the Prophet's hadith. There are three basic principles in understanding the Prophet's hadith: *First*, ensuring the legitimacy of the hadith. *Second*, applying a valid polarization of understanding of

¹⁰ Lelo Dkk Sintani, *Dasar Kepemimpinan* (T.th: Yayasan Cendika Mulia Mandiri, 2022), 25.

¹¹ Aspiazain Chanigo, *Pemimpin Dan Kepemimpinan* (Jakarta: Lentera Ilmu Cendikia, 2017), 2.

¹² Al-Butrus al-Bustānī, *Qāmūs Al-Muḥīṭ* (Beirut: Maktabah Lubnan, 1987), 316.

¹³ Yuyun dan Mahmud Heri Gunawan Yulianingsih, *Pendidikan Agama Islam Dalam Keluarga* (Jakarta: Akademia Permata, 2013), 166.

¹⁴ Yulianingsih, 168.

¹⁵ Dendi Dkk Sugono, *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (Jakarta: Pusat Bahasa Departemen Pendidikan Nasional, 2008), 1183.

¹⁶ Sugono, 1616.

¹⁷ Zaitunah Subhan, *Qadrat Perempuan Taqdir Atau Mitos* (Yogyakarta: PT. LKIS, 2004), 19.

hadith. And *third*, understanding the method of deciphering the *ta'ārud ḡahir* in a hadith.¹⁸

Broadly speaking, there are two typologies of understanding hadith, namely: *First*, understanding the Prophet's hadith without considering the historical process that bring forth to "historical", this typology is called textual. *Second*, critical understanding by considering the origins (*asbāb al-Wurūd*) of the hadith and the context surrounding it, understanding hadith in this way is called contextual.¹⁹

Of these two typologies, hadith cannot be understood independently, because understanding hadith is not the same as understanding other Arabic texts, it requires several approaches that support the hadith text. So that the hadith can be understood as needed. The approach needed to analyze the understanding of a hadith is as follows:

a. Language Approach

In the use of language, when the Prophet (pbuh) conveyed a hadith he used Arabic. In terms of language, the Prophet (pbuh), was the most fluent person, so it is very unlikely that the Prophet (pbuh) would have said words in such an ambiguous sentence order that it would be difficult to understand them. As Zuhri said, the Prophet (pbuh) often used figurative words in explaining religion. Therefore, the term *ḡaqiqī-majazī* is a language logic that is very important to pay attention to.²⁰

b. Historical Approach

The historical approach or more popularly known as the historical approach is an attempt to understand the hadith by considering the historical conditions at the time the hadith was revealed by the Prophet (pbuh).²¹ This historical approach emphasizes the reality of why the Prophet (pbuh) decreed this, as well as the historical conditions of society at that time. This approach investigates how societal procedures influence religious teachings. Apart from that, it can understand the origins of opinions, thoughts, attitudes of a group, this approach also aims to find the truth and explanation of the causes and how an event occurs.²²

c. Science Approach

Apart from discussing religion, hadith also discusses empirical knowledge. Thus, it is necessary to make adjustments between the content of the hadith and

¹⁸ U I N Sultan et al., "FIQH AL-HADITS: Perspektif Metodologis Dalam Memahami Hadis Nabi Zul Ikromi" 3, no. 1 (2020): 105–29.

¹⁹ Miro Abbas Baco Fadli Tufail Muh. Nur, Asrullah Muh., Palangkey Rahmi Dewanti, "Teknik Periwiyatan Hadits," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 3, no. 1 (2023): 96–107.

²⁰ Muh Zuhri, *Telaah Matan Hadis Hadis Sebuah Tawaran Metodologi* (Yogyakarta: Lesfi, 2013), 88.

²¹ Ahmad Faidi, "Akulturasi Budaya Islam Dan India: Tinjauan Historis Terhadap Dialektika Kebudayaan Islam Di India Ahmad Faidi*" 1 (2020): 46–54.

²² Faiqotul Mala, *Otoritas Hadis-Hadis Bermasalah Dalam Sahih Al-Bukhari* (Jakarta: PT Gramedia, 2015), 98-99.

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the latest scientific discoveries that discuss the same theme. As Zuhri said, every hadith does not only speak about the scope of religion, but the hadith also discusses the empirical world. Therefore, hadith needs to be understood with empirical knowledge in its field, so that various scientific disciplines, both natural and social knowledge, can be used as contributions in understanding hadith that relate to certain scientific disciplines. Because it should not be possible for religious teachings to conflict with science.²³

d. Cultural Approach

When the Prophet (pbuh) pronounced something, it could not be separated from conditions, situations and cultural realities, it was also impossible for the Prophet to speak in a room devoid of history, so this cultural approach also needs to be considered. Because no matter what, an idea (including the words of the Prophet (pbuh) is of course always related to the culture that already exists in society.²⁴ As said by Ḥasan Asy'arī, the hadith was recorded from an actualization of the Prophet (pbuh), and Arab society already had a culture. When the Prophet (pbuh) entered society, the hadith that was said could not be removed from the cultural context of society at that time. With this cultural approach, we can differentiate between the actions and words of the Prophet (pbuh), those that originate from culture and those that originate from revelation, so that we can obtain a correct understanding in responding to a hadith.²⁵

The term hermeneutics is a derivative of the Greek verb, *hermeneuin*, which is related to the noun *hermenes* and is related to the god in the ancient Greek mythological tradition named *Hermes*.²⁶ *Hermes* was the messenger of the gods to carry God's message using celestial language to humans who used human language. For this purpose, that interpretation is necessary.²⁷ Hermeneutics itself means expressing one's thoughts in words, translating and acting as an interpreter or transferring unclear expressions of thoughts into clearer forms of expression. Therefore, Hermeneutics is basically a method or way of interpreting symbols in the form of text or something that is treated as text to find its meaning and significance, where this hermeneutic method requires the ability to interpret the past which is not natural, then brought to the present.²⁸

²³ Mala, 104-205.

²⁴ Muhammad Misbah, *Studi Kitab Hadis* (2020: Ahlimedia Press, 2020).

²⁵ Mala, 103-104.

²⁶ Syakieb Ahmad Sungkar, Richard Rorty, and Richard Rorty, "Hermeneutika Dan Perannya Dalam Ilmu Sosial-Budaya," 1980, 1-13.

²⁷ Komaruddin Hidayat, *Memahami Sejarah Agama: Sebuah Kajian Hemeneutika* (Jakarta: Paramadina, 1996), 126.

²⁸ Fahrudin Faiz, *Hermeneutika Qur'ani Antara Teks, Konteks Dan Kontekstualisasi* (Bandung: Qalam, 2002), 9.

. In other words, Hermeneutics is a theory of classifying understanding in relation to the interpretation of a text. The main object of study of hermeneutics itself is understanding the meaning of the message contained in the text and its variables, and the main task of hermeneutics is to look for an internal dynamic that regulates the working structure of a text to project itself outward and enable that meaning to emerge.²⁹

Initially, hermeneutics was used by religious groups. Seeing that hermeneutics can provide meaning in classical texts, in the 17th century, the church applied hermeneutical research to uncover the meaning of the Gospel text. When they encounter difficulties in understanding the language and message of the holy book, they conclude that these difficulties will help to be resolved by hermeneutics. Therefore, in this position, hermeneutics is considered as a method for understanding biblical texts. This fact is considered to be the first step in the growth of hermeneutics, namely the movement of interpretation or exegesis at the beginning of its development.³⁰

Muḥammad al-Ghazālī's Views on the Hadith of Women's Leadership

Muhammad al-Ghazālī as a contemporary thinker provides an extensive explanation of how his thoughts on hadith were developed into a systematic method for assessing the authenticity of hadith. Muḥammad al-Ghazālī is a contemporary scholar whose thoughts and works raise many pros and cons. One of Muḥammad al-Ghazālī's works which has attracted a lot of criticism is *al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyah Baina Ahl al-Fiqh Wa Ahl al-Hadīth*.

Muḥammad al-Ghazālī said that in any cases of religion, it is not permissible to only take one hadith, while ignoring other hadiths. But one hadith must be connected to another hadith. Comparison with related hadiths makes the validity of a hadith easier to understand. Regarding this discussion, all hadiths are always examined by al-Ghazālī with more authentic hadiths. This point can be seen when al-Ghazālī gave a statement regarding the hadith prohibiting women from congregating in mosques. This hadith was rejected by al-Ghazālī because it was considered to be contrary to the Prophet's practice of allowing women to participate in congregational prayers in mosques by providing a special door for women to enter the mosque to participate in congregational prayers. According to al-Ghazālī, this hadith also contradicts with more sahih hadith, which reads:

حَدَّثَنَا سُلَيْمَانُ بْنُ حَرْبٍ، حَدَّثَنَا حَمَّادٌ، عَنْ أَيُّوبَ، عَنْ نَافِعٍ، عَنِ ابْنِ عُمَرَ، قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: لَا تَمْنَعُوا إِمَاءَ اللَّهِ مَسَاجِدَ اللَّهِ.

²⁹ Howard, *Hemeneutika, Wacana Analitik, Psikososial Dan Ontologis* (Bandung: Yayasan Nuansa Cendikia, 2000), 14.

³⁰ Sibawaihi, *Hermeneutika Al-Qur'an Fazlur Rahman* (Yogyakarta: Jalasutra, 2007), 7.

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*Reporting us Sulaymān bin Ḥarb, reporting us Ḥammād, from Ayyūb, from Nāfi', from Ibn 'Umar, Rasulullah said: Do not prevent the maid-servants of Allah from going to the mosque.*³¹

Muḥammad al-Ghazālī also rejected the hadith used as an argument by a group of ulama who made it mandatory for women to wear the *niqab*. The hadith that is used as the basis by a group of ulama who require the use of the *niqab* for women is a hadith originating from 'Aisyah which was narrated by Aḥmad, Abū Dāwud and Ibn Mājh. The hadith states that women held out their headscarves from their heads to their faces when they passed several horsemen. According to al-Ghazālī, this hadith contradicts a number of sahih hadith narrations transmitted by Bukhārī, Muslim and others conveyed by a number of the Prophet's companions. Where a number of indications were found in society at that time which showed that women did not wear the *niqab* during the time of the Prophet. For this reason, al-Ghazālī firmly rejected every incident related to this issue.

The study of women and equality is a study that never subsides in every space and time. Even though it has been discussed many times in many places, there are always refreshing efforts that are no less significant to review this matter. This is caused by a societal construct that seems to place women in a minor position, from the past perhaps until now. The involvement of women in public is a historical record of the Prophet. At that time, women took part in the battlefield, had discussions, became teachers for men, and became a source of income for the family and community.³²

In many ways, the tendency to think with a contextual approach involves al-Ghazālī's studies of hadith. This can be seen in al-Ghazālī's disagreement with the prohibition on women acting as leaders based on the hadith narrated by al-Bukhārī which originates from Abū Bakrah. Based on al-Ghazālī's review, he said that the hadith has the quality of a sahih sanad as does its matan. However, to find the true meaning addressed by the hadith, the historical links and social context of the society addressed by the hadith must be carefully considered.

Muḥammad al-Ghazālī understood Abī Bakrah's hadith contextually, namely by knowing the background to the emergence of the hadith (*asbāb al-Wurūd*); among other things, by understanding the conditions and culture of Persian society as well as the political system adopted at that time, so that the hadith can be applied to situations desired by the Prophet (pbuh), and abandoned in different conditions. Al-Ghazālī further explained that historical facts show that this hadith was uttered by the Prophet in connection with the succession event in the land of Persia, which at that time was on the verge of destruction. And it is also known that their system of government adheres to monarchy. The royal family does not recognize the deliberation system and does not

³¹ Abī Dāwud Sulaiman Ibn al-Ash'ath Al-Sijistānī, *Sunan Abī Dāwud* (Beirut: Dār al-Katab al-Ilmīyah, 2017), 155.

³² Ulfi Ulfiah, *Perempuan Di Panggung Politik* (Jakarta: Rahimah, 2007), 43.

respect any opinion that is contrary to their own. The relationship between the royal family and the people was very bad.³³

In that event, when the Persian armies had been forced to retreat and their territory was increasingly narrowed, there was still the possibility of handing over leadership of the country to a skilled general who might be able to stop defeat after defeat. But political paganism has turned the people and the state into ignorant hereditary treasures. According to the tradition that prevailed in Persia before that event, the person appointed as head of state was a man. Meanwhile, what happened actually violated cultural traditions, namely appointing a woman head of state, namely Buwaran Binti Shairawaihi bin Kisra bin Barwaiz.

At that time the status of women was considered minor, women were not trusted to take care of public issues, especially state issues. The conditions at that time were also logical because at that time women were still closed, so their insight and knowledge was still relatively lacking compared to men. This is a sign that the Persian country is on the verge of destruction. In socio-historical condition, the Prophet who had wisdom uttered this hadith which truly described the real situation at that time. Even though the hadith is valid in terms of sanad and matan, what needs to be taken is its value, not its literal meaning. Because history also proves that some countries can be successful when led by a woman, such as Israel when led by Golda Meir. In fact, al-Ghazālī firmly said that a woman who adheres to her religion is much better than a man who wears a long beard but denies Allah's blessings. Then comparing it with the conditions during al-Ghazālī's life, it turns out that women were even able to balance or be superior to men.³⁴

Based on historical reality in ancient times in the Koran, the land of Saba was led by a queen named Bilqis. It turns out that she was able and successful in leading her country towards faith and success with his intelligence and wisdom. It is absolutely impossible that the Prophet (pbuh) would make a decision in a hadith that clearly contradicts the contents of the revelation sent down to him. This means the words of the Prophet "*never will succeed such a nation as makes a woman their ruler*" ". What implicitly (textually) prohibits women from becoming leaders is not merely looking at the feminine aspect, but more at the leadership aspect (ability to lead). So according to researchers, men will not be successful in leading a society if they do not have good leadership and adequate authority.³⁵

In short, the Abī Bakrah hadith according to Muḥammad al-Ghazālī is not a prohibition for women to become leaders because this hadith is contrary to the Koran

³³ Andi Rahman, "KEPEMIMPINAN WANITA: ANALISIS HADIS RIWAYAT AB Ī BAKRAH" 4, no. 2 (2018): 111–24.

³⁴ Kepemimpinan Perempuan, Perspektif Hadis, and Jurnal Al-maiyyah, "Kepemimpinan Perempuan Perspektif Hadis" 8, no. 2 (2015): 262–84.

³⁵ Wendi Parwanto, "Penafsiran Ulang Konsep ' Kontekstualisasi ' Dalam Hadis: Kajian Atas Hadis Tentang Kepemimpinan Perempuan" 1, no. 2 (2022).

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and the hadith which says that every human being is a leader. Moreover, this Abī Bakrah hadith according to al-Ghazālī is contrary to the history of women's independence in public. Therefore, Muḥammad al-Ghazālī concluded that Abī Bakrah's hadith was not prohibited. In other words, In other words, women can become leaders as long as they have the ability to do so.³⁶

In this case, Muḥammad al-Ghazālī agrees with the opinion of Qurais Shihab who states that the hadith is not general. The hadith was addressed to Persian society at that time, not to all communities and in all matters. Therefore, there is no prohibition on whether or not women can become leaders in society or enter politics, because there is not a single religious provision that can be understood as prohibiting women's involvement in the public and political sphere.³⁷ So according to researchers, this hadith was conveyed by Rasulullah (pbuh), when he received information that the Persians had crowned Princess Kisra as queen.

From this it can be understood that the direction of this hadith is only addressed to that case. This means that Princess Kisra, who was crowned queen according to the Prophet's predictions, will not be successful. This is in line with the rule of العبرة بخصوص (what is used as a guide is the specific cause, not the general lafad). As stated by Syuhudi Ismail, this hadith must be understood contextually because its instructional content is temporal. As long as women have the authority and ability to lead, and society is willing to accept them as leaders, then there is nothing wrong with women being selected and appointed as leaders.³⁸

The critical and analytical study pattern as described above involves al-Ghazālī's studies in his efforts to understand the meaning of hadith messages. Thus, the description above provides an overview of the methods and approaches used by al-Ghazālī, namely critical and analytical methods. Besides, he used a historical and sociological approach. This is demonstrated by his research which always pays attention to the socio-cultural aspects of a problem.

Muḥammad al-Ghazālī, an Egyptian scholar known for his critical approach to hadith, especially on issues considered sensitive, such as women's leadership. Al-Ghazālī is known for promoting interpretations of hadith that are contextual and relevant to modern developments. One of the hadiths that is often referred to in discussions regarding women's leadership is the hadith narrated by Abu Bakrah. In the hadith, women's leadership is often mentioned and discussed as one of the issues that hinders women in society. Imam al-Nasā'ī narrated in his sahih book:

³⁶ Kepemimpinan Perempuan and Dalam Tinjauan, "Kepemimpinan Perempuan Dalam Tinjauan Hadis" 7, no. 1 (2022): 10–22.

³⁷ M. Quraish Shihab, *Wawasan Al-Qur'an; Tafsir Maudhu'i Atas Pelbagai Persoalan Umat* (Bandung: Mizan, 1996), 314.

³⁸ Syuhudi Ismail, *Hadis Nabi Yang Tekstual Dan Kontekstual* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 2009), 67.

أَخْبَرَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ الْمُثَنَّى، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا خَالِدُ بْنُ الْحَارِثِ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدٌ، عَنِ الْحَسَنِ، عَنِ أَبِي بَكْرَةَ قَالَ: عَصَمَنِي اللَّهُ بِشَيْءٍ سَمِعْتُهُ مِنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لَمَّا هَلَكَ كِسْرَى قَالَ: مَنْ اسْتَخْلَفُوا؟ قَالُوا: بِنْتُهُ، قَالَ: لَنْ يُفْلِحَ قَوْمٌ وَلَوْ أَمَرَهُمْ امْرَأَةٌ

*Reporting to us Muhammad Ibn al-Muthanna, Khālid Ibn al-Ḥarīth, Ḥumaid, from al-Ḥasan, from Abī Bakrah said: Allah benefited me with a sentence that I heard from the Messenger of Allah., he asked: who is their leader, the companions answered Kisra's daughter, the Prophet said: "Never will succeed such a nation as makes a woman their ruler.."*³⁹ (HR. Bukhari, no. 4425)

Textually, this hadith shows that women as leaders are prohibited. In this case, the majority of scholars prohibit women from becoming leaders in public affairs in accordance with the hadith. So this hadith is used as legitimacy that men are in every way superior to women and women should be active in the domestic sector, not in the public sector, because men have advantages, both physically, mentally and otherwise. One of the essences of Islamic teachings is equality between men and women. The main justification that makes Muslims proud, especially women, is that the Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh) was the most persistent fighter to improve the dignity of women. The most basic essence of women's emancipation was written in the holy book Al-Qur'an which was revealed to him, almost 15 centuries ago.⁴⁰

Al-Ghazālī's Hermeneutical Approach to the Hadith of Women's Leadership

Hermeneutical Principles in al-Ghazālī's view consist of several stages. *First* principle, Contextualization: Understanding the specific context in which the hadith was conveyed and not taking it literally to apply to all situations without considering social and cultural changes. *Second*, Language Analysis: Examining the meaning of words and phrases in classical Arabic and how they are used when the hadith is spoken. *Third*, Evaluate the Goals and Intent: Analyze the goals and intentions behind the hadith, not just the words used. *Fourth*, Alignment with Islamic Principles: Assess whether the interpretation of a hadith is in line with the basic principles of Islam, such as justice, equality and the benefit of the people. Therefore, in this hermeneutic approach, there are several contexts that can be researched regarding the hadith on women's leadership, namely;

³⁹ Abī `Abd al-Raḥman Aḥmad Ibn Syu`Aib Al-Nasā`ī, *Al-Sunan Al-Kubrā* (Beirut: Muassat al-Risālah, 2001), 402.

⁴⁰ Siti Zubaidah, *Tentang Kedudukan Wanita Dalam Islam* (Bandung: Citapustaka Media Perintis, 2010), 42.

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1. Historical Context of Hadith

Al-Ghazālī emphasized the importance of understanding the context in which the hadith was uttered. This hadith refers to a specific incident when the princess Kisra was appointed leader after the death of her father, which caused chaos in Persia. Al-Ghazālī argued that this hadith was not intended as a general prohibition against female leadership, but rather referred to the specific situation and failure of Persian rule at the time.

2. Language Meaning and Word Use

Al-Ghazālī noted the use of words in the hadith and suggested that the word "people" in these hadith refers to a particular community or nation, not humanity as a whole. This shows that the hadith is not universal but is related to special conditions at that time.

3. Social and Cultural Context

Al-Ghazālī also considered the social and cultural norms of the Prophet's time. At that time, political leadership was generally held by men because of the patriarchal social structure. Al-Ghazālī argues that this context should be understood as the background to the hadith, not as a principle that must be applied strictly in all circumstances.

4. Emphasis on the Principles of Justice and Competence

Al-Ghazālī emphasized the principles of justice and competence in Islam. He believed that Islam emphasized the importance of choosing leaders based on ability and character, not gender. Therefore, women who have competence and leadership qualities should not be prohibited from becoming leaders based solely on this hadith.

5. Contextualization in Modern Times

Al-Ghazālī encouraged Muslims to see the relevance of hadith in the context of modern times. He argues that restrictions on women's leadership based on a literal interpretation of this hadith were not in line with the principles of justice and social progress taught by Islam.

Based on the discussion of MuḤammad al-Ghazālī's views on the hadith on women's leadership, he underlined the importance of historical, social and linguistic context in understanding the hadith through a hermeneutic approach. He argued that the hadith should not be seen as a universal prohibition against female leadership, however it should be understood in its particular context. Al-Ghazālī encouraged a more flexible and contextual interpretation of hadith, which was in line with the principles of justice and benefit in Islam.

Conclusion

The hadith hermeneutics offered by Muḥammad al-Ghazālī has made a significant contribution in answering the problems of Muslims today. According to Muḥammad al-Ghazālī, the position of women and men was equal. He also provided space and opportunities for women to carry out their activities inside and outside the home. In general, Islam does not prohibit women from becoming leaders. This is because men and women are fellow servants of Allah who have the same position before Allah and will receive the same reward for their deeds. Accordingly, the Abī Bakrah hadith understood by Muḥammad al-Ghazālī was not an argument for prohibiting women from becoming leaders, because this hadith only implemented to the Persian people. Muḥammad al-Ghazālī explained that this hadith must be understood contextually. Therefore, al-Ghazālī concluded that women are not prohibited in Islam from becoming leaders with certain criteria.

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