



Association in the Perspective of Hadith: Analyzing Ma'ani al-Hadith Using John Locke's Empiricism Theory in Education

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Received: 2023-01-06; Accepted: 2024-07-26; Published: 2024-07-29

Abstract: Association is fundamental to human life, as highlighted in the Qur'an Al-Mumtahanah verses 8-9. Marzuki Wahid interprets this verse to refer to *kafir harbi*, indicating that Muslims may socialize and engage in mu'amalah with non-Muslim communities, except those who are hostile (*kafir harbi*). Other opinions included prohibiting associations with hypocrites, major sinners, and immoral individuals. The hadith "a man follows the religion of his friend" emphasizes the importance of considering one's associations. This study used qualitative research methods and a library research approach to examine hadiths. John Locke's empiricism theory of education is applied to analyze the hadith's implications on social relations and education. The findings are that the hadith does not prohibit social relations or *mu'amalah* with non-Muslims but advises caution in choosing close friends to protect one's faith. From the perspective of Locke's empirical theory of education, this hadith is relevant and does not present contradictions. This study suggests that Muslims are encouraged to choose friends wisely to maintain their religious integrity while promoting moderate and inclusive social behavior in diverse religious contexts. The alignment of hadith with Locke's empiricism theory underscores the significance of the environmental influence on personal development and education. This hadith offers valuable guidance on social interactions, emphasizing the importance of selecting friends who positively influence faith and character. Through the lens of empiricism theory, hadith supports the idea that one's environment and associations play a crucial role in shaping behavior and personality, encouraging moderate and inclusive social relations in diverse communities.

keywords: Association; Empiricism Theory of Education; Ma'ani al-Hadith

Abstrak: Pergaulan merupakan hal yang fundamental dalam kehidupan manusia, sebagaimana ditegaskan dalam Al Qur'an surat Al-Mumtahanah ayat 8-9. Marzuki Wahid menafsirkan ayat ini merujuk pada kafir harbi, yang menunjukkan bahwa umat Islam boleh bergaul dan melakukan mu'amalah dengan komunitas non-Muslim, kecuali mereka yang memusuhi (kafir harbi). Pendapat lain termasuk melarang bergaul dengan orang-orang munafik, pendosa besar, dan orang-orang yang tidak bermoral. Hadis "seseorang mengikuti agama temannya" menekankan pentingnya mempertimbangkan pergaulan seseorang. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode penelitian kualitatif dan pendekatan penelitian kepustakaan untuk mengkaji hadis tersebut. Teori empirisme pendidikan John Locke diterapkan untuk menganalisis implikasi hadis tersebut terhadap hubungan sosial dan pendidikan. Temuannya adalah, hadis tersebut tidak melarang hubungan sosial atau mu'amalah dengan non-Muslim, tetapi menganjurkan kehati-hatian dalam memilih teman dekat untuk menjaga keimanan seseorang. Perspektif teori empirisme Locke tentang pendidikan, hadis ini relevan dan tidak menghadirkan kontradiksi. Penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa umat Islam didorong untuk memilih teman dengan bijak untuk menjaga integritas agama mereka sambil mempromosikan perilaku sosial yang moderat dan inklusif dalam konteks agama yang beragam. Keselarasan hadis dengan teori empirisme Locke menggarisbawahi pentingnya pengaruh lingkungan terhadap perkembangan pribadi dan pendidikan. Hadis ini menawarkan panduan berharga tentang interaksi sosial, menekankan pentingnya memilih teman yang secara positif mempengaruhi iman dan karakter seseorang. Melalui lensa teori empirisme, hadis tersebut mendukung gagasan bahwa lingkungan dan pergaulan seseorang memainkan peran penting dalam membentuk perilaku dan kepribadian, mendorong hubungan sosial yang moderat dan inklusif dalam komunitas yang beragam.

Kata Kunci: Asosiasi; Teori Empirisme Pendidikan; *Ma'ani al-Hadis*

1. Introduction

Humans are social creatures that require mutual interaction and communication. They are not created to exist as isolated entities but are made diverse to know and communicate with one another. This is emphasized in the Qur'an:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ
اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ

O humanity! Indeed, we created you from a male and a female and made you into people and tribes so that you may 'get to' know one another. Surely, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is righteous. Allah is truly All-Knowing, All-Aware. (Al-Hujurat 49: 13)

The verse describes permission to associate anyone, regardless of race, ethnicity, or culture. Regarding this association, Allah also said in Surah Al-Mumtahanah verses 8-9:

لَا يَنْهَاكُمْ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَلَمْ يُخْرِجُوكُمْ مِنْ دِيَارِكُمْ أَنْ تَبَرُّوهُمْ وَتُقْسِطُوا
إِلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ (٨) إِنَّمَا يَنْهَاكُمْ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ قَاتَلُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَأَخْرَجُوكُمْ مِنْ دِيَارِكُمْ
وَوَظَاهَرُوا عَلَىٰ إِخْرَاجِكُمْ أَنْ تَوَلَّوهُمْ وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّهُمْ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ

Allah does not forbid you from dealing kindly and fairly with those who have neither fought nor driven you away. Surely, Allah loves those who are fair (8). Allah only forbids you from befriending those who have fought you for **your own** faith, driven you out of your home, or supported **others** in doing so. And whoever takes them as friends, then it is they who are the **true** wrongdoers (9). (al-Mumtahanah 60: 8-9).

Some articles explain that the verse above implies *kafir harbi*, believers who are hostile and expelled from their own countries because of their religion. Muslims are allowed to socialize, make friends, and do *mu'amalah* with anyone as they will, without any hindrance, other than with *the kafir harbor*. Thus, it is clear that differences in beliefs are not a barrier for people of various religions to associate, make friends, or cooperate with in their social lives (Wahid, n.d.). Another opinion states that the prohibition on socializing is not to make *disbelievers* and *hypocrites*, perpetrators of grave sins, or perpetrators of immorality as friends. Making friends and associating with them can harm one's religion and morals.

There is a discrepancy between moderate and extreme opinions regarding social etiquette in the context of religious diversity. To address this issue, it is essential to explore the perspective of hadiths.

حَدَّثَنَا ابْنُ بَشَّارٍ، حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو عَامِرٍ، وَأَبُو دَاوُدَ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا زُهَيْرُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنِي
مُوسَى بْنُ وَرْدَانَ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، قَالَ: «الرَّجُلُ عَلَى دِينِ خَلِيلِهِ،
فَلْيَنْظُرْ أَحَدُكُمْ مَنْ يُخَالِلُ»

Muhammad ibn Bashshar said: reported to us Abu 'Amir and Abu Dawud, they said: Reported to us Zuhayr ibn Muhammad said: Reported to me Musa ibn Wardan, narrated Abi Hurayrah: The Prophet (ﷺ) said: "A man follows the religion of his friend; so, each one should consider whom he makes his friend (al-Sijistani, n.d.).

Humans, as social beings, rely on associations for interaction, socialization, and communication. Islam establishes boundaries within these associations, recognizing their significant influence on societies and nations. Associating with bad friends can have detrimental effects, while associating with pious individuals can bring about positive outcomes. Friends significantly influence one another in terms of religion and education. Islam, therefore, recommends socializing with religious friends (al-Hilali 2005).

Allah ed in the Qur'an Surah Al-Furqan verses 27-29:

وَيَوْمَ يَعَضُّ الظَّالِمُ عَلَى يَدَيْهِ يَقُولُ يَا لَيْتَنِي اتَّخَذْتُ مَعَ الرَّسُولِ سَبِيلًا (٢٧) يَا وَيْلَتَى لَيْتَنِي لَمْ
 أَتَّخِذْ فُلَانًا خَلِيلًا (٢٨) لَقَدْ أَضَلَّنِي عَنِ الذِّكْرِ بَعْدَ إِذْ جَاءَنِي وَكَانَ الشَّيْطَانُ لِلْإِنْسَانِ خَذُولًا (٢٩)

And 'beware of' the Day the wrongdoer will bite his nails 'in regret' and say, "Oh! I wish I followed this way, along with Messenger! (27). Woe to me! I wish I had never taken it, and so as a close friend. (28). It was he who truly made me stray from the Reminder after it had reached me." Satans have always betrayed humanity (29). (al-Furqon 25: 27-29).

Good friends guide others towards righteousness, while bad friends lead them astray. This is further supported by Ibn Qudamah al-Maqdisi, who emphasized the importance of choosing friends with good qualities (al-Maqdisi, 1398 H).

In the field of education, three significant theories—nativism, empiricism, and cognition—provide foundational frameworks for understanding personality and behavior development (Suradi, Gustari, and Nilawati, 2021). Empiricism posits that an individual's nature and personality are significantly shaped by their environment. According to John Locke's empiricism theory, humans are born as blank slates, and their experiences and surroundings write upon this slate, shaping their virtues or vices (Wijaya, 2020).

Given the pivotal role of education, parents bear considerable responsibility for guiding and educating their children in positive environments and selecting suitable companions. Positive influences facilitate the development of constructive mindsets, attitudes, and behaviors. This study, therefore, aims to examine the alignment between the hadith "A man follows the religion of his friend" and John Locke's theory of empiricism in education. It seeks to explore how Islamic teachings on social interactions can inform and enhance modern educational practices, promoting moderate and inclusive social behavior in diverse religious contexts.

The primary objective of this research is to elucidate the implications of the hadith "A man follows the religion of his friend" within the framework of John Locke's empiricism theory of education. By doing so, the study aims to highlight the importance of environmental and social influences on personal development and religious integrity. This research seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of how Islamic teachings on social interactions can inform and enhance modern educational practices, promoting moderate and inclusive social behavior in diverse religious contexts.

This research is essential for providing a comprehensive and accurate understanding of the role of manners in the context of Muslim and non-Muslim interactions. This area has not been extensively researched by academic scholars. A literature review revealed several articles pertinent to the topic under investigation. The first article is entitled "The Impact of Promiscuity on Teenagers in Rantau Utara District, Labuhanbatu Regency." This study focuses on the impact of association, particularly in the sub-districts of Kartini, Sirondorong, Aek Paeng, Pulo Padang, and

Padang Matinggi (Yanti, 2017). The study of the impact of association was localized in nature and confined to specific areas. However, how this association is situated within Islamic studies, particularly in the context of hadith, has not been elucidated.

Second, the article "The Impact of Promiscuity on Increasing Dropout Rates in Kuala Utara Village, Kaidipang District, North Bolang Mongondow Regency" (Bukoting, Mobonggi, and Kaawoan, n.d.) also examines promiscuity in specific locations, particularly at a school in Kuala Utara Village, and its influence on the increase in school dropout rates. There is a notable absence of discourse specifically examining the social etiquette of Islam, particularly in the context of hadith, within the theoretical framework of educational empiricism. Furthermore, the author identified articles on the "Adab Association in the Perspective of Imam Al-Ghazali," which serves as the foundational principle for this research. However, there is currently no dedicated discussion on the role of hadith in this context.

This study aims to elucidate the underlying significance, particularly regarding social norms, by drawing upon the tenets of hadith and examining the empiricist approach to education. It seeks to ascertain how Islamic teachings should be conveyed to both Muslim and non-Muslim audiences. This research endeavors to ascertain the meaning or manner of association from the perspective of hadith and its review in the theory of empiricism of education, as well as to describe the association between Muslims and non-Muslims. To obtain the most comprehensive results, the author conducted Takhrij studies and analyzed a range of books on the syarah of hadith.

This study employed qualitative research methods. This research method is employed to gain insight and comprehension of a phenomenon, event, or aspect of human life (Yusuf, 2017). Qualitative research methods are descriptive in nature and prioritize the use of analytical techniques. These techniques involve the incorporation of data (facts) and excerpts gathered from fieldwork to provide a comprehensive account of the phenomena under investigation (Darmalaksana, 2020). Qualitative research is primarily concerned with the collection of data in a natural setting with the aim of interpreting the phenomena that emerge in that context. The researcher's role is pivotal to this process.

2. Results and Discussion

Association in the Perspective of Hadith

Hadith regarding the association

The hadith regarding association emphasizes the significant influence of one's friends on their religious and moral conduct. As narrated:

حَدَّثَنَا ابْنُ بَشَّارٍ، حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو عَامِرٍ، وَأَبُو دَاوُدَ، قَالَا: حَدَّثَنَا زُهَيْرُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنِي مُوسَى بْنُ وَرْدَانَ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، قَالَ: «الرَّجُلُ عَلَى دِينِ خَلِيلِهِ، فَلْيَنْظُرْ أَحَدُكُمْ مَنْ يُخَالِلُ»

Reported to us Ibn Bashshar, Reported to us Abu ‘Amir and Abu Dawud, they said: Reported to us Zuhayr ibn Muhammad, said: Reported to us Musa ibn Wardan, narrated Abi Hurayrah, The Prophet (ﷺ) said: A man follows the religion of his friend; so each one should consider whom he makes his friend (al-Sijistani, n.d).

This hadith is also narrated by Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal with index number 8417(Al-Shaybani 1421 H).

حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو عَامِرٍ، حَدَّثَنَا زُهَيْرٌ، حَدَّثَنِي مُوسَى بْنُ وَرْدَانَ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: “ الْمَرْءُ عَلَى دِينِ خَلِيلِهِ، فَلْيَنْظُرْ أَحَدُكُمْ مَنْ يُخَالِلُ ”

Reported to us Abu ‘Amir: reported to us Zuhayr, reported to us Musa ibn Wardan, narrated Abi Hurayrah: The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “A man follows the religion of his friend; so, each one should consider whom he makes his friend.”

Hadith narrated by Imam at-Tidmidh index number 2378 (Al-Tirmidhi 1395 H).

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ بَشَّارٍ قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو عَامِرٍ، وَأَبُو دَاوُدَ، قَالَا: حَدَّثَنَا زُهَيْرُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ قَالَ: حَدَّثَنِي مُوسَى بْنُ وَرْدَانَ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «الرَّجُلُ عَلَى دِينِ خَلِيلِهِ، فَلْيَنْظُرْ أَحَدُكُمْ مَنْ يُخَالِلُ»: «هَذَا حَدِيثٌ حَسَنٌ غَرِيبٌ»

Reported to us Muhammad ibn Bashshar said: reported to us Abu ‘Amir dan Abu Dawud, they said: Reported to us Zuhayr ibn Muhammad said: Reported to me Musa ibn Wardan, narrated Abi Hurayrah: The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “A man follows the religion of his friend; so, each one should consider whom he makes his friend. This is a *hasan gharib hadith*.”

Additionally, it is narrated by Ishaq ibn Rahaway with index number 351:

أَخْبَرَنَا الْوَلِيدُ بْنُ مُسْلِمٍ، نَا زُهَيْرُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ، عَنْ مُوسَى بْنِ وَرْدَانَ، قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ أَبَا هُرَيْرَةَ، يَقُولُ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «الرَّجُلُ عَلَى دِينِ خَلِيلِهِ فَلْيَنْظُرْ أَحَدُكُمْ مَنْ يُخَالِلُ».

Reported to us Al-Walid ibn Muslim, reported to us Zuhayr ibn Muhammad, narrated Musa ibn Wardan: I heard Aba Hurayrah said: The Prophet (ﷺ) said: A man follows the religion of his friend, so each one should consider whom he makes his friend (Al-Marwazi 1412 H).

Before interpreting a hadith, the first step is to criticize the sanad and matan of the hadith. This step determines the quality and *validity* of the hadith, which is used as the basis for this argument.

No.	Narrator's Name	Narrator's Level	Tabaqat	Jarh wa al-Ta'dil
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1.	Abu Hurayrah (al-Mutqin Jamaal al-Din Abi al-Hajjaj Yusuf al-Mizzi 1403) (d. 57 H)	I	Sahabat (<i>Tabaqat</i> 1)	Sahabat
2.	Musa ibn Wardan (al-Mutqin Jamaal al-Din Abi al-Hajjaj Yusuf al-Mizzi 1403) (d. 117 H)	II	<i>Tabi'in</i> Middle Ages (<i>Tabaqat</i> 3)	'Uthman ibn Sa'id al-Darimi said: from Yahya ibn Ma'in said: <i>Laysa bi al-Qawi</i> , according to Abu Hatim: <i>Laysa bihi Ba's</i> , according to al-Daruqutini: <i>La ba'sa bih</i> . From Muhammad ibn 'Auf al-Ta'i said: I asked Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal about Musa ibn Wardan, He replied: I know nothing about him except for goodness. According to al-'Ijli: <i>Thiqah</i> . According to ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani: <i>Saduq</i> there may be an error (Ahmad ibn 'Ali ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani 1421).
3.	Zuhayr ibn Muhammad (al-Mutqin Jamaal al-Din Abi al-Hajjaj Yusuf al-Mizzi 1403) (d. 162 H)	III	<i>Tabi'ut Tabi'in</i> Among the Largest (<i>Tabaqat</i> 7)	Hanbal ibn Ishaq said: from Ahmad ibn Hanbal said: <i>thiqah</i> , according to Abu Hatim: <i>weak in memorization</i> . According to 'Uthman ibn Sa'id al-Darimi, from Yahya ibn Ma'in: <i>thiqah</i> , according to al-Nasa'i: <i>dha'if</i> , Stated by Ibn Hibban in <i>al-Thiqat</i> book, he said that blamed and disputed. According to Imam al-Dhahabi: <i>thiqah yughrab</i> . According to al-Hafidz Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani: <i>Thiqah</i> , expect narrating from ahli Sham, so it is weakened. Imam al-Bukhari said: from Ahmad ibn Hanbal said: <i>That Zuhayr narrated from ahli Syam is another Zuhayr</i> (Ahmad ibn 'Ali ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani 1421).
4.	Abu 'Amir (al-Mutqin Jamaal al-Din Abi al-Hajjaj Yusuf al-Mizzi 1403) (d. 204 H)	IV	<i>Tabi'ut Tabi'in</i> Among Small Groups (<i>Tabaqat</i> 9)	Abu 'Amir: According to Abu Hatim: <i>Saduq</i> , According to Imam al-Nasa'i: <i>Thiqah ma'mun</i> . According to Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani:

<p>Abu Dawud (al-Mutqin Jamaal al-Din Abi al- Hajjaj Yusuf al- Mizzi 1403:401) (d. 204 H)</p>	<p><i>Thiqah</i>.(Ahmad ibn ‘Ali ibn Hajar al-‘Asqalani 1421:625).</p>
<p>5. Ibn Bashshar(al- V Mutqin Jamaal al- Din Abi al-Hajjaj Yusuf al-Mizzi 1403) (d. 252 H)</p>	<p>Tabi’ut al- According to Abu Hatim: Atibba’ Among <i>Saduq</i>, According to imam al- the Largest Nasa’i: <i>Salih la ba’sa bih</i>, (Tabaqat 10) According to Ibn Hajar al- ‘Asqalani: <i>Thiqah</i> (Ahmad ibn ‘Ali ibn Hajar al-‘Asqalani 1421).</p>
<p>6. Abu Dawud <i>Mukharrij</i> (d. 275 H) Hadith</p>	

Based on the analysis of the validity of the sanad, it was found that all the narrators in the chain met each other or indicated that there was a meeting between the teacher and the student. Therefore, it can be concluded that the hadith is muttasil (connected). In terms of the quality of the narrators, all the narrators in the sanad have a thiqah status, except for one, Musa ibn Wardan, who is rated saduq (truthful) with some minor reservations. Other scholars have affirmed his trustworthiness (thiqah). According to the "Method of Takhrij Hadith and Sanad Research," a narrator graded as saduq cannot be used as evidence before cross-examination (Thahan, 2015). Many scholars praised the quality of Musa ibn Wardan, concluding that the hadith is hasan and can be used as evidence. However, since all the narrators fulfill the requirements for a valid hadith, with only one narrator having a slightly lower level of accuracy (dabit), this hadith is classified as hasan (Rahim and Syafri, 2022). Thus, the other narrators are considered sahih, and the hadith holds the status of hasan (Assagaf et al., 2021).

The matan analysis involves examining the text of the hadith to ensure it is free from any contradictions or errors. The matan of this hadith is consistent across various sources, with slight variations in wording that do not alter the overall meaning. The difference lies in the word **الرَّجُلُ** and **الْمَرْءُ**, indicating the hadith is meaningfully narrated. These variations do not change the original meaning or result in different understandings.

The hadith "A man follows the religion of his friend" aligns with the teachings of the Qur'an, which encourages association with those of good character. As stated in Surah Al-Kahfi:

وَاصْبِرْ نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْغَدَاةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ وَلَا تَعْدُ عَيْنَاكَ عَنْهُمْ تُرِيدُ
زِينَةَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَلَا تُطِعْ مَنْ أَغْفَلْنَا قَلْبَهُ عَن ذِكْرِنَا وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ وَكَانَ أَمْرُهُ فُرُطًا

And patiently stick with those who call upon their Lord morning and evening, seeking His pleasure.¹ Do not let your eyes look beyond them, desiring the luxuries of this worldly life. And do not obey those whose hearts We have made heedless of Our remembrance, who follow 'only' their desires and whose state is 'total' loss. (al-Kahfi, 18: 28).

Ma'anil Hadis about Association

The meaning of lafaz *الرَّجُلُ عَلَى دِينِ خَلِيلِهِ*, in the book "*aun al-Ma'bud*," al- Mundhiri said: narrated from al-Tirmidhi, explained that a person depends on the habits, ways and journeys of his friend's life. While the meaning of lafaz *فَلْيَنْظُرْ أَحَدُكُمْ مَنِ يُخَالِلُ*, then as a believer should think and ponder about who will be made as a friend. Someone who likes religion and morality makes him a friend. However, it is necessary to distance oneself from people with poor morals and religions. Someone will steal their friend's character gradually (Al-Sijistani, n.d).

It is obligatory for every intelligent human being to always think, especially in association, about whether the person who becomes his friend is a bad person, so he should distance himself or herself from them. They are also among the good friends who encourage them to do good, prevent evil, and open the doors of goodness, so they befriend them (Al- 'Uthaymin, n.d).

Explained in the book "*Tuhfah al-Ahwadhi Sharah Sunan al-Tirmidhi*" that a person depends on the habits, ways, and journeys of his friend's life. Thus, a believer should contemplate who will be considered a friend in social interactions. Moreover, someone who is pleased with his religion and morals makes him a friend. If it is not (good), it is left because the character is transmitted quickly. Friends influence whether a person is good or bad. Al-Ghazali said, 'Making friends and associating with stingy people, of course, will transmit their stingy nature. Associating with friends who have *ascetic traits* will, of course, make us *ascetic* to *Dunya*. Because basically, a person will follow the habits of his best friend" (Al-Mubarakfuri, n.d).

As explained in the book *Fatawa Nur 'ala al-Darb*", there is no doubt that a believer should always see and pay attention to who is made as his close friend and hangout mate" (al-'Aziz ibn 'Abd Allah ibn Baz, n.d).

This hadith requires humans to think in terms of looking at (choosing) friends to hang. This does not mean that someone is friends with "A" and hates some of the other friends, especially non-Muslims, which will lead to disputes or even fights. The purpose of hadith is to encourage Muslims to choose and look at who will be their closest friend (best friend) in their daily interactions. Stay away from hanging out with bad friends if you cannot change them. Therefore, the meaning of choosing here is not

to hate friends who are not daily friends or to avoid them, but rather to protect someone from being affected by bad habits.

Imam al-Ghazali quoted from *sahabat* 'Ali ibn Abi Talib who explained: “Don't be friends (close friends) with stupid people, because many stupid people destroy pious people, someone will be judged based on the level of friendship” (Arif 2019). A person follows the state of his/her friend's religion as good or bad. Therefore, in an Arabic saying, *al-Sahib Sahib* “A friend is always tug (his friend)” (al-Rahman Habnakah al-Maydani 1420). Some literary experts also say, *Yazunnu bial-Mar'i ma yuzannu biqarinih* “A person can be judged by who is made as a close friend” (Al Hasan al-Mawardi, n.d). Therefore, it is important for individuals to focus on their friends in an association. In a hadith Rasulullah SAW gave tips on socializing, he said in a hadith (Bin Ismail Abu Abdillah al-Bukhari 1422H):

حَدَّثَنِي مُوسَى بْنُ إِسْمَاعِيلَ، حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الْوَاحِدِ، حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو بُرْدَةَ بْنُ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ أَبَا بُرْدَةَ بْنَ أَبِي مُوسَى، عَنْ أَبِيهِ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ، قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «مَثَلُ الْجَلِيسِ الصَّالِحِ وَالْجَلِيسِ السَّوِّءِ، كَمَثَلِ صَاحِبِ الْمِسْكِ وَكَبِيرِ الْحَدَّادِ، لَا يَعْدَمُكَ مِنْ صَاحِبِ الْمِسْكِ إِذَا تَشْتَرِيهِ، أَوْ تَجِدُ رِيحَهُ، وَكَبِيرِ الْحَدَّادِ يُحْرِقُ بَدَنَكَ، أَوْ تَجِدُ مِنْهُ رِيحًا خَبِيثَةً»

Reported to me Musa ibn Isma'il, reported to us 'Abd al-Wahid, reported to us Abu Burdah ibn 'Abd Allah said; I heard Aba Burdah ibn Abi Musa, from his father radhiyallahu 'anhu said: Abu Musa Al-Ash'ari (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: I heard the Prophet (ﷺ) saying, “The similitude of good company and that of bad company is that of the owner of musk and of the one blowing the bellows. The owner of musk would either offer you some free of charge, or you would buy it from him, or you smell its pleasant fragrance; and as for the one who blows the bellows (i.e., the blacksmith), he either burns your clothes or you smell a repugnant smell.’

Imam al-Nawawi explains in the book of *Sharah Shahih Muslim*: “This hadith compares a good friend to a *perfume* seller and a bad friend to a blacksmith. This hadith also explains the virtues of associating with good friends who have noble morals, *wara attitudes*, knowledge, and dignity. At the same time, there is also an order not to associate with bad people, *heretics*, and other despicable attitudes’ (Zakariyyah Muhyi ibn Sharf et al.,).

The above discussion provides an example of how to find friends with whom to associate. There is also the virtue of associating with a good friend, such as a perfume seller. At the same time, there are dangers in making friends with bad friends, experts in *heritage*, and likes to do reprehensible things. It becomes a necessity for Muslims to choose and select their associates and pay attention to the environment in which they associate (Usamah Salim ibn 'Id al-Hilali 2005). If you have found friends and a suitable social environment, then the association will be lasting and sustainable when communication is good and civilized.

The understanding of hadith regarding the prohibition of associating with non-Muslims does not indicate that it is forbidden to make friends with non-Muslims, nor does it indicate that it is forbidden to feed, except for those who are pious. However, the intended meaning is that the most appropriate and most important to be friends is a believer, and the most appropriate and most important to be entertained, given food and drink, is someone who is pious (Khalilurrahman, 2019).

Thus, the meaning of the lafaz hadith regarding a man following the religion of his friend; therefore, each one should consider whom he makes his friend by not befriending people who have bad morals from a religious point of view because someone will easily follow their friends' habits. In this hadith, there is no prohibition on social interactions or *mu'amalah* with non-Muslims (Wiwaha et al. 2024). The intention was to guard without having to shy away from the adherents of other religions. Therefore, the purpose of this hadith is to encourage it to be more moderate in addressing the associations between different religions. Thus, manners of associating as in the hadith are not to distinguish between Muslims and non-Muslims, helping each other (*mu'amalah*), but to pay attention to boundaries when associating with non-Muslims, as the author explains (Dahuri, Kholis, and Puri 2023). In addition, it is necessary to choose friends with good morals. Ali ibn Abi Talib taught that, "Your real brothers are those who always help you in difficult times and are able to sacrifice for you to provide benefits and be able to help you in various tests." You should also choose friends who are not greedy, because it can be a poison that kills' (Arif 2019).

Association from the view of Empiricism Theory of Education

The hadith of the association described by the author attracts him to study it using the empiricist approach to educational science pioneered by John Locke. According to him, education and the environment influence the process of forming a person's character and personality based on the role of the surrounding environment. Adherents of *empiricism* say that innate abilities do not exist. A child's abilities are the result of both good and bad environmental education. Thus, the development of a person from childhood to adulthood is influenced by the surrounding community, education, and childhood experience. Thus, humans can change anything based on the influence of their environment and education. Education on morals is an important concentration in the context of habituating humans to commendable and noble behavior and maintaining relationships as servants to Allah SWT, fellow humans, and the surrounding environment (nature) (al-Farabi 2020).

The environment influences the formation of a person's behavioral patterns and ways of thinking. In addition, the environment gradually changes one's life and character. In bad environments, it is easy for someone to behave evilly and slowly. Therefore, success and failure are based on their association with the surrounding environment. When a person hangs out with good friends, his mindset will also be

positive. Meanwhile, when hanging out with bad friends, it is certain that the thought process will plunge into negative aspects (Odop, 2010). The environment, especially the family, is the main foundation and has the strongest influence on the mindset of education, especially for teenagers (Hernides 2019).

The process of forming a teenager's character is influenced by the environment. The environment plays a crucial role in the formation of personality traits. The environment is also the main reason for the formation of values that are free of family control and have a large impact on the formation of the character and personality of adolescents. Apart from the environment, peers are one aspect that supports students' self-concept in the sense that they influence personality characteristics (Dongoran and Boiliu 2020). Therefore, if a person is alive, the environment plays a role in influencing life through associations, friends, and the surrounding community. Thus, it is difficult to overcome the influence of the surrounding environment on the process of forming one's character and personality, especially among teenagers (2009). This can be overcome if parents, as main educators, can provide guidance on adolescent morals by teaching moral values based on Islamic teachings (Hernides 2019; Critchley 2014)

Thus, after analyzing the various arguments above, it can be concluded that the *matan* hadith in line with the *empiricism theory* proposed by the author, which explains that the environment or associates contribute to personality change and one's behavior. Therefore, it is necessary to consider and choose a close friend (best friend), particularly in modern times.

3. Conclusion

The role of association in human life is of critical importance and requires careful consideration. In Islam, the selection of suitable companions is strongly encouraged as a means of upholding one's religious identity and moral conduct. The research indicates that the hadith "a man follows the religion of his friend" underscores the significance of contemplating the selection of intimate companions to safeguard one's spiritual beliefs.

The hadith does not prohibit social relations or transactions (*mu'amalah*) with non-Muslims; however, it does advise caution in selecting close friends. The analysis, which employs John Locke's empiricist theory of education, demonstrates that the environment and associations exert a considerable influence on an individual's conduct and character. This research lends support to the position that the hadith is pertinent to empiricist theory, underscoring the significance of environmental impact on personal growth and education, and advocating for moderate and inclusive social conduct within diverse religious communities.

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