



Integrating Empathetic and Normative Approaches in Hadith Interpretation: A Contextual Study of Prophetic Ethical Communication in *Da'wah*

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Abstract: This study aims to integrate normative and empathetic approaches in interpreting hadiths, focusing on prophetic communication during da'wah. The traditional normative approach often ignores the ethical and social context, whereas the empathetic approach can sometimes undermine legal boundaries. This study seeks to bridge these approaches for a more effective and humane da'wah strategy. A qualitative-explorative design and thematic analysis were used. Selected hadiths were examined, focusing on those in which the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) conveyed legal norms alongside empathetic responses. Key examples include the Bedouin who urinated in the mosque, the young man who asked for permission to commit adultery, and the woman who requested punishment for adultery. The analysis revealed that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) maintained the sanctity of Islamic law while incorporating empathy and emotional intelligence in his communication. These instances show that empathy does not diminish the authority of legal norms but instead enhances the effectiveness of da'wah by addressing the audience's socio-psychological needs. This integrative approach aligns with the ethical foundations of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* and the prophetic value of *rahmah*. This study highlights the importance of adopting ethical-contextual hadith interpretation, particularly in contemporary pluralistic societies, to make Islamic da'wah more relevant and humane.

Keywords: Hadith Studies, Prophetic Communication, Empathy, Normative Approach, *Islamic Da'wah*, *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah*.

Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengintegrasikan pendekatan normatif dan empatik dalam penafsiran hadis, dengan fokus pada komunikasi kenabian dalam konteks dakwah. Pendekatan normatif tradisional sering mengabaikan konteks etis dan sosial, sementara pendekatan empatik terkadang dapat mengabaikan batasan hukum. Penelitian ini berusaha menjembatani kedua pendekatan tersebut untuk strategi dakwah yang lebih efektif dan manusiawi. Desain kualitatif-eksploratif dan analisis tematik-kontekstual digunakan dalam penelitian ini. Beberapa hadis dipilih untuk dianalisis, dengan fokus pada hadis yang

menggambarkan Nabi Muhammad (SAW) menyampaikan norma hukum bersamaan dengan respons empatik. Contoh kunci termasuk hadis tentang orang Badui yang buang air kecil di masjid, pemuda yang meminta izin untuk berzina, dan wanita yang meminta hukuman atas perzinahan. Analisis menunjukkan bahwa Nabi Muhammad (SAW) tetap menegakkan hukum Islam sambil mengintegrasikan empati dan kecerdasan emosional dalam komunikasinya. Kasus-kasus ini menunjukkan bahwa empati tidak mengurangi kewibawaan norma hukum, tetapi justru meningkatkan efektivitas dakwah dengan memperhatikan kebutuhan sosial-psikologis audiens. Pendekatan integratif ini sejalan dengan dasar etika maqāṣid al-sharī'ah dan nilai rahmah kenabian. Penelitian ini menekankan pentingnya mengadopsi penafsiran hadis yang etis-kontekstual, terutama dalam masyarakat plural kontemporer, agar dakwah Islam lebih relevan dan manusiawi.

Kata kunci: Studi Hadis, Komunikasi Kenabian, Empati, Pendekatan Normatif, Dakwah Islam, Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah

1. Introduction

In Islamic scholarship, the hadith plays an important role as a moral guide and foundation. laws that guide the behavior of Muslims. For centuries, a normative approach to hadith has dominated the intellectual tradition, particularly in the form of rigid, text-oriented codification of law. However, this approach often ignores the social context and ethical-communicative dimensions inherent in the actions of the Prophet Muhammad, especially his preaching practices. The need for a more empathetic and contextual approach is increasingly felt amid the increasingly complex and pluralistic changes in Muslim societies. Some people convey religious messages literally without considering the context of the audience, which often leads to resistance and even rejection of the message itself (Zamzami, 2024; Nurhadi, 2021).

This phenomenon demonstrates the urgency of reformulating the way we understand and convey hadith, especially those related to the Prophet's da'wah communication. The Prophet not only conveyed the law but also did so with empathy, patience, and attention to the socio-psychological background of his community. In many instances, the Prophet delayed the application of the law to maintain emotional stability and open space for moral awareness. This approach shows that empathy is not a weakening of norms but rather part of an ethical and communicative da'wah strategy (Sulaiman, 2020; Fauzi, 2022).

Therefore, efforts to integrate normative and empathetic approaches in the study of hadith are both a scientific and practical necessity in responding to the challenges

of da'wah in the modern era. This research is important in an academic context because it opens new perspectives on hadith that focus not only on legalistic aspects but also on the human values inherent in the Prophet's da'wah practices. This will not only enrich the methods of hadith interpretation but also contribute directly to the effectiveness of da'wah communication in contemporary society. Furthermore, this study encourages preachers, academics, and Islamic educational institutions to strengthen a prophetic ethics-based approach to preaching that is relevant, humanistic, and grounded in the principles of Sharia (Amir, 2023; Fauzi, 2022).

Thus, this study is expected to serve as a bridge between classical scientific heritage and the needs of modern preaching. The understanding of the Prophet's hadith has been dominated by a normative approach that focuses on legal and formal dimensions. This approach focuses on the wording, chain of transmission, and legal meaning contained in the hadith text, especially in the context of *istinbat* (derivation) of Sharia law. Although this approach has strong legitimacy in classical Islamic scholarship, it often ignores the social, psychological, and communicative context of the Prophet as a human being and messenger who interacted directly with a society that was diverse in terms of culture, social status, and personality (Nurhadi, 2021; Zamzami, 2024).

When legal hadiths are understood without considering the ethical and empathetic context surrounding them, the message of da'wah becomes rigid and loses the transformative aspect that should be inherent in the prophetic communication. Conversely, the empathetic approach to hadith emphasizes ethics, human relations, and social sensitivity in understanding the Prophet's actions and words. This approach stems from the assumption that each of the Prophet's actions is not merely a legal instruction but also a reflection of noble character and a contextual communication strategy full of wisdom. However, this approach is often criticized for being too liberal or blurring the normative boundaries of Sharia law. This has led to an unproductive methodological dichotomy between groups that emphasize legal texts and those that emphasize the ethical and social values of hadith. In this context, it is important to develop an integrative framework of understanding that does not pit the two against each other but rather sees them as complementary dimensions in understanding the Prophet's hadith (Fauzi, 2022; Amir, 2023).

Over the past few decades, the study of hadith in the context of da'wah has developed along two main lines: a normative approach oriented towards legal structures and an empathetic approach emphasizing ethical and contextual aspects.

However, research combining these two approaches within a single framework remains limited. This separation means that studies of *da'wah* hadith often fail to address the complex religious communication needs of modern society. Dakwah becomes rigid when it focuses solely on law and becomes lax when it emphasises only emotional aspects without a normative foundation (Fikri, 2023; Sabili & Ramadhan, 2020).

In fact, the needs of the people today demand a *da'wah* method based on polite, empathetic, and transformative legal awareness. The lack of an integrative approach is also evident in the scarcity of research that explicitly explores how the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) conveyed legal norms using an approach that was adaptable to his audience. Most scientific articles still focus on textual studies of the *matn* and *sanad* of hadith or on the function of hadith in the derivation of *fiqh* law, without considering the Prophet's communication strategies and social sensitivity as a communicator. In this context, research that attempts to bridge the normative power of hadith and the value of empathy is important, so that the study of hadith is not only academically valuable but also applicable in the practice of *da'wah* in contemporary social spaces (Hamdani & Mubarak, 2021; Nurfadillah, 2022).

Therefore, this integrative approach is expected to fill the epistemological gap that has not been widely addressed by hadith and *da'wah* researchers. This study aims to offer an integrative methodological approach to understanding hadiths on *da'wah*, combining normative and empathetic analyses within a single interpretative framework. This integration is intended to broaden the scope of hadith studies, which have thus far been overly focused on legal dimensions or, conversely, emphasized socio-psychological aspects without a normative structure. By selecting specific hadiths that contain prophetic communication in the context of *da'wah*, this study analyzes how the Prophet Muhammad combined the firmness of Sharia law with the gentleness of ethics in conveying religious messages. Another objective of this study is to formulate methodological principles that can serve as a basis for the development of hadith interpretation based on *da'wah* ethics, to respond to the increasingly diverse and complex needs of Muslim communities (Hamdani & Mubarak, 2021; Rahman & Fajri, 2020).

The main contribution of this article lies in updating the methodology of hadith studies, which is not only based on *sanad* and *Matn* criticism but also considers the sociological and psychological contexts and the *da'wah* objectives of the hadith itself. Thus, this integrative approach is expected to enrich the methodology of hadith studies in Indonesia, especially in the fields of *da'wah* education and Islamic communication.

In addition, this study provides practical contributions for Islamic preachers and educators in designing religious communication strategies that are more humanistic and adaptive to today's audience. This integrative model is in line with the spirit of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, in which values such as mercy, wisdom, and *maslahat* are the main foundations of Islamic teachings (Fikri, 2023; Nurfadillah, 2022).

Contemporary studies on hadith in the context of da'wah show a fragmentary tendency. Most studies only focus on normative-legal aspects or, conversely, on ethical-humanistic aspects without attempting complete methodological integration. This creates an academic gap in developing a holistic approach to hadith, especially when faced with the needs of modern da'wah, which demands social sensitivity and firm principles.

For example, Fikri (2023) emphasizes the importance of empathy in urban da'wah but tends to ignore the legal-hadith dimensions. Conversely, Sabili and Ramadhan (2020) focused on a normative approach to hadith da'wah, without considering the aspects of communication and ethical sensitivity towards the object of da'wah.

Several studies have attempted to respond to this complexity by drawing closer to *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* as a contextual normative approach. Hamdani and Mubarak (2021), for example, link hadith *da'wah* with the dimension of *maslahat*, but only mention the aspect of empathy normatively, without adequate communicative study. Meanwhile, Nurfadillah (2022) sharply criticizes the textual methodology in the study of dakwah hadith and encourages a contextual approach but has not yet developed a systematic integrative method.

Other studies, such as that conducted by Khoirurroji' In (2019), although touching on ethical aspects in the Qur'an and hadith, still do not show a synthesis between legal and empathetic approaches to animal slaughter.

A similar trend is evident in thematic studies on da'wah communication. Eko and Zainal (2020) discuss the ethics of da'wah in the digital age by referring to hadith as a normative basis but do not discuss integrative methods between norms and communication. Meanwhile, Anja (2020) presents a qualitative narrative of inclusive and humanistic da'wah but ignores the normative structure of hadith as a source of law. Amrina's (2019) research on the controversial da'wah communication of Ustaz Abdul Somad also tends to focus on stylistic aspects and rhetorical effects, without methodologically analyzing the normative elements of hadith in the lecture.

A local culture-based hermeneutic approach, as offered in the study Model Dakwah Islam Nusantara (2023), also shows a tendency to avoid the normative structure of hadith, despite offering innovations in cross-cultural communication.

However, studies such as *Telisik Hadis Humanisme dalam Hadis Arba'in* (2024) focus on ethics and humanity but do not address how hadith law can be empathetically contextualized. Similar studies can also be seen in Khoirurroji' In's (2019) study on communication ethics based on the Qur'an and hadith, as well as Pewarta's (2022) attempt to link Abraham Maslow's theory of needs with seven selected hadiths, which only touches on psychological aspects without integrating the legal framework of hadith.

There are two dominant tendencies in literature. *First*, there is a normative tendency that rigidly emphasizes the legal aspects of hadith without considering the psychology of da'wah and social conditions. *Second*, there is an empathetic tendency, which places too much emphasis on communication, affection, and social psychology but neglects the depth of the legal structure of hadith.

It is evident that few academic endeavors have explicitly offered an integrative approach that combines the normative rigor and communicative subtlety within the framework of hadith methodology. Therefore, further studies are needed to bridge these two dimensions, enabling hadith to be interpreted not only as legal texts but also as humanistic and effective communicative strategies for *da'wah*.

This study adopts an exploratory qualitative approach to deeply explore the understanding of the hadiths of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) through the integration of two analytical approaches: normative-legal and ethical-empathetic. Exploratory qualitative was chosen because the characteristics of this study do not aim to test hypotheses but rather to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the complementary methodological dimensions in the study of hadith.

The analytical approach used was contextual and thematic analysis. A contextual analysis was conducted to understand the historical, social, and psychological background of the selected hadiths, including paying attention to the aspects of the narrator, the situation, and the Prophet's response in his da'wah interactions. Thematic analysis was used to identify patterns of prophetic communication that contain legal (normative) dimensions and ethical or empathetic values.

The integration of these two approaches allows for a reading of the hadith that is not trapped in the literalism of the text but also does not ignore its legal structure. The primary data sources in this study are the main hadith literature from *Kutub al-*

Sittah, particularly Sahih al-Bukhari, Sahih Muslim, and Sunan Abu Dawud. The selected hadiths are those directly related to missionary events in which the Prophet Muhammad interacted socially in a manner that reflected legal dimensions (such as prohibitions or the application of Sharia) while also demonstrating an empathetic and contextual approach to his audience.

Some of the cases studied include: (1) the hadith about the young man who asked for permission to commit adultery, (2) the hadith about the Bedouin who urinated in the mosque, and (3) the hadith about the adulterous woman who came asking to be punished. The hadiths were selected using purposive sampling, focusing on the theme of prophetic *da'wah* in social situations that contain both legal and empathetic values.

Secondary data sources were obtained from Indonesian-language books and scientific articles discussing contemporary hadith studies, *da'wah* ethics, *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, and contextual approaches. This literature was used to support the analysis and as a theoretical reference for constructing an interpretative framework for reading hadiths integratively. Among them were works by Amir (2023), Nurhadi (2021), and Zamzami (2024), as well as articles from journals reviewed in the literature review section of this paper.

The data analysis technique used was content analysis with a theme- and context-based approach. This process was carried out in three stages: first, identifying hadiths that met the criteria of the Prophet's normative and empathetic *da'wah* themes; second, examining the meaning of the hadiths structurally (*Matn and Sanad*) and historically (*asbāb al-wurūd* and sociological background); and third, interpreting the meaning of the hadith by considering the dimensions of communication, social psychology, and Islamic legal principles.

This study also uses a *maudhūī* (thematic) approach to the hadiths to map a consistent pattern of prophetic *da'wah* between norms and ethics. This study is expected to provide a new understanding of hadith *da'wah* that is no longer trapped in the dichotomy between law and values, but rather presents an ethical, contextual, and applicable prophetic communication framework in contemporary *da'wah* practice.

2. Results and Discussion

Hadith about the Bedouin who urinated in the mosque

One incident that is often cited as an example of tolerance and wise preaching is when a Bedouin Arab urinated in a mosque. This hadith was narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim, describing how the Prophet did not immediately become angry but instead

asked his companions to let the man finish his business first before cleaning up the mess.

This event is narrated in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Kitāb al-Wuḍū', Bāb Ṣubḥ*

عَنْ أَنَسٍ، قَالَ بَيْنَمَا نَحْنُ فِي الْمَسْجِدِ مَعَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذْ جَاءَ أَعْرَابِيٌّ فَبَالَ فِي طَرَفِ الْمَسْجِدِ فَصَاحَ بِهِ النَّاسُ فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ "دَعُوهُ، فَلَا تُزْرِمُوهُ"، فَتَرَكَوهُ حَتَّى بَالَ، ثُمَّ إِنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ دَعَاهُ، فَقَالَ لَهُ "إِنَّ هَذِهِ الْمَسَاجِدَ لَا تَصْلُحُ لِشَيْءٍ مِنْ هَذَا الْبَوْلِ، وَلَا الْقَذَرِ، إِنَّمَا هِيَ لِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ، وَالصَّلَاةِ، وَقِرَاءَةِ الْقُرْآنِ"
(Bukhari, No. Hadis: 220)

According to Ibn Hajar's commentary in *Fath al-Bārī*, the Prophet's decision not to immediately reprimand the Bedouin who urinated in the mosque exemplifies a da'wah strategy rooted in emotional restraint and pedagogical patience (*ta'nī*) as well as gradualism (*tadarruj*). This approach reflects the Prophet's awareness that the Bedouin, coming from a rural background, lacked understanding of the sanctity of the mosque (Ibn Hajar, 2001). Normatively, the act constituted a clear violation of Islamic law regarding the purity of places of worship. However, the Prophet responded with empathy, choosing not to publicly shame the man but instead transforming the incident into a meaningful lesson in religious ethics. This integrative response illustrates that normative enforcement in da'wah must be accompanied by contextual sensitivity and communicative wisdom.

From a normative perspective, the Bedouins' actions clearly violate Sharia law regarding the sanctity of places of worship. In Islamic jurisprudence, mosques must be kept clean, and impurities must not be allowed to remain inside them. The natural response in this context would be decisive action or the imposition of sanctions on the aggressor. However, the Prophet chose an empathetic and educational approach instead. He understood that the perpetrator was not someone who understood the norms, so the best response was education, not confrontation. This demonstrates a harmonious integration between the maintenance of law and the nurturing of morals (Fikri, 2023; Hamdani & Mubarak, 2021).

Hadith about the Young Man Who Asked Permission to Commit Adultery

This story is also mentioned in several hadith books, one of which is Musnad Ahmad, which describes a young man coming to the Prophet Muhammad and asking for permission to commit adultery. The companions were furious, but the Prophet asked him to come closer and engage in dialogue with him. He asked whether the young man

would be willing if the same thing happened to his mother, sister, or female relatives. The young man was moved and eventually repented of his sins.

This hadith is narrated in the Musnad Ahmad. No. 22211:

عَنْ أَبِي أُمَامَةَ، قَالَ: أَتَى فَتَى النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، فَقَالَ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، أَتَدْنِي فِي الزَّنَا، فَأَقْبَلَ الْقَوْمُ عَلَيْهِ، فَرَجَرُوهُ، وَقَالُوا: مَهْ مَهْ، فَقَالَ: اذْنُهُ، فَدَنَا مِنْهُ قَرِيبًا، قَالَ: اجْلِسْ، فَجَلَسَ، قَالَ: أَتُحِبُّهُ لِأُمِّكَ؟ قَالَ: لَا، قَالَ: وَلَا النَّاسُ يُحِبُّونَهُ لِأُمَّهَاتِهِمْ... فَوَضَعَ يَدَهُ عَلَيْهِ، وَقَالَ: اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ ذَنْبَهُ، وَطَهِّرْ قَلْبَهُ، وَحَصِّنْ فَرْجَهُ، فَلَمْ يَكُنْ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ الْفَتَى يَلْتَفِتُ إِلَى شَيْءٍ
(*Ahmad ibn Hanbal, 22211*)

According to al-Munāwī in *Fayḍal-Qadīr*, this is an example of communication *ḥikmah wa mawīza ḥasanah*, which is changing one's mindset by evoking empathy and moral awareness (al-Munāwī, 2007, vol. 1, p. 142). Legally, the young man's request cannot be justified because adultery is a major offence. However, the Prophet did not reject it outright; instead, he touched on the emotional aspects and interpersonal logic to instill awareness of values. This is a form of dialogical da'wah, conveying Shariah norms through a psychological touch.

From a normative perspective, such a request clearly contradicts Islamic law, which strictly prohibits adultery and usually imposes severe penalties for it. However, the Prophet's approach demonstrates empathetic da'wah ethics: he did not judge or rebuke but rather built moral awareness through an affective and dialogical approach to the subject. This hadith shows that prophetic communication ethics can convey norms strongly without losing the values of compassion and moral education (Nurfadillah, 2022; Rahman and Fajri, 2020).

Hadith about the Adulterous Woman Who Asked to be Punished

This hadith was narrated by Muslim and records a woman from the Ghamidiyah tribe who came to the Prophet and confessed to adultery and then asked to be punished by stoning. The Prophet did not respond immediately but delayed the execution until the woman gave birth and breastfed her child. After some time, when the woman came again, the Prophet carried out the Sharia law as she had requested.

Narrated in Muslim, *Kitāb al-Ḥudūd*, No. 1695:

عَنْ عِمْرَانَ بْنِ حُصَيْنٍ، أَنَّ امْرَأَةً مِنْ جُهَيْنَةَ أَتَتْ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، وَهِيَ حُبْلَى مِنَ الزَّنَا، فَقَالَتْ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، أَصَبْتُ حَدًّا، فَأَقِمْهُ عَلَيَّ... فَلَمَّا وَلَدَتْ أَتَاهُ الصَّبِيُّ فِي خِرْقَةٍ، قَالَ: خُذُوهُ

فَارْضِعُوهُ، فَلَمَّا فَطَمَتْهُ، أَتَتْهُ بِالصَّبِيِّ فِي يَدِهِ كِسْرَةُ خُبْزٍ، فَأَمَرَ بِهَا فَحْفِرَ لَهَا إِلَى صَدْرِهَا وَأَمَرَ النَّاسَ
فَرَجَمُوهَا (Muslim, No. 1695)

According to al-Nawawī in *Sharḥ Muslim*, the postponement of the execution demonstrates the Prophet's noble character in balancing law enforcement with mercy towards the mother and child (al-Nawawī, 2005, Vol. 11, pp. 183–185).

Normatively, the Prophet enforced hudud because of Islamic law. However, the Prophet empathetically gave the woman time to give birth and breastfeed her child, even ensuring that the child was independent before the punishment was carried out. This emphasizes that law enforcement must not ignore the context of human and social responsibility.

From a normative perspective, Prophet Muhammad continued to apply hudud law to those who committed adultery. However, an empathetic approach was evident in the Prophet's attitude, which considered the psychological and social conditions of the woman, as well as the future of the child she was carrying. The postponement of the law's implementation without compromising its fairness reflects a balance between enforcing norms and protecting human values (Anja, 2020; Sabili & Ramadhan, 2020).

The three hadiths above clearly show that the Prophet Muhammad never abandoned the legal values of Islamic law, but in his preaching practice, he was not rigid in interpreting its application. Situational understanding, empathy for human conditions, and an educational approach are integral to the Prophet's da'wah communication. Thus, the results of this analysis reinforce the idea that the integration of normative and empathetic approaches is a characteristic of prophetic da'wah.

The three hadiths analyzed in the results section not only record the events of Prophet Muhammad's preaching but also represent a distinct and multidimensional model of prophetic communication ethics. Communication ethics in a prophetic context not only serves to convey messages of truth in a normative manner, but also emphasizes psychological, social, and educational approaches to respond to the diversity of the audience's backgrounds. In other words, the Prophet conveyed the teachings of Islam not only by stating the law but also by educating feelings and reasoning, as seen in the way he dealt with the Bedouins, the young man who wanted to commit adultery, and the adulterous woman from the Ghamidiyah tribe.

In the case of the Bedouin who urinated in the mosque, the Prophet did not respond with anger or spontaneous punishment, even though the act clearly violated the sanctity of the place of worship. Instead, the Prophet practised rahmah and hikmah, two key values in Qur'anic da'wah ethics (see QS. al-Nahl: 125). He allowed

the act to be completed first and then calmly conveyed moral and fiqh education. This shows that prophetic communication places nurturing above punishment and education above emotional expression (Hamdani & Mubarak, 2021).

Similarly, in the case of a young man who asked for permission to commit adultery, the Prophet used persuasive communication methods with an affective and rational approach. He did not immediately label the young man as a sinner but guided his thinking so that he could see the moral and social impact of his actions through analogies with his loved ones. This approach illustrates an empathetic interpersonal da'wah model that aims not only to convey prohibitions but also to shape moral awareness from within the audience (Rahman & Fajri, 2020). Here, the Prophet displayed deep communication, not merely transactional communication.

Meanwhile, in the case of adulterous women, prophetic ethics appear in the form of a balance between law enforcement (*ḥudūd*) and the protection of human rights, especially for unborn and innocent children. The postponement of execution until the child is weaned shows that justice in Islam cannot be separated from compassion (*al-rahmah*) and consideration of *maslahat*. This is evidence that the Prophet Muhammad did not separate norms from their social context but rather made the context the determining factor in his approach to da'wah. In the framework of communication ethics, this action is part of responsive and adaptive communication, which considers the situation and does not generalize the treatment of offenders (Sabili & Ramadhan, 2020).

The prophetic communication model in these three hadiths can be classified into three main principles. First, empathy-based communication places the audience as subjects who must be understood before being given guidance. Second, communication that aims for moral transformation, not just the delivery of information. Third, communication is based on the principle, where norms are upheld but always within the framework of social context and human values. These three principles align with modern ethical communication theory, which emphasizes responsibility, responsiveness, and relational ethics.

Thus, these three hadiths are not only normative data for Islamic law but also an archive of communication ethics that reflect the greatness of the Prophet Muhammad's preaching as an educator of the ummah. This study shows that the integration of normative and empathic approaches in understanding hadith is not only possible, but also necessary as a scientific and practical approach to preaching that is strongly rooted in the prophetic model.

Empathy is not a disregard for the law but part of a more effective da'wah strategy.

One of the key findings of this analysis is that the empathetic approach in the hadith cannot be understood as a compromise of Islamic law but rather as a contextual and effective da'wah strategy. In the three cases studied, the Prophet Muhammad did not abandon the legal dimension of Islamic teachings but adjusted the way they were conveyed so that they could be fully accepted and understood by his audience in Medina.

This approach emphasizes that empathy is not a weakness or a form of liberalization of da'wah, but rather a part of prophetic prudence and wisdom in balancing justice and compassion (Fikri, 2023). A rigid normative approach often fails to touch the inner side of human beings, especially in the context of a complex and pluralistic modern society. Preaching that only conveys the law literally, without considering the audience's psychological, cultural, and intellectual capacities, is prone to rejection and does not bring about change.

In this regard, Prophet Muhammad demonstrated that empathy is a medium for conveying the law in a more profound way so that it is not only memorized but also understood and practiced. This is what al-Ghazālī refers to as *ta'līm bi al-ḥāl*, teaching through circumstances, not just words (Zamzami, 2024).

Moreover, the integration of empathy and legal norms in the Prophet's preaching shows that the moral transformation of the people does not always have to start from formal legal aspects but can begin with an emotional approach that awakens internal awareness. This is what makes the Prophet's preaching so effective, and touches all circles the educated, the public, sinners, and the marginalized groups. Therefore, an empathetic approach in the context of hadith preaching is not only theologically valid but also communicatively strategic. With this approach, preaching can reach a wider audience without losing its solid Sharia footing (Nurfadillah, 2022; Rahman and Fajri, 2020).

The implications for updating contemporary approaches to preaching in a pluralistic society are discussed.

This study underscores the urgency of renewing da'wah methodologies in contemporary societies marked by cultural, religious, and ideological pluralism. In such multicultural contexts, a da'wah approach that focuses solely on the explicit affirmation of Islamic law while neglecting audience psychology and social sensitivities—risks generating resistance and even conflict. Integrating normative and empathetic approaches in interpreting and conveying hadith is therefore essential, not only to enhance the

effectiveness of da'wah, but also to foster inclusive and dialogical social cohesion (Anja, 2020; Fikri, 2023).

The prophetic communication model exemplified by Prophet Muhammad shows that ethics, empathy, and context are integral parts of da'wah and cannot be separated from the law itself. In a highly diverse society, a da'wah approach that prioritizes dialogue, equality, and respect for diversity becomes more relevant. This does not mean compromising Islamic teachings but rather adapting the methods of delivery so that the normative messages of Islam can still be accepted substantively by a public with diverse backgrounds. With this approach, da'wah becomes not only a means of *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar* (enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil), but also a means of civilized social development (Sulaiman, 2020).

Furthermore, the implications of this research can be applied in the development of da'wah education curricula, professional *dai* training, and the creation of more communicative and contextual digital content. Preachers, academics, and da'wah activists are required to not only master Sharia law but also have competence in intercultural communication, social psychology, and audience context analysis. Thus, an integrative approach between law and empathy in hadith can become a new paradigm for developing transformative, inclusive da'wah strategies based on universal prophetic values.

Relevance to the Theory of Maqāṣid and the Principle of Rahmah in Islamic Preaching.

An integrative approach between norms and empathy in understanding hadith *dakwah* has a very strong relevance to the theory of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* (the main objectives of shariah) and the principle of *rahmah* (compassion), which is the ethical foundation of Islam. *Maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* not only aims to maintain the formalization of law but also serves to protect and honor the essential aspects of human life, such as religion, reason, soul, offspring, and property.

In the context of da'wah, fulfilling these *maqāṣid* requires a method of delivery that is not only legally correct but also effective, humane, and full of wisdom (Hamdani & Mubarak, 2021). When the Prophet Muhammad responded to a young man who asked for permission to commit adultery with a rational and affective approach, or when he postponed the hudud punishment for a woman for the sake of her child's welfare, these actions reflected a *maqāṣid* orientation in practice. The law was still enforced, but it was prioritized according to human welfare and conditions. This is where the principle of *rahmah* becomes dominant. The Prophet's preaching was always

based on compassion and concern for the inner and outer well-being of the audience. This is in line with Allah's words in Surah al-Anbiya: 107: “*Wa mā arsalnāka illā raḥMatn lil-‘ālamīn*” and We have not sent you except as a mercy to the worlds. Within the framework of *maqāṣid*, the law should not be applied rigidly and blindly but must serve the purposes of goodness (*jalb al-maṣlaḥah*) and prevent harm (*daf al-maṣadah*). Thus, an empathetic approach to da'wah is not only in accordance with prophetic ethics, but also with the progressive and humane logic of *maqāṣid*. The integration of law and empathy in the hadith of da'wah emphasises that ideal da'wah is not merely about enforcing the law, but also about bringing human values to life in every religious social interaction (Nurfadillah, 2022; Zamzami, 2024). This also addresses the challenges of *da'wah* in the modern era, which demands a wise and value-based approach, not merely legal authority.

Affirmation of the superiority of the integrative approach over the monolithic approach.

An integrative approach to understanding hadith which combines normative (legal) and empathetic (ethical and social context) dimensions offers significant advantages over a monolithic approach that relies solely on one dimension.

A purely normative approach that focuses only on legal aspects is often rigid and ignores the diversity of social and psychological conditions of the objects of da'wah. Meanwhile, an empathetic approach that is not supported by a solid legal structure risks being trapped in value relativism or a loose ethical approach. In this context, an integrative approach presents itself as a more proportional, contextual, and transformative methodological solution (Fikri, 2023; Sabili & Ramadhan, 2020). The advantage of an integrative approach lies in its ability to respond to complexity. realities social without losing the principles of Islamic teachings. He does not separate between sharia and wisdom, between text and context, between the firmness of norms and the gentleness of approach.

In the practice of da'wah, this approach allows a *da'i* to convey Islamic teachings while maintaining the power of the law, but wrapped in the ethics of dialogue, empathy, and social sensitivity. This is evident in the way the Prophet Muhammad conveyed the law to individuals from different backgrounds, where each approach was tailored to the conditions and readiness of the recipients of da'wah (Anja, 2020; Nurfadillah, 2022). During an increasingly pluralistic, mobile society exposed to various global narratives, a monolithic approach is inadequate to respond to the multidimensional challenges of da'wah.

Conversely, an integrative approach not only facilitates the acceptance of messages, but also encourages deeper internalization of values, because norms are conveyed through a humanized approach. Therefore, the study of contemporary da'wah hadith needs to be directed towards developing this integrative paradigm so that it is more functional, adaptive, and remains faithful to the prophetic model of da'wah taught by the Prophet (PBUH).

3. Conclusion

This study highlights the importance of an integrative approach to hadith interpretation in the context of da'wah, combining normative-legal dimensions with empathetic and ethical communication values. Through the analysis of three key hadiths the Bedouin who urinated in the mosque, the young man who sought permission to commit adultery, and the woman who requested punishment for adultery it becomes evident that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) upheld Islamic legal principles while demonstrating social sensitivity, emotional intelligence, and educational communication strategies.

Such an approach shows that empathy does not weaken normative authority; rather, it enhances the effectiveness of da'wah in pluralistic and dynamic societies. By considering the psychological, social, and cultural backgrounds of the audience, da'wah becomes more inclusive, dialogical, and transformative. The integration of legal norms and communicative ethics in hadith interpretation aligns with the spirit of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, which places mercy, wisdom, and public benefit at the heart of Islamic teachings.

Accordingly, this study offers both methodological and practical contributions to the development of hadith studies, Islamic education, and contemporary religious communication strategies. Ethical-contextual interpretation of hadith should be further developed so that Islamic da'wah is not only legally sound but also deeply humanistic and responsive to the needs of the time.

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