

PREVALENCE OF DEPRESSION, ANXIETY, AND STRESS AMONG THE EXPATRIATE POPULATION IN SAUDI ARABIA'S EASTERN PROVINCE

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ABSTRACT

The novel coronavirus (COVID-19) has not only affected the physical health of those infected by it but has also taken a toll on the mental health of those experiencing the pandemic. With the rise in the number of cases an increase in depression, stress and anxiety has been observed. This research was conducted to study the impact of COVID-19 on the mental health of the expatriate community living in the Eastern province of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). A cross-sectional study was carried out using an online questionnaire consisting of the Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale (DASS-21). The sample consisted of 336 individuals including 12 males and 324 females aged 18 and above. After data collection and analysis, prevalence rates of depression, anxiety and stress were calculated. The research revealed that the pandemic has affected the mental health of this population. The survey across the Eastern region showed that 65.47% of participants exhibited depressive symptoms, 73.8% showed the symptoms of anxiety and 57.14% reported stress. Females were reported to be more psychologically distressed than males. Similarly, the older population were found to have higher levels of depression, anxiety and stress than the younger one. This study demonstrates that stress, anxiety and depressive symptoms are considerably prevalent in the expatriate community of Eastern region of KSA during the pandemic and calls for significant measures to be taken to mitigate these effects.

KEYWORDS: Covid-19, Coronavirus, Pandemic, Saudi Arabia, Depression, Anxiety, Stress, DASS-21, Mental Health

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1. INTRODUCTION

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) has played havoc in the entire world after its discovery in December, 2019 in Wuhan province, China. This disease has spread faster and more rapidly than the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and Middle Eastern Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) also caused by different strains of the coronavirus (NIH, 2020; Sanche et al., 2020). A large number of people were affected globally by this virus, including 13 million plus people getting infected and around 600 thousand people losing their lives within the first six months (WHO, 2020). On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19) to be a global pandemic. WHO Director-General, Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, reported that the number of cases outside China had increased 13-fold and the number of countries with cases increased threefold just in the past 2 weeks of the news briefing he was addressing (WHO, 2020).

With the quick spread of the virus and lockdowns to contain the spread, many researchers started to study the effect of this pandemic on the mental health of people. Initially the studies pertaining to psychological challenges of people during the pandemic were conducted in China and Europe (Qui et al., 2020; Porcheddu et al. 2020), and soon after the rest of the world caught up and studies were conducted across the globe. Hence, many research were carried out and results showed that the pandemic has been very distressful for the general public high prevalence rate of psychological disorders (such as insomnia, depression, anxiety, and stress) has been reported in Saudi Arabia (Alkhamees et al., 2020), Pakistan (Hayat et al., 2021), China (Qui et al., 2020), India (Grover et al 2020) Bangladesh (Islam et al., 2020) and Egypt (Arafa et al., 2021). A study conducted to highlight the psychological impact of quarantine and the ways to reduce its psychological toll reported that depression, anxiety, loneliness and suicidal thoughts have been reported frequently during the pandemic (Brooks et al., 2020).

The American Psychological Association (APA) defines depression as “*a negative affective state, ranging from unhappiness and discontent to an extreme feeling of sadness, pessimism, and despondency, that interferes with daily life.*” (APA Dictionary of Psychology, 2020). According to APA, anxiety is defined as “*an emotion characterized by apprehension and somatic symptoms of tension in which an individual anticipates impending danger, catastrophe, or misfortune. The body often mobilizes itself to meet the perceived threat: Muscles become tense, breathing is faster, and the heart beats more rapidly.*” (APA Dictionary of Psychology, 2020).

The definition of stress is “*the physiological or psychological response to internal or external stressors. Stress involves changes affecting nearly every system of the body, influencing how*

people feel and behave. It may be manifested by palpitations, sweating, dry mouth, shortness of breath, fidgeting, accelerated speech, augmentation of negative emotions (if already being experienced), and longer duration of stress fatigue.” (APA Dictionary of Psychology, 2020).

The Eastern region of Saudi Arabia’s main cities are Dammam, Al-Hasa, Al-Jubail, Ras Tanura, Dhahran, Al-Khobar and Al-Qatif (Ashraquia Chamber, 2021). In this geographical context, we focus on the expatriate community, i.e. those people living in a country that is not their own (Oxford Learners Dictionaries, 2021).

The COVID-19 breakout was declared to be pandemic by the World Health Organization on 11th March, 2021. The first case of Coronavirus infection was discovered in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on 2nd March, 2020. (Ministry of Health, 2020). In a month’s time, the educational institutions including schools, universities and madrassas (religious schools), as well as malls, restaurants, beaches, and resorts were shut down and a 24-hr curfew was implemented in almost all the cities of the Kingdom along with ban on intercity travels (Abdullah, 2020). The general population was only allowed to leave their homes to buy food and medications between 6 a.m. and 3 p.m. and that too, within the limits of their living areas and more than one passenger on a single vehicle was not allowed (Abdullah, 2020). All international and national flights were suspended (Arab News, 2020). Religious pilgrimages (Umrah) were also banned (Ahmed, 2020). The first round of lockdown and restrictions was very distressing for the people since most of them had hardly experienced anything of this sort earlier in their lives. This is the reason that several studies have been conducted to study its psychological impact on the people throughout the world. Many studies have been conducted in Saudi Arabia to understand the psychological challenges people are going through during the pandemic in this country as well. However, the data available on the expatriate population is limited.

The present study aims to assess the psychological impact of COVID-19 through a public cross-sectional survey that tends to estimate the prevalence of depressive symptoms, anxiety symptoms, and stress during the pandemic. The objective of this research is to identify potentially vulnerable groups which will help mental health professionals understand the level of psychological discomfort and design tailored interventions for the expatriate population according to their demographic details. The result of this study will also help to create awareness among the expatriate population and encourage the help seeking behavior.

The remaining parts of this paper are organized as follows: The next section represents a literature review. The third section discusses the methodology and results followed by discussion and conclusion discussing the strength and weakness the paper and suggestions for future work along the same lines.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The International Epidemiology Association's Dictionary of Epidemiology defines pandemic as *"an epidemic occurring worldwide, or over a very wide area, crossing international boundaries and usually affecting a large number of people"*. In contrast to this, the World Health Organization (WHO) defines the pandemic as *"the worldwide spread of a new disease"*. Throughout history, the world has seen a number of such outbreaks where the infectious agents have wreaked havoc in the entire world. The noteworthy ones include the Black Death, Spanish flu, human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immune deficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) and Zika virus pandemic (Madhav et al., 2018).

To date, a lot of psychological studies in almost all the major parts of the world have been conducted to study the effects of pandemic and associated changes in life on the mental health of the general public. Saudi Arabia has also conducted many studies to address the psychological wellbeing of its people. One such research conducted by Alamri et al. (2020) studied the impact of the COVID pandemic on the mental health of the general population of Saudi Arabia. They had a total of 1597 respondents who completed the survey, however only 62 participants making 3.9% of the total population sample were non-Saudis (expatriates). The subsequent results of this study showed that 37.1% non-Saudi participants showed the signs of depression, while 24.2% and 22.6% were reported to have symptoms of anxiety and stress respectively.

Algarni et al. (2021) conducted a study on the "Perception of Threat and Psychological Impact of COVID-19 among Expatriates in Makkah Region". This study was specifically conducted to study the effects of the pandemic on the mental health of the expatriate population. In this study, a total of 292 expatriates participated. The prevalence of self-reported depression was nearly 40%, anxiety was 32%, and stress was 43%.

Another similar study was conducted by Alkhamees et al. (2020) to understand the psychological impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the people of Saudi Arabia. Their survey had 1160 participants of the general public and to the best of our knowledge, this study does not indicate any difference between locals and expatriate population. Their results showed that 23.6% reported moderate or severe psychological impact of the pandemic, 28.3%, 24%, and 22.3% reported moderate to severe depressive, anxiety, and stress symptoms, respectively.

The psychological effects of changes brought about by COVID-19 were also studied in other parts of the Middle East. Uvais et al. (2021) conducted research to understand the psychological distress and coping mechanisms among Indian expats working in the Middle East during the COVID-19 pandemic. Their study concluded that out of 94 respondents, 52% reported clinically significant anxiety levels, and 41% reported clinically significant depression levels.

Mass media have been actively involved in bringing the latest news to every individual on the planet, but this information overload can also lead to mental health challenges. An interesting study was conducted by Zakout et al. (2020) in which they studied the magnitude of COVID-19 related stress, anxiety and depression associated with intense mass media coverage in Saudi Arabia. In this study, a total of 215 respondents were included. Higher mental distress rates were reported in non-Saudi participants compared to Saudi ones (i.e., 50.74% vs. 30.40%; 34.23% vs. 13.51% and 59.70% vs. 27.70%; for depression, anxiety and stress, respectively).

Assessment of the Quality of Life during COVID-19 Pandemic was determined by Algahtani et al. (2020) in a Cross-Sectional Survey from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The study sample comprised 754 participants out of which 195 were non-Saudis. The Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale-21 (DASS-21) was used to assess depression, anxiety, and stress. The median and inter-quartile range were used to describe the QoL scores. The non-Saudi residents were almost two times (OR = 1.69; 95% CI: 1.06–2.57) more at risk to be in the first quartile (Algahtani et al., 2021).

Alyami et al. (2021) in their research “Depression and anxiety during the COVID-19 pandemic in Saudi Arabia: A cross-sectional study” found that non-Saudi residents (expatriates), individuals aged 50 years and above, divorced people, retired people, university students and low-income groups had a higher risk of having depression.

Apart from the above-mentioned study, various other studies indicate that socially disadvantaged groups (e.g., low-income groups, ethnic minorities) experience more mental health problems than socially advantaged groups (Purtle, 2012). This is the reason that current research has studied the demographics in detail to be able to provide the relationship between psychological distress and different demographic variables.

3. METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the research was to determine the prevalence of mental health issues among the expatriate community living in the Eastern province of Saudi Arabia during the second wave of COVID-19 period during February and March, 2021. To conduct the study, a questionnaire, DASS-21 (depression, anxiety and stress scale) was used.

This study is quantitative in nature. A cross-sectional study was conducted to explore the prevalence rates of mental health construct (which are depression, anxiety, and stress). DAS scale is a set of three self-reported scales (Appendix 3). It is a 21-item scale and is designed to measure the emotional states of depression, anxiety and stress. This is a summarized version of the 42-item DASS. Each subscale measures depression, anxiety and stress respectively and has seven items. It is a 4-point Likert scale having a range of 0-3. Zero (0) =Did not apply to me; One (1) = Applied

to me to some degree or for some of the time; Two (2) = Applied to me to a considerable degree or for a good part of time; Three (3) = Applied to me very much, or most of the time.

The depression scale measures hopelessness, dysphoria, lack of interest / involvement, anhedonia, devaluation of life, self-deprecation, and inertia. The anxiety scale is sensitive to skeletal muscle effects, autonomic arousal, situational anxiety, and subjective experience of anxious affect. The stress scale assesses difficulty relaxing, nervous arousal, and being easily upset / agitated, irritable, and over-reactive and impatient.

Demographic details such as gender, age, education, marital status and employment status were also obtained. Pearson correlation was used to study the association of demographic variables and with DASS subscales.

Summing the scores for the relevant items gives the scores for depression, anxiety and stress. The DASS-21 is based on a dimensional rather than a categorical conception of psychological disorder. The assumption on which the DASS-21 development was based (and which was confirmed by the research data) is that the differences between the depression, anxiety and the stress experienced by normal subjects and clinical populations are essentially differences of degree. Its reliability analysis shows that it has Cronbach's alpha values of 0.81 for depression subscale, 0.89 for anxiety and 0.78 for anxiety subscales (Coker et al., 2018).

DASS-21 was set in Google Forms (Google LLC, Mountain View, California, USA), and distributed online to collect data pertaining to psychological disorders. Social Media website (Facebook) and WhatsApp were used to share the questionnaire along with a request to spread the survey in this particular community of expatriates. This study is based on a convenience sampling method in which the sample is taken from a group of people easy to contact or to reach. People had to simply click the link created for the questionnaire and enter the data. After clicking on the link, a cover page appeared which showed the research title, objective, and consent. If the participants gave their consent to participate, they were asked to click "start the questionnaire," and start answering the survey questions. As for demographic details, age, gender, educational qualification, employment, and marital status were asked. Participants were requested to fill in all the items. The questionnaire remained open and accessible from 1st February to 15th March, 2021.

Sum scores for the total DASS-total scale thus range between 0 and 120, and those for each of the subscales ranged between 0 and 42. Cut-off scores of 60 and 21 were used for the total DASS score and the depression subscale, respectively. These cut-off scores were derived from a set of severity ratings, proposed by Lovibond and Lovibond (Table 1). Once multiplied by 2, each subscale was categorized as follows.

Table 1. Cutoff Points for DASS-21 Scale

Severity	Depression	Anxiety	Stress
Normal	0-9	0-7	0-14
Mild	10-13	8-9	15-18
Moderate	14-20	10-14	19-25
Severe	21-27	15-19	26-33
Extreme	28+	20+	34+

3.1 Ethical Consideration

Participants' consent was taken and they were informed of the potential risks (such as emotional distress) associated with the survey as it might trigger them or remind them of negative experiences. The objective of the survey was also explicitly explained and participants were given full autonomy to withdraw from the study at any time. Only the participants who gave their consent were directed to the main survey. Anonymity was maintained by not asking for their names. Since the research was conducted in an individual capacity, no legal permission was sought from any Government body.

4. RESULTS

A total 336 respondents completed the survey. They ranged in age from 18 to 45 years old; Males made up 3.6 % of the sample ($n = 12$). The number of female participants was way higher than men in this study (96.42%, $n=324$). More than 92% of respondents were unemployed ($n = 312$), and 62.7% ($n = 211$) had a bachelor (or above) degree. More than half of the respondents ($n=218$) were married (64.8%).

Table 2. Demographic Data of the Participants

Variable	<i>n</i>	Percentage
Sex	336	
Male	12	3.57%
Female	324	96.43%
Age		
18-30	220	65.48%
31-45	116	34.52%
Education		
Bachelor and above	211	62.80%
Below bachelor	125	34.23%
Employment		
Unemployed	312	92.86%
Self Employed	11	3.27%
Employed	13	3.87%
Marital Status		
Married	218	64.88%
Unmarried	118	35.12%
Divorced	0	0.00%

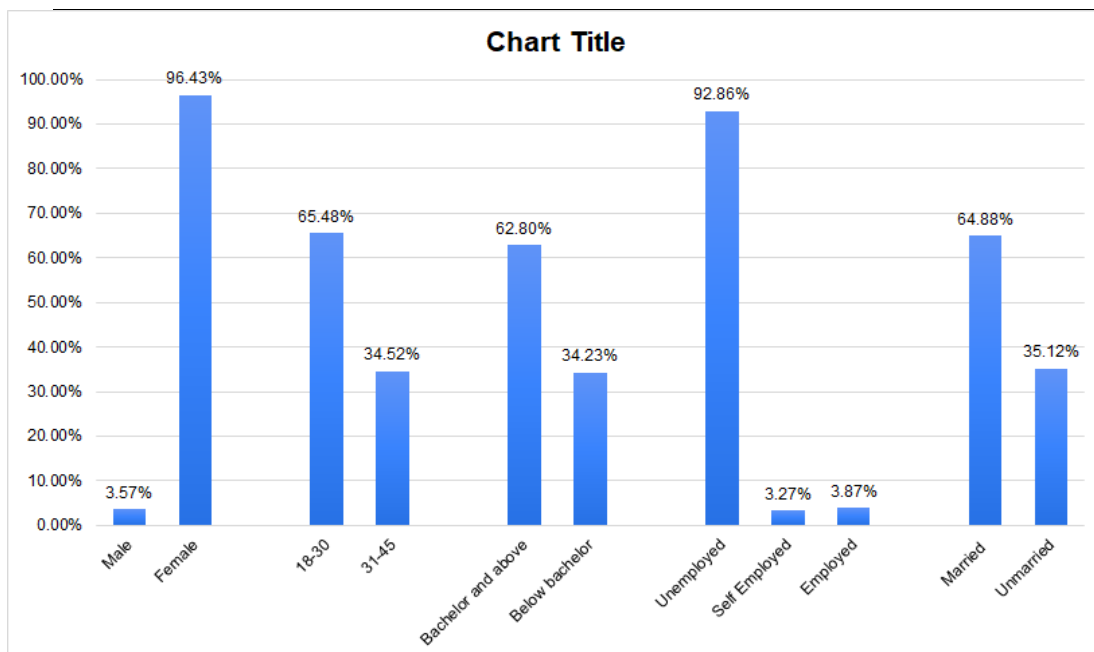


Figure 1. Distribution of Demographic Data

Table 3. Depression distribution among survey respondents during COVID-19 pandemic

Severity	Depression		
	Range	Value	Percentage
Normal	0-9	116	34.52%
Mild	10-13	68	20.24%
Moderate	14-20	76	22.62%
Severe	21-27	24	7.14%
Extreme	28+	52	15.48%
Total		220	65.47%

Table 4. Anxiety distribution among survey respondents during COVID-19 pandemic

Severity	Anxiety		
	Range	Value	Percentage
Normal	0-7	88	26.19%
Mild	8-9	36	10.71%
Moderate	10-14	92	27.38%
Severe	15-19	56	16.67%
Extreme	20+	64	19.05%
Total		248	73.8%

Table 5. Stress scale distribution among survey respondents during COVID-19 pandemic

Severity	Stress		
	Range	Value	Percentage
Normal	0-14	144	42.86%
Mild	15-18	76	22.62%
Moderate	19-25	60	17.86%
Severe	26-33	48	14.29%
Extreme	34+	8	2.38%
Total		192	57.1%

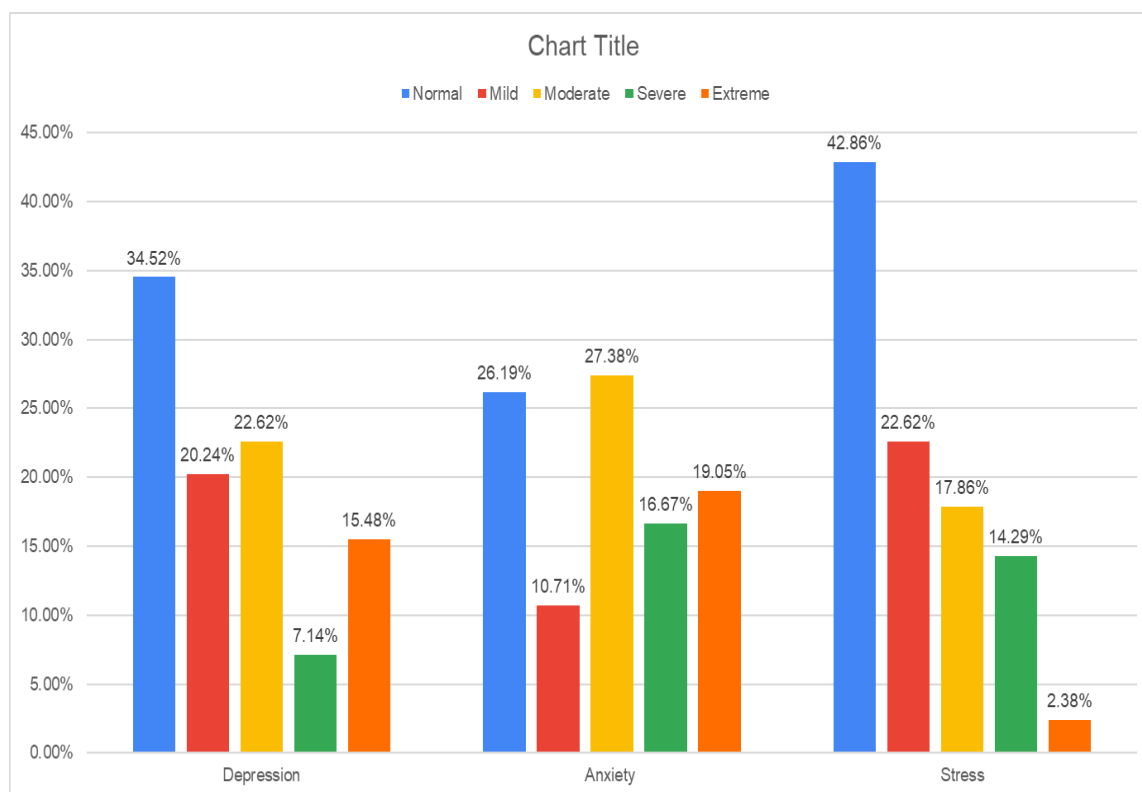


Figure 2. Distribution of psychological health parameters among expatriate population in the Eastern Region of Saudi Arabia during COVID-19 pandemic, 2021.

Participants' psychological health status during COVID-19 pandemic (Table 3, Figure 2) demonstrate that more than half of the respondents (65.47%; $n = 220$) reported experiencing any depression, with 20.24 percent reporting mild symptoms, 22.62 percent reporting moderate symptoms, 7.14 percent reporting severe symptoms and 15.45 percent reporting extreme symptoms. More than 73 percent of respondents were experiencing anxiety ($n = 248$) with 10.71 percent reporting mild symptoms, 27.38 percent reporting moderate symptoms, 16.67 percent reporting severe symptoms and 19.05 percent reporting extreme symptoms. Almost 192 (57.14 percent) of sample respondents reported experiencing stress, with 22.62 percent reporting mild symptoms, 17.86 percent reporting moderate symptoms, 14.29 percent reporting severe symptoms and 2.38 percent reporting extreme symptoms.

Table 6. Distribution of participants psychological health aspects by their biodemographic data

Bio-Demographic Data		Depression			Anxiety		Stress	
		Total	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Gender	Male	12	5	41.67%	6	50.00%	5	41.6%
	Female	324	215	66.36%	242	74.69%	187	57.7%
p-Value			0.07		0.05		0.2	
Age	18-30	220	141	64.09%	154	70.00%	118	53.64%
	31-45	116	79	68.10%	94	81.03%	74	63.79%
	>45	0	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
p-Value			0.4		0.02*		0.07	
Education	Below Bachelor	125	95	76.00%	109	87.20%	98	78.40%
	Bachelor and above	211	125	59.24%	139	65.87%	94	44.55%
p-Value			0.001**		0.00001**		0.000**	
Employment	Unemployed	312	213	68.27%	241	77.24%	187	59.94%
	Employed	13	3	23.08%	4	30.77%	3	23.08%
	Self Employed	11	4	36.36%	3	27.27%	2	18.18%
p-Value			0.0004**		0.000**		0.00092**	
Marital Status	Married	218	151	69.27%	187	85.78%	112	51.38%
	Single	118	69	58.47%	61	51.69%	80	67.80%
	Divorced	0	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
p-Value			0.04*		0.000**		0.003**	

Pearson correlation - * $p < 0.05$ (significant).

Pearson correlation - ** $p < 0.01$ (significant).

Table 4 shows the distribution of participants' psychological health aspects by their biodemographic data. Pearson correlation was used to study the association of demographic variables with DASS subscales scores. A p value lower than 5 percent ($p \leq 0.05$) was considered statistically significant. Depression, anxiety and stress were significantly higher among females than males (66.36% vs. 41.67%, 74.69% vs. 50.00% and 57.7% vs. 41.6%, respectively; $p \geq 0.05$). Moreover, older respondents (>30 years) were significantly more depressed, anxious, and stressed

than younger respondents (<31) (68.1% vs. 64.1%, 81.03% vs. 70%, and 63.79% vs. 53.64%, respectively; $p = 0.4, 0.02, 0.7$ respectively). Participants with bachelor degree and above (62.79%) exhibited lesser psychological distress than those have educational accomplishment below bachelor (values of depression, anxiety and stress for participants with bachelor and above versus below bachelor being 59.24% vs. 76%, 65.87% vs 87.2%, 44.55% vs 78.4% respectively, $p < 0.05$). Unemployed participants (92.86%) were more likely to experience depression, stress and anxiety than those who were working/self-employed. Married respondents were more depressed and anxious than the singles (69.27 vs. 58.47 and 85.78% vs. 51.69%, respectively, $p < 0.05$) but singles were more stressed (67.80%) than married people (51.38%).

5. DISCUSSION

This study was aimed to assess the psychological impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the expatriate population living in the Eastern region of Saudi Arabia. Participants exhibiting depressive symptoms on DASS-21 scale were 65.48%, of which 20.24% were mild, 22.62% moderate, 7.14% severe and 15.48% extreme while those reporting the symptoms of anxiety were 73.81%, of which 10.71% were mild, 27.38% moderate, 16.67% severe and 19.05% reported extreme anxiety. 57.14% of the people reported stress of which 22.62% were mild, 17.86% moderate, 14.29% severe and 2.38% extreme cases were reported.

This prevalence rate of depression is close to what Uvais et al. (2020) reported (52%) in the Indian expats of the Middle east. However, the rate is significantly higher than what was found in the study conducted on the expatriate population living in Makkah region of Saudi Arabia where the prevalence of self-depression was nearly 40%, anxiety was 32%, and stress was 43%. (Algarni, 2021).

The possible explanation for this difference is that the study conducted in Makkah had a significantly higher number of male participants (72%) than females. The females tend to be more susceptible to psychological distress across the globe (Piccinelli & Wilkinson, 2018). Similar findings about the susceptibility of the female population was reported in Egypt by Arafa et al. in 2020. Depression rate is also reported to be more in females as per the discussion of Albert (2015) in his article “Why is Depression more prevalent in women”? In our studies, females reported the problems of depression, anxiety, and stress more than males which is consistent to the similar studies conducted in Saudi Arabia such as the one by Alamri et al (2020) while studying the Prevalence of Depression, Anxiety, and Stress among the General Population in Saudi Arabia during Covid-19 Pandemic.

According to our findings, the older respondents (>31 years) were experiencing more psychological distress as compared to the younger ones (<30 years). Al Omari et al. 2020

conducted a study to explore the prevalence of Depression, anxiety and stress among youth (15-24 years old) in six Middle Eastern countries. The prevalence of depression, anxiety and stress was found to be 47.9% and 33.1%. Similarly, the study conducted on expatriate population of Makkah region found that the age group of 18-34 (similar to the age group of our study; 18-30) reported to have 38.9 % depression, 42.28 % anxiety and 32.89% stress respectively (Algarni, 2021) which is lesser than our findings of 64.09% depression, 70% anxiety and 53.64% stress. This can again be explained on the basis of an overwhelmingly greater female sample in our study. Also, the older adults have to arrange for the bread and butter of the family which puts them more at risk of developing psychological disorders as compared to the younger population which does not have to worry about food and shelter at this stage of life.

Participants with bachelor degrees and above exhibited lesser psychological distress than those having educational accomplishment below bachelor. Depression 59.24%, anxiety 65.87% and 44.55% stress was reported in our studies from respondents who had bachelor or higher qualification. These levels are higher than previous studies conducted in the Kingdom. Use of different tools, time of the study conducted and survey methods etc. can lead to inconsistency of our results with the previous literature.

Unemployed participants (92.86%) were more likely to experience depression, stress and anxiety than those who were working/self-employed. This is in line with the finding of Alyami et al. (2021) who conducted a cross sectional study to find Depression and anxiety during the COVID-19 pandemic in Saudi Arabia and concluded that unemployed individuals were at a higher risk of having depression and anxiety. It is also to be noted that most expatriate women live as a dependent on their husband's permit and are not allowed to work in the Kingdom. Therefore, the percentage of employed population was very less.

Married respondents were more depressed and anxious than the singles (69.27 vs. 58.47 and 85.78% vs. 51.69%, respectively) which is in line with the findings of Alyami et al. (2020) and can be justified with the additional responsibilities of feeding and taking care of the family on married couples as compared to the singles.

6. CONCLUSION

Unprecedented and unpredictable changes have been faced by human beings during the COVID-19 pandemic. Consequently, a large population is experiencing some level of pathological distress. In order to be able to address and limit the negative impact of this pandemic, it is mandatory to identify the high-risk group. Our study aimed to identify such a group by conducting a cross-sectional study. Since lockdown and strict SOPs limited the human-to-human interaction, an online survey served as the only option to conduct such a study. Our research has used descriptive

analysis to analyze the sociodemographic variables and their relationship with psychological distress. The findings suggest that among the expatriates, being a female, having lower education, being an older person is related to depression, anxiety and stress in the Eastern region of Saudi Arabia. The high rate of depression, anxiety and stress in expatriates indicates that this pandemic and all the limitations and changes associated with it are significant stressors in the personal and social lives of this population. Our results can contribute significantly in formulating new guidelines to assist expatriate communities, not only in Saudi Arabia, but also in the other parts of the Middle East with a good majority of non-citizens working in those countries.

This study has demonstrated several strengths. First, it has addressed the prevalence of depression, anxiety and stress in the expatriate population of Eastern region of Saudi Arabia. To the best of the author's knowledge, no study has been conducted to assess the psychological discomfort experienced by this particular group earlier during COVID-19 spread. This may give valuable information to policymakers that can assist them to make decisions which can help this high-risk group and also introduce mental health interventions that can address and mitigate psychological distress in the expatriate community.

However, this study also has several limitations. First, the study was based on an internet-based survey method which means that people who do not have access to or limited knowledge of the internet were not a part of the study. Secondly, the study design was such that it made use of self-reported questionnaires to measure psychological symptoms. Self-reported questionnaires are not as reliable a tool as structured clinical interviews and functional neuroimaging (Ho et al., 2020).

Moreover, this study has not done any comparative analysis of the mental health state of these individuals since the data prior to the pandemic was never taken. This can be attributed to the sudden outbreak of the pandemic.

Another limitation is that the research has neither considered the profession of the participants nor taken their monthly salary into account. A major population of the expatriates belong to the labor class and it would have been interesting to see the psychological impact of COVID on this particular class.

Yet another limitation is the time period for which the study was conducted which was limited to 1.5 months. Convenience sampling can also be a limitation and there can be a bias in the sample as only those who were interested in mental health and understand the importance of such a study would have participated.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Consent Form and Information sheet

Prevalence of Depression, Anxiety, and Stress among the Expatriate Population

This is an independent study aiming to explore the prevalence of Depression, Anxiety and stress among the expatriate population living in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia. Please only proceed if you are a part of this community. This research is being conducted by Bela Khan, Sr. Lecturer at International Open University.

Informed consent and participation in the study

You are invited to fill in a web-based questionnaire. Some of the questions may cause some level of discomfort or remind you of a negative incident. Your participation is completely voluntary. Should you find the questionnaire distressful, you may leave at any moment. No questions asked.

All the information collected will remain confidential and shall not be used for anything other than the said study. You have not been asked to mention your names. Other demographic data is purely for the sake of research. Should you still have doubts, this is the best time to quit.

The objective of this study is to find the prevalence of psychological distress caused by COVID-19 pandemic in the expatriate community. Such studies have been conducted before but the data is very limited when it comes to the expatriate population. Your participation will help us understand the predicament of this community better. The findings of this study will help us create awareness and knowledge about mental health problems.

Please do not participate in the study if you are not an expatriate living in the Eastern province of Saudia. One you press submit, you give your consent to participate in the survey and acknowledge that you have studied this form and you take the responsibility of going ahead and filling in the survey.

Your time and contribution will make all the difference for this community.

Thanking in anticipation

Bela Khan

Select one answer from each of the following questions

1. I have completely understood the objective of the study and I am ready to participate
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
2. I am an expatriate living in the Eastern Province of KSA.
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
3. I understand that this can cause some level of discomfort and I choose to take the responsibility for proceeding
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No

When you choose to click “Next”, you choose to participate in the study voluntarily.

Appendix 2: Questionnaire (demographics)

- 1- Gender
 - a. Male
 - b. Female
- 2- Age
 - a. 18-30
 - b. 31-45
 - c. Above 45
- 3- Education
 - a. Bachelor and above
 - b. Below Bachelor
- 4- Employment
 - a. Unemployed
 - b. Self employed
 - c. Employed
- 5- Marital Status
 - a. Married
 - b. Unmarried
 - c. Divorced

Appendix 3: DAS S 21

Please read each statement and circle a number 0, 1, 2 or 3 which indicates how much the statement applied to you *over the past week*. There are no right or wrong answers. Do not spend too much time on any statement.

The rating scale is as follows:

- 0 Did not apply to me at all
- 1 Applied to me to some degree, or some of the time
- 2 Applied to me to a considerable degree, or a good part of time
- 3 Applied to me very much, or most of the time

1	I found it hard to wind down	0	1	2	3
2	I was aware of dryness of my mouth	0	1	2	3
3	I couldn't seem to experience any positive feeling at all	0	1	2	3
4	I experienced breathing difficulty (e.g., excessively rapid breathing, breathlessness in the absence of physical exertion)	0	1	2	3
5	I found it difficult to work up the initiative to do things	0	1	2	3
6	I tended to over-react to situations	0	1	2	3
7	I experienced trembling (e.g., in the hands)	0	1	2	3
8	I felt that I was using a lot of nervous energy	0	1	2	3
9	I was worried about situations in which I might panic and make a fool of myself	0	1	2	3
10	I felt that I had nothing to look forward to	0	1	2	3
11	I found myself getting agitated	0	1	2	3
12	I found it difficult to relax	0	1	2	3
13	I felt down-hearted and blue	0	1	2	3
14	I was intolerant of anything that kept me from getting on with what I was doing	0	1	2	3
15	I felt I was close to panic	0	1	2	3
16	I was unable to become enthusiastic about anything	0	1	2	3
17	I felt I wasn't worth much as a person	0	1	2	3
18	I felt that I was rather touchy	0	1	2	3
19	I was aware of the action of my heart in the absence of physical exertion (e.g., sense of heart rate increase, heart missing a beat)	0	1	2	3
20	I felt scared without any good reason	0	1	2	3
21	I felt that life was meaningless	0	1	2	3

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT: AN ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

Women's empowerment has become one of the central themes in the ongoing debate between Islam and secularism regarding women's role and status in society. Liberal Islamists embrace women's empowerment and promote it in Muslim societies without a thorough assessment from an Islamic perspective. Women's empowerment has not received a sufficient response from the Islamic scholarship. This work attempts to lay down the foundations for addressing the current gap in that response. Toward that end, this work employs a qualitative approach. It utilizes secondary sources of information to analyze women's empowerment and critique the main approaches employed to promote it in Muslim societies. This work then provides an Islamic assessment of women's empowerment and concludes with recommendations for further work.

KEYWORDS: Islam, Women, Empowerment, Feminism, Gender

1. INTRODUCTION

Conceptually, women's empowerment asserts fostering women's decision-making power and access to opportunities and resources (Batliwala, 2014). Women's empowerment is a change of the power relation between men and women in society, giving women more power in the social, economic, political, legal, and religious spheres (Rahman, 2013). The United Nations (UN) advocated the concept behind women's empowerment in the 1979 'Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women' (CEDAW). Women's empowerment was further emphasized and given social, economic, and political dimensions in the UN 1995 'Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action' (UN Women, 1995).

Some Muslims adopt and promote women's empowerment based on the perception that it aims to remove obstacles that prevent women from gaining and exercising their rights. Other Muslims exhibit suspicion toward women's empowerment and oppose it due to its roots in Western thought. Women's empowerment is a recent concept and is yet to receive sufficient response from Islamic scholarship. There is a good body of Islamic literature on various women-related topics.

This work aims to explain the call to empowering women, critique the approaches utilized to promote it in Muslim societies and assess it from an Islamic perspective. The study makes two main contributions. First, establish the foundations of an Islamic assessment of the call. Second, highlight existing Islamic discourses that indirectly address aspects of the call.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Concerning women's issues, the literature reveals three main discourses amongst contemporary Muslim scholars and researchers. The first is the conservatives. The second is liberal Islamists. The third is those who maintain a just position between the first two and is termed herein the middle Islamist discourse.

The conservative discourse generally restricts women's role in society to their homes as daughters to be wives and mothers e.g., (al-'Abd al-Karīm, 2009). This discourse does not acknowledge a need for women's empowerment, and the rest of this article does not consider it further. This section does not intend to provide a comprehensive review of women's issues. Instead, it focuses solely on crucial aspects of women's empowerment in liberal Islamists and middle Islamist discourses.

a. The Liberal Islamist Discourse

Adherents of this discourse are intellectual Muslims who are firm admirers of Western culture and generally lack formal education and training in Islamic sciences (al-Shafīe, 2004). They adopt the

Western concept of women's empowerment after recasting it in a self-proclaimed Muslim-styled perspective (Pruzan-Jørgensen, 2012).

The central idea in this discourse is that the Islamic texts affirm equality between men and women. The liberal Islamists claim that Muslim scholars purposefully read inequality and patriarchy into the text to justify political and social structures that favor the ruling male elites and satisfy male chauvinism (Hidayatullah, 2014). They further claim that the Islamic scientific heritage reflects men's norms in society and is a form of hegemony that subjugates women (Barlas, 2006). They conclude that it is indispensable for women and feminists, in general, to apply their own experience and understanding to establish a new jurisprudential effort (ijtihād) to achieve women's financial and social independence (Wadud, 2006).

While liberal Islamists have vehemently propagated the idea of patriarchy in Islam, there has been no material or historical evidence to lend credence to it (al-Masīrī, 1999). However, patriarchy's idea continues to take center stage in the liberal Islamists' thought, especially in their critique of the concept of men's guardianship and responsibility toward women (qiwāmah) stated in the Qur'ān verse 4:34 (Sharābī, 1993). An international movement named 'Musawah' emerged, advocating the rejection of qiwāmah and considering it oppressive patriarchy that needs reform (Brueske, 2018).

b. The Middle Islamist Discourse

This discourse views women's empowerment as enabling Muslim women to realize their potential and influence in society while adhering to Islam's principles and values in the Qur'ān and the Sunnah (Farooqi, 20016). The discourse dismisses the liberal Islamists' norms that define women's success as financial and social independence, critiques the notion of judging women's success by comparing them to men, and emphasizes that success is not limited to the life of this world but, more importantly, the hereafter (Maryam, 2020).

The discourse emphasizes that women have three roles in life: a human being, a female, and a member of society (al-Qaradāwī, 1977). For woman's humanity, Islam emphasizes equality with men in the origin of creation. On the other hand, Islam differentiates between men and women in certain aspects, e.g., family's financial responsibility. The integration of equality and differentiation aims to make the relation between men and women complementary, enabling men and women to contribute to society and achieve success (al-Dosarī, 1432 AH). The engagement of Muslim women in society may need re-evaluation since ijtiḥād based on custom ('urf) and public benefit (maṣlaḥa) may change owing to the change in time and place (al-Qaradāwī, 2001).

Consideration of the objectives of the Islamic Sharī'ah (maqāsid al-Sharī'ah) enables developing arguments and solutions regarding women's societal roles in harmony with Islam's spirit and letter

(al-Ghazālī, 2005). While women's primary focus should be the home, there needs to be a balance between women's duties toward the family and society ('Imārah, 2009). The life of the female companions is the model for achieving such a balance. The Muslim world needs women's presence in the public sphere to help combat the Western invasion in culture and education. Rather than focusing on the limitations of women's roles in society, the priority should be to look for opportunities that are compliant with Islam's rules and etiquettes (al-Ghazālī, 2008).

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This work employs the qualitative method and utilizes secondary sources of information. The following three discourses highlight the research approach:

1. Analyze women's empowerment from an Islamic perspective.
2. Evaluate the main approaches utilized to promote women's empowerment in Muslim societies.
3. Utilize the above two discourses to deduce an Islamic assessment of the call to empowering women.

4. ANALYSIS OF WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

4.1. Claimed Objectives

4.1.1. Economic Objectives

The UN stipulated women's empowerment as an integral aspect of human development and a prerequisite to sustained development (UNIDO, 2019). According to the UN, women constitute the majority of the poor globally, and the main reason for that is their uncompensated work at home. Advocates of women's empowerment emphasize women's employment as the means for eliminating poverty in the world (Duflo, 2012). A profit-driven economic aspect of women's empowerment is evident in the World Bank statement that companies aiming to improve their profitability need to increase their women employees and empower them (World Bank, 2014). Also, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) advocates increasing women's access to financing as part of women's empowerment. Since women constitute half the society, IMF posits that increasing interest-based loans to women enables more economic activity and boosts economic growth (IMF, 2018).

The UN narrative on sustained development and profitability ignores the local and global conditions that contribute to poverty. These conditions include corruption, poor performance on human rights, the rise in military expenditure for the benefit of global defense corporations, and the global economic system that favors the rich countries at the developing countries' expense (Abu-Lughod, 2015).

The Islamic perspective refutes the concept of feminization of poverty that ties socio-economic development to women's work outside of the home (al-Qaṭirjī, 2006). In particular, the concept of *qiwāmah* in Islam places the family's financial responsibility upon men, thereby indicating a clear emphasis on the socio-economic value of women's work inside the home (Islahi, 2020). In addition, Islam has conspicuously detailed and guaranteed women's financial and economic rights (Salama, 2021). Hence, the concept of feminization of poverty is unfounded from a secular and an Islamic perspective.

4.1.2. Political Objectives

The apparent political motivation behind the call to empowering women is to achieve world peace. This hinges upon two hypotheses. First, women are less prone to waging wars than men, and, hence, pushing women to positions of political decision-making enables world peace. Second, women are the primary victims of armed conflicts and post-conflict adverse conditions. Addressing and resolving these conditions demands empowering women to be actors in conflict prevention, conflict resolution, and peacebuilding (Webster, Chen, & Beardsley, 2019).

While empowering women may help prevent and resolve armed conflicts, the root cause of any conflict in the world has always been injustice. Therefore, for lasting peace, justice must prevail, which is not feasible as long as the dominant world powers mandate the international governing laws to serve their interests without consideration for the rest of humanity (Ibn Khaldūn, 2015). Additionally, the claim that women are the primary victims of wars is incorrect as the entire society is victims of war (al-Qaṭirjī, 2006). It is worth noting that Muslim feminists affirm that when women had the opportunity to lead nations, they were no less violent and bloody than men (Mernissi, 1997).

A non-apparent political objective of women's empowerment is advancing the West's interests in the Muslim world. Women's empowerment helps recruit and enlist Muslim women and feminists in the West's war of ideologies with the Islamist movements aiming to revive the Islamic civilization (Rabasa, Benard, Schwartz, & Sickel, 2007).

4.2. The Liberal Islamists' Key Assumption

The liberal Islamists claim that starting from the Abbaside era, male scholars marginalized female scholars, monopolized the interpretation of the Qur'ān and ḥadīth, and generated a heritage of patriarchal works denying women their rightful equality with men (Hidayatullah, 2014). The liberal Islamists claim that sidelining women scholars' enabled the incorrect patriarchal interpretations to become the standard throughout the ages (Barlas, 2002). The liberal Islamists persistently emphasize this claim in their writings that it became a *de facto* within the liberal Islamists' discourse.

Three main points refute the above claim:

1. A well-known rule in fiqh based on the authentic ḥadīth states, ‘The burden of proof is upon the claimant’ (al-Burnū, 1997). This rule is also well-established in secular legal systems around the world. The liberal Islamists fail to provide evidence to support their claim and instead typically cite examples of women's unjust experiences in some Muslim societies to support their claim (Abū Ḥujayr, 1997). It is crucial to distinguish between Islam's teachings and Muslims' social practices as the latter may not necessarily conform with the former.
2. It is not practically impossible that the multitude of pious and righteous male and female scholars throughout time maintained silence toward injustice meted out to women and toward the claimed incorrect interpretations of the Qur'ān and ḥadīth (al-'Abd al-Karīm, 2009). Islamic history, especially during the Abbaside era, is rich in stories of scholars who stood firm for right and against wrong to the extent that some of them lost their lives in doing so (al-Tamīmī, 2006).
3. Women scholars have always been far less than male scholars, even in Muslim generations preceding the Abbaside era (Abū Ḥujayr, 1997).

4.3. Women's Empowerment and Feminism

The underlying idea of feminism is that women suffer oppression or are disadvantaged compared with men and that the oppression or disadvantage is either illegitimate or unjustified (James, 1998). Feminism aims to change the perceived injustices to women, and the concept of power is the key to such change. Feminism adopts a seemingly limited view of what constitutes injustice toward women. There is no consensus amongst feminists – neither on the forms of injustice meted out to women nor on the reasons that cause such injustice and the endpoint for bringing justice to women (Tauna & Tong, 1994). Since the 1990s, feminism turned into an activist movement calling for male-female confrontation, competition, struggle for power, and absolute equality between men and women (Caputi, 2013). Liberal Islamists rely on this form of feminism to promote women's empowerment in Muslim societies. They utilize so-called feminist readings of the Qur'ān to posit that the Qur'ān affirms the absolute equality of men and women in all spheres of life (Arnez, 2009).

In Islam, justice amounts to fulfilling the rights at the individual and communal levels (al-Sibāī, 1999). For example, from the individualistic feminist point of view, the law of inheritance in Islam is unjust to women since, in some cases, it gives the male twice the female's share of the inheritance. However, from the communal perspective, since Islam assigns the financial responsibility to men, that law equitably balances men's and women's shares of the inheritance

with their responsibilities (al-Nabarāwī, 2004). The communal aspect of justice is widely recognized and accepted in the secular West because justice is inherently about doing the right thing (Sandel, 2009).

Islam defines the relationship between men and women in society as a partnership based on differentiation and integration of roles and responsibilities rather than competition and rivalry (al-Kurdistānī, 1994). The Qur'ān states, *“Do not covet that in which Allāh has made some of you excel others. Men shall gain a share of rewards according to their deeds, and women shall gain a share of rewards according to their deeds”* (Qur'ān 4:32). This verse asserts that the relationship between men and women is not a rivalry since the reward for each is commensurate with their roles and responsibilities in life (al-Qaraḍāwī, 2001). Furthermore, the verse implies that the prominent roles and responsibilities of men and women are different. Otherwise, there would be no point in separately mentioning men and women, and the verse's wording would have been: each human has a share of rewards according to his or her deeds (al-Nabarawī, 2004).

4.4. Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality

The demand for absolute equality between the two sexes – men and women – is an old topic that gained momentum in the nineteenth century, and there are ample Islamic responses that have addressed that topic, e.g. (al-Kurdistānī, 1994), (al-Dosarī, 1432 AH), (al-Nabarawī, 2004), and references therein. This subsection addresses the relationship between women's empowerment and the more recent concept of gender equality that developed in the 1970s.

In social sciences, gender is a social construct that dissociates biological roles from social roles. Gender is not a binary variable that designates a male or a female but is a spectrum of social beings within which males and females fall (Yenor, 2017). Conceptually, gender equality means that women should have the same rights and access to power and resources as men. Practically, gender equality attempts to eliminate the difference in social roles between men and women, aiming to change the relationship between men and women, especially concerning power (Rahman, 2013). UN literature presents gender equality as a fundamental human right essential to achieving peace and sustainable development (UNIDO, 2019). Gender equality is the enabler to women's empowerment, and women's empowerment is a result and a means of gender equality (Gurkan & Barut, 2019).

The concept of gender directly conflicts with the text of the Qur'ān verse 51:49 regarding creating everything in pairs, which includes humankind (Muslim *et al.*, 2010). While men and women are equal in many respects, they are physiologically and psychologically different. The Qur'ān verse 3:36 states, *“and the male is not similar to the female”* (Ibn Hismādī & Shams al-Dīn, 2018). A well-established fiqh rule is that ‘the Sharī'ah does not distinguish between similar entities, but it does distinguish between different entities’ (al-Burnū, 1997). Concerning roles and

responsibilities, where the similarity in characteristics, abilities, or needs is the case, the Sharī'ah does not distinguish between men and women, and the opposite is true (al-Ghazālī, 2008). Examples of aspects in which Islam asserts equality between men and women include the ontological value (i.e., humanity), dignity and honor, right to protection, legal responsibility, ownership, and capacity (ahlīyah) for financial transactions, right to knowledge, qualification for ijtihād, and consent for marriage (al-Dosarī, 1432 AH). Examples of aspects in which Islam differentiates between men and women include body parts that must be covered ('awrah), dress code, exception of women from some religious obligations (e.g., Friday congregational prayer or Jumu'ah), the share of an inheritance, testimony in financial transactions, testimony in criminal lawsuits that involve capital punishment (qisās) and legal retribution (hudūd), the communal obligation of fighting (jihād), the permission of a male guardian (walī) in marriage contracts, and child custody (al-Dosarī, 1432 AH). The Prophet said, “Let Allāh's curse be upon men who seek semblance with women and women who seek semblance with men” (al-Bukhārī ḥadīth no. 5885). The text of the ḥadīth is general, indicating that the prohibition includes any action that promotes such semblance between the two sexes (al-Kurdistānī, 1994).

Consideration of the differences is part of Islam's equity consistent with the objective of the Sharī'ah to achieve justice and welfare for the whole society (Ibn al-Qayyim, 1996). Both men and women are equally capable and need life, protection, dignity, honor, prayer, zakāh, fasting, ḥajj, legal capacity, the right to ownership, conducting financial transactions, and knowledge. Hence, the Sharī'ah does not distinguish between them in these aspects. However, where there is a difference in capability, characteristics, or need, the Sharī'ah distinguishes between them, such as in the obligations of Jumu'ah and jihād, testimony, inheritance, and dress code. The notion of absolute equality between men and women contravenes with the verse “Allāh does not burden a soul except [with that within] its capacity” (Qur'ān 2:286) (Ibn Kathīr, 2007). Ignoring the differences in characteristics and abilities and assigning similar roles and responsibilities for men and women is a form of injustice (al-Kurdistānī, 1994). Women and society would suffer the negative impact of such injustice. Thus, Islam calls for a just form of gender equality, or gender equity, recognizing the similarities and differences between men and women (Badawi, 2016).

The concept of gender promotes homosexuality and transsexualism as social norms (Yenor, 2017), which directly conflict with the Islamic text (al-Zāhabī, 2002) and (Ibn Hismādī & Shams al-Dīn, 2018). It is worth mentioning that recent Western scientific studies challenge the notion of gender equality. These studies point to a wide range of issues associated with gender equality, including gender dysphoria in children and the negative impact of gender-neutral parenting on society, among several other social issues (Soh, 2020).

5. LIBERAL ISLAMISTS' METHODOLOGIES FOR PROMOTING WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

The liberal Islamists aim to intellectually break away from the Islamic scientific tradition and heritage they accuse of being chauvinistic toward women. They set out to produce works that promote women's empowerment. This section critiques the primary methodologies they employ in their endeavor.

5.1. Far-fetched Qur'ān Interpretations

The liberal Islamists rely on self-proclaimed unorthodox new readings of the Qur'ān (al-Shafīe, 2004). They utilize two main approaches: historical contextualization and thematic contextualization (Hidayatullah, 2014). This subsection explains these two approaches and recalls two examples of how the liberal Islamists utilize the approaches to explain away verse 4:34 of the Qur'ān that establishes the concept of *qiwāmah*.




Historical contextualization renders some verses of the Qur'ān inapplicable to the present time. The Qur'ān verse 4:34 contradicts the liberal Islamists' perception of the Qur'ān's egalitarian ethos that calls for gender equality. The liberal Islamists argue that the verse addresses a specific time and space where women's subjugation to men was prevalent and posit that the verse's text is no longer applicable (Hidayatullah, 2014). If this argument were valid, the question is: How could the Qur'ān approve such subjugation? There must be a clear-cut text that abrogates verse 4:34 or a progression in revelation to abolish the claimed subjugation (Ibn al-'Arabī, 1992). However, neither an abrogating text nor a progression in revelation to render *qiwāmah* inapplicable exists (al-Dosarī, 1432 AH).

Thematic contextualization links certain individual verses to general themes in the Qur'ān, aiming to reinterpret these verses to support the liberal Islamists' call to women's empowerment. This approach is referred to in the liberal Islamists literature as Intra-Qur'ānic Interpretation (Hidayatullah, 2014). This study prefers the term 'thematic contextualization' as it more accurately represents the concept behind the liberal Islamists' approach and avoids confusion with the well-known Intra-Qur'ānic interpretation in the science of Qur'ān exegesis. In their intellectual struggle to reconcile verse 4:34 with gender equality, some liberal Islamists utilize Monotheism (Tawhīd) to revoke the concept of *qiwāmah*. They assert that Tawhīd mandates Allāh's supremacy over all creation and that Allāh has no gender. They posit that women's obedience to men imposed by *qiwāmah* represents a gender hierarchy that contradicts Tawhīd and results in oppression and injustice and, hence, must be revoked (Wadud, 2006). Since Tawhīd is the most fundamental concept in Islam then, if the liberal Islamists' argument were valid, there must be an explicit text in the Qur'ān or authentic Sunnah that revokes *qiwāmah*, which is not the case (al-Dosarī, 1432 AH).


5.2. Extrapolation of Events and Incidents

This approach leverages well-known isolated incidents and events to draw generalized conclusions that promote women's empowerment.

The liberal Islamists recall the female Companions embracing Islam during its early years, holding on to Islam, withstanding persecution, and migrating to Abyssinia and later to Madinah. The liberal Islamists draw upon modern-day political activism and consider these events to be active participation by women in the political arena (Faqīrī, 2015). Political activists typically suffer persecution, imprisonment, and sometimes exile for expressing their political views that oppose oppressive ruling regimes. However, the claim that the abovementioned events amount to political participation constitutes an incorrect analogy (qiyās fāsid). The reason is that the effective cause ('illah) is different in each situation (Abū Ḥujayr, 1997). The male and female Companions who embraced Islam in its early years held on tight to the testimony of faith. They suffered persecution and migrated for that cause (Ibn Kathīr, 1990). Modern-day political activism does not spur from religious beliefs, and political activists may even be irreligious. The notion that Islam's first pillar constitutes political participation turns Islam into a political cause. It contradicts the fact that Islam is a complete way of life centered around worshipping Allāh. Politics is a part of that way of life but is neither its sole aspect nor foundation (Mihanna, 2018).

Motivated by gender equality, some liberal Islamists advocate that a woman can be an Imam leading public congregational prayers of mixed sexes, including the Jumu'ah sermon (Ali, 2019). The liberal Islamists recall a ḥadīth concerning the female Companion Umm Waraqah . The ḥadīth states, “The Messenger of Allāh  used to visit her at her house. He appointed a prayer caller (mu'adhdhin) to make prayer call (adhān) for her, and he permitted her to lead her household in prayer” (Abū Dāwūd ḥadīth no. 592). There is a disagreement among scholars regarding the authenticity of this ḥadīth (al-'Abd al-Karīm, 2009). If the ḥadīth is considered authentic, its text restricts leading the congregational prayer to Umm Waraqah's household only. Extrapolation to general public congregational prayers needs separate evidence, which does not exist. The Prophet's practical Sunnah, followed by the Companions and Followers, indicates that women never led public congregational prayers of mixed sexes. It is unknown that any female Companion, including 'Ā'ishah , has led public congregational prayers of mixed sexes (Ibn Qudāmah, 1997).

5.3. Unscholarly Ḥadīth Criticism

The liberal Islamists reject ḥadīths that do not conform with their call to women's empowerment claiming these ḥadīths to be spurious. An example is the well-known ḥadīth that “Allāh's Messenger  went out to the place of prayer on the day of celebration (īd). He passed by

some women and said to them, ‘O womenfolk, give charity ... Among those deficient in discernment and religion, I have not seen anyone more able to sway the mind of a prudent man than one of you. They asked, ‘O Messenger of Allāh, what is the deficiency of our religion and our discernment?’ He replied, ‘Is it not the case that a woman's testimony is equivalent to half that of a man?’ They said, ‘Yes.’ He said, ‘This pertains to the deficiency of her discernment.’ He then said, ‘Is it not the case that when a woman menstruates, she neither prays nor fasts?’ They replied, ‘Yes.’ He said, ‘That pertains to the deficiency of her religion’” (al-Bukhārī ḥadīth no. 304 & Muslim ḥadīth no. 80).

In the liberal Islamists' view, the above ḥadīth is demeaning to women and contradicts women's equality with men in dignity and honor as mandated by the Qur'ān (Mernissi, 1992). Hence, liberal Islamists declare the above ḥadīth spurious despite having the highest authenticity level as it is agreed-upon. The attempt to revoke the ḥadīth under consideration lacks the scholarly approach in ḥadīth sciences. In particular, when a ḥadīth seems to conflict with the Qur'ān, it needs to be dealt with under the well-known topic of contradiction of evidence in the science of Fundamentals of Fiqh (Usūl al-Fiqh) (al-Sūsah, 1992). Such treatment did not take place in the liberal Islamists' attempt. The Prophet ﷺ explained precisely in the text what he meant by a deficiency in discernment when he referred to the Qur'ān verse 2:282. Also, the Prophet ﷺ explained the deficiency in religion as missing the daily prayers and fasting due to menstruation. In actuality, the ḥadīth is advice from the Prophet ﷺ to women to be cognizant of an innate power they have, which is the ability to sway the minds of men, even the most prudent of them (al-Qaradāwī, 2001). The Prophet ﷺ had the best manners, and it is unthinkable that he would demean women, especially on the happy occasion of 'Īd (Ezzat, 2015). The ḥadīth merely points to characteristics related to women's psychological and physiological nature different from men's (al-Dosarī, 1432 AH). Thus, the ḥadīth does not contradict the Qur'ān and falls under the category of Sunnah that confirms the Qur'ān.

Another liberal Islamist approach to reject ḥadīths that contradict their call for women's empowerment is to declare a narrator in the chain of narration (sanad) weak despite being declared trustworthy by ḥadīth scholars. An example is the well-known ḥadīth narrated by the Companion Abū Bakrah رضي الله عنه stating, “Never will succeed such a nation that makes a woman their ruler” (al-Bukhārī ḥadīth no. 4425). The liberal Islamists declare Abū Bakrah رضي الله عنه untrustworthy due to a well-known incident during 'Umar's caliphate and declare the ḥadīth to be spurious (Mernissi, 1993). However, Abū Bakrah رضي الله عنه is declared trustworthy by the consensus of the ḥadīth scholars (Ibn Ḥajar, 1995). Furthermore, the ḥadīth under consideration is reported in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī,

which enjoys the highest degree of authenticity after the Qur'ān, declared authentic by the consensus of the scholars, and the Muslim Ummah has received it with acceptance (Ibn Ḥajar, 2013).

5.4. Employing Unauthentic Ḥadīths

In their pursuit of supporting women's empowerment in politics, the liberal Islamists cite a narration that claims that 'Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb رضي الله عنه noticed that people demanded higher women's dower for marriage. So, he ascended the pulpit and ordered that the dower is not to exceed four hundred dirhams. A woman from the tribe of Quraysh stood up and addressed 'Umar رضي الله عنه saying that he has no right to limit dower and referred to the Qur'ān verse 4:20. 'Umar رضي الله عنه then declared that the woman was correct and that he was wrong, ascended the pulpit, and withdrew his order. The liberal Islamists use this narration to claim that women participated in public policy during the righteous caliphs' time (Faḡīrī, 2015). However, the above narration has been declared weak in both the sanad and text (matn) (Abū Ḥujayr, 1997).

In their assertion of women's empowerment, liberal Islamists claim that women can fight in wars alongside men (Aqsūrī, 2019). The liberal Islamists recall as evidence a ḥadīth regarding Umm 'Ammārah Nusaybah bint K'ab رضي الله عنها. The ḥadīth states that “Some women’s garments were brought to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb رضي الله عنه. Among these garments, one was elegant and large ... 'Umar رضي الله عنه said, ‘I shall send it to someone more deserving of it; Umm 'Ammārah Nusaybah bint K'ab رضي الله عنها. I heard Allāh's Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم say, ‘on the day of the battle of Uḥud, whenever I turned to the left or the right, I saw her fighting to protect me’” (Ibn Sa'd, 2001). The sanad of this ḥadīth includes al-Wāqīdī, Ya'qūb ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Īsā, and Mūsā ibn Ḍamrah. Al-Wāqīdī is well-known to fabricate ḥadīth (al-Dhahabī, 1982). Ya'qūb ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Īsā is weak (al-Baghdādī, 2011) and Mūsā ibn Ḍamrah is unknown (majhūl al-ḥāl) (al-Bukhārī, 2008). A ḥadīth that has in its sanad a fabricator is spurious and should not be used (Ibn al- Ṣalāḥ, 1980). The ḥadīth under consideration is entirely spurious since it has in its sanad a fabricator, a weak narrator, and an unknown narrator.

The matn of the preceding ḥadīth conflicts with an authentic ḥadīth that states, “'Umar رضي الله عنه distributed garments amongst some women in Madinah. An elegant garment remained ... he said, ‘Umm Salīṭ is more deserving of it because she used to carry the water skins for us on the day of the battle of Uḥud’” (al-Bukhārī ḥadīth no. 2881). The similarity of the incident in the two ḥadīths indicates that the reward was for Umm Salīṭ's رضي الله عنها role in providing water to the soldiers in the

battle of Uhud. Numerous other ḥadīths confirm female Companions' role in the Prophet's battles as helping with food, water, and tending to the wounded (Abū Hujayr, 1997).

6. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

6.1. Foundations of Women's Empowerment

Women's empowerment based on feminism and gender equality creates a culture that recognizes women as empowered if they conform to masculine traits, take on duties historically performed by men, and assert their individualism. Such a narrative considers masculinity the model to aspire for and implies that femininity is lower than masculinity and contradicts the premise of presenting the call to empower women as a pro-women movement (Farooqi, 2016). The liberal Islamists women's empowerment narrative fails to acknowledge women's contributions and empowerment to fulfill female-dominated roles (al-Qaṭirjī, 2006).

On the other hand, Islam acknowledges femininity as an integral aspect of women's existence and ascribes rewards for women for their feminine-based role in society. Islam's consideration of the difference in traits between men and women is evident in a ḥadīth where the Prophet ﷺ said, “Embrace goodness toward women, for a woman is created from a rib, and the most curved part of the rib is its upper part. So, if you attempt to straighten the rib, it will break, but if you cease [to straighten] the rib, it shall continue with its curvature. So, embrace goodness toward women” (al-Bukhārī ḥadīth no. 3331 & Muslim ḥadīth no. 1468). This ḥadīth explicates that women's traits are different from those of men and that men should not attempt to mold women into men's traits as this goes against women's nature upon which Allāh created them (al-Qaraḍāwī, 2001). That nature best suits women's roles in life and empowers them to carry out their responsibilities. Also, molding women into the same traits as men contravenes the wisdom of creating the two sexes to complement each other. Islam assigns rights and responsibilities considering the difference in traits, and in the end, the reward is justly commensurate with the capabilities and responsibilities (al-Kurdistānī, 1994).

The fundamental argument behind women's empowerment in the liberal Islamist discourse is that men and women are equal in humanity (Barlas, 2002). To achieve justice, men's and women's social roles should be equal in all spheres of life. The liberal Islamist discourse assumes absolute equality between the two sexes to be a condition for justice (Ali, 2019). However, the fact that men and women are equal in humanity does not imply equality in all characteristics and, hence, in all life spheres. Islam is concerned primarily with justice and considers equality a consequence, rather than a condition, of justice (al-Dosarī, 1432 AH). Equality materializes when it does not conflict with justice. When femininity and masculinity do not play an influential role, the Sharī'ah does not distinguish between men and women in its rulings, and the opposite is true (Ibn al-Qayyim, 1996).

Equating men and women in roles and responsibilities would be unjust when different characteristics, traits, capabilities, and needs exist. Thus, Islam aims to achieve gender equity and not gender equality (Badawi, 2016).

6.2. Women's Empowerment and Ijtihād

The liberal Islamists recognize and applaud the fact that Islam endorses aspects of equality between men and women. However, they neither acknowledge nor agree with the social elements in which Islam differentiates between men and women. They posit that such differentiation is not built in the Islamic text and is biased due to male chauvinism. Therefore, liberal Islamists call for opening the door of ijtihād to women and feminists to critique and revise Islam and Sharī'ah (Ezzat, 2015).

However, most liberal Islamists promoting women's empowerment lack proper education in Islamic sciences and Arabic. Hence, they lack the conditions required for ijtihād (al-Shafīe, 2004). The liberal Islamists rely on their self-proclaimed endeavors rather than the well-established Islamic sciences approach to read women's empowerment into the Islamic texts. It is essential to emphasize that the Qur'ān clearly instructs referring matters related to women to Allāh. The Qur'ān states, *"And they request from you [O Muḥammad] a legal injunction (fatwá) concerning women. Say, Allāh provides you with injunctions regarding them"* (Qur'ān 4:127). This instruction mandates following the Qur'ān and the authentic Sunnah when discussing women's issues (Muslim & et al., 2010), which includes women's empowerment.

1.3. Assessment of the Call

The liberal Islamists' call to empowering women contradicts fundamental Islamic principles, including qiwāmah, marriage, family life, and men's and women's intrinsic human nature. The call also introduces unorthodox principles and practices into Muslim societies. The main inevitable consequences of the liberal Islamist approach to women's empowerment are:

1. Deviation from the sound understanding and practice of Islam.
2. The collapse of the family institution.
3. Rise and spread of social ills including delayed marriage, divorce, single-parenting, homosexuality, and transsexuality.

The liberal Islamists' call to empower women leads to significant religious, family, and society corruption, negatively impacting religion and progeny's preservation. Preservation of religion is the most important of the five comprehensive objectives of the Sharī'ah (Ibn 'Āshūr, 2011). From the Islamic perspective, the resulting corruption (mafsadah) in the call to empowering women outweighs any potential worldly benefit (maslahah). Based on the fiqh rule that 'repelling corruption takes precedence over acquiring benefits' (al-Burnū, 1997), Muslim societies should

abandon the liberal Islamists' call to empowering women. Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ cautioned of trials related to women saying, "I have not left after me a trial that is more harmful to men than [the trial of] women" (al-Bukhārī ḥadīth no. 5096 & Muslim ḥadīth no. 2740). The secular call for women's empowerment and its consequences are, without a doubt, aspects of that trial.

7. CONCLUSION

A question that needs an answer is: Do Muslim women need empowerment? The answer is a resounding 'yes.' The key to such empowerment is a sound understanding of the Sharī'ah objectives while observing the fixed and the variable aspects of the Sharī'ah (al-Ghazālī, 2008). Thus, an Islamically consistent approach characterizes women's empowerment as 'enabling Muslim women to perform their roles and carry out their responsibilities in life consistent with the Sharī'ah.' This concept qualifies as 'Women's Islamic Empowerment.'

In some Muslim cultures, misunderstanding and misuse of qiwāmah and masculinity result in demeaning, minimizing, and suppressing women's societal roles (Maryam, 2020). These cultures contradict the Islamic perspective on women as human beings and represent hurdles in fulfilling their roles in society. The result is that women who constitute half the society cannot perform their roles to the best of their abilities, and society suffers. Bringing such cultures into consistency with sound Islamic principles should be the objective of women's Islamic empowerment.

Finally, subsection 5.1 briefly pointed to the methodology of the Qur'ān interpretation that liberal Islamists utilize and refer to as 'feminist readings of the Qur'ān' (Hidayatullah, 2014). This topic and its relation with Western hermeneutics need further research and a detailed Islamic response as it is one of the liberal Islamists' pillars to women's empowerment.

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THE IMPACT OF INSTRUCTIONAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS TRAINING ON EDUCATORS

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ABSTRACT

The topic of instructional communication skills of educators is relevant to the learning process, yet the problem exists where many educators are not sufficiently trained in effective instructional communication skills. The outcomes of effective instructional communication skills of educators can enhance communicative cognitive processing, student-teacher relationships, and student motivation and achievement. After the implementation of an instructional eight-hour training session on eight lesson topics of instructional communication skills, two volunteer educator participants indicated a positive result of the training session intervention. The quantitative data gathered from the pre-and post-assessment indicates that educator knowledge of instructional communication skills increased from 50 percent on the pre-assessment to 75 percent on the post-assessment, indicating an average increase of 25 percent. Through this result, the findings conclude that an instructional eight-hour training session has a positive impact, increasing educators' knowledge on the topic of instructional communication skills as a direct result of the instructional eight-hour training session. It can then be inferred that such training interventions on instructional communication skills can be recommended to increase educator's knowledge, potentially positively affecting communicative cognitive processing, student-teacher relationships, and student motivation and achievement.

KEYWORDS: Instructional Communication, Communicative Cognitive Processing, Motivation, Student-Teacher Relationships, Education.

1. INTRODUCTION

Effective instructional communication skills of educators are essential in education, as learning is centered on the communicative process, to which this study is potentially significant. Many educators lack sufficient training in instructional communication skills due to little or null coursework or formal training throughout their academic and professional careers. Educators who have difficulty with communicating knowledge and information successfully are often unable to provide productive and positive student-teacher relationships causing students to have potentially negative outcomes in their motivation and achievement. Educators must understand the communicative process to realize that they are the message, and thus, their attributes of verbal and non-verbal communication affect how their messages are understood, received, processed, and either accepted or rejected by student recipients.

As a classroom is an isolated environment to its purpose, the background knowledge of students affects their cognitive processing within the classroom to where a melding of pedagogical and cognitive psychosocial and neurosocial approaches to communication must be considered by the instructor transforming the classroom to become “a dynamic, multidimensional space” (Walton, 2016, p.123). In this sense, the dimensions of student and educator backgrounds must find a common area to establish a foundational setting where both parties can facilitate an exchange to foster a communicative dialogue of learning. When a foundation or common ground cannot be formed, the communication and thus, the learning process, becomes mechanical and superfluous affecting message dissemination from the instructor and message reception and processing by the student.

While a linear approach to the learning process roots from the instructor disseminating information to the student, the acquisition of knowledge and ways in which learning becomes defined spreads into streams of cognitive processing. Learner outcomes become demonstrated through measurements of comprehension, retention, and application, thus, making learners active participants in the learning process (Sellnow et al., 2012). The problem expands to reveal that as learners are expected to apply knowledge, this cannot be done in an environment where the instructor has not applied his or herself to be actively engaged in crafting and communicating the message of learning. Without such engagement, active student-teacher relationships cannot be formed to activate student motivation and achievement, nor the ability to accurately measure the abilities and progress of both students and educators. The problem of effective communication may become mutual to where the measurement of effective instructional communication skills of instructors must be considered according to purpose, audience, and desired outcomes, to where

what is considered as a “positive” or “negative” result, is only dependent on the “positive” or “negative” perceptions and outcomes of students.

In every classroom setting from elementary through higher education, students struggle for various reasons and display their struggle in various forms. Often elementary, and secondary schools view students from lower socio-economic situations or those attributed to a lack of educational equity, such as “Title 1”(ed.gov) students, schools, and institutions, to have more “problems” among students’ motivation and achievement. Some of the same factors carry onto students in higher education to where their responsibilities bring further distractions to the academic process of learning. While the causes for students’ status’ becomes behavioral, linguistic, cultural, political, economic, and situational, the immediate factor of fostering a breakthrough moment, rather than a breakdown of the learning process, is centered on the essential elements of effective instructional communication skills. Such a moment that impacts student motivation and achievement in a “positive” way where students not only receive messages with minimal interference but also process information with higher intrinsic motivation are rooted in a developed student-teacher relationship that promotes academic success through a continual cycle of cognitive growth for every student.

Even in higher education, traditional instructional paradigms of instructional training do not reflect the fluidity of the learning process to which the breakdown of instructional communication has developed a realization that “the ‘one size fits all models of the past’ are losing relevance, “so instructional communication research should shift with it” (Valenzano & Wallace, 2017 p.483) demonstrating a need for further training and experience in instructional communication skills to be applied in the field of education and among scholars. The maintenance of instructional leadership through effective instructional communication skills is part of the foundation of the pedagogical process. The effectiveness of such a process becomes assessed through the progression of advancement, otherwise leaving a failure to reach goals and attain progress to be attributed to a failure or breakdown in the communicative and learning process (Walton, 2014).

As the problem of lacking instructional communication skills becomes more realized, ways in which student motivation and achievement can be improved run parallel to the improvement of instructional communication skills among educators. The proposed solution to this problem of a deficit of efficient instructional communication skills is to create and implement an eight-hour instructional unit to a group of educators on instructional communication skills incorporating the use of visual aids and learner application of the knowledge through practice and assessment.

The significance of this study leads to an overall objective of implementing instructional communication skills training in formal settings, such as professional development and higher education, to which such skills lead to improved knowledge of the educator, enhancing their

learning opportunities and experiences with learners at any level. This study serves to contribute to the methodology of training and measurement for positive training facilitation to which educator participants can complete with an increased ability to understand the cognitive communicative process, student-teacher relationship building, and the associations of increased motivation and overall learner achievement.

The remaining parts of this paper are organized as follows. The second section represents a review of the literature. The third section details the methodology of the training outcomes and pre-and post-assessment administration and data collection. The fourth section discusses the outcomes of the instructional communication skills training intervention method focusing on the effects of each training topic area. The final section of this paper summarizes the main points and implications of such training interventions and their positive effect which educational institutions can learn and implement.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Research and literature on instructional communication skills suggest that there are countless benefits to effective instructional communication skills. This literature review on the topic will present four themes of communicative cognitive processing, instructional communication skills of instructors, student-teacher relationship, and student motivation and achievement which support the need for further formalized training of educators in instructional communication skills.

2.1 Communicative Cognitive Processing

The crafting and delivery of messages determine outcomes in how messages are processed and internalized. Cognitive development and information processing from infancy through adulthood shape how messages and thus, the world around individuals is formed as schemes. The foundational structures of such schemes are built upon as an individual acquires knowledge and information through experiences. Cognitivism relates to the thought process of an individual. In an educational, or any setting, the learner experiences a process of thinking, and thus, information is processed beginning with a stimulus through filters including sensory register, attention, recognition, short-term memory, rehearsal, long-term memory, and meaningfulness which then leads to the final output of a response to be created and somewhat finalized until the next process begins. This entire process is called information processing. McCown (2015, p. 263) describes this process, known as information processing theory, as “an area of study known as information processing theory, which seeks to understand how people acquire new information, how they create and store mental representations of information, how they recall it from memory, and how what they already know guides and determines what and how they will learn”.

In 1918, Jean Piaget addressed the question, “How does knowledge develop” through his research program called “The Master Plan” (McCown, 2014). Constructivism is the main output of this “master plan”, where cognitive development becomes based on pre-existing knowledge and how such knowledge can be applied to solve a problem to eliminate a disequilibrium, or an unbalance of known and unknown information. Additionally, equilibriums are the desired learning outcomes in information processing where such cognitive schemes are formed and enhanced based on the observation and mental processing of a given environment. The personal growth of an individual is reflective and influenced by cultural norms, goals, and expectations that may require and thus, become established through an event of a psychosocial crisis, or a need to adjust to the “norm” of a society. Erikson (2014) based this process and the development of one’s personality on the “epigenetic principle” or the idea that “the personality of an individual forms as the ego progresses through a series of interrelated stages” (McCown, 2014). As stages are experienced, the ability to communicate an output processing of an experience, or a cognitive display of information, through dialogue with the conscious and aware formation of thoughts and ideas demonstrates true levels of intelligence (Niyetbaeva, et al., 2016). It is through communicative exchanges to which such cognitive associations are processed, and it becomes necessary for heightened dialogue to occur to further information processing and individual development.

Research and literature on the instructional communication skills of educators provide findings that student-teacher relationships based on student perceptions of teachers affect student motivation and academic achievement. The basic elements of the communication process where a message is sent to a receiver are more complicated regarding cognitive processing, psychosocial development, and pedagogy in educational contexts. How content knowledge is understood and how senders’ perceived traits affect message reception and outcomes is crucial in educational settings such as a classroom, where student motivation and achievement become dependent on the method in which the content knowledge of a lesson is crafted and delivered. Not only the message but likewise, perceptions of the sender and teacher qualities, may or may not enhance student-teacher relationships. As such relationships become defined as “negative” or “positive”, students will become more or less intrinsically motivated which could affect their academic achievement to which the ultimate instructional communication skills of the educator are crucial to be effective.

2.2 Instructional Communication Skills of Instructors

As communication is centered on the construction of content, much like how curricula are centered on content, the delivery, or instruction of the content (or message), becomes linked to the messenger. McLuhan’s idea of “the medium is the message” brings to light the idea that the message is entailed in the medium to which it is delivered. The medium in education is the instructor to which the message of specific knowledge is to be delivered through a communicative

process of instructional communication. As this concept is analyzed deeper, the instructor is also a medium of the industry as a representation of the entire phenomena of the process of education, both systematically and organically as an individual seeks knowledge. Therefore, it becomes imperative for the instructor to not only have content knowledge, but more importantly, as Ruben and Feezel (1986, p. 255) suggest, “skill, or the ability to communicate appropriately and effectively is an essential ingredient in teaching”. As the instructor themselves may not essentially be “good” or “bad” (McCluhan, 1964), it becomes the way they use communicative elements, or in the meaning of instruction, the way their instructional communication skills, including message reception as a receiver, can be “good” or “bad”.

Researchers have strived to test and define the objective and concrete meaning to otherwise subjective elements linked to the overall “good” or “bad” communication skills of instructors in educational settings. Bower et al. (2013) conducted a study where two different models of assessment were performed. The “Modes of Communication” considered included voice, body language, and words while the other model of “Constructed Impression” included communicative elements of confidence, clarity, engagement, and appropriateness (Bower et al., 2013). While such elements are static based on a one-way communicative presentation of information, they remain limited as being disproportionate to interactive communication or instructional settings (Bower et al. 2013), leaving the question of how to measure “good” or “bad” instructional communication and the necessary skills for effective instructional communication, unanswered as it stands.

To be defined as “good” or “bad”, instructional communication skills; must be measured against the elements of a receiver on which the effectiveness of the communication can be based. The meaning and purpose of instructional communication dictate the elements and requirements of those elements to which can be assessed and measured objectively with relation to the desired communicative outcomes that occur or do not occur. It becomes the perception of the receiver of the sender to which measures the effectiveness of the communication and process being successful or unsuccessful. While the impression formed about instructors is highly dependent on their oral communication abilities (Rubin & Feezal, 1986), while difficult to objectively measure, the instructional communication skills over content are essential and determine perceptions of instructors which affect the reception of the messages and content they communicate. Using communication effectively in classroom management (Rubin & Feezel, 1986), becomes linked to instructors’ motivation and understanding of instructional communication skills and their association as verbal and non-verbal elements that either work together or may hinder each other.

Just as the cognitive process of schemes is developed in learners, instructors are subjected to the same information processing and development of communicative schemes to which elements and traits of communication that appeal to content and personality are continual. Essentially, as

instructors further their communication, their communication will be furthered (Bakic-Tomic et al., 2015). Experiences further communication and builds personality, to which non-verbal and verbal communicative elements are influenced and displayed. Likewise, teacher instructional communication skills effectiveness has been shown to correlate with teacher credibility and perceived teacher competence (Rubin & Feezel, 1986).

As perceptions of instructors are rooted in instructional communication skills, the comparison of instructors to advertising professionals becomes relevant. The emotional appeal and neuroscience of aiming “to modify the receptor’s knowledge, attitudes, values, and behavior patterns” are common between educators and advertisers, where through effective instructional communication skills the personality and “feeling” of the instructor can overcome the actual message content (Ferres & Masanet, 2017, p.52). This leaves students to become intrinsically motivated to want or not want to further the student-teacher relationship affecting motivation and academic achievement. Thus, the measure of effective instructional communication and such skills of educators can become objectively developed through the results of the receiver, students.

2.3 Student-Teacher Relationships

Just as effective instructional communication skills are essential to enhance perceptions of a sender and message content, the establishment of evolving communication traits into constructive dialogues between instructors and students determines the “negative” or “positive” student-teacher relationship or perceptions of either party that can be formed. It is through true dialogue where emotions can become explicit, experiences can be shared, and mutual communication appealing to the advancement of cognitive development becomes the formula to which “positive” student-teacher relationships can occur (Niyetbaeva et al., 2016). The basic elements of speaking and listening of classroom interaction (Flanders, 1972) formulate perceptions and build cognitive construction of knowledge content of both academic and personal experience for a student, while at the same time, furthering the goals of motivating and educating learners for an instructor. Thus, the effectiveness of instructional communication skills is mutual where the necessity and dependency of the instructor and the student define the learning process.

A decline in instructional communication skills relating to a contradiction between communicative elements delivering a miscommunication of instructional perception can lead to a breakdown in the student-teacher relationship to where the relationship could become “negative” or confrontational. It is through mutual communication and dialogue to which the remedy of conflict would influence the outcome to adjust the student-teacher relationship status (Cupach, 1980).

Within the definitions of the student-teacher relationship, the relationship *is* strictly professional, to where a balance between emotional displays in instructional communication skills must be

measured while displaying cooperation and mutual satisfaction to continue the communicative process long-term throughout the educational process. The perceptions students have of instructors must be reflective of genuine traits and qualities that can lead to a process of trust. Students must trust an instructor to trust the content which determines the value of the communication skills the instructor displays to further the message, as the instructor *is* the message (McCluhan, 1964; Bakic-Tomic et al., 2015). Part of such trust is based on emotional appeal to where the basis of a perception of instructors' communication skills can be judged in the outcomes of storytelling information (Ferres & Masanet, 2017). The subconscious and conscious emotional and rational human experiences in correlation with how storytelling, motivation, and emotional appeal are an integral part of the reception of communicated messages, which are overlooked, as a widespread application within instructional training of educators in the field of education.

Additional research studies and implementation of strategies to further the student-teacher relationship through training are exemplified in a study of middle school teachers implementing the Establish-Maintain-Restore (EMR) intervention approach to where dialogue and methods are purposed for the main goal of “cultivating relationships with students” (Duong et al., 2019). The outcomes of the intervention detailed an increase in academically engaged time and a decrease in disruptive behavior, providing solid promise for concepts to be implemented for teacher training to enhance and promote student-teacher relationships, as the outcomes are beneficial in attaining student engagement.

2.4 Student Motivation and Achievement

Through effective instructional communication skills and the furthering of “positive” student-teacher relationships, student motivation and achievement can be fostered, maintained, and enhanced. The communicative process and instructional communication bring not only knowledge and content but also student engagement by which instructors must lead. Rooting back to the communication skills of an instructor to further measure the effectiveness of their communication, instructors' ability to lead and capture students' interests becomes a defining outcome (Farmer, 2018). It is then inferred that effective instructional communication skills can also be tied to effective instructional leadership. When a communicative disequilibrium occurs, false perceptions that students have of instructors, and likewise instructors have on students, can quickly deteriorate student motivation and achievement and without proper instructor classroom leadership and instructional communication skills, cannot be acquired.

A study completed in a university surveyed the perceptions of students and instructors at undergraduate and graduate levels resulting in lacking communication between students and instructors to where students' “fear of giving the wrong answer” was the main cause (Florescu & Pacurar, 2016). The results of the study indicated discouragement among students based on self-

perception which motivated students towards a “negative” student-teacher relationship and increased “fear” due to “bad” instructional communication skills, lacking dialogue from instructors to students. Rather, if instructors expressed and facilitated an environment that did not perpetuate a “fear of wrong answers” within students but instead communicated the true feelings of instructors that “mistakes ought to be considered a chance to learn something new” (Florescu & Pacurar, 2016, p.62), student-teacher relationships and motivation and achievement would be “positive”. This study also reveals a lack of leadership by which instructors could not effectively communicate or possess effective instructional communication skills to which students’ perceptions of instructors could be understood accurately which otherwise would have stimulated an engaging and motivating classroom environment.

Additionally, similar attempts to measure “good” teaching have been documented by researchers. While not directly related to specific instructors in the university setting, students were asked to indicate their “perceptions of good teaching in higher education” (Nabaho et al., 2016), to which a discrepancy was found between this mentioned study, where students indicated student-centered teaching as the main trait of good teaching allowing the students to lead rather than the instructor, and the university’s student evaluation of teaching. These findings are also contrary to other research studies where specifically in higher educational settings students seek to learn from experts in their field through a more hierarchical formal method of instruction (Nabaho et al. 2016), furthering inconsistencies with one-way measurement of perceptions of “good” and “bad” teaching and thus, the instructional communication skills of instructors without measuring perceptions, and the motivational and achievement levels of student receivers.

Likewise, the intrinsic motivation of instructors is a pivotal psychological and metacognitive element to which instructors further their communication skills, displaying innate communicative capabilities, and are perceived as being more genuine, thus having a more “positive” student-teacher relationship to which students acquire higher interest levels in content and motivation resulting in higher levels of achievement. Akhtar et al (2017, p.20) state, “the quality of teaching students receive in the context of classroom directs the process of their cognitive development, thus motivation of teachers and student achievement in school are strongly interlinked factors”. Such motivation can be rooted in intrinsic and extrinsic capacities for both instructors and students, making effective instructional communication skills essential to maintain shifts. As motivational factors can be fluid, based on perceptions of stimulated satisfaction, “emotions add relevance and human beings are compelled to pay attention to what matters” (Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2019, p.57). Instructors can dictate to students what matters in both subject content and perception of importance supported by motivational stimuli communicated through dialogue and storytelling that furthers a positive student-teacher relationship (Al-Madani, 2015).

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research study is designed as an action quantitative study and thus, quantitative data collection based on two sets of assessment scores. The researcher used a quantitative pre-and post-assessment testing instrument before and after the eight-hour instruction session. The assessment consists of 20 multiple choice questions about instructional communication skills. The assessment was scored using a percentile score where 100% is the highest possible score and 0 percent is the lowest possible score. Both the pre-and post-assessment were administered online through a digital platform to where participants indicated their responses using a device such as a phone, tablet, or computer to where they accessed the assessments at the appropriate prompted time in the study. Random number assignments of the participants were recorded upon completion of each assessment.

After obtaining consent from participants, the pre-assessment was administered, then the researcher instructed the adult educator volunteer participants in an effort to positively affect the results. Each lesson and hour of instruction taught one topic of instructional communication skills which included communicative cognitive processing, non-verbal communication, verbal communication, dialogue, student-teacher relationships, motivation, storytelling and emotional appeal, and message crafting. Through direct instruction, independent learning, guided practice, and group discussion and activities knowledge was presented to teach educator learners the “skills” and correlation between the elements of instructional communication skills and their effects on the learning process as they are used in classroom settings.

At the completion of the training, the researcher administered a post-training assessment to which the results were compared to the pre-training assessment to determine if changes have occurred in the participants' knowledge on the topic of instructional communication skills. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics where the researcher calculated the mean/average of the pre-assessment and the post-assessment scores, thus comparing the mean of the pre-assessment scores to the mean of the post-assessment scores.

3.1 Participants

Eight volunteer participants were selected by the researcher to be contacted based on the criteria that they are over the age of 18 years old and their educational background of teaching/instructional experience of having provided direct instruction in some capacity (face-to-face, or online) to a student group of one or more learners over a consistent time frame greater than six months.

3.2 Ethical Consideration

In this study, the survey was developed then approved by the university's ethics committee. All the data collected were anonymous, confidential, and voluntary. Only participants who consented were electronically directed to the pre-assessment, training course, and post-assessment.

3.3 Analysis

The quantitative data gathered from the pre-and post-assessment indicates that educator knowledge of instructional communication skills increased from the pre-assessment to the post-assessment. The overall average of participants' scores increased from 50 percent to 75 percent, indicating an average increase of 25 percent (see Figure 1).

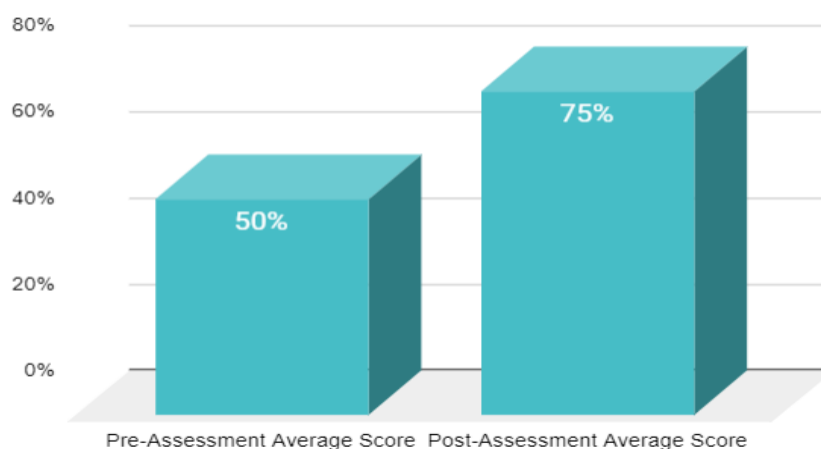


Figure 1: Pre-and post-assessment overall average percentile score comparison.

All lesson topic averages also were maintained or increased ranging in an increase of 0 to 50 percent. The lesson topics of verbal communication and lesson topic of storytelling and emotional appeal showed an average of zero percent increase and decrease while the lesson topics of communicative cognitive processing, non-verbal communication, dialogue, student-teacher relationships, motivation, and message crafting all showed an increase in average scores of 16.67 to 50 percent (see Figure 2).

Of the lesson topics which indicated an increase in scores, three topics increased by an average score of 50 percent. The lesson topic of communicative cognitive processing increased from 57.14 to 78.57 percent, an increase of 21.43 percent. The topic of non-verbal communication increased from 50 to 100 percent, an increase of 50 percent. The topic of dialogue increased from zero to 50 percent, with a second increase of 50 percent. The topic of student-teacher relationships increased from 50 to 100 percent, the third increase of 50 percent. The topic of motivation increased from 50 to 83.33 percent, an increase of 33.33 percent. The last lesson topic of message crafting increased from 33.33 to 50 percent, an increase of 16.67 percent.

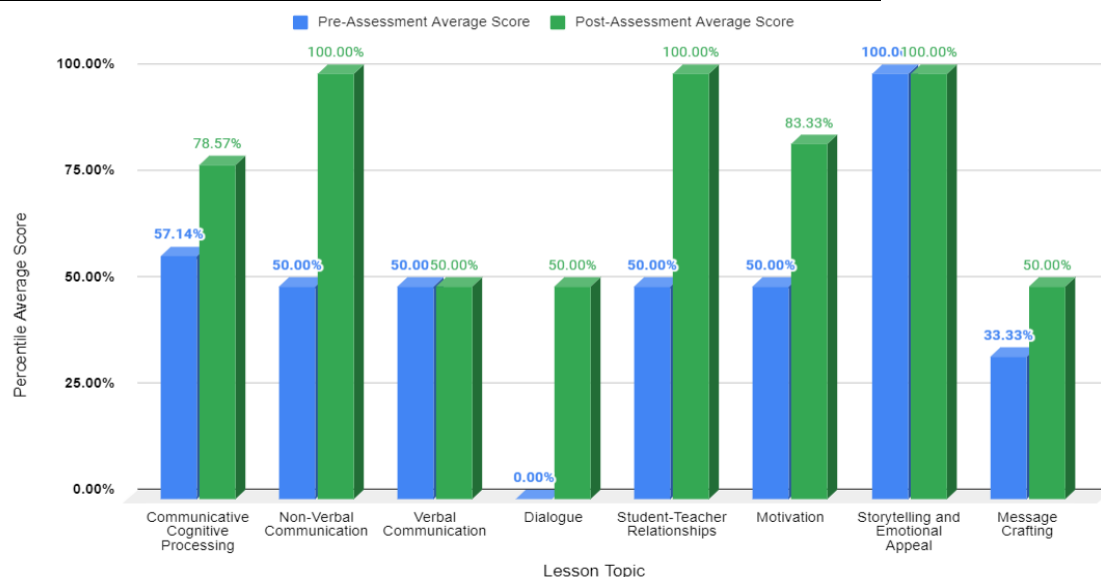


Figure 2: Comparative pre-and post-assessment average scores according to the lesson topic.

Of the two participants, their actual scores increased. The pre-assessment indicated the two participants scored the same score of 50 percent (10 out of 20 questions correct), indicating an overall pre-assessment average score of 50 percent. Following the instructional training session, the post-assessment results indicated one participant had a score of 65 percent (13 out of 20 questions correct), and one participant scored 85 percent (17 out of 20 questions correct), indicating an overall post-assessment average score of 75 percent.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The quantitative data collected from the pre-and post-assessment includes an average percentile score according to a 0%-100% scale. The assessment tool is comprised of reflecting participants' knowledge on the study topic of instructional communication skills. The completion of the 20 multiple-choice question assessment tool reflects eight lesson topics of the instructional training session which include communicative cognitive processing, non-verbal communication, verbal communication, dialogue, student-teacher relationships, motivation, storytelling and emotional appeal, and message crafting. Before data collection, six of the eight participants were not able to participate and therefore, are not included in the data results of the study. The quantitative data results indicate all participants increased in instructional communication skills knowledge upon completing the eight instructional hour training session. The pre-assessment overall average score of all participants was 50 percent. The post-assessment overall average score of all participants was 75 percent. Overall, the quantitative data indicates the impact of an eight instructional hour training session has the ability to improve the instructional communication skills knowledge of educators, which is consistent with the similar study of Akgül (2020).

The instructional communication skills training session positively impacted educator knowledge in communicative cognitive processing, non-verbal communication, dialogue, student-teacher relationships, motivation, and message crafting. Elements of cognitive communication support how effective instructional communication skills of instructors create a perception of the instructor attached to the cognitive construction of knowledge content presented. The subjective communicative traits of verbal and non-verbal expression affect perceptions of interest, motivating student experience based on direct dialogue and interaction to be measured as “good” or “bad”. Additionally, the importance of the intrinsic motivation of the instructor leads to a subconscious effect where their emotions transcend to conscious rationalism to which expressions and eventually instructional communication skills are formed. Likewise, the intrinsic motivation of students can be appealed to through emotional storytelling to which a stimulus nurtured through effective instructional communication skills is received to where the output of academic achievement is acquired. Through this process, the emergence of the cause and reaction of individual communicative exchanges can reflect or deflect interest where student outcomes become the lifeline of true measurement of the effectiveness of instructional communication skills of an instructor.

The data comparison of the pre-and post-assessment scores indicates 100 percent of participants were able to improve both their actual and average scores by a minimum of three points and 15 percent, respectively, and a maximum increase of seven points and 35 percent, respectively. The data results are a clear indication of the positive impact of the eight instructional hour training session on educators' knowledge of the topic of instructional communication skills, as their knowledge of the topic increased as a result of the training session, as evidential in the data analysis results.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the data collected from the research study, the conclusion which can be formed is the impact of an eight instructional hour training session can increase educators' overall knowledge on the topic of instructional communication skills, as indicated by the quantitative data derived from the pre-and post-assessment. Instructional training sessions for educators can therefore be impactful and effective in increasing their knowledge on the topic of instructional communication skills. The study demonstrates and recommends formal implementation based on the need and positive impact of formal instructional communication skills training for educators to further productive communication and cognitive information processing by students to receive a simultaneously emotional and contextually logical learning experience to take place cultivating high motivation and student achievement.

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Appendix A

Pre-and Post-Assessment

- What are the three main elements of communication? * 1 point
- a. Message, Channel, Receiver
 - b. Message, Channel, Decoder
 - c. Sender, Message, Receiver
 - d. Sender, Message, Decoder
- What affects cognitive processing? * 1 point
- a. Experiences and Knowledge
 - b. Communication and Experiences
 - c. Age and Experiences
 - d. Knowledge and Learning
- Why is communicative cognitive processing important? * 1 point
- a. To minimize noise
 - b. To stimulate effective decoding
 - c. To understand the target receiver
 - d. All of the above
- How many elements are included in the full communication process? * 1 point
- a. 7
 - b. 8
 - c. 5
 - d. 3
- What does instructional communication affect in educational settings? * 1 point
- a. Student-teacher relationships
 - b. Student achievement
 - c. Student motivation
 - d. All of the above
- What is "dialogue"? * 1 point
- a. A communicative process that further develops a relationship.
 - b. An exchange of information between two senders.
 - c. A form of communication, based on mutual interests.
 - d. A furthering of mutual communication appealing to cognitive development.
- Student-Teacher relationships are dependent on: * 1 point
- a. Effective instructional communication skills.
 - b. Teachers listening and adhering to students' needs.
 - c. Students feeling that they can trust their teachers.
 - d. Positive student achievement.
- "Appropriateness" is an element of: * 1 point
- a. Instructional design
 - b. Non-verbal and verbal communication
 - c. Curriculum design
 - d. Motivation

An example of intrinsic motivation is: *

1 point

- a. Achieving a personal goal.
- b. Money
- c. Someone else telling an individual what to do.
- d. A requirement that must be fulfilled.

Message crafting relates to: *

1 point

- a. Purposeful creation of messages.
- b. Creating a message with tangible objects.
- c. Writing as a hobby.
- d. Sending an emotional message.

"Silence" is part of what instructional communication element? *

1 point

- a. Verbal communication
- b. Non-verbal communication
- c. Noise
- d. Message crafting

Advertising elements are important in instructional communication as they: *

1 point

- a. Further student motivation.
- b. Provide an emotional appeal to instructional communication.
- c. Further storytelling.
- d. All of the above

An example of extrinsic motivation is: *

1 point

- a. Achieving a personal goal.
- b. A requirement that must be fulfilled.
- c. Money
- d. Someone else telling an individual what to do.

What element of instructional communication is most important *

1 point

- a. Verbal communication
- b. Motivation
- c. Non-verbal communication
- d. All of the above

What is cognitive processing? *

1 point

- a. The process of seeking knowledge and learning through an awareness of what is happening in an experience.
- b. The mental awakening of knowing an experience to which one will become an expert.
- c. The mental process of knowing, including aspects such as awareness, perception, reasoning, and judgment.
- d. The process of gaining knowledge and understanding everything.

How can instructors motivate their students? *

1 point

- a. Have open conversations and get involved in their personal lives.
- b. Lead students through lessons using repetitive positive reinforcement.
- c. Listen and comply with all requests and give rewards.
- d. Use effective communication skills to alter student perceptions.

- Why is non-verbal communication important? * 1 point
- a. It supports verbal communication.
 - b. It displays authenticity.
 - c. It generates interest in content.
 - d. It allows students to know if an instructor is tired.
- What is an element of verbal communication? * 1 point
- a. Clarity
 - b. Motivation
 - c. Facial Expressions
 - d. Eye contact
- What is the role of feedback? * 1 point
- a. Ensuring the message from the sender was received accurately.
 - b. To notify the sender the message was not received.
 - c. A method for the receiver to ask questions to the sender.
 - d. All of the above
- What are the main elements of effective message crafting? * 1 point
- a. Storytelling, emotional appeal, and delivery
 - b. Purpose, delivery, and decoding
 - c. Word choice, purpose, and delivery
 - d. Word choice, delivery, and cognitive processing

THE REAL REASONS BEHIND THE PHENOMENON OF RELIGIOUS EXTREMISM IN MUSLIM COMMUNITY

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ABSTRACT

This research deals with the phenomenon of religious extremism, which has become more widespread in our contemporary Muslim societies. It is one of the most important issues in the Islamic world that impede civil peace in the Muslim community. In such a painful reality, there is a need to analyze the phenomenon in depth to understand its real causes and effects. This study aims to: (1) identify the causes of religious extremism by considering its causes in our contemporary Muslim societies, whether it is related to the intellectual misunderstanding of religion or due to the hostility of facts (2) identify and analyze the implications of religious extremism on contemporary Muslim societies. This study adopted a descriptive analytical approach based on previous academic research on the topic and revealed several important findings. First, most of the violent and extremist ideas in the Muslim community emerged from the womb of suffering from injustice, oppression and tyranny, along with other unfair social and economic conditions. Second, by studying the causes that led to religious extremism in Muslim community, it is concluded that our societies are not immune. They do not have sufficient barriers to the threat of religious extremism. Third, among the effects of religious extremism is distracting the nation from fulfilling its civilizational goals. In addition, the research alludes to the difficulty of getting rid of this incurable disease, unless the collective awareness of Muslims changes.

KEYWORDS: Phenomenon, Religious Extremism, Muslim Community

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the most serious threats to the security and stability of the world in general, and Muslim societies in particular, in this era are the extremist religious ideas, which are practically translated into individual, or group behaviors characterized by extremism and intolerance. What should be known is that the real danger is not in the presence of a religiously extremist group of Muslims, because this phenomenon exists in all societies. The real danger lies in the spread of this phenomenon, and the extremist groups' attempt to use various methods under religious justifications, and attempt to impose this phenomenon in the midst of Muslim societies, so that it then becomes a culture of society which is the nation's true wealth, and its future hope.

Religious extremism may occur between two religions, such as Judaism and Islām, or within one country and one religion, as is happening now in the Muslim community, and this is the motivation behind this study. Despite the efforts being made in Muslim societies to confront the phenomenon of religious extremism, its spread is increasing day by day, and perhaps the reason for the failure in that is due to the lack of knowledge of the real reasons behind this phenomenon, because diagnosing any phenomenon accurately and knowing its true causes and everything surrounding it is the first step to solving it.

Accordingly, this paper attempts to raise some questions about the spread of the phenomenon of religious extremism in the Muslim community, which has become a fact that cannot be denied today, by clarifying the real reasons behind this phenomenon, and examining its implications. That is because accurately diagnosing any phenomenon and knowing its true causes and all that surrounds it, is the first step to solving it. This leads us to search for the following: How did religious extremism arise? What are the most important reasons that led to the spread of the phenomenon of religious extremism in the Muslim community, and what are the effects of it?

This paper aims to provide a cognitive addition in moderate thought, and to spread awareness among Muslims, by exposing the phenomenon of religious extremism in the Muslim community, and clarifying the real reasons behind this phenomenon and its implications, as a first step to limit the spread of this phenomenon among Muslims. Those interested in fighting religious extremism may benefit from it.

The remaining parts of this paper represent previous studies that address a body of research on religious extremism. The third section also represents the methodology adopted in preparing the research. In the fourth section, the minutes and merits of the research will be discussed in detail, such as the definition of the most important search terms, the emergence of religious extremism

and Islām's position on it, a statement of the causes of religious extremism, and its implications. Then the research concludes with a set of results and recommendations.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Among the important studies written on the topic of religious extremism, the study by Bazaz (2008) titled "*The Phenomenon of Exaggeration through the Qur'ān and the Sunnah*" (*Zahirat alghului min khilal al-Kitab wa al-Sunnah*). The study tackled the phenomenon of religious extremism using the term expressed in the legal texts which is 'exaggeration'. The aim of the study was to clarify the extent of the Muslims' suffering because of being described as terrorists, extremists, and fundamentalists. After that, the author tried to defend the religion of Islām with sound arguments, he evidenced Islām as a religion that is innocent of all accusations attached to it.

The author highlighted the true meanings of Islām, and corrected some misconceptions, which were the cause of the deviation, and the motive to this phenomenon. In his analysis of the phenomenon of exaggeration, the author relied on two main sources; the Qur'ān and the honorable Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ (peace be upon him). He also presented the causes and manifestations of the phenomenon by explaining, analyzing and linking this phenomenon, and judging it through the Qur'ān and Sunnah.

The study was characterized by a comprehensive view of the subject, as well as a set of Islamic experiences in ancient and modern times, including the Algerian experience, trying to evaluate it and draw lessons from it. The study concluded with a set of findings and recommendations by the researcher. In another study, Al-Jarad (2009) addressed the issue of religious extremism (*Zahirat al-tattaruf al-diyini*) in a systematic study in which he addressed some terms related to the concept of religious extremism such as 'exaggeration' and 'extremism' etc. He also analyzed the concept of terrorism with regard to its meaning and its connotations, excluding countries that defend their land and its honor against the colonizer. He also explained the relationship between extremism and terrorism.

Later, the discussion was directed to religious extremism in the three religions, Judaism, Christianity and Islām, where the researcher identified the historical roots of religious extremism in Islām, and also addressed the concept of moderation, as one of the general characteristics of Islām, being manifested in various acts of worship, explaining the reasons that led to religious extremism. He classified the causes as two-dimensional: direct causes such as the wrong understanding of Islām and fanaticism and indirect causes, such as economic and political reasons and so on. The most important cause that led to terrorism, according to his opinion is the extremists' deviance from the true understanding of the

religious texts. There is no doubt that the researcher was right when he said that extremism varies according to the conditions of societies, in reference to the role of governments in their politicization of religion and manipulating it to serve their interests.

He also talked about the psychological roots which the *takfiris* relied on in their terrorist practices, with an explanation of the subjective characteristics of the extremist. He touched upon the types of religious extremism and divided religious extremism into three sections, first: the extremism of belief, which he considered one of the most dangerous types of extremism, second: practical extremism, and the third type, which is extremism in judging people by defection and apostasy, and so on. Then, he explained the effects, manifestations and dangers of religious extremism. Accusations of defection (*takfir*) was considered one of the main causes of deviation.

He also shed light on Israel and other Western and secular countries and their role in exaggerating the phenomenon of religious extremism among Muslims. In the end, he presented ways to treat the phenomenon of religious extremism, indicating the most important reasons for avoiding this phenomenon. Abdullah (2012) dealt with the topic "*Al-Shabab Mujahideen Movement in Somalia. where to?*" (*Harakat al-Shabab al-Mujahidin fi al-Suwmal.. 'Ila Ayn?*). The study discussed the emergence of the jihādīst trend in Somalia and how it turned to taking up arms after the collapse of the government, then talked about the next stage, which is the renunciation of arms and the trend towards advocacy work, where the name of the movement was changed from the “Islamic union” to the “sit-in group” according to Qur’ān and the Sunnah.

However, this change was a formality as expressed by the researcher, and was not affected by the jihādīst doctrine that was entrenched in the minds of the youth of the movement. Thus, groups were formed, the most prominent of what is currently known as the Mujahideen Youth Movement under the leadership of Mukhtar Abi Zubair. Then the researcher moved on to talk about the entry of the Ethiopian forces to Mogadishu which gave the Mujahideen Youth Movement a great opportunity to prove its existence and impose its jihādīst agenda in the region, as it was able to establish the so-called “Islamic State” in most areas of central southern Somalia in a short time.

He also talked about the military coup, and the decline of the Mujahideen Youth movement, indicating the mistakes made by the latter, which negatively affected its course and made it withdraw from important cities and locations, the last of which is the port of Kismaywa. The researcher concluded the study by presenting the opinion of international observers on the future of the Mujahideen Youth Movement, and their statement that it is not unlikely that the Mujahideen Youth Movement will rise again and emerge from this crisis, stronger than it was. This is for many reasons, which includes: the movement has never relied on its own capabilities, as much as it was relying on the mistakes of its opponents. The researcher postulates that the Mujahideen Youth Movement will remain, as long as foreign interference in Somali lands exists.

In the same vein, Jirjis (2016) in his book *"Where is ISIS going? (Daesh 'Ilaa 'Ayn?)"*, focused on the emergence of ISIS, and the circumstances that helped its emergence, prominence and advancement. Among which is the social and sectarian crisis and the conflict of identities among Muslims, including the conflict of identities between Sunni and Shiite Muslims, presenting itself as the only protector of the oppressed Sunnis, and filling the vacuum in governance. The researcher also exposed the social and religious backgrounds of ISIS leaders, as well as the political, economic and social factors that prompted people to join ISIS, especially after the escalation of the sectarian wave in the region.

In addition, the researcher discussed the experience of this group in managing states, and the emergence of differences with other Salafi jihādīst group, as well as the disparity that exists between ISIS and Al-Qaeda. This is done by providing wise leadership at the local, regional and international levels of which little is available today. In addition to working on developing a long-term political strategy that includes reconciliation and some concessions, with the aim of reaching a peaceful solution to civil conflicts, and settling the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as the researcher considered the tragedy of Palestine as the constant source of mobilization and recruitment for all groups, including ISIS.

On the other hand, Adam (2017) stated in his book *"The Plague of the Age, Religious Extremism (Its Causes, Results, and Treatment)"* (Taeun al-Asra.. al-tattaruf al-diyini, 'asbabuh wa natayijuh wa 'eilajuhu), that the phenomenon of religious extremism emerged due to several factors, including subjective ones related to the extremist's personality, and objective ones related to the environment, where the spread of ignorance was considered the main reason of this phenomenon. According to the researcher's point of view, religious extremism generates mentalities that cannot be resolved. The author cited the position of Judaism, Christianity and Islām on religious extremism. He also touched on the manifestations of religious extremism and its effects, foremost of which is the moral and ethical decay, which often leads to wars that destroy all social and economic structures of states. In addition, it leads to the absence of coexistence between members of the same society.

The author concludes the study with a set of solutions that it deems appropriate to curb the phenomenon of religious extremism, foremost of which is spreading a culture of moderation and mediation, and giving complete independence to religious authorities, so that they are able to educate Muslims and respond on suspicions, and thus limit this phenomenon. The state should seek to create an appropriate environment suitable for dialogue and true coexistence. Siddiq (2017) mentioned in his book *"Religious extremism and fanaticism, its causes and the factors leading to it"* (al-tattaruf wa al-ta'asub al-diyiniu 'asbabuh wal 'awamil al-muadiyat 'ilayh), the problem of religious extremism and fanaticism. The researcher discusses the concept of religious extremism,

its different types and forms, as well as the concept of intolerance, its types, and the originating causes of extremism and religious fanaticism. The absence of religious authority and the decline in its role in paying attention to the concerns of Muslims was considered the most important cause of religious extremism and fanaticism.

The author also discussed the repercussions of the spread of religious extremism, indicating the position of Islām on it. The researcher cited the roots of religious extremism and the emergence of such groups in the Arab and Islamic world in the modern era to the beginning of the nineteen seventies. He also stressed on how to treat extremism and religious fanaticism, by empowering religious authorities and allowing them to teach religion in the right way. He concluded that religious extremism cannot be cured definitively except through serious dialogue in the best way and being firm about it in societies. The researcher believed that the treatment of religious extremism and fanaticism cannot be eliminated, but rather we can limit its spread only, because Allah Almighty created us all different and this wisdom will continue until the day of Judgment.

Moreover, Ibn Marzouk (2018) tackled this phenomenon in his book titled "*The phenomenon of religious extremism in Arab societies*" (*Zahirat altattaruf aldiynii fi almujtama'at al-'arabiati*). First, he defined the concept of religious extremism, then moved on to discuss the causes of religious extremism in Arab societies. Ignorance of religion was considered the most important cause. The author also discussed the repercussions of the spread of religious extremism, where he focused a lot on the negative effects of this phenomenon in the Arab societies. He also provided some mechanisms of combating religious extremism in Arab societies.

On the other hand, Al-Muhamidi (N.d), took another approach by comparing today's extremists to the *Khārijites* of this century in his research entitled "*The full story of the Khārijites of modern times*" (*Al-Qissat al-Kamilat li Khawarij fi 'asrina*). In the first topic, the researcher addressed the emergence of the *Khārijites*' thought in the present era and summarized the stages of their development. The author discussed their characteristics and pointed out similarities between the *Khārijites* of the past and the present-day *Khārijites*. According to his estimation, there are sixty-eight aspects in which they differ. He also mentioned about the rulings of the Sunnis regarding the adjective '*khārijī*', as he showed that the *Khārijites* are not on the same level in exaggeration, and lastly, he concluded by presenting a set of hadīths and effects contained in the *Khārijites*.

Bakkar. (N.d), presented some solutions that he saw as appropriate to dismantle the culture of extremism in his book "*Dismantling the Culture of Exaggeration*" (*Tafkik thaqafat al-Ghului*) . In addition to immunizing Muslims from the danger of slipping into the abyss of accusing others of blasphemy and treason and judging people for apostasy and so on, the researcher tried to shed light through this book on the culture of extremism, showing the bad consequences of extremism.

He also dealt with the explanation and analysis of the roots and types of extremism, as well as its manifestations and causes. In addition, he presented a set of ideas and principles on how to deal with extremism indicating that the treatment can only be through intellectual awareness, and a statement of its danger and its departure from the method of moderation and mediation. The researcher also focused on the importance of dialogue and considered it the most important principle for treating religious extremism.

Through the foregoing studies that dealt with the issue of religious extremism, we find that the causes of religious extremism in the Muslim communities vary according to different conditions. They differ from one person to another, and from one group to another, and even from one society to another. According to the researcher's opinion, among the most important reasons that led to religious extremism in Muslim societies; is the absence of moderate thought of religion and the lack of its understanding, which is not addressed in previous studies. Accordingly, this study attempts to bridge the research gap by studying the issue of moderation and clarifying its importance and impact on various aspects in society.

3. METHODOLOGY

Two research methods were employed for the sake of meeting the objectives of this research. The inductive approach was employed in this research at the aim of investigating and tracing the causes and factors that led to the emergence of the phenomenon of religious extremism in Muslim societies. This approach helps the researcher in diagnosing the phenomenon and knowing its true causes and effects. In addition, the descriptive analytical method was employed to describe the phenomenon of religious extremism that threatens the security and stability of Muslim societies, and to identify the extent of the impact of extremist thoughts on Muslim societies, in order to develop an integrated perception on the phenomenon of religious extremism.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1 Defining the phenomenon of religious extremism

It is referred to as all strictness in understanding and practicing the principles, rituals, and laws of the Islamic religion, with an attempt to obligate others to it. Religious extremism is linked to fanaticism and ideological inertia, and it indicates a departure from the values and behaviors recognized in society. The phenomenon of religious extremism is the appearance of a Muslim's behavior that contradicts other Muslims at the level of the principles of the Islamic religion, its rituals, and its laws, while trying to obligate others to it. Religious extremism may be between two religions, such as Judaism and Islām, or within one religion, such as Shiite extremism against Sunnis, or it may be the extremism of one group against another group, and it may also include

individuals or the state. Religious extremism that takes place within one country and one religion, as is happening now in our contemporary Muslim societies, is more dangerous than religious extremism that exists between two different religions, and it enters the cycle of exaggeration and overstepping the limit. There is another form of extremism, the opposite of the first, which is the extremism of idleness and negligence that causes its owner to disintegrate, and what concerns us in this paper is the extremism of exaggeration and overstepping the limit.

4.2 Types of exaggeration and overreaching

There are two types of religious extremism cited in texts and pervious literature. The first of which is the Legislative Doctrinal Extremism. It is referred to as strictness in the doctrinal and legislative field, such as strictness in the issue of loyalty and disavowal for instance, as well as obligating all people to perform *ijtihad* (Al-Luhaiq, 1992). The second type of religious extremism found in texts is the Practical and Behavioral Extremism. A good example of it, is the strictness in the practice of worship, such as the prolonged recitation of some imams in prayer, to the extent that some worshipers have almost abandoned prayer in their mosques, even though the Sunnah commands easing (Al-Bukhāri, N.d), and other practices that are considered to be disobedient in religion, that The basic principle in every extremism is the lack of understanding of the rule of the Lawgiver, or the lack of knowledge of its purposes, or the failure to consider these purposes, or ignorance of reality and so on.

4.4 The emergence of religious extremism

Many scholars agree that the talk about the emergence of religious extremism and its emergence in Islām was after the death of the Prophet ﷺ and specifically when the Muslims were divided and the Khārijites sect emerged, then religious extremism became a phenomenon that could not be hidden. (Jabri,1996). The Khārijites are one of dozens of sects and groups that have deviated from the straight path. Of course, the matter did not stop with the Khārijites group, because the door to extremism has not yet been closed. Every day there are more groups that carry extremist religious ideas in various parts of the Islamic world, even if the means and goals differ.

In our time, there are those who believe that religious extremism is due to the religious discourse behind which great figures stand, and heritage references bearing many statements of accusations of kufr and murder, such as Ibn Taymiyyah and his most famous books: (Fatwas), (Ibn Taymiyyah, 2004) and his book (alsiyasat alshareiat fi 'iislah alraaei walraeiati)and (alfaridat alghayibati), whose author likened the rulers of Muslims today to the Tatars, as it was forbidden to deal with them and help them, and that the state is an infidel and there is no way to get rid of it except through jihād, as it is considered the first ideological foundation for armed jihādists

organizations, and the reference Contemporary jihādīst Salafī movements, which is the theoretical basis for the jihād group in Egypt, (Faraj, N.d). Even the killing and criminality carried out by ISIS (aldawaeish), (Al-Yaqubi, 2016). There are those who attribute it to Ibn Taymiyyah, (Al-Mulla, 2020). There are also those who attribute extremism in the current era to Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab, the founder of the Wahhabi movement that was later adopted by the House of Saud, which carries with it a lot of extremism, (Ibn Bishr, 1982). As well as what Sayyid Qutb called for through his book *On Interpretation (In the Shadows of the Qur'ān)* and *(Milestones on the Road)*, the most famous and most controversial book, which is considered the main reference for the Hijrah and Takfir group in Egypt, (Sayyid Qutb, 1972). There are those who attribute religious extremism in the current era to extremist fundamentalist (al'usuliāt- a return to the first roots of Islam from the book, the Sunnah, and consensus) movements, (al-Qaradawi, 1997). that are characterized by violence, extremism, and takfir, such as the Muslim community... and others. They are movements opposed to the renewed modernist Islām (Hammadi, 2015). There are those who attribute it to the religious reform movement with Jamal al-Din al-Afghani and Muhammad Abdo, as stated by (Mansour Khaled, a liberal Sudanese diplomat and writer who held several positions, including the former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sudan), which was the cause of reactions opposed to reform, and the problem of the first nucleus of the extremist groups that produced the Muslim Brotherhood, (Zanbir, 2018). There is no doubt that these serious accusations against scientists need evidence, and an objective discussion in independent research.

According to the research opinion, there are a set of approaches that lead to the causes of the emergence of religious extremism, on top of which is the approach of ignorance of religion, which is the main reason for its emergence. That is because God, who knows best about His creation, made religion able to revive the believers with it despite the natural differences that exist between them. And there is the political approach, which carries with it a lot of injustice, the robbery of rights... and other repressive practices. Likewise, the materialistic approach, as religious extremism often arises in a society whose people suffer from poverty.

4.5 Islām's position on religious extremism

There is no doubt that Islām, which calls for moderation, rejects extremism altogether and in detail, and a warning has been received about the dangers of this phenomenon, as it is far from the nature and limited human capacity for the Almighty's saying: (Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): "O people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians)! Exceed not the limits in your religion (by believing in something) other than the truth, and do not follow the vain desires of people who went astray before and who misled many, and strayed (themselves) from the Right Path.") Al-Maedah:77.

The warning and prohibition of it was also mentioned in the *Sunnah* of the Prophet, as it came in the hadīth: On the authority of Sahel bin Abi Umamah bin Sahl bin Hanif, on the authority of his father, on the authority of his grandfather, on the authority of the Prophet ﷺ who said: “*Do not be hard on yourselves, for they were destroyed before you by their hardening on themselves.*” (Al-Bukhārī, 1999). Then we come to the conclusion that the phenomenon of religious extremism in the Islamic community has nothing to do with the teachings of Islām, but rather was fed with the intention of distorting the image of Islām.

4.6 References or origins from which the extremist derives his ideas

Extremists derive their ideas and references from misunderstanding and misreading of the texts and books that are reliable in religion. Misunderstanding may occur even among those who differ in thought and understanding, for example what happened between hardline fundamentalists and modernists (*Al-hadathīn- the thinkers who worked to spread new thought in the Arab and Islamic world, and these people depend on reason alone, and make it the ruler of religious issues*), (Al-Ruwaili & Al-Bazghi, 2002). Each group claims to have correct understanding of religion. However, both of which fell into the epicenter of extremism.

4.7 The causes that led to religious extremism in Muslim community

Among the most important reasons that led to religious extremism in our contemporary Muslim societies the following:

4.7.1 Reasons related to religion

4.7.1.1 Ignorance of the principles and rulings of religion

Most religious extremism is due to ignorance of religion and not to religion itself. Examples of ignorance of religion include speaking about it without knowledge, and arbitrating an opinion, which is forbidden by Sharī’ah, because of the Almighty’s saying: (7:33) Say, “*My Lord has only forbidden immoralities – what is apparent of them and what is concealed – and sin, and oppression without right, and that you associate with Allah that for which He has not sent down authority, and that you say about Allah that which you do not know.*” Al-Araaf:33

4.7.1.2 Absence of moderate religious thought

One of the most important causes of religious extremism is the absence of moderate thought on religion, that is, the absence of a moderate, balanced understanding that governs the Sharī’ah, due to the lack of definition of it. There is no doubt that the absence of moderate thought in dealing with changes in our contemporary Muslim societies has produced for us a new generation that lives between excess and negligence, and to get out of the problem of religious extremism, we

must return to moderation, through which we can preserve the constants and deal with variables, without exaggeration or negligence.

Religious and doctrinal intolerance: an extremist is an example of both, so you find him fighting the thought of the other with all his strength. This is the result of ignorance of the legitimate differences and acceptance of the other opinion. Scholars have warned of this danger, “considering that getting used to inference for one sect may cause the student to alienate and deny a *math'hab* other than his *math'hab*, without knowing its source, and this leads to a rift in belief in the imams, whom people unanimously agree on their merit and progress in the religion, and their carrying out the purposes of the legislator and understanding its purposes.” (Al-Shatibi,1997).

In addition, the door of *ijtihād* was closed, which led to the freezing of Islamic thought, and this undoubtedly affected the Muslim's thinking negatively. There was religious extremism. As provoking sectarian and sectarian strife poses a threat to the cohesion of the fabric of any human society, and the current conflict and fighting between Sunnis and Shiites in Syria, Iraq and Yemen is undoubtedly religious extremism that came as a result of sectarian animosity and intolerance of religious ideas. This charge was used for the purpose of achieving political goals and finding a religious justification for these wars (Jbeil,2020).

Instead of religion being a means of coexistence, closeness and tolerance, religion has become a factor of demolition, division and sectarian wars. There is no way to extinguish the fire of sedition, dry up hotbeds of sectarian extremism and eliminate sectarian and sectarian tensions; Only by accepting the option of coexistence based on dialogue, tolerance, mutual respect and trust among the components of one society.

4.7.1.3 Productions of the Islamic awakening

The Islamic awakening has produced fanatical religious movements. These movements are called fundamentalist movements, as most of these movements are characterized by fanaticism for their principles (Jabri, 1996), but it must be recognized that these movements did not come from a vacuum. Rather, they are a natural result of the spread of injustice and the absence of freedom of expression, and tyranny on the part of the ruling authorities, with the absence of real democracy, as well as the absence of dialogue. In addition, there are some dictatorial regimes in Islamic countries that prevent religious people from practicing their devotional laws, and they practice a policy of repression. They are undoubtedly sufficient factors for the emergence of extremist movements in Muslim community. As a response to feelings of marginalization, exclusion, and persecution. The Islamic Awakening has also produced extremist currents that care about and promote the *hadīths* of sedition, and perhaps the best example of this is the *hadīth* (The Surviving Sect), (Ibn al-Bay, 1990), It is a major reason for *takfīr* and sowing discord among Islamic sects. Undoubtedly, their

misunderstanding of the hadīth led them to atone for each other, as each sect claims to be the surviving sect. In contrast to these extremist fundamentalist movements, secular movements emerged, which came as a result of the fascination with Western civilization, and its adoption of its ideas, which stand at the opposite end of the fundamentalist movements, (Jabri, 1996).

4.7.1.4 Absence of the jurisprudence of difference and the spirit of tolerance and dialogue

Islām today has become completely different from the Islām of mercy and tolerance legislated by Allāh Almighty, and it is really unfortunate that dialogue and understanding with the other is absent and the spirit of tolerance has disappeared, so the difference in viewpoints turns from integration to outright rivalry.

4.7.1.5 Absence of the role of pulpit preachers in educating people

This is due to the modest cultural level of many of these preachers, who were satisfied with what they received from the institutes for training imams, as they often lack the rhetorical faculty and the ability to persuade. You find their speech hardly benefits the listener in anything. There is no doubt that this spiritual and mental void has opened the way for intruders who carry extremist religious ideology to incite people to religious extremism, directly or indirectly. Likewise, the failure to invest the religious text in a way that suits the transformations that society is witnessing, and the failure to address their various issues, led young people to dangerous slips of thought that scholars did not notice (Zanbir, 2018). The cause of religious extremism may also be the love of fame by following perverts from issues without realizing the consequences of matters. (Al-Kulaiti, N.d). Hence, it can be said that some of the extremism is due to ignorance of religion, due to the absence of the role of scholars, which made it easier for young people to adopt extremist ideas.

4.7.2 Political and Civil Reasons

4.7.2.1 The struggle for power

At first, political extremism was founded by scholars with the abolition of the Rightly Guided Caliphate, as they spilled the blood of the opposition (in the language of the age). The struggle for power continues to this day; Where are the Islamic parties prevented from exercising their right to political action, and the exchange of power with the presence of repression of opposition groups and not allowing them to reach power, which turned the scales, and made them adopt the approach of religious extremism that often leads to violence. Moreover, not giving young people an opportunity to integrate into the political sphere makes extremism a haven for them, as it is the only way, according to their belief, to escape from injustice and political tyranny. Also, one of the political reasons that led to religious extremism is the large number of political and military defeats that have befallen many Islamic countries .(Al-Luwaiq, 1992).

4.7.2.2 Imbalance of the balance of justice and equality

Despite the fact that the laws of Islām, despite their diversity, revolve around one axis, which is the establishment of justice on earth, according to the Almighty's saying:

"Indeed, Allāh orders justice and good conduct" Al-Nahel:90.

And Him saying also: *"O ye who believe! stand out firmly for Allah, as witnesses to fair dealing, and let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just: that is next to piety" Al-Maedah:8.*

However, its absence with the existence of extremist regimes that practice oppression, tyranny and aggression day and night against their people, and make them feel humiliated and ashamed, is considered one of the most important reasons at all that lead not only to religious extremism. Rather, it is an explicit call to violence because repelling injustice from oneself is a human instinct.

Accordingly, most of the violent and extremist ideas in Muslim community have emerged from the womb of suffering from injustice and oppression, even if they came to treatment, they used more injustice and oppression without looking at the reasons, which made the phenomenon of religious extremism instead of shrinking its circle expanding day by day.

4.7.3 Economic and cultural reasons

4.7.3.1 Absence of social solidarity in its Islamic concept

There is a decline in the role of non-governmental institutions, which used to help the state in solidarity and compassion, through which the state was able to absorb the affection of young people, direct its energies to what benefits society, and was able to fill the void that harms the individual and society .(Abd al-Qaher, 2012). This decline in social solidarity has contributed to the high rate of poverty in Muslim community, the feeling of isolation, marginalization, and the widening circle of social disintegration. Which led to a loss of balance among the members of society, and this is what pushed the youth to religious extremism... and other deviations.

4.7.3.2 Lack of security within society

There is no doubt that security is necessary for the stability of the individual and society, and its absence in most Islamic countries is due to some external causes such as colonialism, most of which are internal reasons that came because of the injustice and tyranny of the rulers. This is because the security practices are exaggerated in some Islamic countries, in the form of random and repeated arrests in resisting some suspects, or those who are affiliated with some extremist Islamic movements and others. It led to the spread of evil and sin, and the violation of sanctities, as well as the spread of fear and panic in society (Abd al-Qaher, 2012). This prompted some young

people to migrate to the countries of disbelief and prompted others who claim to represent the Islamic project to adopt extremist religious ideas.

4.7.3.3 The poverty crisis

There is no doubt that the failure of development projects, along with the economic constraints that resulted in massive unemployment in the depths of society, led to a feeling of frustration among the unemployed youth. This frustration prompted some of them to sell their values and principles to get out of the poverty crisis, as they took advantage of spreading religious extremism in exchange for a job position, a sum of money, or other incentives to get them out of their miserable situation, (Al-Jrad, 2009). Poverty, then, can weaken faith, and then slipping into the abyss of religious and other extremism becomes easy, especially since we did nothing to mitigate it. In addition, there are cultural reasons, the most important of which are:

4.7.3.4 Cultural invasion

The cultural invasion, with its technology, has marginalized and distorted the culture of Muslim youth, and changed it with a culture alien to our Islamic environment. Rather, it was able to replace our original values with other Western values that do not express the authenticity and identity of our Muslim society. Social alienation, and it has come to view society with an aggressive look and stands in defence of its identity in the face of intellectual alienation, by adopting religious extremism that often leads to violence (Al-Jrad, 2009).

4.7.3.5 Social networking sites

One of the most important reasons for the spread of religious extremism in the current era is a misunderstanding of religion, resulting from false information that has spread among Muslims. There is no doubt that social networking sites contribute greatly to the dissemination of religious extremism especially among young people (Jabri, 1996). In our time, it has become the main driver of youth, with its information and ideas that are difficult for a sane person to sort out, where the truth is mixed with falsehood and the ignorance of the world. Young people are the group that most uses social networking sites, discussing sensitive problems and issues, especially religious ones that trouble young people who are often on social networking sites. This has helped sites that spread religious extremism to attract young people towards extremist religious ideas, as these sites are considered among the most prominent incubators of extremism and terrorism at the present time, as stated by the Secretary-General of the King Faisal International Prize (Abdul Aziz Al-Sabeel: "Twitter, for example, includes more than 12,000 accounts affiliated with the Daesh regime, and the latter are all working in the field of extremism and terrorism." (Zanbir, 2018). Undoubtedly, these reasons in their entirety have contributed greatly to the spread of religious extremism in Muslim community.

4.7.4 External reasons

There are those who believe that religious extremism is a Western industry by reviving the old deviant sects in a contemporary form and bringing them into the Arab and Islamic countries for the purpose of internal rivalry (Adel Amer, 2020). In the sense that there is an external hand that feeds religious extremism in Arab Muslim countries, and this is a fact that must be pointed out. By looking at a summary of a study conducted by the Israeli Van Leer Institute, which specializes in strategic studies in Jerusalem in 1988, under the title: *'Israel on the threshold of the 21st century'*, (Abu Saada, 2019), it was found that among the Israeli goals to be achieved are:

“Planting and spreading the factors of division, dispersion and ideological partisanship in the Arab countries, with the aim of increasing religious, sectarian and ethnic extremism, and nurturing it and eliminating the ideas of Arab nationalism and Islamic solidarity, and replacing them with the idea of Middle Eastern regional cooperation, as well as employing Islamic fundamentalism and minority ideologies in the region in favor of Israel, in close cooperation with the forces of crusader extremism in the world.” (Abu Saada, 2019).

It also stirs up ethnic, and sectarian differences that often end in civil wars (Abu Saada, 2019). The strange thing is that the first to use the term ‘religious extremism’ were the Jews, who described the Palestinian resistance with it. After that, this description was transmitted to all those who oppose the authorities in the name of Islām in the Arab countries. Rather, it became closely related to Muslims in any event that occurred in the world, until Islām and religious extremism became one thing in the world. Many people look at this, and this is a distortion of an image Islām (Al-Sawy, N.d).

Religious extremism, then, is like the mite that is eating away at the body of contemporary Muslim societies, and the cause of civil wars, sectarian strife, and others and what is happening in Lebanon from civil wars, and in southern Iraq from the revolution of the Kurds, and in Egypt from sectarian strife. It will inevitably move to the rest of the Arab countries, if you do not pay attention and take heed, and all this and more are a prelude to achieving the Zionist goals and its major goals, which is the establishment of the State of Israel and world domination.

What should be noted is that if the problem of religious extremism among Muslims is on the increase, and a certain percentage of it is a Western industry, then it is incumbent upon us as Muslims to acknowledge that this industry has found us capable. Simply because we have become fertile ground for religious extremism and other deviations. In addition, religious extremism is a natural reaction to the reality of contemporary Muslim societies that suffer at all levels, as we have explained before. Which made the door to religious extremism open wide? By searching for the causes that led to religious extremism in Muslim community, we reach the conclusion that our

contemporary Muslim societies are not immune; It does not have sufficient immunity to protect it from the danger of religious extremism and other deviations.

4.8 Effects of Religious Extremism

4.8.1 Distortion of the image of Islām

The reason for this is due to the bad practices of the religion, and the result was that they created a barrier between the non-Muslim and the correct understanding of the teachings of Islām. Also, these extremists were the reason why some Muslims moved away from their faith and the method of moderation and moderation, by pushing them to the temptations of materialistic theory and other corrupt beliefs.

4.8.2 Distracting the nation from carrying out its civilized role in reform

When religious extremism prevails in the Muslim community, this causes the nation to be preoccupied with hypothetical issues in which there is a dispute instead of being preoccupied with essential issues, and there is no doubt that this obstructs and drains the nation's energies (al-Qaradawi, 1402). For example: Some of them were preoccupied with the hadīth of (The Surviving Sect) (ibn albay, 1990).

4.8.3 Chaos and disruption of the social fabric

If a Muslim is a prisoner of extremist ideas, his harm to society becomes greater than his benefit, so he directs his energies to destroy society. Also caused by some of the misconceptions produced by religious extremism, such as takfir, and defaming the scholars... and others, and the consequences that result from them in terms of retiring from society, and their permissibility of money, honors and souls. This leads to the emergence of contradictions in society, and the result will be chaos and rupture in the social fabric (al-Qaradawi, 1402).

4.8.4 Confiscation of the freedom to call

There is no doubt that it has a negative impact on the call, as the extremist works to restrict the call and its people (Sabri, 2011). This is undoubtedly a realization of the plans of the enemies of religion to launch a campaign against Islām at the hands of its sons. This distorted image of Islām will remain in effect for generations, and it will never be easy to get rid of it. Unless the collective consciousness of Muslims changes. And they returned to moderation and mediation, through which we can preserve the constants. And dealing with variables, without exaggeration or negligence.

5. FINDINGS

By delving into the issue of the phenomenon of religious extremism in Muslim societies and identifying the real reasons behind it. This study provides some results at the hope of curbing this phenomenon in Muslim societies. First, the emergence of religious extremism as a phenomenon in Islām was with the emergence of the Khārijites sect. At the present time, it is due to many reasons, the most important of which is the absence of moderate thought of religion, due to the lack of definition of it. With hidden hands working to feed it and spread it to achieve its interests. This confirms the existence of an ideology that incubates extremism in our contemporary Muslim societies. Second, after studying the causes that led to religious extremism in Muslim community, it is concluded that our societies are not immune. There are not enough barriers to protect Muslim societies from the danger of religious extremism and other deviations. Third, extremism is a rejected phenomenon, and those who try to attach it to Islām and its followers; are the enemies of Islām. Their hidden goal is distorting the image of Islām at home and abroad. Fourth, religious extremism leaves deep traces. Among them is distracting the nation from carrying out its civilized role in reform, and it is not easy to get rid of it, Unless the collective consciousness of Muslims changes.

6. CONCLUSION

One of the main reasons behind studying the phenomenon of religious extremism in contemporary Muslim society, is the great challenges facing it today, such as the increasing pace of fanaticism, the series of bombings and assassinations, and the emergence of groups based on killing, which made the Muslim community groan from the effects of religious extremism. Through the review of previous studies, it is evident that there is a lack of discussion on religious moderate thought in dealing with different aspects of life. This study attempts to fill this gap and highlight the importance of this issue to the advancement of Muslim societies. This study revealed a number of results, the most important of which are: the emergence of religious extremism as a phenomenon today is due to many reasons such as the absence of moderate thought of religion and the lack of its definition and application. In addition to the existence of hidden plans aimed at spreading the phenomenon to achieve corrupt interests. By studying the causes of religious extremism in Muslim societies, we conclude that our societies are not immune from drifting towards this disgraceful behavior, as they do not have sufficient barriers to protect them from the danger of religious extremism and other deviations.

This research attempts to provide a cognitive addition in the moderate religious thought, by considering the results obtained. The results of the study would contribute to the development of our societies by protecting them from the danger of religious extremism. It must also be clarified

that the phenomenon of religious extremism is not related to Islām, and the main goal of all those who link Islām with extremism is to distort the image of Islām.

In light of the broad discussion on the phenomenon of religious extremism, this study suggests some recommendations which might contribute to reducing this phenomenon in Muslim societies. First, it is necessary to combat religious extremism, by supporting and organizing conferences and seminars to clarify the truth of Islām, and to respond to suspicions. Also, spreading the message by word of mouth through creating websites and channels in different social networking platforms to reach the masses. Second, focusing on the doctrinal aspect of the school curricula, to immunize the new generation from religious extremism. Third, directing the attention of students and researchers to the importance of moderate thought, and working to spread it in society. Lastly, tightening the penalty for anyone who uses hate speech and extremism, or incites religious extremism.

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ARAB MODERNISTS AGAINST IMĀM ASH-SHĀFI'Ī: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

The Companions of the Prophet ﷺ established the methods of understanding and interpreting divine texts, as they formed the foundations of Ijtihād. However, Imām Ash-Shāfi'ī رحمه الله was the first Muslim scholar to write the principles of Islamic jurisprudence (Usūl al-Fiqh). Yet, Arab modernists in their attempts to devalue the rules of reading, understanding and interpreting divine texts, attack Imām Ash-Shāfi'ī and accuse him of “innovating” in the religion by “inventing” Usūl al-Fiqh. Likewise, they have accused him of “imprisoning” the Muslim intellect and mind regarding the authority of the divine texts as he bound it to methodology. Moreover, they accused him of having cooperated with the Umayyads. By attacking Imām Ash-Shāfi'ī, Arab modernists seek to create an epistemological divide with the heritage of Usūl al-Fiqh as well with semantics and the rules governing the Arabic language. They aim to radically change the interpretation of the Qur'ān and Sunnah in order to get a free and fluid “modern Islamic jurisprudence”. This study uses inductive, comparative and critical analysis methods to assess the credibility of these allegations against Imām Ash-Shāfi'ī and to evaluate their scientific basis. This study proves that these allegations are unfounded. It demonstrates first that Imām Ash-Shāfi'ī did not innovate in religion. Second, it reveals that the Companions themselves established the rules of Usūl al-Fiqh, the hierarchy of sources, rules of interpretation (Dalīl) and shaped the conditions of Ijtihād. Third, this study proves that Imām Ash-Shāfi'ī did not achieve an epistemological move from the reasoning of the Arabic rhetoric of Ijtihād and its cognitive system. Fourth, this study verifies that Imām Ash-Shāfi'ī did not cooperate with the Umayyads. On the other hand, this study exposes the Arab modernists who, by accusing and devaluing Imām Ash-Shāfi'ī and his contributions, are subjective and have transgressed the scientific methods and ethics.

KEYWORDS: Imām Ash-Shāfi'ī, Arab Modernism, Usūl Al-Fiqh, Arabic Language, Modernism.

1. INTRODUCTION

Scholars from different Islamic schools of law honor the various contributions of Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله to Islamic epistemology. Imām Aḥmad رحمه الله considered him the reviver (*Mujaddid*) of the second century (Al- Dhahabī, 1985). Imām Aḥmad also said:” No one holds an inkwell and a pen except that Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī has a favor on his neck” (Al-Khaṭṭābī, nd). Al-Rāzī رحمه الله found that great scholars from various areas of expertise honored Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī in different ways, so he concluded: “The scholars’ praise for Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī is more than one can cover” (2008). However, Arab modernists while adhering to the norms of modernism are fighting to devalue the huge contributions of Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī to Islamic heritage and scholarship. This group violates the standards and ethics of scientific investigation in their quest to attack Usūl al-Fiqh. Instead of discussing the core elements of this branch of knowledge, they turned to personalize their criticism against the person of Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله.

This paper sheds light on particular aspects of the attack on Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī, following the standards of scientific analyses and critics, as well as adhering to the ethics of knowledge. The paper discusses the importance of Usūl al-Fiqh and traces back its history and background. In addition, it highlights the contribution of Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī to this branch of knowledge. Furthermore, the paper refutes a set of accusations put by Arab modernists against Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī. First, the accusation that Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī “invented” the branch of Usūl al-Fiqh. Second, the accusation that he aimed to enforce Arabism as well as to indoctrinate the Muslim intellect with the rules of Arab understanding and interpretation. Third, they accuse him of “innovating” conditions for Ijtihād in order to get rid of the plurality of interpretations of the divine texts. Fourth, Arab modernists accuse Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī of having wrong political tendencies as they accuse him of cooperating with the Umayyads. In the end, the paper provides recommendations for future investigations related to Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Contemporary literature displays two trends in dealing with Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله. The first one consists of the Arab modernists and shares the following features (Al-Qūshṭī, 2016) : subjectivity, secularism, relativity of truth, epistemological divide with the past, historicism, unconditioned way of *ta’weel*, new understanding and interpretations of the divine texts, adopting Western tools and methods in reading and interpreting the Qur’ān and Sunnah and in evaluating Muslim scholars’ heritage as it adopts the view that nothing is sacred including the Qur’ān and Sunnah. Some of the most important figures in this trend are Muhammad Arkun, Adinus, Muhammad ‘Abid Al-Jābiri , Hasan Hanafi, Muhammad Shahrur, Nasr Abū Zaid, Jorj TarAbushti, Zakariah, Abd Al-Majid Al-

Sharfi and others. Arab modernists distinguish themselves and define their understanding of modernism as, first, an idea against religion (Arkun 1998). Second, Arab modernists see modernism as an idea against past heritage Al-Ghamidi (2009). Third, they assume an epistemological divide with the history, origins and heritage (Adinus). Fourth, they argue for absolute liberation from the restrictions of religion, values, and social customs and traditions (Wafah 2001). Fifth, the call for the use of rationality against blind reproduction of the past *Taqlīd*. To reflect the core aim of their intellectual projects, the two important figures among Arab modernists chose precise book titles to reflect the importance of rationality in criticizing the eastern mind. Al-Jabiri chose to use the term ‘Arab mind’ in three books (1989, 1990, 2009). Whereas Arkun chose to use the term ‘Islamic’ or ‘religious mind’ in two books (1991, 1998) in addition to other Arab modernists who use the same terminology such as Kamil (2010). However, the other Arab modernists using the term ‘Arab’ or ‘Muslim mind’ did not show a full, comprehensive and systematic intellectual project in criticizing the Arab and Muslim mind as Arkun and Al-Jabiri did.

Concerning Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī, this trend does not deal intensively with his selected opinions in jurisprudence or his Fatwas; rather they are trying to criticize his theory of knowledge, his rules of reading, understanding, and interpreting divine texts. In addition, they are trying to dismantle the whole block of sources of authority that Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī discussed, namely transmitted evidences (*Naqliyyah*) and rational ones (*Aqliyyah*). They attack the methodology and epistemology that Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī enforced to understand Islam and its sources of authority.

Unfortunately, this trend commits a breach of the scientific spirit and ethics by attacking the person of Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله instead of discussing the issues under criticism. As alleged by Ali Mabruk, that Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī did not seek religious knowledge for Allāh’s sake but for the sake of making wealth. For this reason, he cooperated with the Umayyads. A faction of Arab modernists go so far as to compare Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله to Paul in the sense that Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī distorted the meanings of Qur’ān just as Paul distorted the tenets of Christianity (Al-Tarabushti, 2010).

The second trend of literature concerning Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī consists of researchers and academicians who tried to defend Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī. This second trend varies from superficial attempts of refuting the claims of Arab modernists to deep analyses, as it varies from just being an emotional reaction to support Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī, to in-depth refutations. The most important literature in this genre are ‘*Al-Janayah ‘Ala Shaaf’ii Hiwar ‘Ilmi Hadi‘ ma’ Rafidhi ‘Ilmi Al-Fiqh wa al-Usul*’ by Merwan ibn Aziz al-Kurdi (2018); ‘*Jinayat Uzun*’ by Hakam al-Mutairi, (2010) and ‘*Mawqif al-Ittijah al-Hadathi mina al-Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī*’, by Ahmad Al-Qushti (2016). These three books deal directly with the issue of Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī. However, the first one mixed

discussions between the whole science of Usūl al-Fiqh and the science of Ḥadīth as well as the discussion of many Fiqh issues that are not related specifically to Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī, even if the Imām has his own selected opinions on them. In addition, the author focused only with the Arab modernist ‘Ōzon to answer his attack on Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī. The second book also deals directly with ‘Ōzon. For this, this paper did not mention ‘Ōzon. The third book is rather a good summary of some aspects of the debates on the contemporary dispute on Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī. Other than these three major books, authors from different backgrounds approach the issues related to the debate on Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī in a larger scope, where Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله is not the core topic of the book or the research.

For this reason, this paper focuses on specific aspects of the debate among leading Arab modernist figures on Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله. The contribution of this research is based on a new understanding of the debate on Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī among the Arab modernists, with a focus on refuting the charges against Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī of “innovating” in religion. In addition, it demonstrated that the Arab modernists’ allegations against him are not established on a scientific investigation of his legacy. To prove his innocence, the research concentrates on tracing the rules of Usūl al-Fiqh back to times before Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī. Moreover, it discusses aspects of the conditions of Ijtihād and stipulations for the position of Mujtahid, with a special concern on the condition of expertise in the Arabic language. In the same way, this research traces back those conditions and stipulations to before Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research uses inductive and analytical methods to investigate the origin of Usūl al-Fiqh and to position Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī’s status within the history of Usūl al-Fiqh. In addition, this research uses comparative methods to address the accusations of Arab modernists on the topic and to compare them to expert scholars in the field. Then, this research uses critical analyses methods to evaluate the Arab modernists’ works.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1 The Importance of Principles of Islamic jurisprudence and the Arrival of Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله

The aim of Usūl al-Fiqh is to know the ways to reach the Sharī’ah rulings (Al-Ghazalī 1993), as it helps to understand what Allāh and His Messenger ﷺ intend in the Qur’ān and Sunnah Ibn Taymiyyah (nd). Moreover, Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī set proficiency in this branch of knowledge as the first condition of Ijtihād. Al-Subki رحمه الله said: “Every scholar is under the level of Ijtihād except those who profoundly master Usūl al-Fiqh” (1995). This Islamic branch of knowledge holds its importance also in contemporary intellectual debates. For this, modern Muslim philosophers such

as Taha Abd Al-Rahman devoted part of their intellectual project to discuss the importance of Usūl al-Fiqh (nd).

Before Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله wrote *Ar-Risālah*, scholars since the days of the Companions used to use a variety of rules of interpretation and methods of Ijtihād. As Imām al-Juwayni رحمه الله referred in his *Burhān*: “We know that the Fatwas of the scholars of the Companions on new facts (after the life of the Prophet ﷺ) exceed the textual rulings (provided by the Qur’ān and Sunnah). An excess that cannot be limited by counting or contained by limits” (1997). Furthermore, after a discussion of the history of Ijtihād, Abū Sulaymān, a contemporary academician, concludes:

“... it is clear from this presentation that jurisprudential thought, with its natural and scientific requirements, was available to the scholars of the Companions... Their Ijtihād in Fiqh issues formed the scientific and methodological foundations of the thought of Usūl al-Fiqh. Later Muslim scholars discovered this thought of Usūl al-Fiqh” (1982).

In the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ, the Companions used to make Ijtihād in understanding and interpreting commands of the Qur’ān and Sunnah. They used to make Ijtihād in applying these commands, especially when they were far from the presence of the Prophet ﷺ (Al-‘Ayni 1999). After endorsing their own Ijtihād, the Companions used to come back to the Prophet ﷺ and convey their Ijtihād to him, in order to either ratify it or adjust it (Abū Ya‘la 1990), Al-Shirāzi (1403AH), Al-Sam’ani (1999). Moreover, Ibn Hajar رحمه الله has affirmed that the Companions made Ijtihād in the presence of the Prophet ﷺ not only in his absence (1986). Noting here, that the issue of using Ijtihād at the time of the Prophet ﷺ is a controversial issue among Muslim scholars Al-Juwayni (nd), Al-Rāzi (1997), Al-Ghazālī (1992), Al-‘Ómīdi (nd).

It is true that from a pure Fiqh point of view, the issues upon which the Companions applied Ijtihād are not of great importance as Al-Rāzī رحمه الله pointed out (1997). However, the various occasions of the Companions’ Ijtihād are important in proving that the Companions did proceed to do Ijtihād according to a specific methodology and systematic approach while the Prophet ﷺ was still alive Al-‘Ómīdi (ibid). This shows that the rules and regulations of understanding, interpreting and making Ijtihād that the scholars of Usūl al-Fiqh discuss were well known before Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله wrote his various books on Usūl al-Fiqh. In this sense Ibn Taymiyyah رحمه الله said: “speaking about Usūl al-Fiqh and dividing it into Qur’ān, Sunnah, consensus, and Ijtihād al-Ra’y. In addition, to discussing the various ways that evidences indicate the Sharī‘ah rulings are a well-known matter since the time of the Companions of Muhammad ﷺ and those who followed them, as well as they were known among Muslim scholars. The Companions were more established in

this branch of knowledge [Usūl al-Fiqh] and other branches of Islamic knowledge than who come after them” (nd), Ibn Al-Qayyim (1983), An-Nawawī (1392 AH).

To support this claim, here are two examples of the Companions’ Ijtihād in the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ. First, when the verse of *Tayyammum* [the dry ritual of purification] came down to release some difficult situations where a Muslim cannot take ablution or a shower, ‘Ammār ibn Yāsir رضى الله عنه made an analogy Qiyās with full washing in case of Janābah [state of ritual impurity]. He rolled on the ground so that the dust reached all of his body like in the case of a full water wash. However, the Prophet ﷺ rectified his understanding of the verse to show him that *Tayyammum* concerns only the face and the hand, Al-Bukhārī (1422 AH).

Second, when the Prophet ﷺ told the Companions not to pray ‘Asr prayer except in the quarters of Banu Qurayyah Al-Bukhārī (Ibid), the Companions held different views in understanding and interpreting the command of the Prophet ﷺ Ibn ‘Abd Al-Bar (1994). While some of them claimed that the Prophet ﷺ, meant that they go there, others took the literal meaning of that command and they postponed the ‘Asr prayer to after sundown. In the end, the Prophet ﷺ did not blame the process of Ijtihād of both. With such narrations, Muslim scholars support their claim that the Companions used to make Ijtihād in the lifetime of Prophet ﷺ Ibn Al-Jawzī (1997), Ibn Al-Mulaqqin (2008), An-Nawawī (Ibid). In addition, to many other situations where the Companions had used a variety of methods in their Ijtihād whether they used deduction or induction, or consensus [Ijmā’] or analogy [Qiyās]. On the other hand, the Companions used a variety of methods to unveil the reality of the apparent conflicts of some divine texts whether by showing abrogation [Naskh], or by showing the place of general [‘Āmm] and specific [Khāṣ], or cases of absolute [Muṭlaq] and specific [Muqayyad].

The reports above show that Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله did not invent Usūl al-Fiqh from nothing, as he did not innovate in the religion or try to “put the Muslim intellect in a prison” as the Arab modernists claim. In this sense, Al-Subkī رحمه الله refuted the criticism against Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī and the stipulation of Usūl al-Fiqh for the Mujtahid. He said: “If you say, the scholars of the Companions and those of the Followers and the followers of the Followers were among the greatest Mujtahids and this knowledge (Usūl al-Fiqh) did not exist until Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī came and wrote on it. So how could you stipulate it as a required knowledge for the Ijtihād? I say: The Companions and their Followers were familiar with Usūl al-Fiqh by their natural character as they were familiar by nature with Arabic grammar before Al-Khalīl and Sibawayh came” (1995).

From this, we see what Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī did for Usūl al-Fiqh is like what Sibawayh did for Arabic grammar. The latter wrote the rules of Arabic grammar, he was the first to knock the door

of writing in this field but he was not the inventor of the rules of the Arabic language. Arabic rules and grammar existed before him and they were the Arabs' nature. In the same way, Imām Ash-Shāfi'ī did not originate a new knowledge from nowhere, but he has the honor to be the first Muslim scholar to compile books on Usūl al-Fiqh Al-Bayhaqī (1997), Al-Rāzī (nd), Ibn Taymiyyah (Ibid). In this way, no one can say that people were not thinking and were not debating before Aristotle. People were thinking and deducing as well as they were used to debating and arguing and to objecting by nature, however, people did not have full and accurate rules and logic for what they were exercising until Aristotle came. In the same way, Arab poets used to compose great poems before al-Farahidī provided the various *Buhur al-sh'iar* of Arabic poetry. For this al-Fakhr al-Rāzī said after mentioning Aristotle and al-Farahidi:

“... in the same way, people used to talk about Usūl al-Fiqh, argue and object, but, they did not have a complete referred law in knowing the evidences of Sharī'ah, the way to oppose those evidences and the way of selection. Ash-Shāfi'ī deduced the principles of Usūl al-Fiqh...” (Ibid).

In addition, what refutes the Arab modernists' claim that Imām Ash-Shāfi'ī رحمه الله did innovate in religion is that Imām Ash-Shāfi'ī wrote his famous book of Usūl al-Fiqh *Al-Risālah* as an answer to the request of Imām 'Abd Al-Raḥmān ibn Mahdī, who asked him to write for him about various topics of Usūl al-Fiqh Al-Bayhaqī (1991) Al-Baghdādī (2001). It becomes clear that scholars around Imām Ash-Shāfi'ī were aware about the various issues of interpretation and Ijtihād; however, they did not have a textbook or a reference that gathered these various aspects concerning the knowledge of understanding, interpreting the Qur'ān and Sunnah and the ways of Ijtihād as well.

Imām Ash-Shāfi'ī رحمه الله wrote a variety of books on different issues of Usūl al-Fiqh, such as *Al-Risālah*, *Ahkām al-Qur'ān*, *Ikhtilāf al-Hadith*, *Ibtal al-Istihsan* and *Jima' al-'Ilm*. His masterpiece on Usūl al-Fiqh is *Al-Risālah*, a book that Imām Ash-Shāfi'ī wrote twice as al-Rāzī discussed (Ibid): once in Bagdad and the second time when he stayed in Egypt.

In addition to the request of 'Abd Al-Raḥmān ibn Mahdī, Imām Ash-Shāfi'ī رحمه الله wrote on the topic of Usūl al-Fiqh and Ijtihād because of the following reasons: First, Imām Ash-Shāfi'ī witnessed the creation of both schools; first, the school of Ḥadīth in Madīnah, and second, the school of Ra'y in Iraq. He studied both schools in both their levels, general rules and details of Fiqh and Fatwa. Therefore, he wrote to define the sound rules of interpretation in both schools. Second, he observed the shortcomings of some scholars in relaying on Ḥadīth Mursal and Munqaṭi', where he found that many of these types of Ḥadīth have no origin in the sound Sunnah. Therefore, he put stipulations to support Fatwas and selected opinions with such types of evidences. Third, he observed that some of the general rules of Ijtihād were not clear in some groups of scholars. Such

as the independence of the Sunnah in providing new rulings and laws not found in the Qur'ān. Fourth, he observed that there were debates on Ḥadīth al-‘Ahād as in his discussion with Muhammad ibn Al-Ḥasan al-Shaybānī the disciple of Imām Abū Ḥanīfah. Fifth, he observed that some of the Followers who spread outside Madīnah used Ijtihād in issues where the Prophet ﷺ already provided legal rulings. However, those narrations (Aḥadīth) did not reach these Followers or even Companions. Consequently, people after that followed the opinions and Ijtihād of those scholars thinking that these Aḥadīth are either abrogated [Manṣūkh] or weak [D’āifah].

Thus, Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله showed that the Companions and the scholars after them always sought the strongest evidence and that some narrations of the Prophet ﷺ have been reported only by a few Companions and were not known by the Followers. In this way, the Followers issued Ijtihād according to other rules of Usūl al-Fiqh. It is observed, that at the time of Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī, the scholars of Ḥadīth put great efforts in collecting the narrations of the Prophet ﷺ. The result of such collections of the narrations of the Prophet ﷺ have revealed that some of the previous Ijtihād contradicted higher levels of evidences. For this reason, Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī has discussed the issue of Taqlīd. Sixth, Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī observed that some scholars wrongly spread the use of Ra’y and Istihsān linking them to the right rules of analogy [Qiyās] that the Lawgiver had authorized. In this sense, he discussed the issue of the soundness of Istihsān.

This section concludes that Usūl al-Fiqh and Ijtihād are traced back to times before Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله and proves that the rules, regulations and provisions of understanding and Ijtihād are traced to the time of the Prophet ﷺ. In addition, it demonstrates that the Companions practically applied rules of Usūl al-Fiqh and ensued into Ijtihād. The following section provides evidences that the Companions were the first to establish the epistemology of Ijtihād.

4.2 Ijtihād among the Companions

Ibn Taymiyyah رحمه الله said: “The Companions are the best-established scholars in Ijtihād” (Ibid), they were Arabs by nature and they understood and used the methods and techniques of Ijtihād. In the contemporary way of writing in Usūl al-Fiqh, the first chapter deals with the source of evidences. The literature shows that Muslim scholars divide the evidences into two groups: First, agreed upon evidences or transmitted evidences [Manqūl] and second un-transmitted sources that they call rational evidences [Ma’qūl]. They order the first group into the following; the Qur’ān then the Sunnah then comes the consensus Ijmā’ and last the analogy [Qiyās]. These are the four transmitted source of evidences [Manqūl]. After that come, a set of other un-transmitted sources that they call rational evidences Ma’qūl such as Istihsān, Maṣlaḥah Mursalah ... etc.

The Companions' discussion about the source of the Islamic jurisprudence reveals that they were the first to fix the order and hierarchy of evidences for the Muslim intellect. Imām An-Nasā'ī رحمته الله reports in the *Sunan Al-Kubrā* that the Guided Caliph 'Umar رضي الله عنه wrote to the judge Shurayh:

“If a case comes to you that you find its command in the Qur’ān, so issue your judgment accordingly. If the case is not in the Qur’ān, seek for the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ. If you have a case that is neither in the Qur’ān nor in the Sunnah, so seek the consensus of people and go with it. However, if you find a case that is neither in the Qur’ān, nor in the Sunnah, nor a scholar preceded you to discuss it, then you can choose between two options. First, you can make your own Ijtihād and so you go on the process. Second, you hold back ...” (2001), Al-Bayhaqī (2003).

In addition to this, Ibn Mas’ūd رضي الله عنه said:

“... [If] anyone of you comes across a case; he has to seek its ruling in the Book of Allāh. If a case is not in the Book of Allāh, then he seeks the judgment of the Prophet ﷺ. If the current case is neither in the Book of Allāh nor in the rulings of the Prophet ﷺ, the person has to judge with the consensus of righteous scholars. However, if the case is neither in the Book of Allāh, nor the judgment of the Prophet ﷺ nor in the consensus of righteous scholars then he has to make Ijtihād of his opinion...” ‘Abd Al-Razzāq (1403 AH), Al-Ṭabarānī (1994).

These two texts prove that the first generation provided the current known order of evidences as they declared the hierarchy of Ijtihād sources. This hierarchical organization suggests that anyone who gives a Fatwa or a judgment according to his own Ijtihād and then discovers later that he has contradicted one of the three levels of sources and evidences, he has to drop his Ijtihād and change it according to the superior hierarchy of evidences. Imām Ash-Shāfi’ī رحمته الله in his *Ar-Risālah* reported various cases where Companions changed their Ijtihād once they came to know about evidences of a higher level. As an example, when the Guided Caliph ‘Umar رضي الله عنه opted to put a ceiling for the dowry of marriage. Then a woman exposed the Guided Caliph with the evidence from the Book of Allāh that there can be no ceiling on that matter. Accordingly, ‘Umar رضي الله عنه concealed his Ijtihād and went back to the Qur’ān, Ibn Manṣūr (1982), Al-Ṭahāwī (1994), Al-Dārimī (2000).

Another example concerning also the Guided Caliph ‘Umar رضي الله عنه, when he issued a Fatwa that a person’s wife does not inherit from the Diyah blood issue money, Al-Ḍaḥḥāk ibn Sufyān told him that Prophet ﷺ wrote to him about the and that the person’s wife does inherit in this case.

Consequently, ‘Umar رضي الله عنه went back to the higher level of evidences than his own Ijtihād Abū Dāwūd (2009), At-Tirmithī (1998), and Ibn Abī Shaybah (1997). Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمته الله explains that by saying:

“... when what opposed his own view reached him, he went back to the ruling of the Prophet ﷺ and left his own one. This was the way ‘Umar رضي الله عنه was in all his affairs and such must be people” (1940).

These reports from ‘Umar رضي الله عنه are not exclusive to him, many Companions have dealt with the level of sources in the same hierarchical way. Such as Abū Mūsā al-‘Ash‘arī رضي الله عنه in one issue of inheritance Al-Bukhārī (Ibid). Then Ibn Mas‘ūd رضي الله عنه corrected him with a narration from the Prophet ﷺ and Abū Mūsā رضي الله عنه changed his Ijtihād. Likewise, Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه changed his Ijtihād on Ṣarf exchange as Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī reported (nd).

Such reports show that Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمته الله did not imprison the Muslim intellect in “the prison” of divine texts as alleged by modernists. Equally, they show clearly that the Companions themselves had fixed the matter of evidence hierarchy among the sources of Sharī‘ah and they confirm that the texts of Qur’ān and Sunnah have the last word over all kind of intellectual efforts and all types of Ijtihād, Ash-Shāfi‘ī (Ibid), Abū-Suleiman (Ibid).

On the other hand, the Companions were the first scholars to establish the authority of analogy (Qiyās). ‘Umar رضي الله عنه as reported by Al-Bayhaqī رحمته الله wrote to Shurayh:

“... then have understanding about the cases that are neither in Qur’ān nor in Sunnah. In this case use analogy among things and know the things that are alike and similar, and incline to the more beloved to Allāh in your consideration and most comparable to the truth...” (Ibid).

In practice, books of Ḥadīth and Usūl al-Fiqh are rich with many examples where the Companions used Qiyās. Al-Juwānī رحمته الله exposes the Companions’ use of Qiyās by saying:” and we know that the Companions used analogy in exceptional cases and normal ones. As we certainly know that they used to conjoin the new case to the original text when an effective reason is revealed...”.

What disturbed Arab modernists in the issue of analogy is that it is built upon two major pillars: the first is the ‘Aṣl origin and the second is the Far’ the new case. Arkun accused Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمته الله and scholars of Usūl al-Fiqh to have enclosed the Muslim mind in the myth of origin. This is because modernism is based on a non-origin approach to development and a divide with the past to build the future. In addition, Arab modernists see that the effective reason [‘Illah] in analogy is a means to “imprison Muslims in the original text”, Shahrur (2000). This means that the

intellect does not work on the Usūl, rather the Qiyās that Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī [allegedly] invented reduces the intellectual efforts to deal only with the Far’ Tarabushti (Ibid).

In the same way, the Companions were the first to establish the other sources of evidences such as Al-Maṣlaḥah Al-Rāzī (Ibid), Al-Shāṭibī (1995). Al-Shanqīṭī (1410 AH), Maqāṣid al-Sharī’ah) Ibn Taymiyah (Ibid), Al-Shāṭibī (Ibid) and other rational source of evidence.

Furthermore, scholars consider the chapter concerning implications of words [Dalīl al-Alfāz] as the second most important chapter in Usūl al-Fiqh and Ijtihād. This chapter deals with commands and prohibition [Amr wa Nahy], general and specific [‘Ām wa Khāṣ] and with absolute and qualified [Muṭlaq wa Muqayyad]. Al-Shāṭibī (Ibid) considers those issues the most important ones in the process of Ijtihād. He argues that the Arabs were most concerned with the meanings of words as well as they worked on words to establish meanings. He follows the argument that for this reason, the Companions were the most qualified persons to understand the meanings of the divine texts. In addition, to the fact that they received the divine texts from the words of the Prophet ﷺ. Books of Usūl al-Fiqh and books of Ḥadīth provide a variety of examples where the Companions used the rules of interpretation and implication of the words of the divine texts. For example, the Companions showed that a command entails an obligation at the first level Abū Ya’la (1990), Al-Rāzī (Ibid). As they displayed that the general [‘Ām] has special words Al-‘Ōmidī (nd).

The above illustration demonstrates that the Companions were the first to deal with the issue of Sharī’ah sources of evidence, rules of interpretation and implications Dalīl and the issues related to the Ijtihād and Mujtahid. In addition, these examples show that Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله did not invent his epistemology to build a conspiracy against the Muslim intellect or to imprison the Muslim mind in “the prison” of divine texts and in the myth of origin.

4.3 Arab Modernists and Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله

Arab modernists in their literature seek to devalue Muslim scholars who helped build the foundations of Islamic epistemology and the origin of the main branches of knowledge. They direct their struggle against four major Muslim scholars who can be considered the founding fathers of the Muslim theory of knowledge, namely: Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī, for Usūl al-Fiqh; Imām Al-Bukhārī for collecting sound narrations; Sībawayh for Arabic grammar [Nahw] and Al-Jurjāni for Arabic rhetoric [Balāghah].

Abd Al-Majid al-Sharqi represents well the aim of his group of Arab modernists when he says that the great aim is to: “restrain from the pathologic attachment to the literalism [*harfiyat*] of the texts –especially the Qur’ānic text” (1991). This group wants to have a free reading and understanding of the divine texts, a reading that can lead to all variety of understandings and interpretations –an

understanding that varies from one reader to another, according to the number of readers, as put by Arkun (2001). These methods of reading help them to get a very fluid Islamic jurisprudence: a modern jurisprudence that can fit all their needs, where prohibited matters can become allowed and where obligations can be removed, where even the issues related to the Islamic faith can be changed.

Nothing is fixed in the Arab modernism sphere; even the Islamic code of morals and ethics is questioned and then exchanged by modern un-coded modes. In their pursuit, Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله seems to be the greatest obstacle, because he established the epistemology and the method of understanding and interpreting the divine texts. In this sense, Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله has obviously put the rules of Ijtihād as well. To destroy the hierarchy of sources of evidence, the stipulations for the Mujtahid and the conditions of Ijtihād, Arab modernists started by confronting Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله. In their attempt to do so, they trespass objectivity and scientific methods as well as fail to adhere to scientific ethics. The debates about Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله in their literature turned into a personal attacks against his person.

Al-Jabiri, one prominent member of this group, while attempting to devalue Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله, praised Imām Al-Shāṭibī رحمه الله in contrast. He thought that Al-Shāṭibī had created an epistemological divide and move away from Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله and hence he put an end to the “invented” Usūl al-Fiqh of Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله as he had put an end to the stipulations and methods of Ijtihād that “Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī invented” (nd). What shows that Al-Jabiri did not understand Al-Shāṭibī, is that while he wanted to criticize Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله and the scholars of Ijtihād after him, he claimed that these scholars rendered and reduced the Ijtihād in Sharī’ah into an Ijtihād in the Arabic language. Ironically, Al-Shāṭibī is the most well-known Muslim scholar of all times to stipulate that the Mujtahid in Sharī’ah must be a full Mujtahid in Arabic tongue. Al-Shāṭibī himself said: “it is indispensable for the Mujtahid in Sharī’ah to reach the level of Ijtihād in the Arabic language...” (nd). On another occasion, Al-Shāṭibī declared that the Mujtahid in Sharī’ah should understand Arabic language as the Arabs themselves used to understand their own language or at least the Mujtahid in Sharī’ah should understand Arabic language as the great scholars of Arabic such as Sībawayh, al-Khalīl, al-Kisā‘ī and al-Farra’ (1996).

Ironically also, while Al-Jabiri claimed this epistemological divide with Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله, he praised Al-Shāṭibī as building a harmonious epistemological connection with Ibn Hazm (2009). Moreover, Al-Jabiri displays a real misunderstanding of the Muslim scholars’ epistemological heritage when he put Al-Shāṭibī in the same epistemological channel with Ibn Hazm (Ibid). What clearly differentiates Al-Shāṭibī from Ibn Hazm is Al-Shāṭibī’s clear criticism of the epistemology and methods that Ibn Hazm uses to deduce Maqāṣid al-Sharī’ah. Al-Shāṭibī criticizes the Zahiri school of Ibn Hazm to have reduced the sources of Maqāṣid al-Sharī’ah to only the apparent

meanings and the texts. Whereas Al-Shāṭibī extends the multiple sources of Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah to include analogy [Qiyās] (Ibid), which is a source that Al-Jabiri and his group totally reject. In addition, Al-Shāṭibī criticized Ibn Ḥazm more than once in his various books (Ibid). This shows an aspect of the contradictions of Arab modernists, which is due to their weak Sharī'ah and Arabic background, a weakness that negatively affects their understanding of Muslim scholars' heritage on both epistemological and methodological levels. Additionally, the contradictions that are an associated feature of the Arab modernists are due to a weak methodology in dealing with the Islamic heritage, a methodology based on selecting whatever helps in reaching the goal even if it leads to methodological contradictions, Taha Abd Al-Rahman (nd).

Furthermore, the reader of *Al-Muwafaqāt* of Al-Shāṭibī can only say that while Al-Shāṭibī was building the pillars of his new approach, he was investing the full power of the Arabic rhetoric project of Imām Ash-Shāfi'ī رحمه الله, Al-Saghir (1415 AH). Additionally, if the fundamental element of Al-Shāṭibī's project of Maqāṣid is built upon considering the Sharī'ah's universal detailed injunctions and texts, it is to be said that Imām Ash-Shāfi'ī رحمه الله preceded Al-Shāṭibī to that. Al-Ghazālī رحمه الله reported that Imām Ash-Shāfi'ī رحمه الله while discussing the steps that a Mujtahid must follow, mentioned the following: "... if he did not find a consensus, he (the Mujtahid) while using analogy [Qiyās], should observe first the universals [*al-Kuliyyāt*] and prioritize them over the detailed rulings and texts [*Juz'iyāt*] ..." (1400 AH). In the same way Al-Juwaynī reported similar accounts from Imām Ash-Shāfi'ī (1997).

While Arab modernists criticize the rules of the Arabic language and the various methods that Arabs used their language in, they proposed completely alien methods to the Arab tongue in order to understand and interpret the Qur'ān and Sunnah that are in Arabic. They propose a foreign Western methodology to understand the Arabic texts in order to connect Muslim heritage to the Western epistemology. They either propose structuralism or deconstruction theory Hamudah (1998). The first one centralizes the reader rather than the author under the theory of the death of the author, while the second will link the understanding of any text to the understanding of another text and the second one depends on the third text in an infinite chain of texts. The end of this method is that no text has meaning because we are waiting to get the entirety of the texts. According to both methods, the texts of the Qur'ān and Sunnah will end with no meaning intended by the Lawgiver, (Al-Sharqi, 1990).

Arab modernists while attacking the stipulation of expertise in the Arab language to understand and interpret the Qur'ān and Sunnah ended by fighting Imām Ash-Shāfi'ī رحمه الله himself and his own intentions. Nasr Abū Zaid exemplifies one of the extreme subjectivity in criticizing Imām Ash-Shāfi'ī رحمه الله. He clearly stated that Imām Ash-Shāfi'ī رحمه الله encouraged the Arab language for the only reason that he was a "tyrant who founded the pillars of Arabism ideology". He said:

“While he (Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله) established the Arabic origin of the Qur’ān ... he did it from an ideological perspective implied the context of the intellectual and cultural conflict... he (Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله) subscribed not only to Arabism, but also to Qurrashism” (1992).

In this simple way the author diminishes the totality of Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī’s works, contributions and authority to both the Sharī’ah and Arabic language to a mere bad intention and insincerity towards Allāh in order to glorify the Arab tongue. While reading Abū Zaid’s opinions on Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله it seems that he turns him out to be a racist like Hitler was concerning the German race. In addition to Abū Zaid, Al-Tarabushti also transgresses the borders of objectivity and ethics in dealing with Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله; and due to his Christian background, Al-Tarabushti compares Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله to Paul who corrupted Christianity (2010).

Amazingly enough from Abū Zaid, is his struggle throughout the book to devalue the contributions of Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله to Islamic epistemology as he reduces Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī’s efforts to a mere struggle for Arabic ideology and Qurrashism. Abū Zaid commented on the selected opinion of Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله that there are no non-Arabic words in the Qur’ān by saying:

“... it was also (the selected opinion of Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī), a confirmation of the sovereignty and dominance of the tongue of Quraysh over the languages of the Arabic tongue. ... The reality is that this position is not free from an inclination towards Qurrashism” (Ibid).

By these words, Abū Zaid reduces a full chapter in the science of the Qur’ān into Qurrashism and racism. This issue of whether there are non-Arabic words in the Qur’ān or not is a controversial one among Muslim scholars and Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله was not the only one who held such a view but it is the viewpoint of the majority of Muslim scholars Al-Zarkashi (1990), not as wrongly mentioned by Abū Zaid.

Moreover, when Abū Zaid discusses the travels of Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله to Egypt and settling there, he literally interprets the cause behind it: “that the governor of Egypt was a Qurashī and Hāshimī (Ibid).” Arab modernists in their fight against the person of Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله are too blind to distinguish between historical facts. In this sense, Abū Zaid has accused Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله of cooperating deliberately with the Umayyads. He said:

“... but the most important expression of Ash-Shāfi‘ī’s inclination to Qurrashism, is that he was the only jurist of his time to deliberately cooperate with the Umayyads...” (Ibid).

It is an astonishing statement, when the reader knows that the Umayyads collapsed in 132 AH and Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله was born 18 years later in 150 AH in the same year when Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمه الله died. Another unreasonable claim in this statement is that while Abū Zaid himself declared that Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله was the only jurist to cooperate with the Umayyads, he contradicts himself when before this he claimed that the two disciples of Abū Ḥanīfah, namely Abū Yūsuf and Muhammad ibn al-Hasan have preceded Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله in cooperating with the Umayyads (Ibid). It is not only Abū Zaid who is mistaking history, on the other hand Hasan Hanafi declares that Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله was a student and disciple of Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رحمه الله (2004) while all historians know that Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله was born in the same year that Abū Ḥanīfah رحمه الله died. It is strange to see two Arab modernists falling into historical mistakes, where both of them did not know that Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله was born 18 years after the collapse of the Umayyads and it was the same year Abū Ḥanīfah رحمه الله died.

Third, Arab modernists devalue the efforts of Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله in books that are now published in several volumes. Nowadays, Masters, PhD theses and scientific papers and articles are published to study the various parts of Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī’s heritage. However, Arab modernists in their quest to get a fluid understanding of the divine texts and a liberal ways of Ijtihād accuse Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله of having imprisoned the Muslim mind in his theory of knowledge and his rules of interpretation Arkun (1998). As they accuse him of struggling for the sake of eliminating the intellectual and jurisprudential pluralism Arkun (Ibid), Abū Zaid (Ibid). Arkun goes far to say that because of Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī’s stipulations of Ijtihād, the Muslim nation come to see that the Sharī‘ah is from a divine source (Ibid). Moreover, Nasr Abū Zaid accused Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله that by his confirmation of the conditions of Ijtihād, he was able to make Muslims believe that religion and creed dominate all aspects of life (1995). Al-Marzuqi another Arab modernist goes further to accuse Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله to have: “planned to steal the will of the nation” (2006) –astonishing declarations on the part of academicians and researchers!

What is more, is that Arab modernists accuse Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله of establishing the duality of ‘Asl and Far’. Modernism is an epistemological divide with the past and hence with the origin as mentioned above. For modernism, there is no origin to go back for or to seek. For this Arkun sees that the Islamic idea is “prisoner and captive” of the idea of origin [‘Asl]. His attack against the idea of origin aims to establish the historicity of the divine texts (1999). While the duality of ‘Asl and Far’ is not the invention of Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله, Arkun and his group want in reality to get rid of the understandings and interpretations of the three first generations. This is the noble first three generations of Islam who constitute the origin of the various way of understanding, interpreting the Qur’ān and Sunnah, as they represent the origin of the Islamic epistemology and the origin of its systematic thinking. On the other hand, the way of the three noble generations are

the origins of the embodiment of the religious teaching in practice at the level of faith, worship, Islamic code of living and politics.

These four last accusations against Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله show clearly that Arab modernists turned their intellectual project into a war against Muslim scholars. They left the objectivity and scientific neutrality of research to jump in to personalization and prejudices.

5. CONCLUSION

This paper proved that the rules and maxims of Usūl al-Fiqh and conditions of Ijtihād are traced back to the Companions’ time. The paper displayed examples of the Companions’ methodology to understand the divine texts. Furthermore, it demonstrated that Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله did not innovate in religion and that scholars in his own generation were using the rules and regulations of Usūl al-Fiqh. Additionally, the paper evidenced the subjectivity of Arab modernists while dealing with the Muslim theory of knowledge as it provided with examples that they were unscientific in debating against Usūl al-Fiqh and Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله.

Due to the nature of academic papers, this study did not deal with other important issues involved by Arab modernists against Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله such as their subjective dealing with his lineage, his expertise and authority in both Sharī’ah and the Arabic language. In addition, this paper did not refute the claim of Arab modernists that Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله perpetrated “a coup against the Qur’ān in favor of the Sunnah”. Furthermore, the paper did not deal with specific treatment of this trend with specific rules and legal maxims claiming that Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله “invented” them, such as the rule that the Sharī’ah ruling is issued unconditionally to a particular case, but the ruling is generalized to similar cases [*Al- ‘Ibrah bi ‘Umum al-Lafz la bi Khusus al-Sabab*]. For this, this paper opens the doors for other researchers to pursue the study and refute the various claims of this trend of Arab modernists against Imām Ash-Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله, against other Muslim scholars and against Muslim heritage.

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