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The Methodology of *Sanad* Criticism Employed by Ibn al-Jawzī, al-Suyūṭī, and Ibn Ḥajar in Detecting *Mawḍūʿ* Hadith: A Comparative Study and Its Relevance in the Digital Era

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Abstract:

The proliferation of fabricated hadiths (*maudhu'*) throughout Islamic history, driven by political, sectarian, and ideological motivations, necessitated rigorous methodological frameworks for hadith verification. Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597 AH) developed one of the most influential yet contested approaches to identifying fabricated narrations through his seminal work *al-Maudhu'āt*. While existing studies have examined hadith classification and general principles of hadith criticism, no comprehensive comparative analysis has systematically evaluated the epistemological foundations and methodological distinctions among Ibn al-Jawzī, al-Suyūṭī, and Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī within an integrated *sanad-matn* framework, nor explored their relevance to contemporary digital-era disinformation challenges. This study aims to analyze Ibn al-Jawzī's *sanad-criticism* methodology for detecting fabricated hadiths in *al-Maudhu'āt*, compare it with the methodologies of al-Suyūṭī and Ibn Ḥajar, and evaluate the relevance of these classical approaches to religious information verification in the digital age. This research employs a qualitative approach combining intellectual history analysis, content analysis, and comparative methodology, with *al-Maudhu'āt* as the primary data source, supplemented by *al-La'ālī al-Maṣnū'ah* and *Lisān al-Mīzān* as secondary sources. The findings reveal three epistemologically distinct methodological poles: Ibn al-Jawzī's eliminative-preventive approach, which prioritizes a single defective transmitter as sufficient grounds for *maudhu'* judgment; al-Suyūṭī's inclusive-moderate approach, which demands comprehensive cross-chain verification before issuing verdicts; and Ibn Ḥajar's systematic historico-critical approach, which cross-references biographical data and evaluates comment consistency across sources. These three methodologies constitute a layered verification framework applicable to contemporary hadith authentication challenges, particularly for detecting religiously fabricated content on social media and for developing AI-based hadith verification algorithms. This study offers a reconstructed epistemological model of classical hadith verification that bridges pre-modern scholarship and digital-era information literacy, providing methodological foundations for AI-assisted systems for Islamic information authentication.

Keywords: *Ḥadīth Criticism, Maudhu' Hadīth, Ibn al-Jawzī, Sanad and Matn Analysis, Al-Maudhu'āt.*

INTRODUCTION

Hadith, as the second source of Islamic teachings after the Qur'an, plays a fundamental role in explaining the laws, ethics, and guidelines for the lives of Muslims. However, throughout the history of hadith transmission, not all circulating narrations can be verified as authentic all the way back to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. The emergence of fabricated

hadiths (maudhu') has become an inevitable phenomenon, influenced by various factors such as political interests, sectarian fanaticism, ideological propaganda, and misguided moralistic motives. These conditions led to the emergence of the discipline of hadith criticism as a systematic effort to distinguish between authentic narrations and those that cannot be verified.¹

In the scholarly development of hadith, the critique of the isnad and the matn has become a primary tool in the verification process. Hadith scholars developed rigorous methodologies to preserve the purity of Islamic teachings from distortion. One of the key figures in this field is Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597 H), known for his work *al-Maudhu'āt*, a compilation of fabricated hadiths accompanied by critical analysis. Through this work, Ibn al-Jawzī not only compiled maudhu' narrations but also provided evaluations based on analyses of the sanad and matn, as well as on rational and historical considerations. His contributions established *al-Maudhu'āt* as one of the earliest and most important references in the study of maudhu' hadiths and the methodology of hadith criticism.²

Nevertheless, Ibn al-Jawzī's approach has not been without criticism. Several scholars, such as al-Suyūṭī and Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, have argued that the criteria used by Ibn al-Jawzī in identifying maudhu' hadiths are too strict, leading to some narrations that should be categorized as weak (dha'if) being instead classified as fabricated hadiths.³ This difference points to a fundamental divergence in methodological approaches, particularly in how weak and fabricated hadiths are distinguished. Furthermore, Ibn al-Jawzī's emphasis on analyzing the matn especially when a hadith's content contradicts the Qur'an, reason, or historical reality has also sparked debate about the potential for subjectivity in evaluating hadith.⁴

Studies on Maudhu' hadith and hadith criticism have been extensively conducted by previous researchers, with a variety of research focuses. For example, the study titled *Understanding Fabricated Hadiths: An Analysis of Source Credibility and Its Implications for Hadith Research* by Fahrur Rozi and Khairul Fahmi highlights the importance of source validity in identifying fabricated hadiths.⁵ Another study by Rahman, Imelda Putri, and Maya Fitri Sulastri on the general methodology of hadith criticism in the tradition of classical scholars, which focuses more on the basic principles of the science of musthalah al-hadith.⁶ Meanwhile, Muhammad Asgar Muzakki's research also examines Jalaluddin as-Suyuthi's methodology of hadith criticism in the book *al-La'aali al-Mashnu'ah*, which is a revision and critique of *al-Maudhu'āt* by Ibn al-Jauzi;⁷ however, research on books dealing with fabricated hadith generally remains focused on mapping the criteria for maudhu' hadith and the

¹ Ridwan Nurrahman, "Metodologi Tajrih Ibn Al-Jauzi Dalam Kitab Ad-Dhu'afâ Wal-Matrûkin," *Al-Majaalis DIRASAT Islamiyah* 4, no. 2 (2017): 73–90.

² Kirana Sutri Dewi et al., "Pentingnya Hadis Dalam Kerangka Hukum Islam: Kedudukan, Fungsi, Dan Perannya Yang Melengkapi Al-Qur'an," *Nursing and Public Health (JONAPH)* 1, no. 1 (2025): 52–60.

³ Ridwan Nurrahman, "Metodologi Tajrih Ibn Al-Jauzi Dalam Kitab Ad-Dhu'afâ Wal-Matrûkin."

⁴ Sjafrī Rasjiddin, "Al-Maudhu' At Karya Ibn Al-Jauzi," *Mediasi*, 9, no. 2 (2015): 17–27.

⁵ Fahrur Rozi and Khairul Fahmi, "Pemahaman Terhadap Hadis Maudhu': Analisis Terhadap Kredibilitas Sumber Dan Implikasinya Dalam Penyelidikan Hadis," *Indonesian Journal of Multidisciplinary Scientific Studies (IJOMSS)* 2, no. 2 (2024): 175–78.

⁶ Im Rahman and elda putri Ssb.Maya Fitri Sulastri, "Metodologi Penelitian Hadis : Antara Kritik Sanad," *Jurnal Al Qur'an Dan Hadis* 2, no. 2 (2025): 233–46.

⁷ Muhammad Asgar Muzakki, "Analisa Metodologi Kritik Hadis Jalaluddin As-Suyuthi Dalam Al-La'aali Al-Mashnu'ah Fi Al-Hadits Al-Maudhu'aj," *Al-Isnad: Journal of Indonesian Hadist Studies* 01, no. 1 (2020): 1–10.

characteristics of their authors, rather than delving into a comprehensive methodological analysis.

Although these various studies have made important contributions, research on maudhu' hadiths still tends to focus on aspects of classification, the characteristics of fabricated hadiths, and the intellectual profiles of key figures, and has not yet comprehensively examined the methodological framework of sanad and matn criticism in an integrated manner from Ibn al-Jawzī's perspective. In other words, the integration of sanad analysis, matn criticism, and rational and historical considerations within Ibn al-Jawzī's methodology has not yet been explored in depth.

Based on the above discussion, it is evident that studies specifically examining Ibn al-Jawzī's methodology of hadith criticism in comprehensively identifying maudhu' hadiths remain relatively limited. Therefore, this study aims to fill that gap by conducting an in-depth analysis of the methodological patterns employed by Ibn al-Jawzī in his masterpiece, *al-Maudhu'āt*. Furthermore, this study seeks to explore the relevance of this methodology in a contemporary context, particularly in addressing the widespread dissemination of fabricated hadiths in the digital age.

The development of information technology and social media has accelerated the spread of religious information, including hadiths whose authenticity has not been verified.⁸ This phenomenon demonstrates that the problem of fabricated hadiths is not merely a historical issue but also a real challenge in the modern era. The methodological approaches developed by classical scholars such as Ibn al-Jawzī therefore remain relevant for study and adaptation in the context of verifying religious information today.⁹

The study applied Qualitative Historical Research (QHR) combined with Intellectual History Analysis and Hadith Methodology Analysis. This approach was chosen because it enables the historical reconstruction of the epistemological foundations of thought and the systematic comparison of methodological evolution across scholars. The primary data source is Ibn al-Jawzī's, *Kitab al-Maudhu'āt*, chosen because this work represents the most comprehensive account of the eliminative-preventive approach in the study of maudhu' hadith and serves as the primary scholarly reference for al-Suyūṭī and Ibn Ḥajar. Secondary data sources include *al-La'ālī al-Maṣnū'ah* by al-Suyūṭī and *Lisān al-Miẓān* by Ibn Ḥajar. The research stages include: (1) an inventory of hadiths in *al-Maudhu'āt* and the identification of indicators of fabrication used by Ibn al-Jawzī; (2) categorization of methods for critiquing the *sanad* and *matan*; (3) a systematic comparison with the methodologies of al-Suyūṭī and Ibn Ḥajar using measurable indicators (jarh wa ta'dīl, the use of mutabi' and shawahid, matn criticism, and the determination of the maudhu' verdict); (4) a reconstruction of the epistemology of hadith verification; and (5) an analysis of contemporary relevance. Data validity is ensured through source triangulation, namely cross-checking the views of the three scholars on the same hadiths, as well as confirmation with classical jarh wa ta'dīl literature such as *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb* and *Miẓān al-I'tidāl*.¹⁰

⁸ Kasmīati, "Metode Kritik Ibn Al-Jauzi Dan Ibn Hajar," *Ulunnuha* 32, no. 3 (2021): 167–86.

⁹ Ridwan Nurrahman, "Metodologi Tajrih Ibn Al-Jauzi Dalam Kitab Ad-Dhu'afā Wal-Matrûkin."

¹⁰ Agus Susilo Saefullah, "Ragam Penelitian Kualitatif Berbasis Kepustakaan Pada Studi Agama Dan Keberagamaan Dalam Islam," *Al-Tarbiyah: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan Islam* 2, no. 4 (2024): 195–211, <https://doi.org/10.59059/al-tarbiyah.v2i4.1428>.

This research's novelty lies in three aspects that have not been explored in an integrated manner in previous studies. First, this study offers an epistemological reconstruction of Ibn al-Jawzī's hadith verification as a model for detecting premodern religious disinformation, comparing its verification logic with the theory of epistemic vigilance that has emerged in contemporary cognitive psychology and media literacy studies. Second, this study constructs a comparative framework of three methodological poles (eliminative-preventive, inclusive-moderate, historical-critical) that have never been systematically formulated within a single integrated analysis. Third, this study explores the implications of these three methodologies for developing artificial intelligence (AI) systems to verify digital hadith. This aspect has not been extensively addressed in technology-based hadith studies. Thus, this study not only contributes to the discourse on classical hadith studies but also paves the way for Islamic Digital Humanities as an emerging field.

Discussion

Ibn al-Jawzī's methodology of sanad criticism holds an important place in hadith studies due to his extremely rigorous approach to assessing the authenticity of narrations. According to Ibn al-Jawzī, the sanad is the primary foundation for verifying hadith; without a valid sanad, a hadith cannot be upheld as part of the Prophet's ﷺ teachings.¹¹ This paradigm aligns with the classical principles of *musthalah al-hadith*, which regard the sanad as the primary "shield" of a narration's authenticity.¹² His strict stance stems from the social context of the 6th century AH, when hadith forgery was rampant due to political motives, sectarianism, extreme forms of spirituality, and the propaganda of certain groups. These circumstances necessitated preventing the infiltration of fabricated narrations into religious tradition.

Ibn al-Jawzī's analysis of the *isnad* focuses on two aspects: (1) the credibility of individual narrators, and (2) the continuity of the *isnad*. The evaluation of narrators is conducted by referring to the literature on *jarḥ wa ta'dīl*, with particular attention paid to narrators deemed liars (*kadhhdhāb*), accused of fabricating hadith (*wāḍi' al-ḥadīth*), or having a very poor memory (*sayyi' al-ḥifẓ*). If a chain of transmission (*sanad*) contains a narrator falling into one of these categories, he tends to classify the hadith as *maudhu* immediately. This strictness exceeds the standards of most hadith scholars; however, according to Ibn al-Jawzī, this measure is necessary to protect the purity of the Prophet's teachings.¹³

Besides the quality of the narrators, he also examined the continuity of the *isnad* through an analysis of *ittisāl* or *inqiṭā'*. He rejected chains of transmission that were proven historically unrealistic—for example, claims of meetings between two narrators who could not possibly have met because of the time gap between their lifetimes. The historical-rational approach of this kind demonstrates that, although it focuses on the *sanad*, the analysis does not neglect the narrators' chronological and social contexts.¹⁴ However, some scholars argue that this method sometimes jumps to conclusions too quickly about a break in the *sanad*, particularly

¹¹ A'an Mujibur Rohman, "Kritik Ibn Al-Jauzi Terhadap Hadis Dalam Kitab Ihya Ulum Ad-Din Dan Pembelaan Abu Al-Fadl Al-Iraqi," *Jalsab : The Journal of Al-Quran and As-Sunnah Studies* 1, no. 1 (2021): 62–75, <https://doi.org/10.37252/jqs.v1i1.130>.

¹² Muhammad Asgar Muzakki, "Analisa Metodologi Kritik Hadis Jalaluddin As-Suyuthi Dalam Al-La'Aali Al-Mashnu'Ah Fi Al-Ahadits Al-Maudhu'Aj," *AL ISNAD: Journal of Indonesian Hadith Studies* 1, no. 1 (2020): 1–10, <https://doi.org/10.51875/alisnad.v1i1.23>.

¹³ Zubaidah Zubaidah, "Metode Kritik Sanad Dan Matan Hadits," *Al-Manar* 4, no. 1 (2015): 47–49, <https://doi.org/10.36668/jal.v4i1.68>.

¹⁴ Rozi and Fahmi, "Pemahaman Terhadap Hadis Maudhu : Analisis Terhadap Kredibilitas Sumber Dan Implikasinya Dalam Penyelidikan Hadis."

when there remains the possibility that the narrators could have met through travel or at specific scholarly gatherings.

The author adopted a cumulative approach in assessing the authenticity of hadith. He gathered all critical reports regarding a narrator from various sources and used them as strong indicators for reaching a verdict. He prioritized negative *jarḥ* over positive *ta'dīl*; often, a single definitive *jarḥ* comment was sufficient for him to reject a hadith, even if other scholars assessed the narrator as weak but not a liar. This approach demonstrates a high degree of caution (*iḥtiyāt*), which, according to some modern scholars, aims to prevent even the slightest possibility of hadith forgery.

The epistemological perspective of Ibn al-Jawzī's methodology was a response to the intellectual climate of his time. The 6th century AH was a period marked by the massive spread of fabricated hadiths. Several groups exploited hadith for political or spiritual legitimacy, making decisive action necessary to preserve the authority of hadith scholarship.¹⁵ Consequently, his masterpiece *al-Maudhu'āt* is not merely a catalog of fabricated hadith but also an intellectual statement aimed at restoring epistemological order in the study of hadith.

Nevertheless, the extreme rigidity of Ibn al-Jawzī's methodology drew criticism from prominent scholars such as al-Suyūṭī and Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī. They argued that not all hadiths he ruled to be *maudhu'* were actually fabricated; some were merely *dha'īf* with a mild degree of weakness. These criticisms arose because Ibn al-Jawzī often issued rulings based on a single chain of transmission without conducting a thorough cross-referencing of different chains.¹⁶ For example, when he identified a problematic narrator in one chain, he immediately rejected the entire narration associated with that narrator without examining whether other, stronger chains supported the hadith.

In contrast to the "single chain" method, the approach of classical scholars such as al-Dāraquṭnī or al-Nasāʾī always examined the possibility of the presence of *mutābi'* and *syāhid*. According to them, a weakness in a single narrator does not automatically render the entire hadith *maudhu'* if a stronger alternative chain of transmission is found. However, for Ibn al-Jawzī, the presence of even a single narrator classified as a liar is sufficient evidence that the narration stems from a specific pattern of fabrication.¹⁷

In several cases, he even rejected hadiths from *ṣadūq* narrators who had weak memorization, especially if the text of the hadith was deemed illogical or contradictory to stronger narrations. Although other scholars merely classified such narrations as *dha'īf*, Ibn al-Jawzī regarded them as a sign of fabrication. This stance indicates that, despite his focus on the *isnad*, he was still influenced by his scholarly intuition regarding the text.¹⁸

Another notable aspect is his rejection of lesser-known chains of transmission. He believed that minor chains of transmission were susceptible to the infiltration of fabricated hadiths, especially during an era when hadith fabrication was carried out systematically. Therefore, if a hadith was transmitted only through an unpopular chain or if its narrators

¹⁵ Muhammad Fikri Akbari, Hairul Hudaya, and Hafizhatul Munawwarah, "Metode Kritik Matan Hadis Perspektif Ulama Hadis," *Al-Falah: Jurnal Ilmiah Keislaman Dan Kemasyarakatan* 25, no. 1 (2025): 15–31, <https://doi.org/10.47732/alfalahjikk.v25i1.398>.

¹⁶ Muzakki, "Analisa Metodologi Kritik Hadis Jalaluddin As-Suyuthi Dalam Al'-La'aali Al-Mashnu'ah Fi Al-Hadits Al-Maudhu'aj."

¹⁷ Hilgha Mustin, Muhammad Tasbih, and Zaenab Abdullah, "Kritik Sanad (Naqd Al-Sanad) Dalam Ilmu Hadis: Metodologi Dan Implementasinya," *Socius: Jurnal Penelitian Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial* 3, no. 1 (2025): 852–58.

¹⁸ Mustin, Tasbih, and Abdullah.

lacked a strong track record of transmission, he regarded this as an indication of serious weakness.¹⁹ Despite the criticism, it is important to understand that this methodology emerged from a sociopolitical context that allowed for the widespread fabrication of hadith. Thus, the rigor of Ibn al-Jawzī's method actually made a significant contribution to maintaining standards for hadith verification. He emphasized that not all weaknesses in hadith can be tolerated, especially when they involve narrators known for their dishonesty. Therefore, Ibn al-Jawzī's methodology must be understood as an extreme measure to preserve the integrity of the prophetic tradition during a time of epistemic crisis.²⁰

However, many scholars have pointed out that not all the hadiths he included in *al-Maudhu'āt* are actually fabricated. Some hadiths merely have weaknesses in their isnad but show no evidence of fabrication. This kind of criticism suggests that Ibn al-Jawzī's methodology should be viewed as one of the methodological poles in hadith studies: the "strict" pole, as opposed to the "moderate" pole of al-Suyūṭī and the "analytical-critical" pole of Ibn Ḥajar.²¹

The methodology of Ibn al-Jawzī remains relevant in the context of contemporary hadith research. The rigor of his methodology serves as a reference for filtering out motivational hadiths that are widely circulating on social media. Furthermore, his principle of caution can serve as a model for developing artificial intelligence-based hadith verification algorithms, particularly for detecting problematic narrators, patterns of forgery, and historical anomalies in the chains of transmission.²²

Finally, the contribution of Ibn al-Jawzī's sanad methodology lies not merely in the results of his evaluations, but in the framework of thought he established. He taught that safeguarding hadith requires meticulousness, methodological courage, and a commitment to scholarly integrity. Despite being rigorous, his approach opened the door for subsequent scholars to develop more balanced and comprehensive methods. Therefore, Ibn al-Jawzī's methodology remains an important part of the spectrum of hadith scholarship and continues to inspire the practice of takhrij and hadith verification in the modern era.

Analysis of the Hadiths in *al-Maudhu'āt* and the Responses of al-Suyūṭī and Ibn Ḥajar

This comparative analysis of seven representative hadiths from *al-Maudhu'āt* is presented to examine the epistemological differences among the three scholars concretely. The selection of these seven hadiths is based on their representativeness in illustrating significant methodological differences: some are unanimously agreed upon by all scholars as *maudhu'*; some are disputed; and al-Suyūṭī and Ibn Ḥajar later rehabilitated some.

The first case: A hadith regarding the virtue of reciting the Qur'an on Friday. Ibn al-Jawzī included this hadith in *al-Maudhu'āt* because its chain of transmission (sanad) includes

¹⁹ ul Fikri Jayyid and Muhammad Isa Anshory, "Hadits Maudhu' (Palsu): Studi Sejarah, Ciri, Dan Upaya Ulama Dalam Menjaga Keaslian Sunnah," *IDENTIK: Jurnal Ilmu Ekonomi, Pendidikan Dan Teknik* 2, no. 4 (2024): 136–42.

²⁰ Mahsyar Idris, "Studi Kritik Sanad Hadis Dan Implikasinya Terhadap Keabsahan Ajaran Ekonomi Syariah Dalam Masyarakat," *Taswiq: Jurnal Ekonomi Syariah* 2, no. 1 (2025): 1–11, <https://doi.org/10.35905/taswiq.v2i1.11338>.

²¹ Ahmad Abdur Rahman Al-imam, "The Influence of Modernity on Matn Criticism: A Comparative Study of Traditionist and Reformist Approaches in Ibn Hajar's Fath Al-Bari and Rashid Rida's Majallat Al-Manar on Hadiths of Natural Phenomena," *Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization (JITC)* 16, no. 1 (2026): 1–17.

²² Rahman and Sulastri, "Metodologi Penelitian Hadis : Antara Kritik Sanad."

Maysarah ibn ‘Abd Rabbih al-Fārisī, a narrator whom he classified as a liar and fabricator of hadith based on the comments of Ibn Ma‘īn and al-Bukhārī. Ibn al-Jawzī’s reasoning: the presence of even one narrator proven to be a liar is sufficient evidence of forgery, regardless of the text’s content. Al-Suyūṭī, in *al-La‘ālī al-Maṣnū‘ah*, refutes this by pointing out that a similar hadith is also transmitted through the chain of Ibn ‘Umar, which is free of Maysarah; thus, at worst, its status is *dhā‘if* (weak), not *maudhu‘* (fabricated). Ibn Ḥajar, in *Lisān al-Miẓān*, confirms that Maysarah was indeed known as a fabricator, but cautions that cross-checking is necessary before a final verdict is reached. Epistemological analysis: This difference reflects the contrast between the principles of *ihtiyat* (Ibn al-Jawzī) and *i‘tidal* (al-Suyūṭī). Methodologically, al-Suyūṭī is more meticulous because he applies the principle of *shawahid*, whereas Ibn al-Jawzī employs single-source elimination.²³

Second case: The hadith “Man ‘arafa nafsahu faqad ‘arafa rabbahu” (Whoever knows himself knows his Lord). Ibn al-Jawzī declared this hadith to be *maudhu‘* because no unbroken chain of transmission (*sanad*) leading back to the Prophet ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam could be found; all its chains are *munqathi‘* and its narrators are *majhul* (unknown). He also assessed that the text bears the hallmarks of Sufi philosophy, which is inconsistent with the prophetic style of language. Al-Suyūṭī agrees with this assessment and finds no supporting evidence to elevate its status. Ibn Ḥajar is more cautious: he states that this narration is not authentic as a *marfu‘* hadith, but does not rule out the possibility of its authenticity as an *athar* (a statement by a Companion or a *Tabi‘i*). Epistemological analysis: This case represents one of the few instances of relative consensus among the three scholars; however, differences still emerge at the level of interpretation: Ibn Ḥajar is more open to the possibility that the *matn* may be authentic even if it does not have *marfu‘* status a nuance not present in the views of Ibn al-Jawzī and al-Suyūṭī.²⁴

Third case: Hadiths on the virtues of ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib mentioned in a Shia context. Ibn al-Jawzī included several hadiths on the virtues of ‘Alī whose chains of transmission (*sanad*) contain narrators identified as supporters of the Shi‘a (*ghulat*) or known for excessive sectarian fanaticism (*ta‘aṣṣub*). For him, sectarian motivation is a strong *qarinah* (indication) of forgery that must be considered alongside the narrators’ weaknesses. Al-Suyūṭī refuted some of these judgments by asserting that love for ‘Alī does not automatically make a narrator a liar, and that these hadiths have an *asl* (root of transmission) in authoritative sources. Ibn Ḥajar takes a more measured approach: he distinguishes between moderate Shia narrators (whose narrations are acceptable within certain limits) and the *ghulat* (who are rejected). Epistemological analysis: This case reveals the sociological-epistemological dimension of *sanad* criticism. Ibn al-Jawzī uses sectarian affiliation as an aggravating factor.

²³ Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Maudhu‘āt*, ed. Nur al-Dīn Sharaf al-Dīn al-Kutubī (Medina: al-Maktabah al-Salafiyyah, 1966), vol. 1, 104–108; al-Suyūṭī, *al-La‘ālī al-Maṣnū‘ah fī al-Aḥādīth al-Mawdu‘iyyah* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 1996), vol. 1, 45–47. Lih. juga Brown, “The Rules of *Matn* Criticism,” 362–365.

²⁴ Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Maudhu‘āt*, vol. 1, 215–217; Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Lisān al-Miẓān*, ed. ‘Abd al-Fātah Abū Ghuddah (Beirut: Dār al-Bashā’ir al-Islāmiyyah, 2002), vol. 6, 122–124. Bandingkan dengan Ismail Syuhudi, *Metodologi Penelitian Hadis Nabi* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1992), 78–82.

In contrast, Ibn Ḥajar establishes a more nuanced gradation based on the individual track record of the narrator, rather than solely on his group affiliation.²⁵

Case 4: The Hadith on the Virtue of Intention (*fa-man kānat hijratuhu ilā dunyā yusibuha*). Ibn al-Jawzī once questioned several variants of the hadith on intention (*al-niyyat*) that were circulating with weak chains of transmission. However, in this context, what is more relevant is a similar motivational hadith that he ruled to be *maudhu'* because its chain of transmission (*sanad*) is derived solely from an unknown single narrator (*mufrad*). Al-Suyūṭī and Ibn Ḥajar both agreed that variants of the narration with an unknown single narrator (*mufrad*) cannot be upheld, even though their meaning generally does not contradict Islamic principles. This is one of the rare cases where all three scholars agree that the weakness of the *isnad* cannot be remedied by the truth of the *matn*'s meaning. Epistemological analysis: This case demonstrates that hadith chain criticism is not merely a matter of the message's content, but of the epistemological authority of the transmission. Even a hadith with a true meaning can be rejected if its chain of transmission cannot be verified.²⁶

Case 5: Hadiths on the Superiority of Knowledge Over Worship (*faḍl al-ʿilm ʿalā al-ʿibādah*). Ibn al-Jawzī included several hadiths on the superiority of knowledge whose *isnads* contain ʿAbd al-Raḥīm ibn Zayd al-ʿAmmī, a narrator considered *dhaʿif jiddan* (extremely weak) by the majority of *muhaddithūn*. Al-Suyūṭī, in *al-Laʿālī*, found a supporting chain of transmission through Abū Hurayrah with a better chain of transmission; thus, he disagreed with the ruling that the hadith is *maudhu'* and classified it only as *dhaʿif*. Ibn Ḥajar concurs with al-Suyūṭī's position while adding that this hadith has its basis in the Qur'an (Q.S. al-Mujadilah: 11), so its general meaning is *sahih*, even though the specific wording that has circulated is problematic. Epistemological analysis: This case demonstrates the positive function of *matn* criticism: the consistency of the *matn* with the Qur'an serves as an additional consideration in determining a hadith's status. This factor is more prominent in Ibn Ḥajar's approach than in Ibn al-Jawzī's.²⁷

Case 6: The Hadith on the Prohibition Against Eating Hot Food (*nahy ʿan akl al-ṭaʿām al-ḥār*). Ibn al-Jawzī included this hadith because its chain of transmission (*sanad*) includes a narrator known for frequently fabricating hadiths on table manners with no authentic source. An analysis of the *matn* also reveals medical content that does not appear to originate from the prophetic tradition. Al-Suyūṭī accepted this ruling and found no supporting evidence. Ibn Ḥajar was more critical of the procedure: he argued that rejecting a hadith based on its medical content without strong evidence from the *isnad* is an example of text criticism taking precedence over *isnad* verification—a method which, in his view, must be conducted sequentially (*isnads* first, then text). Epistemological analysis: This case reveals a methodological tension between prioritizing the *sanad* versus the *matn*. Ibn al-Jawzī used

²⁵ Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Maudhuʿāt*, vol. 1, 340–355; al-Suyūṭī, *al-Laʿālī al-Maṣnūʿah*, vol. 1, 285–302; Ibn Ḥajar, *Lisān al-Miẓān*, vol. 3, 401–415. Mengenai dimensi sosiologi-epistemologis kritik *sanad*, lihat Lucas, “The Legal Principles of Muḥammad B. Ismāʿīl Al-Bukhārī,” 300–308.

²⁶ Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Maudhuʿāt*, vol. 2, 18–22; al-Suyūṭī, *al-Laʿālī al-Maṣnūʿah*, vol. 2, 55–57; Ibn Ḥajar, *Lisān al-Miẓān*, vol. 1, 89–92. Untuk prinsip epistemik bahwa kebenaran *matan* tidak menyelamatkan kelemahan *sanad*, lihat Hallaq, “The Authenticity of Prophetic Hadith,” 80–85.

²⁷ Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Maudhuʿāt*, vol. 1, 63–67; Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Lisān al-Miẓān*, vol. 4, 198–201; al-Suyūṭī, *al-Laʿālī al-Maṣnūʿah*, vol. 1, 130–135. Lih. juga Duderija, “Evolution in the Concept of Sunnah,” 410–415 untuk konteks integrasi *sanad*-*matan* dalam penilaian hadis.

both simultaneously (a holistic approach), whereas Ibn Ḥajar emphasized a hierarchical sequence (a sequential approach).²⁸

Case 7: The hadith “Uṭlubū al-‘ilm wa law bi-al-Ṣīn” (Seek knowledge, even if it is in China). This is one of the most popular hadiths that has been disputed. Ibn al-Jawzī included several variants of its narration in *al-Maudhu‘āt* because all of its chains contain da‘īf or majhul narrators, with one version containing Abū ‘Atikah al-Bashrī, who is considered matrūk (rejected). Al-Suyūṭī did not entirely reject it; he found many supporting narrations, even though they were all weak, and thus proposed the status of *dha‘īf la-hu asl* (weak but having a basis). Ibn Ḥajar assessed that although all its chains of transmission are problematic, the abundance of narrations (*kāsrat al-ṭuruq*) can elevate its status to *hasan li-ghayrihi*, rather than *maudhu‘*. Epistemological analysis: This is the most illustrative case of the consequences of methodological differences: the same hadith results in three different rulings *maudhu‘* (Ibn al-Jawzī), *da‘īf* (al-Suyūṭī), and *hasan li-ghayrihi* (Ibn Ḥajar) solely due to differences in the application of the principles of *takthīr al-shuruq* and *kāsrat al-ṭuruq*.²⁹

Based on the seven cases above, a consistent epistemological pattern can be identified: Ibn al-Jawzī applied the principle of maximum caution through single-narrator elimination; al-Suyūṭī applied cross-chain verification before reaching a verdict; Ibn Ḥajar applied a comprehensive gradation that sequentially considers the number of chains, the consistency of commentary, and the hierarchy of sanad and matn. These differences are not merely technical but rooted in distinct basic assumptions: whether the primary goal of hadith criticism is prevention (preventive) or the pursuit of the truth of transmission (constructive).

A Methodological Comparison of Sanad Criticism Among Ibn al-Jawzī, al-Suyūṭī, and Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī

A study comparing the methodologies of sanad criticism among Ibn al-Jawzī, al-Suyūṭī, and Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī is an important part of understanding the development of hadith epistemology within the Islamic tradition.³⁰ This study examines the comparative analysis of the methodologies of isnad criticism among these three scholars, who lived in distinct historical, social, and intellectual contexts; thus, the methods they formulated not only reflect their individual critical abilities but also mirror the needs of the eras they faced. In much of the literature, all three are regarded as central figures who made significant contributions to establishing standards for hadith authentication. The differences in their approaches demonstrate that the science of hadith particularly sanad criticism is not a static discipline but a dynamic one that continues to evolve and improve from generation to generation.³¹

²⁸ Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Maudhu‘āt*, vol. 2, 87–91; Ibn Ḥajar, *Lisān al-Mizān*, vol. 2, 333–337. Mengenai prioritas hierarkis sanad atas matan dalam metodologi Ibn Ḥajar, lihat Brown, “The Rules of Matn Criticism,” 370–378; Motzki, “Dating Muslim Traditions,” 220–228.

²⁹ Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Maudhu‘āt*, vol. 1, 175–179; al-Suyūṭī, *al-La‘ālī al-Maṣnū‘ah*, vol. 1, 195–200; Ibn Ḥajar, *Lisān al-Mizān*, vol. 5, 67–71. Untuk analisis prinsip *kāsrat al-ṭuruq* dalam mengangkat derajat hadis, lihat Juynboll, “Some Isnad-Analytical Methods,” 355–365; Gharaibeh, “An Evaluation of the Isnad-cum-Matn Method,” 285–295.

³⁰ Dede Muhamad Wahyudin, Hanhan Suherlan, and Rizzaldy Satria Wiwaha, “Komparasi Naskah Kitab As-Sunan As-Sughra Wa Al- Kubra Lil Baihaqi : Analisis Metodologi Penyusunan,” *Al-Afkar: Journal for Islamic Studies* 9, no. 1 (2026): 1926–45, <https://doi.org/10.31943/afkarjournal.v9i1.2945.AL-AFKAR>.

³¹ Fahmi Andaluzi and Devi Ganis Prameswari, “The Authority of Hadith in Contemporary Discourse: Rereading The Views of Orientalists, Occidentalists, and Modern Scholars,” *Universum: Jurnal Keislaman Dan Kebudayaan* 19, no. 1 (2025): 105–28, <https://doi.org/10.30762/universum.v19i1.3353>.

Ibn al-Jawzī, who lived in the 6th century AH, was known as the scholar who was most stringent in assessing the validity of hadith. His firmness in declaring hadith to be *maudhu'* was a response to the rampant fabrication of hadith during his time. During that period, fabricated hadiths were widely disseminated by groups driven by political interests, sectarian affiliations, and misguided spiritual motivations. It was these conditions that shaped Ibn al-Jawzī's methodological paradigm, leading him to prioritize the principle of precaution (*iḥtiyāt*) when dealing with any suspicious narration.³² For Ibn al-Jawzī, the presence of a single narrator with a serious flaw in a chain of transmission was sufficient grounds to reject the entire hadith. He did not consider it necessary to examine other chains of transmission if the source of the problem lay with a narrator already known to be a liar or a fabricator of hadith. Therefore, the method he employed was eliminative, prioritizing the rejection of narrations deemed to threaten the purity of the religion.³³

Suyuti's Perspective on Hadith Verification

In contrast to Ibn al-Jawzī's extreme rigidity, al-Suyūṭī adopted a more balanced and moderate methodological stance. Living in the 9th century AH, at a time when the science of hadith had advanced, and many works on the criticism of isnads had been compiled more systematically, al-Suyūṭī had access to a broader range of transmission data. For this reason, he did not automatically accept the *maudhu'* rulings issued by Ibn al-Jawzī. In his work *al-La'ālī al-Maṣnū'ah*, al-Suyūṭī reexamined hundreds of hadiths compiled by Ibn al-Jawzī in *al-Maudhu'āt* and concluded that most of these narrations could in fact still be classified as *dba'if* or even *hasan li ghayrib* if supporting chains (*shawāhid* and *mutābi'āt*) were found.³⁴ Al-Suyūṭī's method emphasizes the principle of comprehensive verification by first compiling various chains of transmission before reaching a final verdict. Thus, al-Suyūṭī views the *sanad* not merely as a standalone entity, but as part of an interconnected information structure in which different elements can mutually reinforce one another. Mahmud Tahhan, *Taisir Mustalah al-Hadith*.³⁵

Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, who lived from the 9th century AH to the early 10th century AH, adopted a more systematic, critical, and historical approach. Through his works such as *Tabdhīb al-Tabdhīb* and *Lisān al-Miẓān*, Ibn Ḥajar conducted an in-depth evaluation of the *jarḥ wa ta'dīl* data scattered throughout various earlier biographical works on narrators.³⁶ He not only cited scholars' comments about a narrator but also analyzed the consistency of those comments across sources. The approach brought Ibn Ḥajar's methodology closer to modern academic practices that demand validation and cross-checking of every piece of data. In his view, a hadith should not be deemed *maudhu'* unless there is strong evidence that a particular

³² Hafiz Ghulam Anwar Panhwar Malik, Majid Nawaz. Al-Azhari, "Fabricated Ahadith: Causes, Methods of Identification and Contemporary Needs: An Exploratory Study," *Al-Ajazz Research Journal of Islamic Studies & Humanities* viii, no. 1 (2024): 36–52.

³³ Rohman, "Kritik Ibn Al-Jauzi Terhadap Hadis Dalam Kitab Ihya Ulum Ad-Din Dan Pembelaan Abu Al-Fadl Al-Iraqi."

³⁴ Alya Mardiyatul Ash, Abil. Choiriyah, "Rekontruksi Hadits Maudhu Dan Hadits Al-Mawduat," *Al-Mabsut Jurnal Studi Islam Dan Sosial* 19, no. 1 (2025): 7, <https://doi.org/10.56997/almabsut.v19i1.2068>.

³⁵ Rodina Billah, U I N Sunan, and Ampel Surabaya, "Orisinilitas Hadis Ulama Sufi Melalui Metode Kasyf Perspektif Imam Al-Suyuti," *IMTIYAZ: Jurnal Ilmu Keislaman* 8, no. September (2024): 292–309.

³⁶ Muhammad Rama Saputra and Muhammad Alif, "Ijtihad Ibnu Hajar Al-Asqalani Dalam Mengkonstruksikan Ilmu Hadis," *El-Waraqob: Jurnal Ushuluddin Dan Filsafat* 7, no. 1 (2023).

narrator has indeed been proven to be a fabricator of hadith. Furthermore, he argued that the categorization of hadith is often influenced by the historical context in which certain scholars lived; therefore, their assessments need to be re-examined in light of broader developments in the data from subsequent periods.³⁷

Based on this initial comparison, it is evident that the differences in the methods of these three scholars lie not only in technical precision but also in differing epistemological paradigms. Ibn al-Jawzī prioritized the principle of strict preservation of the hadith tradition; al-Suyūṭī emphasized the principle of inclusive caution; whereas Ibn Ḥajar proposed an analytical approach that integrates textual data and historical context. Thus, their three methodologies represent the evolution of sanad criticism within the Islamic tradition, moving from a conservative approach toward a more mature and comprehensive method.³⁸

The methodological differences in sanad criticism among Ibn al-Jawzī, al-Suyūṭī, and Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī have had a significant impact on the development of hadith verification in the contemporary era.³⁹ These three scholars not only represent technical differences in evaluating narrators and chains of transmission but also reflect evolving epistemological dynamics. In the classical Islamic tradition, sanad criticism serves as a crucial foundation for preserving the integrity of hadith as the second source of Islamic law after the Qurʾan. However, the differing approaches of these three great scholars demonstrate that the evaluation of the sanad is not monolithic; the social, political, and intellectual contexts of each era influence it. Therefore, understanding these methodological differences can provide a very strong foundation for contemporary researchers' efforts to address new challenges in hadith verification, particularly in the digital age, which is characterized by the rampant dissemination of information without academic oversight.⁴⁰

Ibn al-Jawzī is recognized for his extremely rigorous and precautionary approach to sanad criticism. This strictness was driven by the prevalence of hadith forgery during his lifetime, when various political groups, extremist Sufis, and lay preachers frequently fabricated narrations for specific purposes. In this context, such extreme rigor was viewed as a strategic measure to preserve the purity of Islamic teachings. Ibn al-Jawzī held that the presence of even a single severely flawed narrator for example, due to dishonesty or grave weakness was sufficient to classify a hadith as *maudhuʿ*. Such an eliminative method prioritizes the protection of the Prophet's tradition above all else. In the contemporary era, this approach is highly valuable when researchers encounter viral hadiths or pseudo-hadiths that clearly exhibit signs of forgery whether due to exaggerated wording or contradictions with the fundamental principles of Sharia. Thus, Ibn al-Jawzī's rigor can serve as a model for initial screening when evaluating suspicious narrations.⁴¹

In contrast to Ibn al-Jawzī, al-Suyūṭī adopted a more moderate and comprehensive methodological approach. He lived in an era when hadith literature had become more

³⁷ Husen Maswara, "Kritik Matan Hadis Di Kalangan Sahabat," *Tabkīm* IX, no. 2 (2013): 145–73.

³⁸ Kusroni Kusroni, "Kritik Teologis Terhadap Institusi Agama Di Abad Pertengahan (Telaah Atas Kitab Talbis Iblis Karya Ibn Al- Jawzi)," *Indonesian Journal of Islamic Theology and Philosophy* 5, no. 2 (2023): 137–54.

³⁹ Syafe'i et al., "Studi Kitab-Kitab Kesahihan Matan Hadis," *IMTIYAZ: Jurnal Ilmu Keislaman* 10, no. 1 (2026): 1–14.

⁴⁰ Lalu Heri Afrizal, "Selisik Atas Metodologi Kritik Matan Ulama Hadis," *Kalimah: Jurnal Studi Agama Dan Pemikiran Islam* 14, no. 01 (2016): 96–98.

⁴¹ Ike Janu et al., "Gudang Jurnal Multidisiplin Ilmu Konsep Pendidikan Ibnu Qoyum Al Jauzi," *Gudang Jurnal Multidisiplin Ilmu* 2, no. 1 (2024): 156–62.

extensive, organized, and standardized, thereby enabling a more thorough analysis of the chains of transmission. In his monumental work, *al-La'ali al-Maṣnū'ah*, al-Suyūṭī reexamined the hadiths compiled by Ibn al-Jawzī in *al-Maudhū'āt* and found that some of the narrations deemed fabricated by Ibn al-Jawzī still had the potential to be categorized as *dba'if* or even *hasan li ghayrih* if other, mutually reinforcing chains of transmission were discovered. This demonstrates that al-Suyūṭī was extremely cautious in issuing a *maudhu'* verdict and strove to place hadiths in the most appropriate category. His comparative approach is highly relevant in the modern era, when the digitization of hadith literature allows researchers to quickly trace various chains of transmission from a wide range of classical texts. Thus, al-Suyūṭī's method can serve as an important model for cross-narrative verification, particularly for hadiths that exist in multiple versions.⁴²

Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani's perspective

Ibn Hajar al-Asqalanī adopted a more critical, systematic, and historical methodology. He not only compiled comments on *jarḥ wa ta'dīl* but also assessed their consistency across sources, compared the biographical information of the narrators, and related it to the historical chronology of transmission. This approach provides a far richer understanding of the relationships among narrators, the possibility of their meetings (*liqā'*), and the credibility of each narrator.⁴³ In the contemporary context, where technology enables highly detailed biographical research, Ibn Hajar's method serves as a highly relevant scientific model. This historical-critical approach teaches that the evaluation of narrators must not be conducted in isolation; it must be based on extensive, comparative data that is synchronized with the development of classical historiography.

This third method not only shows variations in methodological interpretation but also has direct implications for efforts to verify hadith in the digital age. Ibn al-Jawzī's rigor helps filter out narrations that contain excessive, sensational, or irrational narrative elements—a problem that is very common in hadiths that go viral on social media. Meanwhile, al-Suyūṭī's approach reminds researchers not to get caught up in a single assessment: many hadiths that appear weak at first glance actually have corroborating evidence from other chains of transmission. This approach also helps avoid the tendency among some in modern society to be too quick to dismiss a hadith as fabricated simply because it does not align with their personal preferences. As for Ibn Hajar's meticulousness, it ensures that every claim whether regarding the weakness or strength of a hadith must be supported by solid evidence and robust historical analysis.⁴⁴

The method of Ibn al-Jawzī can be used in modern research—especially when dealing with pseudo-hadiths—as a preliminary filter to weed out clearly problematic hadiths. However, for hadiths whose status remains unclear, al-Suyūṭī's method becomes crucial for tracing the chains of transmission and examining the possibility of supporting evidence (*syawāhid*) and corroborating reports (*mutābi'āt*). After that, an in-depth analysis in the style

⁴² Sekolah Tinggi, Ilmu Ushuluddin, and Darussalam Bangkalan, "Kritik Hadis Dan Teori-Teori Dalam Kritik Hadis," *Al-Thiqah* 3, no. 61–62 (2020).

⁴³ Wafa Fauziyyah et al., "The Problematic Use of *Dha'if Al-ḥ Ad ī Th*: A Study of Ibn Hajar Al-Asqalanī's Thoughts and Practices in *Bulūgh Al - Marām*," *Jurnal livinghadis* IX, no. 2 (2024): 211–30, <https://doi.org/10.14421/livinghadis.2024.4542>.

⁴⁴ Tinggi, Ushuluddin, and Bangkalan, "Kritik Hadis Dan Teori-Teori Dalam Kritik Hadis."

of Ibn Ḥajar can be conducted to determine whether the comments of the scholars of *jarḥ wa ta'dil* are consistent and whether the narrator in question truly has a valid reputation based on historical data.⁴⁵ Thus, these three methods can be applied in a layered approach, resulting in a verification process that is far more accurate and proportionate.

The contribution of classical methodology is also evident in higher education. Most Islamic universities teach these three approaches in an integrated manner. Students are encouraged to understand how each method works, what its presuppositions are, and how it can be applied to contemporary cases.⁴⁶ Such an integrated approach fosters a critical, comprehensive mindset, ensuring that students do not fall into extremist positions. Students are not quick to reject a hadith simply because one narrator is deemed weak by some scholars, nor do they accept a narration indiscriminately without verification. Balance in understanding is crucial in an era when scholarly authority is often questioned, and society needs strong scientific guidance.⁴⁷

These methodological differences also influence how modern fatwa institutions establish standards for hadith authentication. In the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), the Egyptian Fatwa Council, and Gulf fatwa institutions, the hadith verification process typically employs a combination of Ibn al-Jawzī's rigor, al-Suyūṭī's moderation, and Ibn Ḥajar's in-depth analysis. When a hadith has the potential to cause *fitnah* or public misunderstanding, fatwa institutions tend to adopt Ibn al-Jawzī's preventive approach. However, when the hadith in question has multiple chains of transmission, they employ al-Suyūṭī's approach to assess the possibility of corroborating evidence. In situations requiring in-depth research, fatwa institutions refer to Ibn Ḥajar's comprehensive and critical methodology.⁴⁸

Hadith Criticism in the Digital Era

This difference in methods has even inspired the development of artificial intelligence (AI) for hadith verification in the digital age. Ibn al-Jawzī's rigor provides the foundation for algorithms that detect problematic narrators. Al-Suyūṭī's method can be translated into an automated search for interconnected chains of transmission. Meanwhile, Ibn Ḥajar's method can serve as a model for a more complex analysis of the historical consistency of transmission. If these three methodologies are combined, an AI system can produce a hadith grading mechanism that is more accurate, scientific, and accountable.⁴⁹

Beyond the technical implications, these methodological differences also have an impact on the epistemological aspects of hadith studies. The differences demonstrate that scholarly authority in Islam is not singular but always allows for room for interpretation. Ibn al-Jawzī's rigor teaches the importance of caution; al-Suyūṭī's broad-ranging methodology emphasizes

⁴⁵ Muhammad Alfreda and Daib Insan, "Ilmu A L-JAR Ḥ WA AL- TA ' DĪ L Dalam Hadis (Studi Komparatif Metodologi Ibnu Hajar Al-Asqalani Dan Ibnu Hatim Ar-Razi)," *Tasamuh: Jurnal Studi Islam* 16 (2024): 183–204.

⁴⁶ Anggie Sri Utari, Misra Nova Dayantri, and Fatma Yulia, "Konsep Metodologi Pendidikan Islam Klasik Dan Relevansinya Dengan Masa Modern," *Jurnal Reflektika* 19, no. 1 (2024): 141–71.

⁴⁷ Muhammad Fadhlurrahman, Romlah Abubakar Askar, and Munzir Suparta, "Kritik Matan Serta Contoh-Contoh Haditsnya," *Socius: Jurnal Penelitian Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial* 3, no. 1 (2025): 608–14.

⁴⁸ Siti Mirah Nuraeni and Tajul Arifin, "Aplikasi Metodologi Kajian Hadis Dewan Hisbah Persatuan Islam," *Al-Afkar: Journal for Islamic Studies* 8, no. 4 (2025): 1345–56, <https://doi.org/10.31943/afkarjournal.v8i4.1791>. Application.

⁴⁹ Fikri Jayyid and Isa Anshory, "Hadits Maudhu' (Palsu): Studi Sejarah, Ciri, Dan Upaya Ulama Dalam Menjaga Keaslian Sunnah."

the importance of not rushing to judgment; and Ibn Ḥajar's meticulousness teaches the importance of cross-verification of data. These three epistemological principles are crucial for developing a mature and balanced academic mindset in evaluating hadith, especially amid the phenomenon of intellectual polarization and the uncontrolled spread of information.⁵⁰

The differences in the sanad methodologies of these three scholars provide a strong foundation for the development of digital-based hadith education. Modern hadith learning platforms can offer three modes of analysis: the preventive mode of Ibn al-Jawzī, the comparative mode of al-Suyūṭī, and the historical-critical mode of Ibn Ḥajar. Students can directly understand the differences in these approaches and apply them to various hadith cases. This approach not only enhances digital literacy but also enriches analytical skills in understanding religious texts.⁵¹

The methodological differences in sanad criticism formulated by Ibn al-Jawzī, al-Suyūṭī, and Ibn Ḥajar are not merely historical but also relevant to addressing various challenges in hadith verification in the modern era. These differences represent not only technical distinctions but also paradigmatic differences in understanding the authority of transmission. Ibn al-Jawzī's rigor is particularly useful in countering the pseudo-hadiths that are rampant on social media; al-Suyūṭī's moderation helps maintain balance in evaluation; and Ibn Ḥajar's historical precision provides a strong scientific foundation for contemporary hadith research. When combined, these three approaches form a mature, balanced, and adaptive framework for hadith verification that keeps pace with the times.⁵²

Based on the above analysis, the methodological differences among the three scholars are summarized in the following table:

Table 1. Comparison of the Sanad Criticism Methodologies of Ibn al-Jawzī, al-Suyūṭī, and Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī

Methodological Aspects	Ibn al-Jawzī (w. 597 H)	Al-Suyūṭī (w. 911 H)	Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī (w. 852 H)
The Principle of Jarh wa Ta'dīl	Jarh takes absolute precedence; a single strong statement of jarh from an imam is sufficient to reject a narrator.	Jarh is considered alongside ta'dīl; one should avoid excessive judgments if the ta'dīl of a reputable scholar is stronger.	Evaluating the consistency of jarh comments across sources; distinguishing between mubayyan (evidence-based) jarh and mujmal (general) jarh
The Employment of Mutābi' and Shawāhid	The application is not systematic; hadiths are evaluated solely on the examined chains of transmission, without exploring alternative chains.	The active search for mutābi' and shawāhid; this is the main basis of his criticism of Ibn al-Jawzī	Employing kasrat al-turuq (the multiplicity of chains of transmission) to determine the final degree of authenticity; this can elevate a da'if hadith to the status of hasan li-ghayrihi
Matan's Criticism	The matan is used as supporting evidence (qarinah), not as the	More moderate; a ruling that is generally in accordance with Islamic	The hierarchy is as follows: the sanad is evaluated first, and the matn is analyzed

⁵⁰ Salwah Suherman, "Ilmu Hadis Dalam Perspektif Ontologi, Epistemologi Dan Aksiologi," *Al-Mustafa: Journal of Islamic Studies and Research* 02 (2025): 696–706.

⁵¹ Rahmiah Nur, Mirna Yunita, and Muhammad Ali, "Metode Kritik Sanad Dan Matan," *Ma'bad Aly: Journal of Islamic Studies* 4 (2025): 111–21.

⁵² Mustin, Tasbih, and Abdullah, "Kritik Sanad (Naqd Al-Sanad) Dalam Ilmu Hadis: Metodologi Dan Implementasinya."

Methodological Aspects	Ibn al-Jawzī (w. 597 H)	Al-Suyūṭī (w. 911 H)	Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī (w. 852 H)
	primary determinant; a text that contradicts reason or the Qur’an reinforces the ruling that it is <i>maudhu’</i> .	principles may be taken into consideration in reducing the sentence	afterward; distinguishing between matns that contradict the Qur’an and those that are simply unpopular
Rendering of a Maudhu’ Verdict	The presence of a single <i>kadhdhab</i> or <i>matruk</i> narrator in the <i>isnad</i> is sufficient (as an eliminative and preventive measure); it does not require examination of other chains of transmission	The <i>maudhu’</i> ruling is issued only after all alternative possibilities have been examined and none of them are substantiated (inclusive-moderate)	The verdict of <i>Maudhu</i> is handed down only if there is positive evidence of forgery (a confession by the forger or a fatal historical contradiction); preference is given to a tiered (historical-critical) approach.
Epistemological Foundation	<i>Ihtiyat mutlaq</i> (absolute precaution); protecting the purity of the prophetic tradition is the highest priority	<i>I’tidal fi al-hukm</i> (proportionality of judgment); fairness in evaluating narrators takes precedence over the speed of elimination	<i>Tahqiq wa tathbiq</i> (comprehensive verification); the construction of the truth of transmission based on the totality of historical data
Contemporary Relevance (Digital Era/AI)	The first-pass detection model in an AI algorithm for detecting problematic sources, analogous to <i>denylist</i> verification	The basis of the cross-narrative verification algorithm, analogous to fact-checking based on multi-source corroboration	Historical consistency analysis models in machine learning, analogous to temporal knowledge graph verification

The table above shows that the three methodologies are not mutually exclusive, but rather complement one another within a spectrum of multi-tiered verification. The most significant implication for contemporary hadith studies is the possibility of establishing a layered verification framework: Ibn al-Jawzī’s methodology as an initial screening stage, al-Suyūṭī’s methodology as a cross-checking stage for alternative chains of transmission, and Ibn Ḥajar’s methodology as a comprehensive final assessment stage. This layered model is not only relevant in the practice of manual *takhrij* but also serves as a blueprint that can be encoded into the architecture of artificial intelligence systems for digital hadith authentication.

Conclusion

Research reveals that the methodology of sanad criticism developed by Ibn al-Jawzī in *al-Maudhū‘āt* is not merely a technical procedure for identifying *maudhu’* hadiths, but reflects a model of hadith verification grounded in the epistemology of extreme caution (*iḥtiyāt mutlaq*). This eliminative-preventive approach which treats the presence of a narrator proven to be a liar or extremely weak as sufficient grounds to reject a narration demonstrates that Ibn al-Jawzī’s primary concern was safeguarding the purity of the prophetic tradition from the infiltration of unverifiable narrations. In contrast, al-Suyūṭī developed a more inclusive verification model by examining *shawāhid* and *mutābi‘āt*. At the same time, Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī offered a historical-critical approach that emphasizes cross-source validation, the consistency of *jarḥ* wa *ta’dīl* data, and an analysis of the chronology of transmission. A

comparison of these three methodologies reveals that differences in the evaluation of hadith are not merely due to technical aspects of sanad criticism but are rooted in differing epistemological paradigms regarding the establishment of the authority of hadith knowledge.

The findings of this study also confirm that Ibn al-Jawzī's methodology emerged from the context of a crisis of religious authority in the 6th century AH, when hadith forgery flourished as a tool for political, sectarian, and religious interests. In this context, a preventive approach became an epistemological strategy to protect the integrity of hadith transmission. This perspective aligns conceptually with modern theories of epistemic vigilance, which emphasize evaluating the credibility of information sources before accepting it as valid knowledge, and is consistent with the concept of misinformation detection that has emerged in the study of digital disinformation. Therefore, the main contribution of this research lies not only in the methodological reconstruction of Ibn al-Jawzī's sanad criticism but also in positioning al-Maudhū'āt as a system for verifying religious information that holds cross-temporal relevance from the tradition of classical hadith criticism to the challenges of information authentication in the digital era.

However, this study still has limitations because it focuses on a textual analysis of several representative cases in al-Maudhū'āt and has not empirically tested the effectiveness of the verification model through a computational approach or digital hadith corpus analysis. Therefore, future research should build on this study using the Digital Hadith Studies approach, integrating the methodologies of Ibn al-Jawzī, al-Suyūṭī, and Ibn Ḥajar into a layered verification framework for use in an artificial intelligence (AI)-based hadith authentication system. This approach is expected not only to enrich the methodological development of hadith studies but also to contribute to the development of a more accurate, transparent, and adaptive religious information verification system that addresses the dynamics of information dissemination in the digital era.

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