

SPREADING HADITH MAUDHU' VIA INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY: REASONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Nik Suhaili Binti Nik Fauzi ¹, Mesbahul Hoque² Kauthar Abd Kadir³

^{1,2,3}Fakulti Pengajian Quran dan Sunnah, Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM)

Abstract

Hadith maudhu' is a false and fabricated Hadith and has lied in the name of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, and such things were never done by the Prophet. This paper aims to study the spreading of hadith maudhu' in the ICT era, to identify the reasons for spreading hadith maudhu', and to suggest several guidelines to inhibit hadith maudhu' from spreading further. The study uses a qualitative method based on library research by analyzing studies and past documents as well as the textual content of materials in the form of books, journals, articles related to Hadith Maudhu'. The results of this study found that the awareness of Muslims nowadays about the spread of false hadith is unsatisfactory, as they are more dependent on sharing through ICT without checking its authenticity first. Therefore, pious Muslims should always be concerned about a sharing that involves sensitivity towards religion, including the spread of hadith Maudhu'.

Kata Kunci: major signs, al-qiyamah, al-fitan, al-malahim, chronology, methodology.

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*Corresponding Author: Mesbahul Hoque Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM) Email: mesbahul@usim.edu.my

INTRODUCTION

Hadith Maudhu' w can be defined as fabricated, fake and false hadith, or a hadith that the act was never committed and done by Prophet Muhammad SAW¹. It is *haram* or illegal for Muslims to narrate and use this kind of hadith in their lives, because false hadiths can damage Islamic values². According to the hadith narrated by Bukhari from Abu Hurairah RA, those who lie in the name of Prophet Muhammad SWT, their place will be in hell³.

The spread of false hadith or hadith Maudhu' via Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is no longer an uncommon thing. Various hadith Maudhu' are spread via ICT among society. Muslims who have a weakness in Islamic knowledge easily believe and accept those false and fabricated hadith. To solve this problem, we try to study how hadith Maudhu' is spread via ICT and identify the reasons behind the spreading of hadith maudhu'. Later several guidelines are suggested to inhibit spreading of hadith Maudhu' further.

THE WAY FOR SPREADING HADITH MAUDHU' THROUGH ICT:

The spread of false hadith or false news nowadays is no longer an uncommon thing, in addition to the condition of the world today. Various technologies have been designed and created to facilitate the daily use of the public, but, at the same time, some use technology resources well, and some people misuse them.

Thus, the spread of false hadith nowadays in the ICT era often occurred in social media as well as in Islamic talks. For example, a hadith shared in Malay texts without the original texts from the Arabic

¹ M. Kamali (2005). Ḥadīth Studies: Authenticity, Compilation, Classification and Criticism of Ḥadīth. UK: Islamic Foundation.

² M.Hoque (2019). Derasat fil Hadis daif wal maudhu. Malaysia: Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia. P91.

³ M.A. Al Bukhari (2001). Sahih al Bukhari, Al- Jami' Al- Sahih Al- Musnad Al- Mukhtasar Min Umuri Rasoolilahi wa sunanihi wa Ayyaamihi. Dar Touq Al-Najah.

language. For those who lack religious knowledge, it would be easy to be deceived by the text, yet the sharing of the hadith is in the Malay language which is easy to understand.

In the past 2 years, the whole world has suffered from a disease known as COVID-19 which caused most educational institutions or mosques and other places where people gathered to be closed⁴. With the existence of the social media platform, it can help everyone to refer their needs through it. Apart from the social media that had already been mentioned, Google Meet, Zoom Meeting, Microsoft Teams, and others are also used to make online learning or live streaming easily accessible.

Some speakers have abused the title of an Islamic speaker and claimed themselves as independent while they lack adequate knowledge of religion. This issue is also the reason how false hadith is being spread in this current life. Other than students, who used the platform for their online distance learning some speakers use it to share any relevant knowledge online as well⁵.

Many hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad SAW are shared on social media, but it has been found that there are some false hadiths are shared, either in live broadcasts or videos that uploaded on YouTube, Facebook or the other social media platform which the sharing involved about hadiths Maudhu'⁶. Below explanation for some popular ways of spreading hadith Maudhu'.

1) Social media platform

Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, and others are an incredible influence and become part of people's lives. The influence of social media on human beings also covers various aspects of life and even leads them to be addicted to its use. It could help people to stay connected more efficiently, serve as an opportunity for business development, a tool to find needed information or as a tool for preaching, and is easy to manage⁷.

Many people are excited to spread wise hadiths on social media with a good intention and wanted to avoid immoral and negative things from happening even when they did not know the authenticity of the hadith. Such good intentions can turn into an undesirable thing if they are lacking from religious knowledge and lack awareness which caused the spreading of fabricated hadith over social media. A social media activist who known as Sittah An-Nur, some of her posted videos in 2021contain statements that touch the sensitivity of the *aqeedah* and the teachings of Islam. For those who lack religious knowledge, they were certainly easy to be deceived and follow what was said by her. She had a heretical group that gathered her followers who believed in her words. She later rape ted and made *Tawbah* for those mistakes⁸.

As Muslims who are pious to Allah SWT, one must be careful and concerned in everything especially towards the sensitivity of religion. In addition, it is hoped that the public should be smart, prudent social media users and do not abuse the platform provided because it can bring bad effects and consequences.

2) Islamic talks and preachers

The status of a preacher is also highly regarded among the Muslims because for them, a preacher is a person well verse in the field of religious knowledge. Unfortunately, many false hadiths are quoted in the talks or speech of Muslim preacher where many Muslims become comfortable with it, and they accept all hadiths mentioned as authentic. It becomes more complicated when these hadiths become

⁴ A. M, Piwko (2021). Islam and the COVID-19 Pandemic: Between Religious Practice and Health Protection. *Journal of Religion and Health* (2021) 60:3291–3308.

⁵ Hoque, M., Yusoff, A. M., Toure, A. K., & Mohamed, Y. (2019). Teaching Hadith Subjects through E-Learning Methods: Prospects and Challenges. International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development, 8(2), 507-514.

⁶ M.T. Islam. (2019). The Impact of social media on Muslim Society: From Islamic Perspective. *International Journal of Social and Humanities Sciences (IJSHS)*, Volume-3, Issue-3, P 95-114.

⁷ W.Akram (2017). A Study on Positive and Negative Effects of social media on Society. *International journal of computer sciences and engineering. Volume-5, Issue-10.* DOI: 10.26438/ijcse/v5i10.35135.

⁸ https://www.msn.com/en-my/news/berita/sittah-annur-akhirnya-bertaubat/ar-AAOR8Mm

commonly used among of the community and are always being quoted in TV, radio and other social medias⁹.

False hadiths are those that are translated into Malay without quoting the original text in the Arabic language. Some hadiths are presented briefly without the beginning of the 'sanad' or the complete 'matan'. Most of the well-known fabricated hadiths spread among Muslims that discussed about the fadhail al-a'mal. "Seek knowledge even if it was in China"¹⁰, is among the well-known false hadith that has always been used in motivational or religious talks by Muslim preachers and followers of Islam. However, it is not the words narrated by Prophet Muhammad SAW. The same goes to "Seek knowledge from the Cradle to the Grave"¹¹, although this hadith has meaning that leads to goodness, but it does not come from Prophet Muhammad SAW.

Hadith Maudhu' or false hadith that spread through religious speeches and talks that they delivered are the worst. The group of Islamic preachers who are shallow in knowledge, ignorant, and have no basis in religious knowledge has argued with hadiths without observing the status of the hadiths. They should refer to study in detail on hadith from '*Kitab muktabar*' such as '*kutub sittah*'.

The failure to defend the authenticity of the hadiths of Prophet Muhammad will cause the Muslims of the next generation to be exposed to heresy and superstitions that is opposed by Prophet Muhammad SAW. It is an obligation for Muslims to always check the hadith first prior to be conveyed to avoid spreading false hadiths.

REASONS BEHIND SPREADING OF HADITH MAUDHU':

False hadith created to increase the influence and bigotry against the high-ranking person such as the rulers, governments, sheiks, teachers, and more. The spread of false hadith affects Muslims, which made them confused about a hadith since back then till today whether it is authentic hadith that came from the Prophet himself or the hadith is a false creation.

The spread of false hadith is no longer becoming an uncommon thing due to its spread that has taken place all over the world which involved Muslims as well as non-Muslims. This study found out the reasons of spreading Hadith Maudhu' is due to the lack of Islamic knowledge, fanatics of certain beliefs, and related to political interest. The purpose of them to falsify the hadiths must be of worldly and other worldly reasons.

According to Abdul Kadir during the early days of Islam Prophet Muhammad SAW realized that this phenomenon would happen after his death¹². At the end of his life, he reminded his companions about the disputation that will affect future Muslims. His words were narrated by one of the companions Irbadh bin Sariah, as follows: "Whoever lives after me will witness many disputations" (Sunan Abi Daud: 4607) ¹³.

The main reason behind spreading hadith Maudhu' is a lack of understanding and knowledge about hadiths studies, that made Muslims easily influenced. Therefore, obeying all of Prophet Muhammad's sunnah and the studies of fabricated hadiths must always be carried out by Muslims to preserve the purity and authenticity of the Prophet's hadiths.

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⁹ M. F. Ariffin (2016). Fabricated Hadith: Unraveling Contradiction between Society and Scholar towards Mutual Agreement. Jurnal Intelek, Universiti Teknologi MARA, (2016) Vol 11(1): 31-39.

¹⁰Ibn Al-Jawzi said that this is a fabricated narration. J.A. Ibn Al-Jawzi (1968). *Al-Maud*huat. Caro, Egypt. 1st edition. Maktabtul quds. Cairo.

¹¹ I. M. Al Azluni (1933). Kasful khefa wa mozel al-ilbas amma ashtahra minal-ahadith ala alsinatin nas. Cairo, Egypt. Maktabtul al Quds.

¹² Abdul Kadir, F.K. (2010). Bid'ah dalalah. Council of the Islamic religion and Malay *Customs Terengganu* (MAIDAM): Kuala Terengganu.

¹³ A. D. Al-Sijistani (2009) *Al-Sunan*. Beirut, Dar Al-Risalah Al Aalamiyah. Vol 7. P 16.

1) Lack of the Islamic knowledge

Lack of religious knowledge or hadith knowledge is one of the reasons to spread of false hadith. Usually, people who claim to be knowledgeable will falsify many hadith in their speech or talk such as advice or threats just because they want popularity and fame from the public.

Those who lack knowledge about hadith, especially about the hadith narrator, they certainly are deceived and believe that the false hadith is from the Prophet Muhammad SAW. The same goes for those who claim themselves as Islamic speaker and still talk and use the false hadith, it clearly shows that they are the same as people who lacked in hadith knowledge. If they know the status of hadith, they should not easily spread and convey any hadith unless its truth and authenticity are ascertained first.

With the knowledge of religion and hadith, they can recognize, observe, and check in advance of a hadith that was delivered or received to ensure its authenticity before disseminating it more widely. The following is a list of websites or applications that can be used to search, refer to and learn about hadith:

- 1. Portal e-Hadith JAKIM
- 2. Irsyad al-Hadith
- 3. Semakhadis.com
- 4. Sunnah.com
- 5. Jami' al-Sunnah wa Syuruhiha
- 6. Dorar al-Saniyah
- 7. Islamweb
- 8. Al-Maktabah Syamilah
- 9. Maktabah Syamilah Online
- 10. Jami' al-Kutub al-Tis'ah

This website and application are only for reference and if it is in doubt, it should then make any reference to Hadith experts or Hadith scholars to ask more about the description of hadith. At the very least, these platforms can help us make some references. There could be some errors in those websites and applications.

2) Fanatic of a certain belief

Among the reasons of spreading *hadith maudhu*' is in terms of a person's fanatical attitude the bigotry towards something. The occurrence of such things happening is due to the person's ignorance and lack of knowledge. For example, being fanatic or obsessed with some individuals, obsessed with the *mazhab fiqh*, obsessed with race, language, and country.

Being obsessed or fanatic towards certain individuals in terms of their character or delivery can deceive people who lack knowledge. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic era, various medical and health-related information were shared by people on social media platforms regardless by Muslim or non-Muslim. If a Muslim wants to spread something, they must ensure its authenticity first. Among the things that often spread is sunnah foods that can prevent COVID-19 infections, such as honey. Some attribute the hadith to the Prophet Muhammad SAW while the hadith is a weak and false hadith. The false hadiths were written as:

"Whoever drinks honey for three days in every month on an empty stomach, then he is saved from a great disease, (i.e.) paralysis, leprosy, and vitiligo" ¹⁴.

"Whoever licks honey three times in the morning of every month, then he will not be afflicted with a great plague" 15.

¹⁴ A. A. Jalaluddin (1996). Al Laali Al Masnuah Fil Ahadis Al Maudhuah. Bairut. Darul kotub al ilmiyah, vol:2, P 344.

¹⁵ A. A. Jalaluddin (1996). Al Laali Al Masnuah Fil Ahadis Al Maudhuah. Bairut. Darul kotub al ilmiyah, vol:2, P 344.

With the spread of false hadiths like this on social media, people who lack knowledge about hadith will be deceived and believe and even often practice the hadith and eventually become fanatics of it. People know that honey has many benefits, but they do not realize how dangerous it is to their faith to be fanatic towards the false hadith. Fanaticism against race, language, and country is also the reason of spreading false hadith. The importance of being a knowledgeable Muslim is to avoid and identify something that is conveyed whether it is true or false.

Those who spread hadith maudhu' or false hadith because they expect rewards and interests should not expect their rewards from Muslims. What should be brought closer for Muslims is Allah and not the creature of Allah SWT.

3) Related to political interest

The phenomenon of spreading slander and the emergence of false hadiths to attract support and claim that their group is on the right side in fighting for Islam eventually caused division among the Muslims. After the death of Rasulullah SAW, there were disputes and differences of opinion about the position of the caliphates. This situation continued until it led to the assassination of Saidina Uthman.

In the time of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, there was a political conflict between Ali ibn Abu Talib and Mu'awiyah ibn Abu Sufyan. One of the things that some of the supporters of these figures have done is make false hadith¹⁶. It can be concluded that the falsification of hadith at the time occurred after the Muslims were divided in the form of factions and their respective groups.

The danger for Muslims is when they start to be divided because it has been stated that the Muslims are one Ummah, based on a verse in the al-Quran:

Meaning: "Indeed, this is your nation, one nation and I, your Allah (God), so worship (Me)." [Al-Anbiya'a, 92]

Leaders forget the blessings of unity when they are in a state of pleasure and forget the importance of ethics in politics. Politics is the management of worldly affairs that is important in upholding the religion of Islam and it must follow the principles and laws that have been set by the religion. Political leaders should always look at the interests of the people, race, and religion as the focus in politics and not just pursue the interests of positions and ranks.

In 2019, in parliamentary discussions, there was a politician who had issued a false hadith attributed to the Prophet to win his own opinion. He said that the Prophet Muhammad SAW forbade the practice of distributing wealth to the public because he feared having malicious envy.

The hadith narrated has raised various doubts and misunderstandings among the people. As for Muslims, it has become a practice that should be done all the time, which is to share the wealth and sustenance available that has been bestowed by Allah SWT. Prophet Muhammad SAW even said:

Meaning: "Indeed, there is a fitnah for every Ummah, and the Fitnah for my Ummah is wealth." [Hadith Sahih] [Jami` at-Tirmidhi 2336]¹⁷.

Prophet Muhammad SAW has conveyed and explained the hadith related to the life of mankind in which there will be a slander based on wealth. In addition, there is another authentic hadith that shows that the existence of wealth that has been bestowed by Allah must be shown.

¹⁷M.I.Al-Tirmidhi (1996). *Al-Sunan Al-Tirmidhi*. Tahqiq: Bassar Ewad . Beirut, Darul garb islami vol 4 p161.

¹⁶ M.Hoque (2014). *Mabahes fil Hadis daif wal maudhu*. Malaysia: Daru Syakir Enterprise. P17.

Meaning: "If Allah has given you wealth, then let the effect of Allah's blessing and generosity be seen on you." [Hadith Sahih] [Sunan an-Nasa'i 5224]¹⁸.

In conclusion, Muslims will be looked down, inferior, and backward by non-Muslims because of the negative attitude and personality of the Muslim community. As pious and jihadist Muslims, we must careful and alert so that the division of community, deception and the spreading of false hadith can be replaced with unity of believers and pious.

GUIDELINES TO INHIBIT THE SPREAD OF HADITH MAUDHU':

Some guidelines to inhibit hadith maudhu' from spreading further on social media, as well as religious talks, books, and even political discussions can save and stabilize the piety and faith of a Muslim. This study found that the act of spreading hadith maudhu' can be inhibited and overcome with several guidelines and ways, such as controlling the use of social media, the immediate action taken by the authorities on the related issues, and further empowering the advantage of knowledgeable.

Hadith maudhu' that are spread widely on social media usually has something that attracts the attention of users. Those who are ignorant, lack knowledge of hadith, certainly do not care about the status of the hadith, and are deceived by its falsification and practice. Moreover, the false hadiths that were disseminated looked interesting, realistic, and timely with the circumstances that were an issue at the time¹⁹.

It is hoped that the love of an Ummah towards the Prophet Muhammad SAW and the emphasis on the authenticity and purity of the hadith can prevent the occurrence of further falsifications and lies. Islam must be considered good and liked by non-Muslims once the community of Islam does not commit any problem related to the sensitivity of religion. In addition, may it be easier for those who want to know and embrace Islam.

1) Controlling the use of social media

The use of social media is now becoming easier, but it is also increasingly challenging. The existence of the internet can help speed up the process of delivering news, even old or new information. Social media plays an important role in conveying information to the community. Information, news, and sharing shared through the internet are all part of our daily lives.

Muslims should be wary of false news and hadith that are created solely to attract public attention and make it an issue. False hadith is spread because the ignorance want to be famous, get support and love from the people, and so on, whereas it is a false spread and has caused sin against oneself. The reasons of the spread and contagion of false hadith have already been elaborated in the previous section of this article.

Muslims should be educated to have a social responsibility for the material obtained, especially on social media. All news or hadith received should be checked first, filtered, and not disseminated first before knowing its authenticity. For the sharing of fake news, the public can check through *Sebenarnya.My*, while to identify a hadith whether it is Sahih or fabricated can be referred to the previous description about Hadith applications and websites.

The efforts of Malaysians especially Muslims to inhibit the spread of false hadith are very welcome although it is quite difficult to control. Controlling the use of social media is not so difficult because it is just a restriction or reporting to the authorities about false information sharing, especially related to Islamic sensitivity, such as spreading hadith maudhu'.

As a Muslim, it is demanded by the religion to be careful and check the authenticity of any information received, regardless of whether it is news, stories, or hadith. Allah says in the al-Quran: يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنْ جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنْبَا فَتَبَيَّتُوا أَنْ تُصِيبُوا قَوْمًا بِجَهَالَةٍ فَتُصِبْحُوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلْمُ نَادِمِينَ

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 $^{^{18}}$ A.S. An Nasai (1930). Sunan an Nasai. Cairo, Egypt. Al Maktaba Al Tijariariah Al Kubra. Vol 8. P 181.

¹⁹ M. Hoque, A. M. Yusoff (2019). Teaching Hadith Subjects through E-Learning Methods: Prospects and Challenges. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, 8(2), 507-514.

Meaning: "Oh you who believe, if a wicked person comes to you with news, then check carefully so that you do not inflict a disaster on a people without knowing the circumstances that cause you to regret your actions." [Al-Hujurat. 9]

Social media allows information to be spread easily and quickly, and the sharing of such information can be a good or bad effect. If hadith maudhu' is not controlled, the spread of false hadith will continue to spread without considering the effect on one's faith and piety. It has become an obligation for every Muslim to rebuke and prevent something that causes damage to the faith and pollutes the purity of hadith and religion.

2) The authorities must act on the current issues

Authorities are important people in a matter where the public needs the final word and support from them to take an action²⁰. A big problem will arise when certain individuals spread false hadith and several groups of society who accept and believe hadith Maudhu' without checking the authenticity of a hadith.

Muslims need to train themselves not to believe too much and get carried away by what is read on social media. A wise Muslim user of social media should examine the content of any hadith that is disseminated whether it comes from an authentic source or not. Muslims also can help the authorities by informing the hadith scholars, or hadith experts if a dubious hadith was shared.

There is a need to inculcate the importance of digital literacy, be a smart user on social media, and know the impact of spreading false hadith to oneself, family, society, and country. Media literacy education should also be applied to all groups, regardless of age from young to old. Various awareness is very important so that the community is more knowledgeable in sharing the hadith received before disseminating it to others.

3) Empowering the advantage of being knowledgeable

In Islam, the duty to seek knowledge and education is obligatory for every Muslim. Islam affirms the right to education for all without gender discrimination or religion. The importance of education has been emphasized repeatedly in the al-Quran, which is the ultimate source of guidance for Muslims.

اِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَّوُ ۗ إِنَّ اللهَ عَزِيْزٌ غَفُوْرٌ Meaning: "Those truly fear God, among His Servants, who have knowledge: for God is Exalted in Might, Oft-Forgiving". [Fatir. 28]

The importance of seeking knowledge has been emphasized repeatedly in the Al-Quran, which is the ultimate source of guidance for Muslims. Al-Quran treats knowledge to reach the faith for all Muslims to become true believers. A Muslim should constantly be seeking more knowledge and be educated. It helps to build character, opinions, and intellect.

Meaning: "My Lord! Increase me in knowledge." [Taa-Ha, 114]

Every Muslim should constantly be seeking more knowledge to reach the faith for all Muslims, either males or females, to becoming a true believer, says Al-Ouran. This verse indicates that whatever people's knowledge is limited as they need to keep asking Allah to increase the knowledge.

Being educated and having knowledge saves people from being exploited and fooled. It is easier to take advantage of innocent and illiterate people. Through religious education, Muslims will become more alert to everything surrounding them. In addition, religious education is also important to avoid being easily influenced by things that are not true and not based on the words of Allah and the authentic hadith of Prophet Muhammad SAW.

²⁰ F. Rachmadhani (2019). The Concept of Hadith Maudhū' and Its Contextualization in Information Management in theDigital Era. AL QUDS: Jurnal Studi Alquran dan Hadis vol. 3, no 2, 2019, p, 2580-3190.

Meaning: "Whoever takes a path upon which to obtain knowledge, Allah makes the path to Paradise easy for him." [Hadith Sahih] [Jami` at-Tirmidhi 2646]²¹.

Islam has never set aside the importance of seeking knowledge that can help people achieve a good life in the world. Everyone can get an education according to their capability. To seek knowledge is a sacred duty, it is obligatory on every Muslim. Education should be the guidance from religion for the achievement of the main goal of human beings that is Allah's satisfaction.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of this study, it seems that the awareness of Muslims nowadays about the spread of false hadith is unsatisfactory, as they are more dependent on sharing through ICT without checking its authenticity first, especially social media, where it is an easy and fast platform and advanced communication technology that can disseminate information in just a few seconds.

In addition, lack of education and fanaticism with something are also the reasons for the widespread of false hadith due to self-interest without thinking about sin and its consequences. This occurrence can be prevented if Muslims unite in eradicating those who make and spread false hadith. Therefore, we as Muslims can protect and preserve the name of our Prophet Muhammad SAW and the name of this holy religion.

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²¹ M.I. Al-Tirmidhi (1996). *Al-Sunan Al-Tirmidhi*. Tahqiq: Bassar Ewad. Beirut, Darul garb islami vol 4. P 385.