

THALAB AL-IMARAT FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE HADITH

Abbas Langaji

Fakultas Ushuluddin, Adab, dan Dakwah, Institut Agama Islam Negeri Palopo

Email: abbaslangaji@iainpalopo.ac.id

Abstract

The phenomenon of political ambition and the pursuit of public office without considering capabilities frequently triggers crises in governance and leadership. Prophetic traditions (hadiths) explicitly warn and prohibit individuals from seeking leadership positions (thalab al-imarah). This study aims to examine the legal status and interpretation of hadiths prohibiting the request for public office through matn analysis (tahlil al-matn), resolve the apparent contradiction (ta'arudh) between hadith texts and Quranic narratives (Surah Yusuf: 55), and synthesize these prophetic values into the discourse of modern management science. Employing a qualitative library research method, this study adopts textual-hermeneutical and socio-historical approaches. Primary data were retrieved from Al-Kutub al-Tis'ah (focusing on narrations by Abu Dharr al-Ghifari and Abd al-Rahman bin Samurah) and analyzed via takhrij, asbab al-wurud, and the harmonizing method of al-jam'u wa al-tawfiq. The findings demonstrate that the prohibition against seeking office is not absolute-dogmatic, but rather sociological-conditional. The restriction specifically applies to unqualified individuals (dha'if) to prevent the betrayal of public trust. Conversely, offering oneself for a position is permissible and even recommended if driven by moral integrity, intellectual capacity, and public interest, as exemplified by Prophet Joseph (Yusuf). This reinterpretation aligns seamlessly with executive criteria in modern leadership science, which emphasizes competence, integrity, and managerial objectivity.

Keywords: *Thalab al-Imarah, prophetic hadith, asbab al-wurud, hadith harmonization, modern leadership*

Abstrak

Fenomena ambisi politik dan upaya memperoleh jabatan publik tanpa mempertimbangkan kapabilitas sering kali memicu krisis dalam tata kelola pemerintahan dan kepemimpinan. Tradisi kenabian (hadis) secara tegas memberikan peringatan dan melarang seseorang meminta jabatan kepemimpinan (thalab al-imarah). Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji status hukum dan interpretasi hadis-hadis yang melarang permintaan jabatan publik melalui analisis matan (tahlil al-matn), mengurai pertentangan yang tampak (ta'arudh) antara teks-teks hadis dan narasi Al-Qur'an (QS. Yusuf: 55), serta mensintesis nilai-nilai profetik tersebut ke dalam wacana ilmu manajemen modern. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode penelitian kepustakaan (library research) dengan pendekatan tekstual-hermeneutis dan sosiohistoris. Data primer diperoleh dari al-Kutub al-Tis'ah, dengan fokus pada riwayat Abu Dzarr al-Ghifari dan Abd al-Rahman bin Samurah, kemudian dianalisis melalui metode takhrij, asbab al-wurud, serta metode harmonisasi al-jam' wa al-tawfiq. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa larangan meminta jabatan tidak bersifat mutlak-dogmatis, melainkan bersifat sosiologis-kondisional. Larangan tersebut secara khusus ditujukan kepada individu yang tidak memiliki kualifikasi (dha'if), sebagai upaya mencegah pengkhianatan terhadap amanah publik. Sebaliknya, menawarkan diri untuk menduduki suatu jabatan diperbolehkan, bahkan dapat dianjurkan apabila didorong oleh integritas moral, kapasitas intelektual, dan kepentingan publik, sebagaimana dicontohkan oleh Nabi Yusuf. Reinterpretasi ini memiliki keselarasan dengan kriteria eksekutif dalam ilmu kepemimpinan modern yang menekankan kompetensi, integritas, dan objektivitas manajerial

Kata kunci: Thalab al-Imarah, hadis, *asbab al-wurud*; harmonisasi hadis; kepemimpinan modern.

INTRODUCTION

Human beings are, by their very nature, both social creatures and beings with a religious dimension.¹ As social creatures, humans cannot meet all their life's needs individually but require interaction, cooperation, the division of roles, and the organization of communal life. Meanwhile, as religious beings, humans are bound by values and rules that originate from God as a guide for living their lives. The interconnection between these social and religious dimensions means that human life is not only concerned with the relationship between the individual and God, but also with how humans organize their communal life, including matters of leadership, power, authority, and office. In this context, humans can be understood as political beings who require a system of governance for communal life based on moral and religious values.

From an Islamic perspective, the regulation of human life is not limited to matters of worship but also encompasses various aspects of social life. Islamic law

¹ Ilyas, F., & Bin Hj. Suliaman, I. (2017). Muhammad Syuhudi Ismail (1943-1995); Tokoh Hadith Prolifik, Ensiklopedik Dan Ijtihad. *Jurnal Ilmiah Islam Futura*, 17(1), 1. <https://doi.org/10.22373/jiif.v17i1.1604>

provides guidelines regarding the relationship between humans and God (*habl min Allah*) and the relationship between humans and their fellow humans (*habl min al-nas*). These two dimensions are inextricably linked because an ideal social life is built upon the values of divinity, morality, justice, responsibility, and the common good.² Within this framework, humans are positioned as *khalifatullah fi al-ardh* that is, those entrusted with the responsibility to manage life on earth in a responsible manner. Consequently, every form of authority held by humans including positions in government or social organizations is not viewed merely as a position of power but also as a moral and religious responsibility.³

From an Islamic perspective, therefore, a position of authority carries a strong ethical dimension. It is not merely a means to attain status, respect, influence, or certain benefits, but rather a trust that entails accountability.⁴ A person who assumes a position is accountable not only to people for the use of their authority but also to Allah SWT. This understanding demonstrates that the issue of public office in Islam cannot be separated from matters of competence, integrity, responsibility, and a focus on the public good. Thus, the primary concern is not merely who obtains the position, but how that position is obtained and for what purpose the authority is exercised.

This issue becomes even more relevant when considered in light of the tendency for individuals and groups to aspire to certain positions. In social and political life, positions are often viewed as symbols of success, sources of influence, or means of gaining access to power and resources. Under certain conditions, the desire to obtain a position can even shift the focus from service and the common good to personal or group interests. Another problem arises when a position is given to someone without considering the competence, integrity, and abilities required to fulfill the responsibilities inherent in that position. Such conditions demonstrate that the issue of positions is not only related to administrative aspects but is also a moral and religious issue.⁵

Ibn Taymiyyah addressed this issue by pointing out that one of the factors contributing to the Muslim community's weakness in managing their lives is when those who hold office and play key roles in governing society drift further away from Islamic values. This view suggests that the quality of leadership and public

² Zainul Muttaqien, M., Syawwaludin Nur, M., & Aprilia, F. (2022). Konsep Pemimpin Menurut Sayyid Quthb dan M Quraish Shihab dalam Tafsir Fi Zhilal Al-Quran dan Tafsir Misbah. *Jurnal Multidisiplin Indonesia*, 1(3), 1034–1051. <https://doi.org/10.58344/jmi.v1i3.186>

³ Huda, N., Refleksi, A. P.-, & 2018, undefined. (2015). Orientasi Kajian Hadis Kontemporer Indonesia (Studi Artikel E-Jurnal Dalam Portal Moraref 2015-2017). *Journal.Uinjkt.Ac.Id*. <https://journal.uinjkt.ac.id/index.php/refleksi/article/view/10204>

⁴ Ali, M. (2015). Asbab Wurud Al-Hadits. *Tahdis*, 6(2), 87.

⁵ Anjani, R. S. (2023). Al- Qur ' an Dan Hadist Sumber Hukum dan Pedoman Hidup Umat Muslim. *Jurnal Region: Jurnal Agama, Sosial, Dan Budaya*, 1(6), 531–541.

officials is closely linked to the quality of life of the community they lead. Positions not underpinned by integrity and competence have the potential to lead to abuse of authority, injustice, and the management of public affairs that is not oriented toward the common good.⁶

In this context, the hadiths of the Prophet (peace be upon him) serve as an important source for understanding the ethics of obtaining and holding office. The hadiths not only contain provisions regarding worship in the narrow sense but also provide guidelines on human behavior in social life, including matters of leadership and power. A number of the Prophet's (peace be upon him) hadiths issue warnings regarding a person's desire to obtain office.⁷ These hadiths are worth examining because, on the one hand, they contain prohibitions or warnings against seeking office, while on the other hand, leadership is a necessity in society. This issue raises the question of how these hadiths should be understood: Is the prohibition against seeking office absolute, or are there specific contexts in which it is permissible for someone to accept or even volunteer for a position when they possess the necessary qualifications.

The issue of understanding hadiths regarding the seeking of office cannot be separated from the nature of hadiths, which emerged within specific social contexts. A purely textual understanding of hadiths has the potential to lead to disproportionate conclusions if it fails to consider the context in which the hadiths were revealed, the moral objectives they seek to establish, and the circumstances of those seeking or accepting office. Therefore, a study of hadiths regarding positions requires an interpretation that not only focuses on the wording of the text but also considers the context, the underlying meaning, the objectives of Islamic law, and their relevance to contemporary leadership issues.⁸

The need for a more comprehensive interpretation is becoming increasingly important because the issues surrounding public office today present a level of complexity that differs from the social context in which the hadith was originally conveyed. Public office can be found in various spheres, ranging from government, educational institutions, community organizations, and religious institutions to various professional bodies. In each of these spheres, there are different demands regarding competence and integrity. Therefore, understanding the hadiths on seeking positions of authority must focus on the ethical substance they contain particularly regarding motivation, capability, trustworthiness, responsibility, and

⁶ Soleh, K., & Iskandar, A. (2020). Metodologi Kritik Dan Pendekatan Dalam Memahami Hadis. *Jurnal Studi Hadis Nusantara*, 2(2), 174. <https://doi.org/10.24235/jshn.v2i2.7651>

⁷ Handayana, S. (2019). Pemikiran Hadis Syuhudi Ismail. *TAJDID : Jurnal Ilmu Keislaman Dan Ushuluddin*, 16(2), 255–236. <https://doi.org/10.15548/tajdid.v16i2.101>

⁸ Al-Naisaburiy, A. A. al-H. (1977). *Ma'rifat fi 'Ulum al-Hadits*. Maktabah al-'Ilmiyah.

the public good which must be taken into consideration when seeking or holding such a position.⁹

On that basis, an examination of the hadith regarding seeking office should not stop merely at determining whether or not it is permissible for someone to seek office. The examination must focus on how the hadith should be understood in a balanced manner and how its normative message can be applied in various leadership situations¹⁰. This approach is important to avoid an overly literal interpretation and to prevent the arbitrary use of hadiths without considering the fundamental principles of Islamic teachings. Thus, the hadith regarding asking for a position can be regarded as a source of leadership ethics that emphasizes a sense of trust, competence, responsibility, and a focus on the public good.

Based on the above discussion, this study focuses on the hadith of the Prophet (peace be upon him) regarding seeking office by examining its status, the meanings it conveys, and its relevance to issues of leadership. This study aims to address two main questions: (1) what is the status of seeking office from the perspective of the Prophet's hadith; and (2) how can these hadith be interpreted through various perspectives so that they can be understood contextually and as relevant to contemporary leadership issues? This study is expected to contribute to the development of hadith studies, particularly in understanding hadiths on leadership in a more contextual manner, while also reinforcing the understanding that a position of authority in Islam is a trust that demands integrity, competence, and moral responsibility.

METHODOLOGY

This research is a qualitative library study that examines the hadith of the Prophet (peace be upon him) regarding the prohibition against seeking office (thalab al-imarah) through a textual-hermeneutic (tahlil al-matn wa al-isnad) and socio-historical approach.¹¹ The primary data for this study were extracted from the narrations of Abu Dzar al-Ghifari and Abd al-Rahman bin Samurah, which are compiled in major hadith collections such as Sahih al-Bukhari, Sahih Muslim, Sunan Abi Dawud, Sunan al-Nasa'i, Sunan al-Tirmidhi, Sunan al-Darimi, and Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal. Meanwhile, secondary data was sourced from classical hadith commentary literature, books on fiqh al-siyasah, and works on modern leadership management science. Data collection was conducted using

⁹ Sukri, A. (2019). Negara Dalam Pemikiran Mohammad Natsir. *Jurnal Al-Aqidah*, 11(2), 118–131. <https://doi.org/10.15548/ja.v11i2.1416>

¹⁰ Huda, A. N., & Fitriana, M. A. (2020). Resepsi Terhadap Konsep Pemaafan Dalam Al-Quran: Sebuah Kajian Living Quran. ... : *Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Quran, Hadist* <https://garuda.kemdikbud.go.id/documents/detail/2053676>

¹¹ Fiantika, F. R., & Dkk. (2022). *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*.

documentation techniques and takhrij al-hadith to map the chains of transmission (sanad) and variations in the text (matan).¹²

The collected data was then analyzed in stages, beginning with the verification of the authenticity of the isnad and matn, followed by an examination of the asbab al-wurud to understand the sociological background and personal contexts of the Companions who prompted the hadith¹³. Next, the harmonization method (al-jam'u wa al-tawfiq) was used to resolve the apparent contradiction (ta'arudh) between the textual prohibition in the hadith and the permissibility of seeking office as stated in the Qur'an, Surah Yusuf, verse 55. Finally, the results of this textual synthesis are integrated with modern leadership and organizational management theories to formulate criteria for leadership and professional ethics that are responsive to the dynamics of current public governance.¹⁴

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of The Text of The Hadith

Hadiths that discuss "alab al-imitat" can be found in at least two passages, as follows:

1. The one related to the case of Abu Zar,

لاتسأل الإمارة

2. The one related to the case of Abdurrahman bin Samurah:

يا أبا ذر إنك ضعيف وإنها أمانة

Based on a search in the book Mu'jam al-Mufahras li Alfāz al-Hadis al-Nabawy, using the terms ضعيف and أمانة as keywords for the first hadith, and the terms سأل and إمارة as keywords for the second hadith, it was found that these hadiths are found in authoritative hadith collections, as detailed below:

1. First Hadith:

حدّثنا أبو النعمان محمد بن الفضل ، حدّثنا جرير بن حازم ، حدّثنا الحسن حدّثنا عبد الرحمن بن سمرة قال: قال النبي صَلَّى الله عليه وسلّم: يا عبد الرحمن بن سمرة لا

¹² Makmur, & Muhammad Ismail. (2021). Metode Kesahihan Sanad Hadis. *Al-Mutsila*, 3(2), 85–95. <https://doi.org/10.46870/jstain.v3i2.50>

¹³ Siyoto, S., & Sodik, A. (2015). *Dasar Metodologi Penelitian* (Cet.I). Lliterasi Media Publishing.

¹⁴ Soleh, K., & Iskandar, A. (2020). Metodologi Kritik Dan Pendekatan Dalam Memahami Hadis. *Jurnal Studi Hadis Nusantara*, 2(2), 174. <https://doi.org/10.24235/jshn.v2i2.7651>

تَسْأَلُ الْإِمَارَةَ فَإِنَّكَ إِنْ أُعْطِيَتْهَا عَنْ مَسْأَلَةٍ وَكَلْتَ إِلَيْهَا وَإِنْ أُعْطِيَتْهَا عَنْ غَيْرِ مَسْأَلَةٍ أُعْذَتْ عَلَيْهَا وَإِذَا حَلَفْتَ عَلَى يَمِينٍ فَرَأَيْتَ غَيْرَهَا خَيْرًا مِنْهَا فَكُفِّرْ عَنْ يَمِينِكَ وَأَتِ الْذِي هُوَ خَيْرٌ.

2. The Second Hadith:

حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الْمَلِكِ بْنُ شُعَيْبٍ بْنُ اللَّيْثِ حَدَّثَنِي بِنُ سَعْدٍ حَدَّثَنِي يَزِيدُ بْنُ أَبِي حَبِيبٍ عَنْ بَكْرِ بْنِ عَمْرٍو عَنْ الْحَارِثِ بْنِ يَزِيدٍ الْحَضْرَمِيِّ عَنْ ابْنِ حَجِيرَةَ الْأَكْبَرِ عَنْ أَبِي ذَرٍّ قَالَ: قُلْتُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَلَا تَسْتَعْمَلُنِي قَالَ فَضْرَبَ بِيَدِهِ عَلَيَّ مِنْكَبِي ثُمَّ قَالَ يَا أَبَا ذَرٍّ إِنَّكَ ضَعِيفٌ وَإِنَّهَا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ خَزْيٌ وَنَدَامَةٌ إِلَّا مَنْ أَخَذَهَا بِحَقِّهَا وَأَدَّى الَّذِي عَلَيْهِ فِيهَا.

Meaning of Terms

This discussion will explain several key terms found in the text of the hadith addressing the prohibition against seeking office, as narrated by Muslim and Abû Dàwud, as follows:

The phrase لا تَسْأَلُ is a particle of prohibition, while تَسْأَلُ is a present tense verb (fi'il mudhàri') derived from the root سأل, meaning to ask or demand. Yunus bin Ubaid further expands the meaning of this word to include تمنى, which means to hope for, to desire, or to fantasize about. Furthermore, al-Mubarkafûry states that the phrase لا تَسْأَلُ is in the form of a prohibition (in the prohibitive form). Etymologically, the term الإمارة can mean government that is, authority, a sphere of governance and leadership, or a kingdom. The phrase “فإن أُعْطِيَتْهَا” means “if you succeed in obtaining it”; the phrase “عن مسألة” means “after you have asked for it”; the phrase “وكلت إليها” means “you were left to her own devices, abandoned without any assistance”; and “أعنت عليها” means “may Allah assist you in that leadership Allah will help you in carrying out that duty.”¹⁵

The two hadiths that are the subject of this study appear to address the same theme namely, requesting a position which, when compared with a verse from the Qur'an, seems to contradict Surah 12:55:

قَالَ اجْعَلْنِي عَلَى خَزَائِنِ الْأَرْضِ إِنِّي حَفِيظٌ عَلَيْمُ

¹⁵ Saifulah Samsudin, M. Fauzi Jumingan, Abdul Rauf Hassan, & M. Zulkifli Ismail. (2015). Peranan Kitab Shuruh Al-Hadis Fokus Kepada Kitab Dalil Al-Falihin. *HADIS: Jurnal Ilmiah Berwasit*, 5(9), 7–20.

Yusuf said: “Appoint me as the treasurer of the land (of Egypt); indeed, I am one who is trustworthy and knowledgeable.”

The verse above tells the story of Joseph when he asked the Pharaoh of Egypt for the position of Chief Treasurer, and how Joseph was indeed granted that position at that time. This suggests that asking for a position is permissible. In cases like this, one must approach the matter wisely by considering the context of the preceding and following verses. The verses preceding Surah 12:55 suggest that Joseph’s request was preceded by the King’s offer to appoint him as a royal advisor or to another position within the category of high-ranking royal officials. However, Joseph felt that he lacked the qualifications to serve in the position the King had offered. The only skill he possessed was his ability to manage the state treasury. Therefore, the position he requested in response to the King’s offer was that of state treasurer; thus, it can be said that, fundamentally, Joseph did not ask for a position per se, but merely specified one of several possible roles that might be entrusted to him based on his capabilities¹⁶.

In the case of the hadith text prohibiting the seeking of office, which on the surface appears to contradict Surah Yusuf, verse 55, there are two possible ways to resolve this: “The hadith regarding the prohibition against seeking office does not contradict the Qur’anic verse, because the hadith text does not mention any contextual evidence (qarinah) as is found in the verse that states *حفيظ عليم*. Therefore, this hadith is directed at those who are unfit to hold office because they lack credibility, particularly the quality of justice. This is consistent with another hadith from Abu Hurairah:

من يطلب قضاء المسلمين حتى يناله ثم غلب عدله جوره فله الجنة. ومن غلب جوره عدله فله النار

Thus, both of these approaches combining the verses and hadiths can be applied in practice: it is permissible for a person to seek a position if they are qualified, and it is prohibited for a person to seek a position if they are not qualified for it.

Explanation of Hadith

Asbab Al-Wurud

In the text of the first hadith, the reason for its revelation is explicitly stated: On one occasion, Abu Zar came to the Prophet (peace be upon him) to ask for a

¹⁶ Maulana, A., & Nurita, A. (2023). Pemikiran Abu Zahwu Tentang Peran Muhaddisin Dalam Menjaga Otentisitas Hadis Pada Abad Ketiga Hijriah. *Kontemplasi: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Ushuluddin*, 11(01).

position or office. After observing and considering Abu Zar's personal integrity, intellectual capacity, capabilities, and public acceptability, the Prophet said to Abu Zar: "You are a weak person, whereas that position is a trust for everyone who holds it."¹⁷

In Islam, the authority or responsibility entrusted to a person is a trust that must be safeguarded and exercised appropriately, as one will ultimately be held accountable for it. Thus, a position of authority is a trust that must be carried out properly, in accordance with the words of Allah in Surah al-Nisà [4]: 58

﴿ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمَانَاتِ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ ۚ ﴾

Indeed, Allah has commanded you to fulfill your trust toward those to whom it is entrusted, and when you pass judgment among people, you must be just.

From this explanation, it is clear that a position in all its forms and hierarchical levels is a trust that must be carried out properly, as one will be held accountable for it on the Day of Judgment. Thus, through these two hadiths, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) conveyed to two of his companions the consequences of holding a position; to Abu Zar, he stated that a position is a trust a heavy responsibility that should not be entrusted to just anyone, but only after considering a person's personal integrity, intellectual capacity, capabilities, and public acceptance¹⁸.

The Prophet's rejection of Abu Zar's request can be seen, for example, in another hadith narrated by Muslim:

عَنْ أَبِيهِ عَنْ أَبِي ذَرٍّ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ يَا أَبَا ذَرٍّ إِنِّي أَرَاكَ ضَعِيفًا وَإِنِّي أَحِبُّ لَكَ مَا أَحِبُّ لِنَفْسِي لَا تَأْمُرَنَّ عَلَىٰ اثْنَيْنِ وَلَا تَوَلِّ مَالَ يَتِيمٍ .

According to al-Zahabi, the Prophet's advice to Abu Zar not to seek a position was because he was considered weak—not in the sense of physical strength or faith, but rather in terms of managerial weakness.

فهذا محمول على ضعف الرأي، فإنه لو ولي مال اليتيم لأنفقه كله في سبيل لبخير ولترك اليتيم فقيرا. فقد ذكرنا أنه كان لا يستجيز ادخار النقدين. والذي يتأمر على الناس يريد أن يكون فيه حلم ومداورة. وأبو ذر رضي الله عنه كانت فيه حدة فنصح النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم.

¹⁷ Al-Naisaburiy, A. A. al-H. (1977). *Ma'rifat fi 'Ulum al-Hadits*. Maktabah al-'Ilmiyah.

¹⁸ Beti, A. (1993). *Autobiography Syeikhul Hadis Maulana Muhammad Zakaria*. Idara Isha'ab-E-Diniyat.

As for Abd al-Rahman bin Samurah, the Messenger of Allah reminded him not to seek a position of authority, for such a position is, in essence:

الإمارة أولها ملأمة، وثانيها ندامة، وثالثها عذاب يوم القيامة إلا من عدل

The Law on Seeking Public Office

Muhammad al-Farra' states that seeking a position or office is a practice that is disliked (makruh). Similarly, al-'Asqalani (d. 852 H.) explicitly states that this hadith indicates the makruh nature of seeking a position. Al-Asqalani comments that demanding or requesting a position essentially amounts to rejecting Allah's help, and even more so if the intention is to gain personal benefit¹⁹.

Both al-Farra' and al-Asqalani viewed the matter of holding office not merely as a matter of honor, as is often seen today, but these two figures went further to view holding office as a trust that entails many risks and responsibilities that must be fulfilled. Nevertheless, in the author's view, the ruling that seeking a position is "makruh" in this context is more relevant when understood sociologically rather than in terms of fiqh; seeking a position, being overly ambitious for one, and even resorting to any means to obtain it are reprehensible acts, despised by both individuals and society²⁰.

Ibn Abd al-Salām and several other scholars have stated regarding the seeking of office that there are three legal categories for those who seek office, namely: 1) sometimes a person is obligated to seek office or demand it; 2) sometimes a person is encouraged to seek it; 3) sometimes a person is prohibited from seeking it. It is obligatory when the person is capable of ijtihad and acts justly; it is recommended if their knowledge is very profound; and it is forbidden if they lack the necessary ability and competence²¹.

A similar view was expressed by Ibn Taymiyyah (728 H.), who argued that positions of authority should not be sought after, but rather assigned based on who is qualified. Every position must be held by a capable and suitable person from among the Muslims. This statement is relevant to one of the hadiths of the Prophet (peace be upon him), namely:

¹⁹ Al-Mubarkafūry, I. A. 'Alī M. bin A. al-R. bin A. al-R. (1979). *Tuhfat al-Ahwaz bi Syarh Jami' al-Turmuzy*.

²⁰ Al-Nasā'ī, A. A. A.-R. A. B. S. (2012). *Kitāb Al-Mujtabā Al-Ma'rūf bi Al-Sunan Al-Ṣuḡrā* (Jilid 1). Dār Al-Tāṣīl. file:///C:/Users/ASUS/Downloads/AN-NASAI 1 (1).pdf

²¹ Al-Naisaburiy, A. A. al-H. (n.d.). *Al-Mustadrak 'Ala al-Sahihaini*. Dar Al-Kutub Al-Ilmiyah.

من ولي من امر المسلمين شيئا فتولي رجلا وهو يجد من هو اصلح للمسلمين منه فقد خان الله
ورسوله

Ibn Taimiyah's statement reflects the democratic and effective nature of government and authority that seeks social justice. When viewed from the perspective of modern management, Ibn Taimiyah's statement is very much in line with the expectations of several management experts, including S. P. Siagian, MPA, and Peter F. Drucker. According to S. P. Siagian, a person who wishes to become an executive must meet several requirements, including: 1) Broad knowledge; 2) The ability to think conceptually and effectively; 3) The ability to identify strategic issues; 4) The ability to act as an integrator; 5) Objectivity in dealing with and treating subordinates; 5) A rational way of acting and thinking; 6) A pattern and style that can serve as a role model; 7) Openness toward subordinates without disregarding the existing hierarchy; 8) A democratic leadership style; 9) The ability to act as a wise advisor.

Meanwhile, Kartini Kartono outlines the criteria that a leader must possess, namely: 1) Physical and mental energy; 2) Awareness of goals and direction; 3) Enthusiasm and optimism; 4) Friendliness and compassion; 5) Integrity (honesty, integrity, and sincerity); 6) Technical expertise; 7) Decisiveness; 8) Intelligence; 9) Teaching skills; 10) Trustworthiness²².

From the above description, it can be seen that if a leader or official possesses the criteria mentioned, they are considered capable of fulfilling that trust well. Regarding the person who sought the position in the hadith under discussion, it is explained that after assuming the position, they will feel burdened by the very office they had requested. Hadith scholars generally explain that this statement means such an official will be left to their own devices and abandoned without any assistance from Allah SWT. This is relevant to another hadith:

من طلب القضاء واستعان عليه وكل إليه، ومن لم يطلب القضاء ولم يستعن عليه انزل الله
إليه

In another hadith narrated by Abu Dawud from Abu Hurayrah, it is stated:

من يطلب قضاء المسلمين حتى يناله ثم غلب عدله جوروه فله الجنة. ومن غلب جوروه عدله فله
النار

²² Su'aidi, H. (2017). Hermeneutika Hadis Syuhudi Ismail. *Religia*, 20(1), 33.
<https://doi.org/10.28918/religia.v20i1.837>

‘Whoever seeks to become a judge among the Muslims and attains that position, and if his justice overcomes his injustice, he will enter Paradise; but if his injustice overcomes his justice, he will enter Hell.’

Looking at the opinions of the scholars regarding the prohibition against seeking office, they generally state that one should not seek office, but rather consider the criteria that have been agreed upon. Literally, this hadith is addressed to Abu Zar al-Gifari—who, in the assessment of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), was a “weak” person and Abd al-Rahman bin Samurah. However, no further explanation has been found specifically, a clear background regarding the Prophet’s prohibition concerning Abd al-Rahman bin Samurah. Nevertheless, this hadith contains universal messages²³.

The phrase “فان أعطيتها عن غير مسألة فأنت عليها” means “given without being asked.” According to Muhammad al-Qàri, help will surely be granted during his term of office. According to him, “help” here can mean tawfiq (divine guidance), loyalty, and tahqiq (justification). God’s help, which is promised to officials who are entrusted with a position without having asked for it, is most likely related to the constructive and innovative efforts undertaken by an official using the expertise or profession he possesses. This is relevant to the hadith of the Prophet (peace be upon him):

إذا وسد الأمر غير أهلها فانتظر الساعة

“If you entrust a matter to someone who is not qualified for it, then wait for its downfall.”

Thus, in the author’s opinion, the prohibition against seeking office in this hadith does not apply universally. Therefore, it is permissible for someone to seek office in order to safeguard the welfare of the community, for the sake of serving Allah, the Exalted. Similarly, it is permissible for someone to seek office if they possess good personal integrity, recognized intellectual capacity, and public acceptance. In the case of Prophet Yusuf, as mentioned, because his personal integrity (reflected in the phrase inni ‘āfīz) and intellectual capacity (reflected in the phrase ‘alīm) were recognized, he sought a structural position within the state system. His request was legitimized by divine revelation, and it was granted by the local ruler.

²³ Anwar, S. (2013). Metode Usul Fikih Untuk Kontekstualisasi Pemahaman Hadis-Hadis Rukyat. *Jurnal TARJIH*, 11(1), 1–11.

CONCLUSION

Based on a study of the hadiths of the Prophet (peace be upon him) regarding seeking office, it can be concluded that, from an Islamic perspective, a position of office is a trust and a responsibility for which one must be accountable to Allah (the Exalted) and society. Therefore, a position of office should not be viewed as a means to gain power or serve personal interests, but rather as a responsibility to promote the common good. A person who holds a position must possess integrity, honesty, knowledge, and abilities appropriate to the duties entrusted to them. The hadiths regarding seeking positions essentially serve as a warning against an ambitious attitude in the pursuit of power, especially for those who lack the qualifications and ability to fulfill such a trust.

The prohibition against seeking office is not absolute; rather, it must be understood in light of a person's intentions, circumstances, abilities, and suitability. Seeking or accepting office may be justified if a person possesses the necessary competence and integrity and is capable of carrying out the duties fairly, honestly, and responsibly—especially when the position is needed for the public good. Thus, the essence of the hadith is not merely to prohibit someone from seeking a position, but rather to emphasize that positions must be granted to and held by individuals who are qualified, trustworthy, and competent. This understanding remains relevant in the context of contemporary leadership because it can serve as an ethical foundation for preventing the abuse of power and fostering responsible leadership that is oriented toward the public good.

REFERENCES

- Al-Mubarkafūry, I. A. 'Ali M. bin A. al-R. bin A. al-R. (1979). *Tuhfat al- Ahwaz bi Syarh Jami' al-Turmuziy*.
- Al-Naisaburiy, A. A. al-H. (n.d.). *Al-Mustadrak 'Ala al-Sahihaini*. Dar Al-Kutub Al-Ilmiyah.
- Al-Naisaburiy, A. A. al-H. (1977). *Ma'rifat fi 'Ulum al-Hadits*. Maktabah al-'Ilmiyah.
- Al-Nasā'ī, A. A. A.-R. A. B. S. (2012). *Kitāb Al-Mujtabā Al-Ma'rūf bi Al-Sunan Al-Şugrā (Jilid 1)*. Dār Al-Tāşīl. file:///C:/Users/ASUS/Downloads/AN-NASAI 1 (1).pdf
- Ali, M. (2015). *Asbab Wurud Al-Hadits*. Tahdis, 6(2), 87.
- Anjani, R. S. (2023). *Al- Qur ' an Dan Hadist Sumber Hukum dan Pedoman Hidup Umat Muslim*. Jurnal Region: Jurnal Agama, Sosial, Dan Budaya, 1(6), 531–541.
- Anwar, S. (2013). *Metode Usul Fikih Untuk Kontekstualisasi Pemahaman Hadis-Hadis Rukyat*. Jurnal TARJIH, 11(1), 1–11.
- Beti, A. (1993). *Autobiography Syekhul Hadis Maulana Muhammad Zakaria*. Idara Isha'ab-E-Diniyat.
- Fiantika, F. R., & Dkk. (2022). *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*.

- Handayana, S. (2019). Pemikiran Hadis Syuhudi Ismail. *TAJDID : Jurnal Ilmu Keislaman Dan Ushuluddin*, 16(2), 255–236. <https://doi.org/10.15548/tajdid.v16i2.101>
- Huda, A. N., & Fitriana, M. A. (2020). Resepsi Terhadap Konsep Pemaafan Dalam Al-Quran: Sebuah Kajian Living Quran. ... : *Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Quran, Hadist* <https://garuda.kemdikbud.go.id/documents/detail/2053676>
- Huda, N., Refleksi, A. P.-, & 2018, undefined. (2015). Orientasi Kajian Hadis Kontemporer Indonesia (Studi Artikel E-Jurnal Dalam Portal Moraref 2015-2017). *Journal.Uinjkt.Ac.Id*. <https://journal.uinjkt.ac.id/index.php/refleksi/article/view/10204>
- Ilyas, F., & Bin Hj. Suliaman, I. (2017). Muhammad Syuhudi Ismail (1943-1995); Tokoh Hadith Prolifik, Ensklopedik Dan Ijtihad. *Jurnal Ilmiah Islam Futura*, 17(1), 1. <https://doi.org/10.22373/jiif.v17i1.1604>
- Makmur, & Muhammad Ismail. (2021). Metode Kesahihan Sanad Hadis. *Al-Mutsla*, 3(2), 85–95. <https://doi.org/10.46870/jstain.v3i2.50>
- Maulana, A., & Nurita, A. (2023). Pemikiran Abu Zahwu Tentang Peran Muhaddisin Dalam Menjaga Otentisitas Hadis Pada Abad Ketiga Hijriah. *Kontemplasi: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Ushuluddin*, 11(01).
- Saifulah Samsudin, M. Fauzi Jumingan, Abdul Rauf Hassan, & M. Zulkifli Ismail. (2015). Peranan Kitab Shuruh Al-Hadis Fokus Kepada Kitab Dalil Al-Falihin. *HADIS: Jurnal Ilmiah Berwasit*, 5(9), 7–20.
- Siyoto, S., & Sodik, A. (2015). *Dasar Metodologi Penelitian (Cet.I)*. LIterasi Media Publishing.
- Soleh, K., & Iskandar, A. (2020). Metodologi Kritik Dan Pendekatan Dalam Memahami Hadis. *Jurnal Studi Hadis Nusantara*, 2(2), 174. <https://doi.org/10.24235/jshn.v2i2.7651>
- Su'aidi, H. (2017). Hermeneutika Hadis Syuhudi Ismail. *Religia*, 20(1), 33. <https://doi.org/10.28918/religia.v20i1.837>
- Sukri, A. (2019). Negara Dalam Pemikiran Mohammad Natsir. *Jurnal Al-Aqidah*, 11(2), 118–131. <https://doi.org/10.15548/ja.v11i2.1416>
- Zainul Muttaqien, M., Syawwaludin Nur, M., & Aprilia, F. (2022). Konsep Pemimpin Menurut Sayyid Quthb dan M Quraish Shihab dalam Tafsir Fi Zhilal Al-Quran dan Tafsir Misbah. *Jurnal Multidisiplin Indonesia*, 1(3), 1034–1051. <https://doi.org/10.58344/jmi.v1i3.186>