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Authenticating Hadith Through the Irfani Method: An Effort in Epistemic Decolonization and the Contribution of Hadith Studies to the SDGs

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Abstract

Objective: This article examines the application of the Irfānī method in Hadith authentication as a strategy for epistemic decolonization, aiming to develop a more inclusive, spiritually grounded, and socially responsive approach to understanding Islamic teachings while demonstrating its contribution to advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). **Theoretical framework**: The study is grounded in the theory of epistemic decolonization, drawing on Muhammad Rofiq Muzakkir's perspective to critique the dominance of Western epistemological paradigms in Islamic scholarship and to emphasize the legitimacy of indigenous Islamic epistemologies, particularly the Irfānī tradition, which integrates spiritual intuition with ethical reasoning. **Literature review**: Previous studies on Hadith authentication predominantly emphasize textual criticism (naqli) and rational analysis ('aqli), whereas limited attention has been given to the spiritual and metaphysical dimensions of Hadith interpretation. Existing scholarship therefore reveals a significant gap concerning the integration of experiential spirituality into contemporary Hadith studies. **Method**: This research employs a qualitative library research approach by examining classical and contemporary literature on Hadith studies, Islamic epistemology, Irfānī thought, and decolonial theory through descriptive and interpretive analysis. **Results**: The findings demonstrate that the Irfānī method complements conventional Hadith authentication by incorporating spiritual experience, moral intuition, and ethical reflection without undermining established scholarly standards. This integrative approach strengthens interpretations promoting justice, compassion, social equality, environmental responsibility, and peaceful coexistence, thereby supporting several SDGs. **Implications**: The study provides an alternative epistemological framework for Islamic scholarship, encouraging educational institutions and researchers to embrace epistemic plurality while producing religious knowledge that is contextually relevant and socially transformative. **Novelty**: The principal contribution of this research is the integration of Irfānī spirituality into Hadith authentication within an epistemic decolonization framework, offering a holistic model that connects authentic Islamic knowledge production with contemporary global sustainability agendas and ethical development.

Keywords: irfānī method, hadith authentication, epistemic decolonization, islamic epistemology, sustainable development goals (sdgs).

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INTRODUCTION

The approach to contemporary hadith studies has undergone complex developments, particularly in terms of its relevance and application to modern Muslim society. Two dominant streams have emerged: first, the normative-textual approach which emphasizes the preservation of the sanad (chain of narration) and matn (content) criticism, and second, the application of a historical-critical methodology influenced by modern Western science. The latter has made significant contributions to the development of hadith studies. However, in practice, both approaches often result in a reductionist understanding of hadith, treating it merely as a textual object to be processed and validated, without considering its practical and ontological dimensions in the life of the Muslim community [1].

In the context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), an approach is needed that accommodates not only the textual validity of hadith but also how hadith can be applied in daily life practices that support sustainable social, economic, and environmental development. For example, through the application of principles of social justice, diversity, and desires embedded in hadith, which can serve as significant references in efforts to achieve the SDGs, particularly in relation to poverty alleviation, quality education, and environmental protection.

It is essential to recognize that hadith studies should not merely explore the texts historically but also take into account the spiritual and practical dimensions that can support social transformation. One alternative approach that is emerging is the use of the Irfānī method in hadith authentication. This method emphasizes spiritual experience and moral intuition, which are often overlooked in the Western methodological framework that prioritizes historical-empirical verification[2]. The Irfānī approach creates space for integrating inner aspects in understanding hadith, aligning with the SDG focus on diversity in addressing social, economic, and environmental issues.

Epistemic decolonization in hadith studies becomes particularly relevant in this context. As part of the broader decolonization of knowledge, it is crucial to reassess the dominance of Western epistemology, which often positions the West as the center of knowledge while disregarding local traditions, including in the context of hadith studies [3]. Therefore, the Irfānī approach in hadith authentication offers an alternative path that allows for the development of more inclusive and sustainable Islamic knowledge. This approach not only enriches hadith methodology but also contributes to the achievement of the SDGs, particularly in building inclusive, just, and sustainable societies.

The epistemic decolonization thoughts proposed by Muhammad Rofiq Muzakkir and Muhammad 'Abid al-Jabiri open the opportunity to reposition the Islamic intellectual tradition as an active subject in knowledge development. With this approach, hadith can be understood not just as a normative text limited to the past context, but as part of the prophetic existential structure that remains relevant in shaping the awareness and social praxis of contemporary Muslims [4].

Therefore, this study aims to develop an Irfānī-based hadith authentication model as an epistemic decolonization strategy, which not only focuses on the normative and textual aspects but also on its application in social life to support sustainable development goals. This approach paves the way for more equitable dialogue between Islamic studies and global discourses on the decolonization of knowledge, while making a tangible contribution to the achievement of SDGs through a more holistic and contextually relevant Islamic perspective[5].

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LITERATURE REVIEW

Hadith authentication is a crucial process in classical Islamic tradition. Traditionally, the authentication of hadith is divided into two main approaches: textual (naqli) and rational (aqli). The textual approach prioritizes the validity of the sanad (chain of narrators) and matn (content of the hadith) based on the methodology of ulumul hadith (sciences of hadith), aimed at ensuring the authenticity and authority of each narrator [6]. On the other hand, the rational approach focuses on logical reasoning and historical contextualization of the hadith, which is relevant to historical criticism and hermeneutics to understand the underlying message in the hadith text[7]. However, in the last two decades, an alternative approach has emerged, namely the Irfani approach, which offers a deeper dimension in studying hadith.

The Irfani approach in hadith authentication is rooted in the tradition of Sufism and Islamic philosophy, which considers mystical experience as a higher source of knowledge than reason or sensory perception[8]. This approach evaluates hadith not only from the aspects of sanad and matn but also through the alignment of the inner meanings of the hadith with metaphysical truths revealed through spiritual experience[9]. For example, intellectual figures in Islam such as Al-Ghazali used the approaches of bayani (expository), burhani (rational), and Irfani to assess the authenticity of hadith, integrating scientific methodology with the spiritual dimension, reflecting a balance between textual truth and spiritual experience [10].

One significant study that critiques the matn of hadith is that of Thāhir al-Jawābi, who emphasized the importance of exposing the truth and falsehood in the matn. This approach functions to avoid ambiguous meanings, strengthening the importance of integrating both textual and rational approaches in hadith analysis. In the context of Sufi society, the Irfani approach is well accepted. A study on the Indonesian Majelis Pengkajian Tauhid dan Tasawuf (Indonesian Study of Tawhid and Sufism) showed that while they do not always use the method of kashf (mystical unveiling), they prioritize the quality of hadith content over the exactness of the sanad. This indicates that hadith authentication does not only rely on formal methodology but is also influenced by esoteric dimensions often found in Sufi spiritual practices.

Furthermore, the Irfani approach in hadith studies can be seen as an effort to provide space for spiritual understanding in the interpretation of hadith. The inner experience that involves the purification of the soul becomes an integral part of accessing the "inner truth" contained in the hadith[11]. Irfani epistemology emphasizes intuition and spiritual experience as methodologies to achieve a deeper understanding that transcends the limitations of modern rationality[12]. This emphasis on subjective experience aligns with the goal of epistemic decolonization, which seeks to liberate Islamic studies from the influence of Western methodologies that tend to neglect the metaphysical aspects of religious texts [10], [13].

Hadith authentication based on the Irfani approach offers a more holistic perspective in evaluating hadith, emphasizing the spiritual experience that cannot be measured by conventional scientific or empirical methods. This certainly presents a challenge, given that much of the literature on the Irfani method remains limited to theoretical and philosophical realms without clear practical guidance[14]. This approach is also often regarded as subjective and difficult to measure scientifically, leading to skepticism among scholars who are more accustomed to positivist approaches.

The paradigms of the West and the orthodox Sunni acceptance in higher Islamic education pose obstacles to the application of the Irfani approach in academic studies

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[1]. However, by integrating the Irfani approach methodologically and practically, this research seeks to fill the existing gap in hadith studies. This approach not only enriches perspectives in evaluating the authenticity of hadith but also opens the discussion on the relevance of hadith in contemporary contexts and its contribution to sustainable development goals (SDGs)[15]. Therefore, hadith authentication based on the Irfani method represents an effort to combine esoteric knowledge with scientific methodology, suggesting a more inclusive approach to hadith studies that contributes to sustainable development goals (SDGs).

METHODOLOGY

The research methodology used in this study is a qualitative approach with a library-based research design that is context-critical in nature. The aim is to explore the decolonization of methodology within the humanities, particularly in the context of Islamic studies and hadith authentication. This study focuses on developing a model of hadith authentication based on the Irfani method, offering an alternative perspective to traditional approaches in hadith studies. The primary data sources are the works of Muhammad Rofiq Muzakkir on decolonization of methodology, as well as the writings of Muhammad 'Abid al-Jabiri on the epistemologies of bayani, burhani, and Irfani. These two scholars provide important insights into the relationship between Islamic epistemology and the modern context, as well as the critical relevance of challenging Western dominance in Islamic studies[2]. Additionally, literature on hadith and Sufism is used as a reference to ensure the discussion is grounded in authentic and relevant sources related to this study [15].

The data collected is analyzed using qualitative content analysis techniques oriented towards a thematic-conceptual approach. The initial process involves open coding to identify units of meaning relevant to key concepts such as epistemic decolonization and epistemic disobedience. This process aims to explore how epistemic hegemony can be subdued through a broader critical reading, particularly in the study of hadith. This analysis allows for uncovering dimensions of hadith that are often overlooked in conventional studies and opens space for more holistic approaches. Subsequently, axial coding is performed to group initial codes into more structured categories, such as critique of Western epistemological dominance and the relationship between epistemologies in the context of reading theological texts, emphasizing the importance of more open and inclusive readings [16].

To ensure the reliability of the findings, this study employs several data assurance strategies. Theoretical triangulation is conducted by comparing the readings of the works of Rofiq and al-Jabiri with global decolonial discourse and relevant empirical studies, as well as linking them to the context of education and Islamic studies. This reflects the principle of wasatiyyah, which integrates a balanced understanding of revelation and reason in interpreting religious texts[17]. Moreover, an audit trail concept is established to document in detail the open coding process, category formation, and transparent conclusions that can be traced [18].

Meanwhile, a hermeneutic perspective is applied to interpret the hadith texts within the decolonial framework and Islamic epistemology, with the aim of uncovering deeper and more complex meanings in the hadith under study. This approach is not solely focused on description but also on interpreting the meanings embedded within the hadith, revealing spiritual and metaphysical dimensions that are often neglected in modern empirical approaches[19]. The reflective stance of the researcher, who is also part of the Muslim academic community, plays a role in enriching the analysis and

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providing an additional layer to the understanding developed in this study[20]. Through this approach, the model of hadith authentication based on the Irfani method is systematically formulated, argued, and open for testing in a broader academic discourse to enrich hadith studies and its contribution to sustainable development, particularly in achieving the SDGs through a more holistic and integrated Islamic perspective[21].

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Muhammad Rofiq Muzakkir and the Foundations of Epistemic Decolonisation

A central figure supporting the theoretical framework of "Authenticating Hadith through the ʿIrfānī Method: An Effort at Epistemic Decolonisation in Contemporary Hadith Studies" is Muhammad Rofiq Muzakkir, the author of Decolonisation: Critical Methodology in the Humanities and Islamic Studies, published by the Bentala Tamaddun Nusantara Foundation. In this work, and across various scholarly forums, Rofiq interprets decolonisation not as a political slo `gan, but as a methodological project that interrogates the deepest structures of knowledge production questioning who has the authority to define "knowledge", what standards of rationality are deemed legitimate, and which traditions are granted centrality. He asserts that colonialism has left its imprint not only on political and economic domains, but also on the epistemic architecture that positions Europe/the West as the benchmark of civilisation and human rationality.

In his manuscript "Knowledge, Coloniality, and Decolonisation", Rofiq formulates the decolonial approach along three axes: problems (al-masā'il), solutions (al-ḥulūl), and applications within Islamic studies. At the level of problems, he critiques how coloniality constructs hierarchies of knowledge, placing Western-modern science at the apex of rationality while reducing other knowledge traditions, including Islamic thought, to mere objects of study often perceived as "less scientific". At the level of solutions, decolonisation is not merely about dismantling Western dominance, but about constructing alternative epistemic systems rooted in the identity, ethics, and historical consciousness of Muslim societies. Herein lies the strength of Rofiq's thought: he goes beyond critique by advocating for the revitalisation of Islamic intellectual traditions as active subjects in global knowledge discourses.

Rofiq's ideas have begun to influence a range of decolonial inquiries within Qur'anic and Hadith studies in Indonesia. In the decolonial analysis of Qur'anic studies, for instance, his ideas are utilised to define decolonisation as an effort to challenge all colonial legacies within the structures of knowledge, curricula, and authority not merely identity politics. In the field of ḥadīth, his work Decolonisation has served as a conceptual reference in articles proposing a "decolonising method of ḥadīth matn criticism," where Rofiq is cited in critiques of modernist-positivist bias and in calls for readings more attuned to Muslim epistemic contexts. The present article takes this a step further: it does not only borrow Rofiq's critique of Western epistemological hegemony but seeks to operationalise the spirit of decolonisation through a model of Hadith Authentication based on the ʿIrfānī method.

Within the framework of this article, Rofiq's thought is read as a meta-methodological foundation. His critique of Western centrality and his call to reanimate Islamic intellectual heritage provide the epistemic horizon for developing approaches that regard ḥadīth not simply as texts to be verified historically, but as modes of prophetic being that are lived through spiritual experience and social praxis. Rofiq's version of epistemic decolonisation calls for a paradigm shift from one that affirms

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only the standards of burhānī-positivist rationality to a configuration that gives equal epistemic space to bayānī, burhānī, and ʿirfānī epistemologies. Thus, when this article proposes an ʿirfānī-based model of ḥadīth authentication as a decolonial strategy, it is essentially enacting Rofiq's call to build an alternative knowledge system grounded in the richness of Islamic tradition, rather than negotiating under the shadow of Western epistemology.

Simultaneously, Rofiq's intellectual stance resonates with the broader discourse on epistemic decolonisation as championed by scholars like Linda Tuhiwai Smith and Walter Mignolo without falling into mere repetition. He appropriates global decolonial sensibilities such as epistemic disobedience and cognitive justice, yet articulates them uniquely through references to Islamic scholarly traditions from al-Ghazālī to contemporary debates on the integration of science and religion[22].

In the context of this article, the strength of Rofiq's contributions lies in his capacity to provide a language and framework for articulating that which has often been intuitively felt but rarely formalised: that recovering the ʿirfānī dimension in ḥadīth studies is not a regression into subjectivism, but a deliberate epistemic decolonial act an affirmation of spiritual experience as a legitimate mode of knowledge production. Therefore, the analysis of Rofiq in this article positions him not merely as a referential figure, but as an architect of an epistemic horizon from which the very idea of ʿirfānī based ḥadīth authentication becomes imaginable.

Hadith Authentication in the Context of Islamic Epistemology

In the context of Islamic epistemology, ḥadīth authentication plays a pivotal role as a source of knowledge that shapes both religious understanding and practice among Muslims. To grasp this concept, it is essential to examine how ḥadīth is understood epistemologically, including its position and authority in both Sunni and Shia traditions.

Ihsan argue that the epistemological differences between Sunni and Shia traditions lie in methodology, sources of authority, and criteria for validity. In Sunni tradition, the validity of ḥadīth is determined through rigorous scrutiny of both isnād and matn, requiring a strong and traceable chain of transmission. In contrast, the Shia tradition places ultimate authority in the Imam, who is regarded as possessing divine insight into the interpretation of ḥadīth. According to Alfani and Rochmawati, the Imam's interpretive authority is crucial in Shia understandings of ḥadīth, as he is viewed as the inheritor of the Prophet's knowledge [23].

Al-Ghazālī, a seminal figure in Islamic thought, also contributed to the discourse on ḥadīth authentication by integrating both scientific and spiritual dimensions. Anwari [10]highlight that al-Ghazālī did not reject the scientific method in ḥadīth studies but rather combined it with the epistemologies of bayānī, burhānī, and ʿirfānī. Thus, concepts such as narrator integrity and textual critique are central to al-Ghazālī's holistic approach to ḥadīth.

On a broader level, Fauzi affirms that critical methodology in ḥadīth is essential in testing authenticity through the lens of epistemological truth correspondence. This approach offers scholars a toolkit to navigate contemporary challenges both internal and external to the Islamic tradition [24]. Moreover, Munir and Ngampo advocate for a holistic approach to ḥadīth that includes ontological and axiological dimensions in ʿilm al-ḥadīth [25].

As digital technology advances, concerns over the de-authorisation of ḥadīth studies in the digital era have arisen. Nafisah et al observe that the internet has become

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a primary source of religious knowledge, including ḥadīth [26]. This shift poses new challenges, as authority transitions from traditional madrasas to online platforms potentially reshaping how Muslims access and interpret ḥadīth in everyday life.

The ʿIrfānī Method as an Ontological Approach to Understanding Hadith

The ʿIrfānī method offers a significant ontological approach to understanding ḥadīth in the Islamic tradition. Rather than focusing solely on rational or textual dimensions, this method explores inner experience and individual spirituality. Maʿrifah and Sudirman describe the ʿirfānī approach as involving profound spiritual experiences, which are seen as integral to the Islamic spiritual heritage. In the context of ḥadīth, such experiences draw individuals closer to God and enhance the depth of understanding and embodiment of prophetic teachings [27].

Rangkuti further argues that the ʿirfānī method functions as one of the four primary scientific approaches within Islamic epistemology alongside bayānī, burhānī, and tajrībī [28]. Each approach has distinct characteristics, with ʿirfānī centred on mystical experience and self-purification as valid pathways to knowledge. Thus, the ʿirfānī method contributes an essential spiritual dimension that complements and transcends rational or textual analyses.

According to al-Jābirī, ʿirfānī epistemology is intuitive and emphasises inner experience, contributing to an understanding of ḥadīth not merely as intellectual material but as spiritual truth to be embodied. Through riyāḍah (spiritual discipline), individuals are believed to access deeper meanings of ḥadīth, enriching their religious experience.

Anwari and Jannah note that the ʿirfānī approach also appears in the authentication methodology of thinkers such as al-Ghazālī, who integrated spirituality into scientific inquiry. This demonstrates how the ʿirfānī method bridges rational knowledge and spiritual experience, allowing for a more holistic understanding of ḥadīth. Akbar and Soleh also observe its role in Islamic education, where it helps students attain deeper truth through spiritual practice [4].

Ultimately, the use of the ʿirfānī method as an ontological approach underscores the need for integrating revelation, reason, and spiritual experience in Islamic knowledge development [29]. Mustakim asserts that this method facilitates deeper engagement with the meanings of ḥadīth and provides guidance for understanding the Prophet's teachings in daily life [30].

Authenticating Hadith Based on the Irfani Method: Efforts in Epistemic Decolonization in the Contribution of Hadith Studies to SDGs

Irfani-based hadith authentication marks a turning point in understanding and critiquing the narratives that have been built around Islamic teachings, particularly in addressing the epistemic impacts of colonialism. Epistemic colonialism, as a form of knowledge domination that involves the imposition of norms contrary to local ways of thinking and traditions, has led to a limited understanding of hadith within a narrower, textual framework. The Irfani approach, which focuses on inner experiences and spiritual understanding, offers a new way of exploring the meaning of hadith, not only from a textual perspective but also from the mystical and subjective dimensions embedded within the teachings of the Prophet. Marjuki et al explain that this approach opens space for a more holistic understanding, integrating both rational and spiritual aspects, which is highly relevant in an increasingly plural and globalized world. In this context, Irfani contributes to enriching the way we understand hadith, making it more

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inclusive and preventing it from being confined to narrow interpretations influenced by external dominant perspectives in the Islamic tradition.

Anwari and Jannah emphasize that the Irfānī approach in hadith studies allows for adjustment to local contexts, providing deeper understanding that is relevant to the challenges of the present era. In the context of epistemic decolonization, this method encourages the Muslim community to revisit hadith with a more profound approach, free from readings that only adhere to modern moral standards. It creates space for the reinterpretation of hadith within the framework of universal Islamic values, leading to a more open understanding of social and cultural diversity. In this framework, Irfānī functions not only as a tool for understanding texts but also as a means to raise critical awareness about existing knowledge structures that may have been distorted by external influences irrelevant to Islamic tradition.

Islamic religious education can also greatly benefit from the application of the Irfani method. Mualimin [31] highlights that the combination of spiritual experience with academic knowledge can create a more balanced learning experience, focusing not only on cognitive intelligence but also on the spiritual development of students. This is particularly important in the context of epistemic decolonization, which seeks to ensure that Islamic education does not merely become a traditional heritage detached from the dynamics of the times, but remains relevant to current needs. Thus, Irfānī provides an alternative approach to building student character that is not only intellectually competent but also spiritually deep, enhancing their lives in a broader context.

Furthermore, the application of the Irfānī method in hadith authentication also opens space for critique of conventional understandings that tend to emphasize only intellectual and rational aspects. Darmalaksana emphasizes the importance of methodological approaches in hadith research that can accommodate various dimensions of knowledge, including the spiritual aspect. Critical readings of hadith, which involve personal and inner experiences, facilitate a more comprehensive understanding of the Prophet's message, not only as a normative text to be followed but also as a living source that can be interpreted in a developing social context. This encourages the community to understand established narratives, often shaped by dominant views, and invites them to seek deeper meanings that are more relevant to current social and moral conditions.

One significant example often discussed in the context of hadith criticism is the marriage age of 'Aishah. The hadith stating that the Prophet married 'Aishah at the age of six and began living with her at the age of nine has sparked sharp debates among contemporary Muslim scholars and intellectuals. Rofiq Muzakkir, in his analysis with Siti Sarah Muwahidah, breaks down the differing views between Jasser Auda and Jonathan AC Brown on this hadith, emphasizing the importance of not applying modern moral standards when critiquing a hadith from a vastly different historical context. Rofiq asserts that the effort for decolonization does not mean normalizing all pre-modern practices but rather having the courage to acknowledge that the moral standards we use today are the result of historical constructs that cannot be simply applied to the past.

Through a decolonial perspective, Rofiq also shows that criticism of the hadith about 'Aishah's marriage age is often influenced by modern moral categories that emerged in the West, such as human rights and child marriage. Auda, who rejects the validity of this hadith, uses modern logic to critique it, but Rofiq argues that such criticism is not entirely fair because these moral categories only emerged in the 20th century and are not relevant to the 7th-century socio-political context. In this regard,

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Rofiq invites the community to be more critical in applying modern categories to assess past practices without necessarily justifying all aspects of them. This shows that decolonization is not just about preserving tradition but about evaluating it with an awareness of the historical development of our moral norms.

In the case of the hadith about female leadership, criticism of the hadith "lan yufliḥa qawm wallaw amrahum imra'ah" (A people will never succeed if they entrust their affairs to a woman) also shows a similar phenomenon. This hadith is often used to argue against female political leadership and is considered by some as discriminatory. However, using a decolonial framework, Rofiq shows that criticism of this hadith tends to apply modern Western political standards to the Islamic tradition without considering the more diverse classical interpretations. In this context, epistemic decolonization does not mean rejecting gender equality discourse but invites the community to be more critical of modern standards that often ignore the mismatch between interpretation and the context of the Islamic tradition itself.

Through these two examples, we can see how the application of the Irfani method in hadith authentication serves as a tool to enrich our understanding of hadith within the framework of epistemic decolonization. By using this approach, Muslims not only study hadith as a normative text but also as part of a broader tradition, which must be read with sensitivity to historical, social, and moral contexts. The Irfani method paves the way for a more holistic understanding, encouraging the community to not just accept existing narratives but to continue exploring deeper meanings that align with the universal values of Islam and the challenges of our time. Thus, Irfani based hadith authentication becomes an important part of the contribution of hadith studies to the achievement of sustainable development goals (SDGs), as it connects religious texts with broader social and moral challenges.

CONCLUSION

This study proposes an Irfani based authentication model for Hadith as an effort of epistemic decolonization in Hadith studies, addressing the dominance of Western epistemology in the analysis of religious texts. Through the Irfānī method, Hadith is understood not only from textual and historical aspects but also from spiritual dimensions and inner experiences, which are crucial in enriching its interpretation. This approach opens the way for a more holistic reading of Hadith, relevant to the social and moral conditions of contemporary Muslims. Additionally, the application of this method in Hadith studies supports the goals of sustainable development (SDGs), emphasizing values such as social justice, diversity, and equality, as embodied in the teachings of Prophet Muhammad. The novelty of this research lies in integrating the Irfani method as a tool for a deeper and more inclusive understanding of Hadith. This approach critiques conventional methods that prioritize textual or rational analysis by providing space for spiritual aspects and moral intuition in reading Hadith texts. The method allows for a reinterpretation of Hadith in a socially relevant context and responds to the challenges of a pluralistic and globalized era. Therefore, this study not only enriches Hadith studies but also contributes to decolonization thought in Islamic studies. The global contribution of this research is in introducing the Irfani approach as a more inclusive and relevant method for Hadith authentication in contemporary contexts. In facing the challenges of epistemic colonialism, this model helps restore the role of Islamic intellectual traditions as active subjects in global knowledge dialogues. By opening space for a more equitable dialogue between Islamic studies and the discourse on knowledge decolonization, this research makes a

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significant contribution to linking religious texts with broader social and moral goals, supporting the achievement of the SDGs globally.

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Author Contribution

All authors contributed equally to the preparation of this paper. Their roles covered coordination, research implementation, financial support, translation, and final editing to strengthen the manuscript's academic style and structure. Each author took part in data analysis, conceptual development, and drafting the manuscript. All authors carefully read, reviewed, and approved the final version to ensure accuracy, originality, and academic integrity. This collective work demonstrates strong collaboration that maintained coherence, balance, and intellectual rigor throughout the writing process.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors explicitly declare that there are no conflicts of interest related to the publication of this paper. No financial, institutional, or personal relationships influenced the preparation, analysis, or interpretation of this research. The study was carried out independently in accordance with fair academic principles and ethical standards

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