

DILEMMA OF TAKLID AND IJTIHAD IN THE CONTEMPORARY ERA OF HADITH PERSPECTIVE: COMPARATION OF THE THINKING OF AHMAD HASSAN AND NAWAWI AL-BANTANI

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Abstract

This study examines the problematic between taqlid and ijtihad in the contemporary era through the perspective of hadith, with a comparative approach to the thoughts of Ahmad Hassan and Shaykh Nawawi al-Bantani. In the midst of developments marked by scientific progress, widespread access to information, and increasing religious awareness, Muslims are faced with the choice between following the opinions of scholars absolutely (taqlid) or trying to understand religion independently through ijtihad. Ahmad Hassan, as a modernist reformist figure, emphasized the importance of returning to the Qur'an and hadith and rejected blind taqlid. Meanwhile, Shaykh Nawawi al-Bantani, a traditionalist scholar, viewed taqlid as a relevant path for the lay community to maintain scientific authority and the continuity of tradition. This study uses a qualitative method with a library study approach and analysis of relevant hadith. The results of the study show that these differences in views are rooted in different social contexts and methodological approaches, but both have the same goal, namely maintaining the integrity of Islamic teachings amidst the dynamics of the times, and this problem needs to be addressed by respecting the opinions of scholars, while still trying to understand Islamic teachings directly from the Qur'an and hadith with critical thinking.

Keywords: Taklid, Ijtihad, Hadith, Ahmad Hassan, Nawawi al-Bantani.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini membahas problematika antara taklid dan ijtihad di era kontemporer melalui perspektif hadis, dengan pendekatan komparatif terhadap pemikiran Ahmad Hassan dan Syaikh Nawawi al-Bantani. Di tengah perkembangan zaman yang ditandai oleh kemajuan ilmu pengetahuan, akses informasi yang luas, dan meningkatnya kesadaran beragama, umat Islam dihadapkan pada pilihan antara mengikuti pendapat ulama secara mutlak (taklid) atau berusaha memahami agama secara mandiri melalui ijtihad. Ahmad Hassan, sebagai tokoh reformis modernis, menekankan pentingnya kembali kepada Al-Qur'an dan hadis serta menolak taklid buta. Sementara itu, Syaikh Nawawi al-Bantani, seorang ulama tradisional, memandang taklid sebagai jalan yang relevan bagi kalangan awam demi menjaga otoritas keilmuan dan kesinambungan tradisi. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan studi kepustakaan dan analisis terhadap hadis yang relevan. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa perbedaan pandangan ini berakar pada konteks sosial dan pendekatan metodologis yang berbeda, namun keduanya memiliki tujuan yang sama yaitu menjaga keutuhan ajaran Islam di tengah dinamika zaman, serta permasalahan ini perlu disikapi dengan cara menghargai pendapat para ulama, sambil tetap berusaha memahami ajaran Islam secara langsung dari Al-Qur'an dan hadis dengan pemikiran yang kritis.

Kata kunci: Taklid, Ijtihad, Hadis, Ahmad Hassan, Nawawi al-Bantani.



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INTRODUCTION

The contemporary era, marked by modernization, has brought various forms of convenience to human life through the process of digitalization. This transformation encompasses various aspects, such as communicating with individuals across vast distances, searching for desired entertainment, obtaining information from various parts of the world, and seeking sources of knowledge, both in general and religious fields.¹ For example, access to Islamic knowledge has become increasingly easier with the availability of various lectures and sermons accessible through digital devices such as mobile phones on various platforms. This has positively contributed to facilitating Muslims' religious knowledge and encouraging continuous improvement in the quality of their worship.

The practice of seeking Islamic knowledge has undergone significant changes over time. The digital world, which promises convenience, has in fact shifted the traditional Muslim practice of acquiring knowledge. This shift is evident in the fact that previously, Muslims would seek out scholars to deepen their knowledge. This contrasts with the current contemporary era, where religious studies and lectures are often viewed on mobile phones, without the need for in-depth, in-person discussion and study.² Not only that, but quotes and calls to worship are often found on social media without clear sources or references. Unfortunately, most social media users readily accept these messages without further investigation because they perceive them as relatable.³

As a reflection of current reality, calls to worship on social media are often presented in the form of videos or photos with attractive editing. This naturally makes viewers eager to engage with what is conveyed in the post without in-depth correction. One example is a TikTok post by the account "cjdw store12" regarding an invitation to worship Rebo Wekasan. The uploaded content of the photo explains what "Rebo Wekasan" is, its virtues, and the procedures for worship without any detailed explanation of the legal basis for the worship. Further examination of the comments section of the post reveals numerous comments or responses from netizens who immediately follow without questioning the legal basis of the worship itself, such as "qobiltu," "permission to practice," "permission to share," "I have done it with the pondok congregation," and many more.⁴

The large number of calls to worship on social media without providing any explanation or legal basis will gradually damage people's critical thinking and this will certainly have a negative

¹ Nur Syam, *Islam Dan Modernisasi: Studi Tentang Pemikiran Muhammad Abduh* (Raja Grafindo Persada, 1995), 12.

² Moh. Fail, "Fenomena Taqlid Digital Dan Implikasinya Dalam Bertauhid Di Era Pos-Truth," *Journal of Thought and Philosophy* 1, no. 1 (2022): 28.

³ Zubair Umar, *Media Sosial Dan Problematika Dakwah Di Era Digital* (Deepublish, 2020), 52.

⁴ Mas_habib.cjdw, "Rebo Wekasan Fadhilah Serta Tata Cara Praktiknya," accessed March 17, 2024, <https://vt.tiktok.com/ZSM3sNg3M/>.

impact on humans themselves.⁵ Like blind imitation, the development of ijihad has actually progressed alongside the development of Islam. However, many Muslims still practice blind imitation without considering the underlying reasons behind a command or practice. Taqlid is an expression of accepting or following someone, both in their words and actions, accompanied by belief in their truth without understanding the evidence.⁶ So far, the concept of imitation and understanding of it still refers to previous behavior, as evidenced by the widespread attitude of people who adopt the behavior of others without investigating its truth and validity.

The Islamic religion does not allow its adherents to submit to an opinion or law without paying attention to the underlying arguments. This is in accordance with the word of Allah which prohibits humans from following something without deep knowledge and consideration of that thing as Allah says in surah al-Isra' verse 36:

وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُولَئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْئُولًا

“And do not follow that of which you have no knowledge. Verily, the hearing, the sight, and the heart, all of them will be questioned about it.”⁷

Apart from that, acts of taqlid are also considered as a form of following the actions carried out by polytheists in the era of ignorance where they followed the actions of their ancestors without being based on knowledge as stated in the Al-Qur'an surah az-Zukhruf verse 22:

بَلْ قَالُوا إِنَّا وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا عَلَىٰ أُمَّةٍ وَإِنَّا عَلَىٰ آثَارِهِم مُّهْتَدُونَ

“They said: “Indeed, we found our fathers adhering to a religion, and indeed we are those who are guided by (following) their footsteps.”⁸

On the other hand, society needs ijihad as an instrument for developing the implementation of existing religious teachings. Efforts to make ijihad relevant to conditions and situations in society are actually the task of Fuqaha who have the capacity and capability to carry out legal istinbat based on the arguments of the Qur'an and Sunnah. Therefore, the aim of ijihad is to strive to implement Islamic teachings as a way of life for every Mukalaf so that it is appropriate to the conditions of the time and place.⁹ In general, one may follow a mujtahid's example for matters for which the law is not yet known. However, one must still strive to discover or investigate the truth,

⁵ Hasyim Muzadi, *Masyarakat Islam Dan Tantangan Modernitas* (UIN Maliki Press, 2010), 86.

⁶ Enang Hidayat, *Kaidah Ushul Fiqh* (Kencana, 2024), 238.

⁷ Al-Qur'anul Karim Surah al-Isra' verse 36.

⁸ Al-Qur'anul Karim Surah az-Zukhruf verse 22.

⁹ Nurhayati and Ali Imran Sinaga, *Fiqh Dan Ushul Fiqh* (Prenada Media Group, 2018), 43.

so it can be said that such imitation is conditional or temporary.¹⁰ As is the case with taqlid which occurs among some mujtahids with other mujtahids because they do not find the evidence that underlies the solution to a problem.

Ahmad Hassan argues that ijhtihad, ittiba, and taqlid are three paths often used by Muslims to understand religion. Why is this? Because religion fundamentally requires ijhtihad from everyone in practicing it, except for those who do not qualify as mujtahids. According to Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani, imitation is the lowest level of faith of the five levels he formulated. According to him, this imitation is defined as a servant's faith based on the opinion of someone he believes to be true without any argument for his beliefs. He forbade imitation for the four imams of the madhhab (Islamic schools of thought). However, for mujtahids of madhhabs, mujtahids of muftis (Islamic muftis), and the general public, Nawawi actually forbade ijhtihad and made it mandatory.¹¹

Differences of opinion between individuals are nothing to be concerned about, as they are a natural occurrence. The differences of opinion expressed by these two prominent Indonesian Islamic figures are compelling enough to be studied and compared, allowing for their application to current needs and developments. The ideas drawn from these prominent Indonesian figures are based on the widespread events surveyed in Indonesia, thus prioritizing local opinions, specifically those of Indonesian scholars.

In order for this study to be useful and not to be a repetition of the study, it is important to include a literature review along with the differentiating points of the research being reviewed. As for the literature review, in the classical context of al-Ghazali in the book *al-Mustasfa fi Ilm al-Usul*, he explained that ijhtihad is an obligation for those who meet the requirements of knowledge, while taqlid is permitted for lay people who are unable to perform ijhtihad. In line with al-Ghazali, Muhammad Abu Zahrah in *Usul al-Fiqh* stated that ijhtihad must be revived to face new problems that were not encountered in the past. He also rejected blind taqlid which limits the creative thinking of Muslims. Ahmad Hassan's taqlid thoughts have been studied by M. Muhlis in 2019 and published in the journal *Studi Ilmu-Ilmul Qur'an dan Hadith* with the title "Ahmad Hassan's Thoughts on Ijhtihad and Taqlid". In addition, Basri's *Turats* journal, published in 2021, has explained Nawawi al-Banatani's thoughts in the context of Traditional Islam. The difference with this research is related to the selection of figures who comment on the issue of taqlid and their comparison with other figures.

¹⁰ Abdul Majid Khan, *Ikhtisar Tarikh Tasyri* (Amzah, 2013), 149.

¹¹ Harun Nasution, *Islam Ditinjau Dari Berbagai Aspeknya* (UI Press, 1985), 1:128.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach, data collection is carried out through library research, namely by collecting references from various written sources both in books and journals related to the discussion being studied. The most important data sources used in this research are the book Questions and Answers on Religion Problems by Ahmad Hassan and the book Kāsyifatus Sajā by Nawawi al-Bantani. The theory in this research uses the theory of content analysis (Content Analysis) by discussing in depth the content of information from the data that has been collected in accordance with the objectives of the problem being studied.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Biography of Ahmad Hassan and Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani

Hassan was born on December 31, 1887, in Singapore. His father, Ahmad, was from Sinna Vappu Maricar, and his mother, Muznah, was from Dar Palekat, Madras, India, but was born in Surabaya, Indonesia. Ahmad Hassan's actual name is Hassan. However, in accordance with the culture of Indians living in Singapore, his father's name must be prefixed. Thus, his name became popularly known as Ahmad Hassan.¹²

His father was an Indian writer and expert in Islamic studies and Tamil literature. He was also the editor of Nurul Islam, a Tamil (Indian) religious and literary magazine published in Singapore. Ahmad has also written several books in Tamil and several translations from Arabic.¹³ Hassan's wife, Maryam, married in 1911 in Singapore. Maryam was of Tamil-Malay descent, from a devoutly religious family. From this marriage, Hassan and Maryam were blessed with seven children, one of whom was Abdul Qadir Hassan, who also succeeded his father.¹⁴

Hassan's parents were known to be educated and religious, so he received his early education directly from them. From the age of seven, he studied the Quran, religion, Arabic, Malay, Tamil, and English.¹⁵ His perseverance was evident in his enthusiasm for seeking out local scholars to gain knowledge. As a child, he was raised by his educated father, and as an adult, he studied Islamic jurisprudence with scholars like Haji Ahmad in Singapore. He pursued this learning process while working as a shop assistant until 1910, at the age of 23.¹⁶

¹² Nur Hizbullah, "Ahmad Hassan: Kontribusi Ulama Dan Pejuang Pemikiran Islam Di Nusantara Dan Semenanjung Melayu," *Jurnal Al-Turās* 20, no. 2 (2014): 287.

¹³ Muhammad Fauzhan Azima, "Independensi A. Hassan Terhadap Al-'Asqalani Dalam Terjemah Bulughul Maram (Kajian Intertekstualitas)," *Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 2, no. 2 (2021): 126.

¹⁴ Zakiyah, "Textual Understanding of the Prophet's Hadith (Study of the Understanding of Ahmad Hassan's Traditions)," *Journal of Hadith Studies* 2, no. 1 (2019): 39.

¹⁵ Azima, "Independensi A. Hassan Terhadap Al-'Asqalani Dalam Terjemah Bulughul Maram (Kajian Intertekstualitas)," 126.

¹⁶ Repa Hudan Lisalam, "Ancaman Bagi Pembuat Gambar Dan Patung Dalam Hadits Menurut Ahmad Hassan," *Jurnal Holistic Hadis* 8, no. 1 (2022): 91.

In 1910–1913, A. Hassan taught at Arab Street, Bagdad Street, Geylang, as well as the Assegaf madrasah in Singapore.¹⁷ He was also a teacher at an Islamic madrasah and worked for the Utusan Melayu media as a religious column writer, where he began to highlight his Islamic thoughts.¹⁸ In 1921 he moved to Surabaya to manage his uncle's shop, Abdul Latif.¹⁹ In 1924, while studying weaving in Bandung, she lived with Muhammad Yunus, the founder of Persis, and later devoted herself to Islamic studies through the organization.²⁰

Hassan also frequently exchanged ideas with Islamic figures, such as Faqih Hasyim, a youth (modernist) figure from West Sumatra. Faqih Hasyim was a figure who had absorbed many of the reformist ideas of West Sumatran youth, such as Abdullah Ahmad, Abdul Karim Amrullah, and Zainuddin Labay El-Yunusi. After 17 years in Bandung, Persis also became known in the wider community. In 1941, Hassan moved to Bangil, East Java and founded the Bangil Islamic Association Islamic Boarding School. In 1956, he performed the Hajj and fell ill. On November 10, 1958, Hasan died at the age of 71.²¹ Therefore, Hassan has several nicknames such as Hassan Bandung and Hassan Bangil because his domicile keeps moving.

Ahmad Hassan is a productive person and he is very skilled in various Islamic sciences such as tafsir, hadith, moral beliefs, Islamic law, language and politics.²² His works are numerous, but there is only one specific work in the field of hadith, namely "Translation of Bulughul Maram". In this translation book, even though it is only called a translation book, it also contains Mustalah al-Hadith, sharh and also other opinions regarding the translated hadith, contradictory hadiths and saḥīḥ hadiths. Apart from that, Hassan's other works are very varied, including Questions and Answers on Religious Issues, Tafsir al-Furqan, Treatise of al-Fatiha, Translation of Bulughul Maram, Tauhid, History of the Isra' Mi'raj, Faraid, Hajj Minutes, Book of Zakat, Dictionary of al-Bayan, Questions and Answers on Religious Issues, Jesus and His Religion, Matan Jurumiyah.²³

Besides A. Hassan, Indonesia also has many scholars who are competent in various fields, one of whom is Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani. He is a renowned scholar among the people of the archipelago, especially on the island of Java. His real name is Abu Abdul Mu'thi Muhammad

¹⁷ Lisalam, "Ancaman Bagi Pembuat Gambar Dan Patung Dalam Hadits Menurut Ahmad Hassan," 126.

¹⁸ Lisalam, "Ancaman Bagi Pembuat Gambar Dan Patung Dalam Hadits Menurut Ahmad Hassan."

¹⁹ Lisalam, "Ancaman Bagi Pembuat Gambar Dan Patung Dalam Hadits Menurut Ahmad Hassan," 92.

²⁰ Muhammad Iran Simbolon, "Metode Ijtihad Ahmad Hassan Bandung Dalam Masalah Hukum Keluarga," *Jurnal Ijtihad* 36, no. 1 (2020): 78.

²¹ Maula Sari, "Pemahaman Hadis Ahmad Hassan Dalam Perspektif Sosiologi Pengetahuan," *Jurnal Diroyah* 4, no. 2 (2020): 137.

²² Imam Anas Muslih, "Pemikiran Ahmad Hassan Tentang Riba," *Jurnal Realita* 1, no. 1 (2004): 8.

²³ Muslih, "Pemikiran Ahmad Hassan Tentang Riba," 9.

Nawawi bin Umar bin Arabi, who later became known as Nawawi al-Bantani, based on his birthplace, namely the province of Banten, specifically in Pedaleman village, Tanara sub-district, Serang district, Banten province.²⁴ Sheikh Nawawi was born in 1230 H/1815 AD and died in 1340 H/1897 AD in Mecca at the age of approximately 82 years.²⁵

Sheikh Nawawi was raised in a religious environment that shaped him into a learned man and adept at religious knowledge. From childhood, he was known for his intelligence and critical thinking, readily understanding his father's lessons.²⁶ Seeing his potential, his father sent him to various Islamic boarding schools in Java at the age of eight. He studied with prominent scholars such as Kiai Sahal from Banten and Kiai Yusuf from Purwakarta.²⁷ Thanks to his intelligence, at the age of 15 he already had many students and then continued his education in Makkah al-Mukarromah.²⁸

Pursuing knowledge in the holy city of Mecca led Sheikh Nawawi to meet prominent scholars in Mecca such as Sheikh Khatib as-Sambasi, Sheikh Abdul Ghani Bima, Sheikh Sayyid Ahmad Nahrawi, Sheikh Ahmad Dimiyati, Sheikh Junaid, and many more. The thoughts that were deeply embedded and became the dominant influences in Sheikh Nawawi's thinking were Sheikh Sayyid Ahmad Nahrawi, Sheikh Junaid, and Sheikh Ahmad Dimiyati.²⁹ After studying various sciences, Sheikh Nawawi became a scholar who was skilled in various religious sciences, especially in the fields of hadith, interpretation, fiqh, tauhid and tasawwuf.³⁰ Due to his expertise in various branches of Islamic knowledge, Sheikh Nawawi was visited by many people from all over the world to gain knowledge from him.³¹

The students of Sheikh Nawawi who became influential scholars, especially in the archipelago, were Sheikh Mahfudz at-Tarmasi, Sheikh Khalil Bangkalan, Kiai Haji Saleh Darat as-Samarani, Kiai Hasyim Asy'ari Jombang, Kiai Haji Ahmad Dahlan Yogyakarta, Kiai Haji Hasan Genggong, Sheikh Muhammad Zainuddin bin Badawi as-Sumbawi and others.³² His expertise in various sciences also made him a scholar who had many honorary titles such as al-Sayyid al-Ulama'

²⁴ Rizem Aizid, *Biografi Ulama Nusantara: Disertai Pemikiran Dan Pengaruh Mereka* (n.d.), 143.

²⁵ Chaidar, *Sejarah Pujangga Islam Syekh Nawawi Al-Bantani Indonesia* (Sarana Utama, 1978), 95.

²⁶ Chaidar, *Sejarah Pujangga Islam Syekh Nawawi Al-Bantani Indonesia*, 95.

²⁷ Aizid, *Biografi Ulama Nusantara: Disertai Pemikiran Dan Pengaruh Mereka*, 144.

²⁸ Aizid, *Biografi Ulama Nusantara: Disertai Pemikiran Dan Pengaruh Mereka*, 144.

²⁹ Muhammad Irfan Zidny, *Biografi Syekh Muhammad Nawawi Al-Jawi al-Bantani* (Pondok Pesantren Qatrun Nada, 2022).

³⁰ M. Afiquil Adib, "Syekh Nawawi Al-Bantani: Kajian Pemikiran Pendidikan Islam Dan Relevansinya Di Abad-21," *Al-Qalam: Jurnal Ilmiah Keagamaan Dan Kemasyarakatan* 16, no. 2 (2020): 449.

³¹ Adib, "Syekh Nawawi Al-Bantani: Kajian Pemikiran Pendidikan Islam Dan Relevansinya Di Abad-21," 450.

³² Arwansyah, "Peran Syaikh Nawawi Al-Bantani Dalam Penyebaran Islam Di Nusantara," *Kontekstualitas* 30, no. 1 (2020): 75.

al-hijaz, Nawawi at-Tsani, which was first given by Wan Ahmad bin Muhammad Zain al-Fathani.³³, the first doctor of the God label by Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje³⁴ Apart from that, Indonesian ulama also gave Sheikh Nawawi the title ash-Shaykh al-Fakih as a form of his expertise in the yellow book.³⁵

Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani is a scholar who has been recognized as a world scholar because of his contributions to Islamic knowledge which are expressed in his various works.³⁶ Among his works are Nihayah al-Zain syarh Qurrah al-'Ain bi Muhimmah al-Din, Nashaihul 'Ibad, al-Tafsir al-Munir li-al Mu'allim al-Tanzil al-Mufassir, Tanqih al-Qaul syarh Lubab al-Hadis, Kasyifah al-Saja syarh Safinah al-Naja, Uqud al-Lujain fi Bayan Huquq al-Zaujain, Lubab al-Bayyan, ad-Durur al-Bahiyyah fi syarh al-Khashaish al-Nabawiyyah and other works.³⁷

Taklid and Ijtihad Perspective of A. Hassan and Nawawi al-Bantani

Religious thought in Islam is constantly evolving, particularly in the context of scholarly authority and the community's attitude toward the traditions of previous scholars. One central issue in this discourse is imitation (taqlid). In general, imitation refers to the act of accepting or following someone, both in their words and actions, while believing in their truth without understanding the evidence.³⁸ The concept of imitation and its understanding still refers to the behavior of previous generations, as evidenced by the widespread adoption of others' behavior without seeking truth and investigation. Specifically, in the fourth century Hijri, or the 12th century AD, this period is known as the "Taqlid" period, which marked the end of the "Ijtihad" period.³⁹

In Islamic history, imitation (taqlid) was common practice, especially among laypeople unable to perform ijtihad. However, reformers criticized it as a hindrance to progress and freedom of thought among the Muslim community. Scholars differ on the legality of imitation (taqlid), although the majority generally consider it reprehensible.⁴⁰ Ahmad Hassan, a reformer and leader

³³Wan Ahmad bin Muhammad Zain al-Fathani is one of Indonesia's leading Islamic scholars who is an expert in various scientific fields.

³⁴Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje was a Dutch scholar of culture, orientalism, and language. He was also known as a great scientist, with many of his works found throughout the Indonesian archipelago, given that he had visited Indonesia during the Dutch colonial period.

³⁵ Moh. Abid Mabur, "Pengaruh Karya Syekh Nawawi Al-Bantani Dalam Tradisi Kajian Kitab Kuning (Kitab Klasik) Di Pesantren Butet," *Tamaddun* 4, no. 2 (2020): 73.

³⁶ Amirul Ulum, *Penghulu Ulama Di Negeri Hijaz: Biografi Syekh Nawawi al-Bantani* (Pustaka Ulama, 2015), 85.

³⁷ Ulum, *Penghulu Ulama Di Negeri Hijaz: Biografi Syekh Nawawi al-Bantani*, 85.

³⁸ Muhammad Sari, *Fiqh Dan Ushul Fiqh* (A-Empat, 2021), 72.

³⁹ Sari, *Fiqh Dan Ushul Fiqh*, 72.

⁴⁰ Baiq Djalil, *Ilmu Ushul Fiqh* (Kencana, 2010), 202.

of Persis, firmly rejected imitation as a reaction to the passive attitude of Muslims who accepted teachings without criticizing the basic texts.⁴¹

Ahmad Hassan's thinking is often associated with aggressive, extreme, and puritanical thinking due to his literalistic understanding, often used as a reference by fundamentalists. This is particularly evident in matters related to worship, particularly mahdah worship (worship whose procedures were explained by the Prophet Muhammad).⁴² he rejects everything that smacks of heresy or things whose arguments are unclear and are not found in the Qur'an and al-Hadith. Ahmad Hassan's main thoughts are generally of four types: First, thoughts regarding the sources of Islamic law. Second, Ijtihad, ittiba, and taklid. Third, Bid'ah. Fourth, understand nationality.⁴³

According to Hassan, taqlid (imitation) is performing worship by following someone's invitation or command without any supporting evidence or even without verifying the evidence. According to him, immediately following an order or call to action without any reason or basis from the Quran or Hadith is tantamount to performing an act without any basis. Someone who practices taqlid is called a muqallid. This taqlid behavior, or the trait of taqlid, is an act that is disapproved of or prohibited by Allah.⁴⁴ According to Hassan, this taqlid nature or taqlid behavior is contrary to one of the verses of the Qur'an, namely Surah al-Isra' verse 36 as explained previously.

According to him, the nature of taqlid is not in accordance with the purpose of the verse, which is that the aim of the verse is to keep Muslims away from the nature of taqlid which is forbidden by Allah SWT. Apart from that, in this verse there is a command to study and think, so that Muslims have independent and sharp minds, not being slaves to other people's thoughts. A person who submits to other people can harm and injure himself both in this world and the hereafter, because he has done something that is prohibited by Allāh SWT.⁴⁵ For Hassan, taqlid is a form of intellectual sophistication that is contrary to the Islamic passion which encourages the search for knowledge and truth through direct study of the Al-Qur'an and Hadith. As a result, the Qur'an or Hadith will be abandoned if the behavior of taqlid or hoping to follow other people's invitations to worship without a clear basis continues to be carried out.

Meanwhile, the opposite of the characteristic of taqlid is ijtihad, ijtihad etymologically means using all one's abilities to do something, whether concrete or abstract.⁴⁶ The word ijtihad

⁴¹ Ahmad Hassan, *Soal-Jawab Tentang Berbagai Masalah Agama* (Diponegoro, 2007), 3:1245.

⁴² Syafiq A. Mughni, *Hasan Bandung: Pemikir Islam Radikal* (Bina Ilmu, 1994), 25.

⁴³ Dainori, "Kontroversi Pemikiran Hukum Ahmad Hassan Dalam Sejarah Pemikiran Hukum Islam Di Indonesia," *Jurnal Kariman* 7, no. 1 (2019): 150.

⁴⁴ Hassan, *Soal-Jawab Tentang Berbagai Masalah Agama*, 3:1245.

⁴⁵ Hassan, *Soal-Jawab Tentang Berbagai Masalah Agama*, 3:1246.

⁴⁶ Abdul Wahhab Khalaf and Rohidin Wahid, *Al-Ijtihad Fi al-Syariah al-Islamiyah* (Pustaka al-Kautsar, 2015), 4.

comes from the Arabic word "al-Jahdu" which means "effort or hard work".⁴⁷ According to this concept, the word ijtihad is not applied to something easy or light. Ijtihad means a strenuous effort to achieve or acquire something. In this context, ijtihad refers to the maximum effort to derive sharia laws from their foundations through earnest and in-depth thought and research.⁴⁸

According to the definition of Uṣul Fiqh, ijtihad means directing all abilities by a fiqh expert to obtain knowledge about the laws of the Sharia' and Sharia law shows that ijtihad only applies in the field of fiqh, the field of law relating to charity, not in the field relating to charity or nizhari.⁴⁹ This definition clearly provides a basic view that ijtihad is a sincere and in-depth effort made by an individual or group to achieve or obtain a sharia law through sincere thinking based on the naqli evidence, namely the Qur'an and Hadith.

According to Hassan, ijtihad is seriously examining information about a difficult matter by understanding the subtle details or figuratively. People who carry out ijtihad are called mujtahid, to be able to become a mujtahid, someone must understand Arabic and its knowledge, including the science of tafsir, Uṣul Fiqh, and the science of hadith to understand the meaning or intent of the verses of the Qur'an and hadith.⁵⁰ According to him, religion basically requires everyone to make ijtihad, in order to practice and understand religion, except for people who do not meet the requirements.

As for those who do not meet the requirements for ijtihad, they are required to follow ittiba', not necessarily to imitate directly. Ittiba' means to obey, accept, or do something indicated by someone who knows the basis of the Qur'an and hadith. The person who follows ittiba' is also called a muttabi', according to Hassan, a muttabi' does not have to know whether a hadith is valid or not. A muttabi' only needs to understand it by being explained its meaning and position and its evidence by someone he follows (muttaba').⁵¹ Therefore, according to Ahmad Hassan, ittiba' is a mediator between the nature of imitation and the necessity of ijtihad. This is because in ittiba', a person is also required to understand the legal basis of a practice they perform, unlike taqlid, which simply imitates or follows a law or practice from another person without understanding the basis.

Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani in *Nihāyatuz Zain fī Irsyādil Muḩtadi'īn* explains that ijtihad is the maximum effort of a mujtahid to dig up sharia law directly from the Qur'an and as-Sunnah.⁵² He divided mujtahids into three: absolute mujtahids, madzhab mujtahids, and fatwa mujtahids.

⁴⁷ Rizki Zulkarnaen, *Jihad Ulama Nusantara Abad XIX* (Jejak Pustaka, 2023), 72.

⁴⁸ Abdul Hayy Abdul 'Al and Muhammad Misbah, *Ushul Fiqh Al-Islami* (Pustaka al-Kautsar, 2014), 337.

⁴⁹ Khalaf and Wahid, *Al-Ijtihad Fi al-Syariah al-Islamiyah*, 6.

⁵⁰ Mughni, *Hasan Bandung: Pemikir Islam Radikal*, 28.

⁵¹ Mughni, *Hasan Bandung: Pemikir Islam Radikal*, 39.

⁵² Abi al-Mu'thi Muhammad Nawawi al-Jawi, *Nihayatuz Zain Fi Irsyadil Muḩtadiin* (al-Kitab al-Ilmiyyah, 2002), 9.

According to him, the absolute mujtahids were only four major school imams: Ash-Shafi'i, Abu Hanifah, Malik, and Ahmad bin Hanbal.⁵³ Sheikh Nawawi also has a view on these four schools of thought with the expression "madzhab ash-Syafi'i utsaq wa madzhab Maliki ausa' wa madzhab Abi Hanifah aktsar wa madzhab Ahmad bin Hanbal aura".⁵⁴

The second category is the mujtahid of a madhhab, someone who is able to conduct ijihad based on the principles put forward by their imam. The scholars categorized by Sheikh Nawawi as belonging to this category are Imam al-Muzani and al-Buwaithi. The third category is the mujtahid of fatwa, someone who is able to interpret some of the qaul or statements of one mujtahid imam with some of the qaul of another mujtahid imam. Scholars categorized as belonging to this mujtahid realm include Imam an-Nawawi and ar-Rafi'i. However, ar-Ramli and Ibn Hajar do not fall into this category because they only follow taqlid.⁵⁵

Sheikh Nawawi also explained the requirements that must be met by someone when he becomes a mujtahid, whether absolute, madzhab, or fatwa. The requirements or criteria that must be met for an absolute mujtahid include: understanding and mastering Arabic in depth, knowing the Qur'an and its asbabun nuzul, mastering legal hadiths, whether authentic, hasan, or weak, and knowing the rijal al-hadith, mastering the ijma' and opinions of the scholars, having the ability to conduct legal istinbath, and of course being able to compile his own fiqh rules.⁵⁶ Continuing with the provisions as a mujtahid of a madhhab, namely; he is able or masters all the ushul fiqh of the imam of the madhhab he follows, knows the arguments used by the imam of the madhhab in determining his law and is able to draw conclusions from the law taken by the imam of his madhhab.⁵⁷

The third mujtahid criterion is the fatwa mujtahid, namely; someone who has a strong understanding of ushul fiqh and qawaid al-fiqhiyyah, masters the opinions held by the madzhab imams along with the postulates which are the basis for their legal decisions and finally is able to determine the most persistent (strong) opinion on a problem. As for people who do not fall into these three categories, it is obligatory for them to submit to the absolute mujtahid imam. This opinion is strengthened by the proposition in the Qur'an surah al-Anbiya' verse 7:

⁵³ Nawawi al-Bantani, *Sullam Al-Munajah Syarh Safinah Ash-Shalah* (Dinas Perpustakaan, 2017).

⁵⁴ al-Jawi, *Nihayatuz Zain Fi Irsyadil Muhtadiin*, 9.

⁵⁵ al-Jawi, *Nihayatuz Zain Fi Irsyadil Muhtadiin*, 9.

⁵⁶ al-Jawi, *Nihayatuz Zain Fi Irsyadil Muhtadiin*, 10.

⁵⁷ al-Jawi, *Nihayatuz Zain Fi Irsyadil Muhtadiin*.

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا قَبْلَكَ إِلَّا رِجَالًا نُوْحِي إِلَيْهِمْ فَسَأَلُوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

"We did not send before you (Prophet Muhammad) but several men to whom We gave revelations. So, ask someone who has knowledge if you do not know."

This verse explains that Allah makes it mandatory for people who do not know to ask questions and makes it mandatory for them to accept the expressions of the ulama' by submitting to them. The meaning of taklid according to Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani is following the opinion of mujtahid ulama without any knowledge of understanding the Sharia propositions in depth. Nawawi did not allow submission to other than the four imams, even to other mujtahids who were also considered to have madzhab such as Imam Sufyan ats-Tsauri, Sufyan bin 'Uyaynah and Abdur Rahman bin 'Amr al-Auza'i. Syekh Nawawi also does not allow taklid to even high-ranking friends because their madhhab is not customary and also not collected. As for absolute mujtahids as has been stated, it is not permissible or even haram for them to perform taqlid and it is obligatory for non-ijtihad experts to perform taqlid in the ushul chapter, namely in the study of the creed of Imam Abu Hasan al-Asy'ari and Imam Abu Manshur al-Maturidi.⁵⁸

In Fath al-Majid which is in line with Nihāyatuz Zain, Syekh Nawawi al-Bantani divides taklid into two: taklid jaiz (permissible), namely the taklid of ordinary people towards mujtahids because they are unable to carry out ijtihad, and taklid mahzur (reprehensible), namely fanaticism towards one school of thought even though they know there is a stronger proposition. He also forbids someone from submitting to several imams just to seek convenience, for example following Imam Malik in the law of non-mahram contact, but following Imam Syafi'i in the procedures for purification.⁵⁹

Apart from the division of taqlid, Sheikh Nawawi also has a division of a person's level of faith into five levels as mentioned in his book Syarh Kasyifatus Saja as follows:

1. Taqlid (following faith), which relies on the words of others without knowing the evidence. A person at this level is considered to have valid faith, but it is sinful if they neglect to seek evidence if they are capable of doing so.
2. Scientific faith, namely knowing the creed and its evidence. This level of faith is called the level of faith of certain knowledge.
3. Faith 'Yes, That is, knowing God through the observation of the heart. Therefore, God is never out of sight because of the deep fear of God that is always present in his heart.

⁵⁸ al-Jawi, *Nihayatus Zain Fi Irsyadil Mubtadiin*.

⁵⁹ Nawawi al-Bantani, *Fathul Majid Fi 'Ilmi at-Tauhid* (al-Haramain Jaya Indonesia, 2017), 20.

4. *Faith in Truth*, namely being able to see Allah with the heart and what is meant at this level are people who are knowledgeable and are far from other than Allah.
5. *True Faith*, namely disappearing with Allah and being drunk with love for Him.

The faith of taklid enters the lowest level of faith and is considered as people who are kept away from the essence of Allah SWT.⁶⁰

Results of a Comparison of the Thoughts of Two Figures on Taqlid and Ijtihad

The understanding of ijthihad and taqlid put forward by two figures, Ahmad Hassan and Nawawi al-Bantani, has quite significant differences. These two differences will be compared to obtain a comprehensive understanding in addressing the attitude of taqlid which is widely or widely occurring in society, especially in Indonesia. However, when drawn from the study of hadith, the application of taqlid is in accordance with the Prophet's hadith as contained in various primary sources such as Sahih Bukhari, Sahih Muslim, Musnad Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Sunan ibn Majah, Sunan at-Tirmi, and Sunan ad-Darimi as follows:

حدثنا إسماعيل بن أُوَيْسٍ قَالَ: حَدَّثَنِي مَالِكٌ، عَنْ هِشَامِ بْنِ عُرْوَةَ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عَمْرٍو بْنِ الْعَاصِ قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ: (إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَقْبِضُ الْعِلْمَ انْتِزَاعًا يَنْتَزِعُهُ مِنَ الْعِبَادِ، وَلَكِنْ يَقْبِضُ الْعِلْمَ بِقَبْضِ الْعُلَمَاءِ، حَتَّى إِذَا لَمْ يَبْقَ عَالِمًا، اتَّخَذَ النَّاسُ رُؤُوسًا جُهَالًا، فَسُئِلُوا، فَأَفْتَوْا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ، فَضَلُّوا وَأَضَلُّوا)

Has told us Ismail bin Uways, he said he had told me Malik from Hisham bin 'Urwah from his father from Abdullah bin 'Amr bin Ash, he said: I have heard the Messenger of Allah say: "Indeed, Allah does not take away knowledge by plucking it from people's breasts, but Allah takes away knowledge by passing away the scholars' so that when He left no one with knowledge, people made their leaders from ignorant people, then they were asked and they gave a fatwa without knowledge, then they go astray and lead astray."⁶¹

Imam an-Nawawi, in his *Minhāj al-Muhaddithīn Syarḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, explains that the "lifting away of knowledge" does not mean the loss of the scholars' memorization, but rather the passing away of the scholars. As a result, people will make decisions based on ignorance, leading them astray and leading astray.⁶² This hadith emphasizes the crucial role of religious scholars in

⁶⁰ Nawawi al-Bantani, *Kitab Dan Terjemahan Syarḥ Kasyifatus Saja* (al-Hidayah, n.d.), 1:55.

⁶¹ Abu Abdillah Muhammad bin Ismail al-Bukhari, *Shahih Al-Bukhari*, no. 100 (Dar Ibnu Katsir, 2010), 1:50.

⁶² Imam Nawawi, *Syarḥ Sahih Muslim* (Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, n.d.), 16:223–24.

preserving religious knowledge. Without them, society is at risk of accepting fatwas from incompetent individuals. As time progresses and scholars pass away, Islam will once again become foreign, as the Prophet foretold, due to the dwindling number of scholars capable of establishing correct laws.

Therefore, Taqlid, which is the adoption or acceptance of someone's opinion without considering the evidence with a strong understanding, can be a serious threat to the sustainability of science itself. When someone establishes a law solely based on the words of others without understanding the basis of the evidence, and then another party questions the legal basis, the legal position becomes fragile and vulnerable to questioning. This is dangerous, because the truth of a law should be determined by referring to clear and accountable sources. If this tradition of accepting and conveying laws without a strong basis continues, it will cause much damage. One of the worst consequences is the emergence of deviant practices that not only mislead oneself but also mislead others.⁶³

Ahmad Hassan, a prominent Indonesian Islamic thinker of the 20th century, presented his views quite different from those of most previous scholars in addressing the issue of imitation (taqlid). For Ahmad Hassan, the prohibition of blind imitation (taqlid) is a suitable effort to avoid the phenomenon mentioned in the hadith above. For him, imitation (taqlid) is the practice of following the opinions of others without understanding the underlying reasons, whether from the Qur'an or the Hadith. Therefore, Ahmad Hassan strongly criticized the culture of imitation (taqlid) that has taken root among Muslims, where, according to him, many people simply accept the opinions of scholars or previous religious figures without being willing to examine whether those opinions are based on sound evidence. He views blind imitation as a serious disease that makes Muslims backward, rigid, and unable to keep up with the times.

According to Ahmad Hassan, Islam is a religion that encourages its followers to think, research, and seek the truth rationally in accordance with revelation, rather than simply following the crowd without knowledge. As contained in an-Nawawi's commentary on Minhajul Muhaddithin Syarh Sahih Muslim, the concept of the withdrawal of knowledge or the loss of sources of knowledge in the hadith shows that knowledge is not lost suddenly, but rather gradually, namely with the death of scholars who bring or possess knowledge. However, for Hassan, the death of great scholars and the scarcity of mujtahids are actually facts or realities that cannot be avoided.

According to Hassan, as explained in Questions and Answers on Various Religious Issues, if a mujtahid no longer exists, then the obligation of Muslims is to produce new mujtahids, not to rely on blind imitation. Thus, he rejects the view that knowledge will disappear with the death of a

⁶³ Ibnul Qayyim al-Jauziyah, *I'lamul Muwaqqi'in 'an Rabbil 'Alamin* (Dar al-Kutub, n.d.), 1:43.

scholar.⁶⁴ For Hassan, the people must not be satisfied with only relying on the legacy of previous ulama, but must try to understand religious propositions directly. He interpreted the hadith as an invitation to revive the spirit of ijthihad; The death of the cleric actually becomes an encouragement for the people to seek knowledge independently, rather than strengthening their faith.

Apart from that, according to Hassan, taklid also has bad long-term effects, the culture of taklid that continues to be carried out makes people lazy about studying Islamic laws, no longer being critical until they end up accepting anyone's opinion without considering whether the opinion is based on postulates or just a cultural heritage tradition. He considers the tradition of taqlid to be contrary to the Islamic passion which encourages the search for knowledge and truth through direct study of the Al-Qur'an and Hadith. Ahmad Hassan also criticized people who claimed to give fatwas in the name of a madhhab, when in fact they only plagiarized or repeated the opinions of ulama without understanding the evidence. He stated that taklid is like closing the door to the truth, whereas this religion is founded on knowledge and arguments, not human words without evidence.⁶⁵

However, on the other hand, in general ijthihad cannot be done carelessly, there are certain conditions in carrying out ijthihad, this is done so as not to easily judge a law.⁶⁶ Although Ahmad Hassan actually invited Muslims not to be afraid of ijthihad, as long as they have adequate capacity or ability, namely understanding Arabic, the science of interpretation, the science of hadith, and the principles of ushul fiqh.⁶⁷ As a solution to the dilemma between taqlid and ijthihad, Ahmad Hassan encouraged the community to develop the tradition of ittiba', which means following evidence, not simply following others. He emphasized that as long as a person possesses even a modicum of knowledge, they are obligated to seek the truth based on evidence, not simply follow opinions. Ittiba' is a middle ground considered healthy, allowing a Muslim to follow another's opinion but must understand the underlying evidence. This practice of ittiba' is considered a bulwark to prevent the community from easily going astray amidst the decline of true scholars. Ittiba' teaches the community to maintain respect for scholars without sacrificing reason and critical thinking. In various writings, such as in the magazines Al-Lisaanul Arab and Pembela Islam, he repeatedly reminds every Muslim that it is obligatory to verify whether a teaching is truly sourced from the Quran and authentic Hadith. If there is a difference of opinion among scholars, the one with the strongest evidence should be followed, not simply based on who is more popular.

Meanwhile, Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani explained that someone is permitted to imitate (taqlid) if they are indeed someone who lacks the ability to find or understand a proof, let alone the

⁶⁴ Hassan, *Soal-Jawab Tentang Berbagai Masalah Agama*, vol. 3.

⁶⁵ Hassan, *Soal-Jawab Tentang Berbagai Masalah Agama*, vol. 3.

⁶⁶ Khalaf and Wahid, *Al-Ijtihad Fi al-Syariah al-Islamiyah*, 9.

⁶⁷ Mughni, *Hasan Bandung: Pemikir Islam Radikal*, 28.

ability to perform ijtihad. Sheikh Nawawi's understanding of imitation is not intended to contradict or contradict the hadith conveyed by the Prophet. Here, Sheikh Nawawi prioritizes caution against misinterpretation in understanding or interpreting a proof in the context of deriving a law. Unlike Ahmad Hassan, who indeed prioritizes a critical form of understanding something by utilizing the gift of reason given by God, Sheikh Nawawi has his own understanding and efforts in viewing this matter.

The determination of the permissibility of taqlid is intended for anyone other than the four muhtahid imams (Imam Hanafi, Malik, Syafi'i and Hanbali) because the criteria he set for ijtihad are very strict and only these four people are considered as qualified people and in accordance with the criteria that have been set. With the statement put forward by Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani, does it mean that he forbids someone from thinking critically and trying to explore the meaning or intent of a law? Not so. As Ahmad Hassan explained the concept of ittiba', namely establishing a law based on the imam accompanied by knowledge of the evidence, Sheikh Nawawi did not mention this directly with a detailed explanation regarding ittiba' as conveyed by A. Hassan. However, this can be seen from the structure of faith that has been conveyed by Sheikh Nawawi in his book *Kasyifatus Saja* that he touched on this matter.

Sheikh Nawawi clearly permitted imitation without understanding the evidence, and even made it obligatory if one lacks the ability to explore the law. This statement is not intended to discourage someone from developing; it aligns with the position of someone who imitates the law without knowledge of the evidence, which is considered the lowest in their faith. This position should inspire a person to raise their level of faith. Therefore, it can be interpreted that imitation is permissible, but it is still better to base the law on knowledge of the evidence. Nawawi placed those who base a law on understanding its evidence in a higher position of faith. This can also be understood as a guideline for someone to continue developing into a better person, one way of doing this is by understanding the law and its underlying evidence.

Based on the explanation above, the following are the results of a comparison regarding the understanding of taqlid and ijtihad as related to the hadith according to Ahmad Hassan and Sheikh Nawawi Al-Bantani. Comparative analysis is a method of comparing one variable with another to compare their similarities and differences, ultimately resulting in conclusions or results from the research being studied.⁶⁸ Therefore, the two variables referred to in this study are the thoughts of Ahmad Hassan and Sheikh Nawawi Al-Bantani, to identify similarities and differences between the two figures. The comparative results are presented in the table below:

⁶⁸ Winarno Surakhmad, *Metodologi Pelajaran Ilmiah* (Tarsito, 1986), 84.

Table 1

Component	Ahmad Hassan	Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani
Definition of imitation	Following other people's opinions without knowing the basis of the evidence, either from the Qur'an or the Hadith	Sheikh Nawawi defined taqlid as the lowest level of faith among the five levels. It involves relying on the words of others without knowing the evidence. It is considered sinful for a person to neglect seeking evidence if they are capable.
Attitude towards imitation	Strongly rejecting imitation and considering it as a specter or obstacle to the progress of the Muslim community.	Shaykh Nawawi allows taklid if he is a person who does not have the ability to find or understand a proposition. It even makes it mandatory for lay people to maintain their religion.
Reasons for prohibiting or encouraging imitation	Taklid has a bad effect on Muslims causing Muslims to be left behind and stiff because it is a form of intellectual lag and makes Muslims stagnant or unable to keep up with the times, because Islam orders the use of reason and the search for arguments not following along.	Without taqlid, it is feared that ordinary people will make ijthad on their own and end up going astray.
Correlation analysis of hadith	The concept of the withdrawal of knowledge and the death of scholars who have knowledge according to Hassan cannot be used as a reason to immediately accept taqlid, because the knowledge or sources of law have been officially recorded. In fact, if a scholar is passed away, what needs to be done is to make or give birth to a new thinker or a mujtahid.	The loss of knowledge is the same as the loss of competent scholars, according to Sheikh Nawawi, true religious knowledge is possessed by scholars who maintain a clear chain of knowledge, so that the hadith above is a strong warning to the Islamic community to adhere firmly to the teachings of previous mujtahid scholars, therefore he is of the opinion that taqlid is important.

<p>The Problem of Ijtihad</p>	<p>Serious efforts to seek and understand Islamic law directly from the Koran and Sunnah, using reason, logic and correct scientific principles. Ijtihad is not just quoting the opinions of previous scholars without understanding the basics, but is truly a process of understanding the law in real terms. He also set the conditions for mujtahids namely, mastering the Qur'an and Hadith in general, understanding Arabic well, to access primary source texts, using common sense in analyzing and understanding the law, abandoning madzhab fanaticism, and being objective towards the evidence.</p>	<p>Sheikh Nawawi allows ijthid, he provides very strict conditions. Ijtihad can only be carried out by great scholars who have reached the level of mujtahid, not by random people. Mujtahids must master the Qur'an and Hadith along with their interpretation and knowledge of sanad, Ushul fiqh and qawa'id fihiyyah, high level Arabic, the opinions of previous madzhab scholars.</p>
<p>The solution to the problem of imitation and ijthid</p>	<p>He revived the spirit of ijthid for those who were able, and advocated ittiba, that is, following evidence, not simply following others. He emphasized that as long as a person possessed even a modicum of knowledge, he was obligated to seek the truth based on evidence, not blindly following the opinions of those unable to perform ijthid.</p>	<p>Maintain the tradition of imitation by relying on references to trusted mujtahid scholars.</p>

This relates to the comparative understanding of taqlid and ijthid according to Ahmad Hassan and Shaykh Nawawi al-Bantani. Ahmad Hassan and Shaykh Nawawi, although both figures of the archipelago, do not rule out the possibility of their differing views. Looking at their biographies, Ahmad Hassan was born in 1887 and is said to have been heavily influenced by modernists, while Shaykh Nawawi, born in 1815, still adheres to traditionalist figures. Differences in understanding among figures or scholars are commonplace in the Islamic intellectual tradition. These differences do not merely indicate conflict, but rather reflect the thinking that developed within each figure's respective scientific framework. Therefore, it is important to critically examine the roots of each thought, as well as to understand the historical, sociocultural, and spatial-temporal contexts surrounding it. Analysis of this background can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the reasons and foundations of the differences in opinion that arise.

CONCLUSION

This research reveals that the dilemma between taqlid and ijthid in the contemporary era remains a significant debate among Muslim scholars and intellectuals. Ahmad Hassan, known as a reformist and rationalist, tends to reject blind taqlid and encourages ijthid as widely as possible for anyone capable, emphasizing the importance of returning directly to the Qur'an and Hadith. His views reflect a spirit of reform and critique of the taqlid schools of thought that are considered to limit the dynamics of Islamic law and considered it a scourge or obstacle to the progress of the Muslim community. As an alternative to the dilemma between taqlid and ijthid, Ahmad Hassan encouraged the community to develop the tradition of ittiba', which is following evidence, not simply following others. He emphasized that as long as someone possesses even a modicum of knowledge, they are obligated to seek the truth based on evidence, not simply follow opinions. Ittiba' is a healthy middle ground, allowing a Muslim to follow the opinions of others but must understand the underlying evidence.

Nawawi al-Bantani, a traditionalist cleric who lived in a pesantren environment and was affiliated with the Shafi'i school of thought, viewed taqlid as a necessity for lay people who were not yet capable of conducting ijthid on their own. However, he still recognized the importance of ijthid for mujtahids in developing Islamic law that was relevant to the times. Sheikh Nawawi defines taqlid as the lowest level of faith among the other five levels. Shaykh Nawawi allows taklid if he is a person who does not have the ability to find or understand a proposition. It even makes it mandatory for lay people to maintain their religion. Without taqlid, it is feared that ordinary people will make ijthid on their own and end up going astray.

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