

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE OF JARH WA TA'DIL SCIENCE AS A BASIS FOR THE SANAD CRITICISM METHOD

Sarah Fabira Nida, Koko Komaruddin, and Otong Subendar

Abstract: This paper discusses what is called the standard operating procedure of the science of jarh wa ta'dil in its use as a method of criticizing the sanad of hadith. It must be admitted that the hadith as the second source of Islamic guidance after the Qur'an is not free from various academic-scientific problems. From here, the discussion of jarh wa ta'dil finds its urgency. This paper is a qualitative literature research that produces findings in the form of descriptive and explanatory words about jarh wa ta'dil. This paper does not discuss the entire main theme of jarh wa ta'dil, but limits it to the issue of definition, urgency and significance, causes and conditions, and effects of jarh wa ta'dil. This paper finds that jarh wa ta'dil as the basis for the method of criticizing the sanad of hadith which is typical of the intellectual treasury of Islam is the fruit of an awareness of the urgency of an intellectual, argumentative and critical framework of thought. A scholar is required to have certain criteria before arguing about a narrator or a hadith. A scholar who does not have the skills and competence is prohibited from becoming a critic of hadith because jarh wa ta'dil has legal consequences for a narrator or a hadith.

Keywords: jarh wa ta'dil; science of hadith; sanad criticism method; standard operating procedure

Abstrak: Tulisan ini membahas tentang apa yang disebut sebagai prosedur operasi standar ilmu *jarh wa ta'dil* dalam penggunannya sebagai metode kritik sanad hadis. Harus diakui bahwa hadis sebagai sumber pedoman Islam kedua pasca al-Qur'an tidak terlepas dari berbagai persoalan secara akademis-ilmiah. Dari sinilah, pembahasan tentang *jarh wa ta'dil* menemukan urgensinya. Tulisan ini merupakan penelitian kualitatif kepustakaan yang menghasilkan temuan berupa kata-kata deskriptif dan eksplanatif tentang *jarh wa ta'dil*. Tulisan ini tidak membahas keseluruhan tema besar *jarh wa ta'dil*, tetapi membatasi pada persoalan definisi, urgensi dan signifikansi, sebab dan syarat, serta akibat dari *jarh wa ta'dil*. Tulisan ini menemukan bahwa *jarh wa ta'dil* sebagai basis metode kritik sanad hadis yang khas dari khazanah intelektual Islam merupakan buah kesadaran urgensi kerangka berpikir yang intelektual, argumentatif dan kritis. Seorang sarjana diniscayakan mempunyai kriteria-kriteria tertentu sebelum berargumen mengenai seorang perawi atau sebuah hadis. Seorang sarjana yang tidak mempunyai kecakapan dan kompetensi dilarang menjadi kritis hadis karena *jarh wa ta'dil* menghasilkan akibat hukum terhadap seorang perawi atau sebuah hadis.

Kata kunci: *jarh wa ta'dil*; ilmu hadis; metode kritik sanad; prosedur operasi standar

Introduction

In general, scholars believe that the Qur'an, hadith and prophetic sirah are the three main sources that can provide information or reports about the origins and situation and conditions of Islam during the time of the prophethood (Belkzi, 2011). For Muslims, these three sources are not only believed to be historical sources, but also as religious or theological sources. However, it cannot be denied that because these sources, especially the books of the history of the prophethood (*sirah nabawiyah*) and also the hadith, come from approximately one century to one and a half centuries after the events that occurred (Sizgorich, 2004), this has given rise to debates about their authenticity, originality, authority and validity.

As noted by Zaid Ahmad and al-Duri, scholars differ on the origin of the tradition of writing history and hadith in Islam. Some say it began with Urwah ibn Zubair (d. 94 AH/711-712 AD); some say it began with Ibn Syihab al-Zuhri (d. 124 AH/742 AD); some say it began with Ibn Ishaq (d. 151 AH/768 AD); and some say it began with Ibn Hisham (d. 218 AH/834 AD) (Ahmad, 2008: 439-440; al-Duri, 1957: 1-12). From these differences, it can be asserted that it is safe to conclude that the development of historical and hadith literature in Islam was made no later than the 2nd century AH or the 8th century AD.

These differences of opinion are accompanied by several problems that surround the sirah and especially the hadith as sources, such as the in contemporaneousness of the recording with the event; complex and contradictory narratives; discrepancies and uncertainties in chronology; editorial processes, including additions, reductions, falsifications and editing; techniques for combining several different khabar to form a complete narrative; and a long and largely invisible oral transmission process (Donner, 1998, 2010; Landau-Tassaron, 1986; Lecker, 1995; Schoeler, 2006). In addition to these problems, the scholarly attitude that tends to arbitrarily collect a lot of information or reports, and then select certain information or reports to be included in the construction of his work is a separate problem in the context of these sources (Brown, 2011).

Based on the problems surrounding the sources above, the author sees the need to reaffirm the position of the science of *jarh wa ta'dil*, especially as

the basis for the method of criticizing the sanad of hadith. Because in addition to having a function to examine and review the chain of transmission (*isnad/sanad*) to resolve differences and even contradictions about information from the same event and is used to evaluate the validity and reliability of the narrators of hadith, the science of *jarh wa ta'dil* is one of the unique methods that emerged and was born from the development of the tradition of classical Muslim scholarly.

Based on the consideration of the background of the problem explained above, the science of *jarh wa ta'dil* finds its discussion urgent. However, due to the breadth of the discussion regarding *jarh wa ta'dil*, the author needs to set limits in this paper in order to be more focused and not too broad in its discussion. This paper positions the science of *jarh wa ta'dil* as a branch of science that has been established in the discipline of hadith science, so this paper does not discuss the controversy surrounding its history, growth and development as well as the pros and cons or conflicts from the classical to the contemporary era. However, this paper systematically discusses the definition and basis of *jarh wa ta'dil*, its urgency and significance, its causes and effects, the requirements of critics, and the pronunciations used.

Method

From the data sources used, this research is classified as library research, namely a series of activities or processes of obtaining, finding, and selecting written sources or data regarding a problem in a particular aspect or field that is the object of research properly through systematic, directed and accountable work procedures (Kaelan, 2010; Kasiram, 2010). Meanwhile, if viewed from an analysis perspective, this research is a qualitative research, namely research that emphasizes the condition of natural objects, the process of deductive/inductive conclusion analysis, and the dynamics of the relationship between observed phenomena using scientific logic (Moleong, 1996).

Therefore, in simple terms, this research is a research that makes library materials as objects or sources of research consisting of primary and secondary sources or data as well as research that does not conduct calculations. Procedurally, this research produces descriptive data which in

the context of this research is in the form of written words from library sources or data that are in accordance with certain aspects, fields, or themes and topics.

Results and Discussion

Science of *Jarh wa Ta'dil*: Definition, Basis, Urgency and Significance

Etymologically, the word of *jarh* is the *masdar* of *wazan jaraha-yajrahū* which can be interpreted as the result or scar on the body caused by a weapon; blemish or defect; wound (body or anything else); and a wound that bleeds (Marhumah, 2016; Ritonga, 2022; Saifuddin et al., 2023; Srifariyati, 2020). In the context of justice and courts, the word *jarh* is understood as the rejection and invalidation of the validity of a witness or insults and slander in public or behind (Abi Al-Fadhl, 2003; Abu Zahwu, n.d.). From here, it appears that the word of *jarh* etymologically can show different meanings when used in different contexts.

Referring to the terminology of hadith science, the word of *jarh* means the obvious nature, personality or unfair situation of a narrator which causes the history conveyed to be invalid or weak (Marhumah, 2016). In other terms, with reference to various opinions of scholars of hadith experts, the author defines the term *jarh* as a disclosure or statement about the nature, situation, condition or state of the narrator which can disfigure and bring down his justice or damage his memorization and memory, so that his history is considered invalid, weak or rejected. Thus, *jarh* science is a branch of the field of hadith science which specifically studies the defects of narrators, both from the aspect of justice and from the aspect of their authenticity.

Meanwhile, the word of *ta'dil* etymologically comes from wazan '*addala-yu'addilu*' which means enforcement (*taqwim*), cleansing (*tazkiyah*) and balance (*taswiyah*) (Saifuddin et al., 2023). In a longer sense, *ta'dil* can be interpreted as equalizing, balancing something with another and upholding justice or being fair (Abdul Hadi, 1998). Through such a definition, the word *ta'dil* directly opposes the word of *jarh* which has been explained previously in the science of hadith.

Viewed from the context of the terminology of hadith science, the word of *ta'dil* means the characterization of a narrator with qualities that

purify him, so that his justice is apparent and his narration is accepted; the purification of a narrator and his determination as a just and reliable person; the characterization of a narrator with something that makes his narration acceptable; or the disclosure of the clean qualities possessed by a narrator so that his justice and reliability are apparent, so that his narration can be accepted (Abdul Hadi, 1998; Al-Adlabi, 1983; Al-Qaththan, 2005; Mazid, 2010). From these various definitions, the science of *ta'dil* is a branch of the discipline of hadith science that specifically studies the goodness and advantages of a narrator so that his narration can be accepted.

Hadith scholars define *jarh wa ta'dil* in one breath. For example, the science of *jarh wa ta'dil* is defined as a science that discusses the affairs of narrators in terms of whether their narratives are accepted or rejected; a science that discusses the narrators of hadith from an aspect that can show their condition, either deforming or clearing them, with certain expressions or pronunciations; a science that discusses the rules of *jarh* and *ta'dil* of narrators'; a science that discusses disgrace or praise for a narrator (Abdul Hadi, 1998; Marhumah, 2016; Saifuddin et al., 2023). From these various definitions, a person will gain the insight that the science of *jarh wa ta'dil* is a science that discusses the despicable and praiseworthy qualities of the narrator in order to then assess and determine the narration and then accept or reject it through certain pronouncements.

The explanation of the definitions above, seems to lead to the understanding that the activity or activity of *jarh* and *ta'dil* is a standard thing that must be passed when assessing and determining the acceptance or rejection of a narrators. In fact, according to Abu Zahwu (n.d.), some scholars require knowledge of the science of *jarh wa ta'dil* in order to be able to reveal the condition of weak narrators or liars from narrators who are consistent in narrating hadith. Thus, knowledge and understanding of the science of *jarh wa ta'dil* is a necessity for every Muslim, especially Muslims who study the field of hadith.

The necessary basis for knowing and understanding the science of *jarh wa ta'dil* is the verse of the Qur'an which recommends researching news as an effort to preserve religion and its sources as well as the hadiths of the Prophet SAW. in the context of advice and benefit, not in the context of criticism or

insults regarding a person or several people. Like the hadith of the Prophet Saw. who called Abu Jahm a person who liked to beat and Muawiyyah as a poor person who had no wealth when Fatimah bint Qais spoke about the condition of these two people who proposed to her; as well as the hadith of the Prophet SAW. who called Khalid bin Walid one of the swords of Allah SWT (Zubaidillah, 2018). Meanwhile, the verse of the Qur'an which is the basis of *jarh wa ta'dil* is as follows:

يَأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِنْ جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ فَتَبَيَّنُوا أَنْ تُصِيبُوا قَوْمًا بِجَهَلٍ فَتُصْبِحُوا عَلَىٰ
مَا فَعَلْتُمْ تُدَمِّرُنَّ

“O you who have believed, if there comes to you a disobedient one with information, investigate, lest you harm a people out of ignorance and become, over what you have done, regretful” (QS. Al-Hujurat [49]: 6).

According to Tohir Ritonga (2022), the verse above implies that every believer must be careful and examine the news brought by wicked people or people who are not yet known and whose circumstances are unclear in order to avoid negative excesses that may be caused by the news brought by such people. Thus, it can be emphasized that as far as the use of *jarh wa ta'dil* is in the context of hadith knowledge and on the basis of *hifz al-dīn* (protecting religion), to that extent the activity of *jarh wa ta'dil* is not an act of gossip. The logical consequence is that when the activity of searching for other people's defects or shortcomings is not in the context of knowledge and is not based on religious interests, then this activity is classified as a reprehensible act of gossip.

The discussion in the previous paragraphs clearly shows that the science of *jarh wa ta'dil* is an important part of the life of a Muslim (educated). This, of course, is not only aimed at something that is theological-religious, but is also aimed at the context of verification that may be academic-scientific in nature. Therefore, the search for the good and bad of a narrator is not something evil, let alone sinful in the context of the science of *jarh wa ta'dil*. This statement is further strengthened by the existence of Qur'anic and Sunnah foundations, both directly and indirectly.

Briefly and concisely, it can be said that the urgency and significance of the science of *jarh wa ta'dil* is to know and determine the condition of the narrator, both by revealing his reprehensible qualities and revealing his

praiseworthy qualities, to determine the acceptance or rejection of the narrator's. If so, it is not an exaggeration to say that the science of *jarh wa ta'dil* is one of the most important benchmarks and considerations in the method of criticizing the sanad of hadith. To understand this science, it is necessary to study the books of hadith, especially the books that discuss *jarh wa ta'dil*, in order to be able to understand the explanation of the Prophet SAW, the views and opinions of the companions that were revealed to the tabi'in, tabi'utabi'in, and the experts in hadith.

Standard Operating Procedures in the Science of *Jarh wa Ta'dil*

After knowing the definition and basis, as well as the urgency and significance, the more important thing is to discuss what the author calls the standard operating procedure in the science of *jarh wa ta'dil*. In this context, the standard operating procedure referred to is the particulars or ins and outs of *jarh wa ta'dil*, especially related to the reasons why the narrator is subject to *jarh wa ta'dil*, its conditions, the words used, and the levels of *jarh wa ta'dil* and its rulings. In this section, the reasons and conditions of *jarh wa ta'dil* are discussed first.

In general, narrators must have fair and just nature and attitudes. When a narrator does not have these natures and attitudes at all, then his narration needs to be traced and can be subject to *jarh wa ta'dil*. According to ibn Hajar al-Asqalaniy, as quoted by Hasbi Ash-Shiddieqy (1997), the reasons why a narrator needs to have his narration traced through the science of *jarh wa ta'dil* are when he is exposed to the nature and attitude of *bidah*, *mukhalafah*, *ghalath*, *jabalah al-hal* and *da'wa al-ingitha*. In this context, *bidah*, namely committing a despicable act outside the provisions of the sharia; *mukhalafah* is violating a more *tsiqah* narration; *ghalath* is making many mistakes in narrating; *jabalah al-hal* is a narrator whose identity is unknown; and *da'wa al-ingitha* is a strong suspicion of a broken sanad.

In addition to the reasons, the requirements for *jarh wa ta'dil* consist of two things, namely first, the requirements of the scholar who conducts *jarh wa ta'dil*; and second, the requirements for accepting *jarh wa ta'dil*. In the first case, ulama and hadith scholars have limited the requirements for someone to be able to conduct *jarh wa ta'dil*, namely *tsiqah* (fair and *dabit*); having knowledge of the rules of *jarh wa ta'dil*, so that people who do not have this

knowledge cannot make an assessment; knowing the terms of *jarh wa ta'dil* and their words; not being fanatical about one group; having a breadth of knowledge related to the treasures and intellectual traditions of Islam (Abdul Hadi, 1998; Al-Quat, 2003). There are also those who add *wara'* and honesty as requirements for accepting *jarh wa ta'dil* (Ash-Shiddieqy, 1997). For the second thing, the conditions for accepting *jarh wa ta'dil* are: first, *jarh* can only be accepted with clear grounds or reasons. Second, a general assessment of *jarh* without explaining the basis and reasons for a narrator who has absolutely no *ta'dil* can be accepted according to the opinion confirmed by ibn Hajar in *Syarh an-Nukhbah*. Third, *jarh* must be free from various things that hinder its acceptance. If there are things that prevent it, *jarh* cannot be accepted. What is meant as a barrier in the context here, such as the condition of critics (Ritonga, 2022).

Procedurally, a critic may not characterize someone who does not need to be characterized; must not reduce the necessary provisions, for example mentioning what is connected with justice and lawfulness; and must be fair when conducting assessments. Therefore, a critic (a person who carries out *jarh wa ta'dil*) is not a layman or ordinary person, but a person who has special criteria in terms of personality and intellectualism.

In addition to what must and cannot be done, the condition of the narrator can be assessed by direct testimony from someone who has a fairly broad scientific competence regarding the justice of the narrator, a narrator whose existence is known, and a search for *jarh wa ta'dil* books that can be used as references regarding the defects or justice of a narrator. Thus, an act of *jarh wa ta'dil* will be acceptable when a critic meets certain personality and intellectual requirements and meets certain procedures and procedures agreed upon by scholars of hadith science. Then, what if there is a conflict in *jarh wa ta'dil*?

Scholars have anticipated the conflict in *jarh wa ta'dil* by compiling rules that can be used as references. Here are some rules, just to mention, which are: first, *al-jarbul-mubhamu ghairu mabulin* (*jarh* that is *mubham* is not accepted); second, *lā yuqbalu al-jarbu min dha'ifin wa lā min muta'annitsin labu mu'āridhun mu'tabarun* (*jarh* is not accepted unless it is offensive or leaves a mark); third, *al-ta'dilu muqaddamun 'ala al-jarh* (positive assessment is prioritized over

negative assessment); and fourth, *al-jarh muqaddamun 'ala al-ta'dili* (negative assessment is prioritized over positive assessment).

Levels and Consequences of *Jarh wa Ta'dil*

After discussing the causes and conditions of *jarh wa ta'dil* in the discussion above, this section discusses the levels and consequences of *jarh wa ta'dil* which are also included as standard operating procedures. However, the author needs to emphasize first that the term level refers to the classification of critics as well as to the classification of the degrees of *jarh wa ta'dil* themselves. For the classification of critics, the author refers to the view of al-Dzahabi quoted by Amin Abu Lawy (1997). According to him, a critic can be classified into three groups, namely 1) harsh in *jarh* and careful in *ta'dil*, 2) *mutasyabil*, *mutasamih* or *mutanwabin* (lax in judgment), and 3) *mu'tadil munshif*, *mutawasith* (moderate).

The first group consists of critics who easily give a *jarh* assessment because of errors that are not serious and do not reduce its justice and authenticity. In other words, critics who are included in the first group are those who say that the evidence of the hadith must be based on the narration by the narrator from his memorization. While the second group are critics who base their assessment on writings without comparing it with other sources. The description of the third group is that critics who have made efforts to accept the narration and have also compared it with previous conditions, so that they can assess the narration of a particular book (Wahid & Matondang, 2011).

Meanwhile, for the classification of the degree (lafaz) of *jarh wa ta'dil* itself, according to al-Dzahabi as quoted by Abu Lawy (1997), there are four levels for *ta'dil* and five levels for *jarh*. Hierarchically, the levels of use of the *ta'dil* are: first, the repetition of the *tautsiq* such as *tsiqatun tsiqatun* or repetition with different characteristics such as *tsiqatun bujjatun*, *tsabtun bujjatun*. The use of this wording indicates the first or highest assessment. Second, one *tautsiq* word such as *tsiqatun*, *ridha* and a combination of assessments that do not reach the first or highest level. Examples are the words *al-amin*, *al-ma'mun*, *laisa fibi syai'un*, *khayyiran fadlilan*, *shaduqun ridha*, and so on. Third, the use of the words *saduq*, *la ba'sa bib*, *laisa bibi ba'sun*. Fourth, the use of the words *maballubu al-shidq*, *jayyid al-hadits*, *shalih al-hadits*, *shaduq Insha Allah*, and so on.

For *lafaz jarh*, the hierarchy of usage is: first, *dajjal*, *kadzdzab*, *wadllda'*, *yadla'u al-hadith*. Second, *muttaham bi al-kidzb*, *muttafaq 'ala tarkibi*. Third, *matruk*, *tarakubu*, *tarakubu fulan*, *laisa bitsiqatin*. Fourth, *wahin bin marrah*, *laisa bisya'in*, *dha'if jiddan*, *dha'afuhu*. Fifth, *Yudha'if*, *fibi dha'if*, *qad dhu'ifa*, *laisa bi al-qaniy*, *laisa bihujah*, *layyin*, *la yuhtaju bib*, *ukhtulifa fib*, and others.

However, if we look at the opinion of Mahmud Thahan referred to by Tohir Ritonga (2022), the levels of each *jarh wa ta'dil* are six levels. The levels of *ta'dil* and *lafaz* and their legal consequences are: first, *lafaz* that uses the superlative form or *wazan af'ala*. The effect of using this *lafaz* on the law of a *hadith* is valid. Example: *autsaqu al-nas*. Second, *lafaz* that mentions the strengthening properties of the *tsiqah*, justice, and the determination of its narration, both *lafdzi* and *ma'navi*. The legal consequences are valid. Example: *tsiqatun tsiqatun* and *tsiqatun tsabt*. Third, *lafaz* that indicates the *tsiqah* without strengthening it. The words commonly used are *tsiqah*, *hujah*, *tsabt*, *hafizb*. The legal consequences are valid. Fourth, pronunciation that shows a positive assessment of fairness and trust without any hint of the power of memorization and accuracy. The legal consequence of *hadith* is *hasan*, while examples of pronunciation are *shaduq*, *mahalluhu al-shidq*, and others. Fifth, pronunciation that does not indicate praise or blame and is usually something like so and so *shaikhun*, *ruviya 'anhu al-hadith*, and so on. The legal consequence of the *hadith* is *dhaif*. Sixth, *lafaz* that approaches criticism or recording (*jarh*), such as *shalih al-hadith* or *yuktabu haditsuhu*. The legal consequence of the *hadith* is *dhaif*.

Meanwhile, the levels of *jarh* and *lafaz* and their legal consequences are: first, *lafaz* which shows the flaws, weaknesses or defects of the narrator at the lowest level. Examples of pronunciation are *layyin al-hadith*, *fibi maqal*, or *fibi dla'fun*. Second, *lafaz* that show the narrator's flaws, weaknesses or defects and should not be used as evidence. For example: *majhul*. Third, *lafaz* that shows is very weak and the *hadith* should not be written down. For example: *fulan dha'if jiddan* or *laisa bi syai'in*. Fourth, *lafaz* that indicates accusations of lying or falsifying *hadith*. For example: *Muttaham bi al-kidzb* or *muttafaq 'ala tarkibi*. Fifth, *lafaz* which shows the nature of lying or forgery and the like. For example: *Dajjal*, *kadzdzab*, *wadllda'*. Sixth, *lafaz* that indicate excessive

lying and this is the highest level in the worst sense. For example: *akd ζ abu al-nas*, *ruk ζ n al-kid ζ b*, and *ilaibi al-muntaha fi al-kid ζ b*.

Based on the description above, it can be said that each phrase in *jarb wa ta'dil* has a different function and meaning and level when applied to a narrator and his hadith. Regardless of the differentiation of levels, the author believes that there is a meeting point that can compromise these opinions. In fact, what is explained in the four levels of *ta'dil* and five levels of *jarb* according to al-Dzahabi has been covered in the six levels of *jarb* and *ta'dil* according to Mahmud Thahhan.

Conclusion

The science of *jarb wa ta'dil* is one of the branches of the discipline of hadith science. Conceptually, the science of *jarb wa ta'dil* is a science that studies and discusses the details and ins and outs of narrators and their narrations through tracing their praiseworthy or despicable qualities. As a science that seeks out the bad or bad qualities of others, *jarb wa ta'dil* has certain standard operating procedures that have been given guidelines by scholars of hadith science. Of course, to know the position and status of a narrator, his narration and hadith, there must be certain consequences and causes that must be clear and obvious, not just assumptions or hypotheses.

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Sarah Fahira Nida¹, Koko Komaruddin², and Otong Suhendar³

^{1,3}Institut Agama Islam Darussalam Ciamis, Indonesia

²Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, Indonesia

Correspondence: ¹sarahfahiraf@gmail.com