



COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE METHODS OF BUKHARI AND MUSLIM IN HADITH SELECTION

Masood Ahmad

Assistant professor, International Islamic University, Islamabad, Pakistan

Orcid ID : <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9804-8314>

Email: masood.ahmed@iiu.edu.pk

Dr. Muhammad Anas

Assistant professor Hadith department, International Islamic University Islamabad

Abstract:

This paper will compare the processes of Imam Muslim and Imam al-Bukhari in Hadith collection, which was to conserve the Sunna, as the second main source of Islamic legislation. Imam Bukhari used extremely high standards, establishing a continuous chain of reports, personal confirmation of the intercultural contact of reminder and remembered and the unaltered purity of moral character. His incredibly discerning method led to approximately 7,563 narrations, which makes Sahih al-Bukhari the gold standard of authenticity. Imam Muslim, as rigorous, took a somewhat broader approach. His encouraged narrations were those that were likely to include direct contact, contained corroborative variants, and placed emphasis on consistency of content. His collection of over 12,000 Hadiths offers further background knowledge that is useful for theological and legal justification. They discuss other external factors including conflicts in politics, sectarian strains, and even geographical scholarly traditions, which informed their choice of options. Both researchers were concerned with related issues such as counterfeit Hadith or incoherence in transmissions which were resolved by close isnad authentication and textual criticism. These findings suggest that Bukhari gave more emphasis to maximum authenticity and Muslim offered a broader range of valid traditions. Collectively, their writings comprise the basis of Hadith sciences that guarantee that appropriate Prophetic traditions are preserved and inform classic and modern Islamic scholarship.

keyword: Hadith Authentication, Imam Bukhari, Imam Muslim, Sahih al-Bukhari, Sahih Muslim, Comparative Methodology

1-Introduction

Hadith and Its Significance

The Hadiths- (Sayings, Actions and Approvals of the Prophet Muhammad) The hadiths occupy a prominent role in Islamic doctrine and legislation. The Hadith is the second most important Islamic book after the Qur'an, and reflects the divine law as revealed in the Qur'an. It is indispensable for the interpretation and commentary of the verses of the Qur'an which are normally short and sometimes vague, so that a complete perspective is established of Islamic beliefs, practices and morals. The significance of Hadith is such that it affects both religious and legal circumstances of a Muslim's life¹.

Hadiths originated as oral communication, but with the spread of Islam it was felt necessary to begin preserving strictly these oral traditions in written form. This practice of recording and authenticating hadiths continued until all these hadiths were written down and their authenticity better vetted by hadith scholars (known as *Muhaddithun*) who sifted through the hadith and evaluated the chain of narrators of each hadith and the text, with stringent criteria for veracity. The result of this compilation was the recording of thousands of Hadiths, some of which were

¹ Abu Ghudda, Muhammad. *The Science of Hadith: A Handbook for Beginners*. Islamic Book Trust, 1997.



compiled by great scholars in major books. Foremost of these are the compilations of Imam Bukhari and Imam Muslim 2 of the most authentic collection of hadith in the Islamic world.² In Islamic Jurisprudence, the role of a Sahih Hadith cannot be overstated as a source of law, morality, and personal behavior. Consequently the authenticity of the Islamic legal and theological system is heavily dependent upon the reliability of Hadith collections³

Purpose of the Study:

This research article is aimed to investigate the methodology of Imam Bukhari and Muslim in selecting the Hadiths with a comparative study. Through a study of the criteria they applied for the acceptance of the Hadith, this research will elucidate the subtle distinctions and/or similarities between their approaches, and generate insights into their methodologies. This will also serve a valuable contrastive purpose in noting the advantages and disadvantages of their respective works, the sahihs of al-Bukhari and Muslim, and the long-term effects that they had on the discipline of Hadith studies and on Islamic law.⁴ Its significance also stems from the fact that it relates to the larger discussion of Hadith authenticity. By comparing the methods used by these two great scholars in their collection of Hadiths, we are able to understand the principles underlining them in the endeavor to preserve the authenticity of the Islamic tradition. Knowles (mantesh] 5 the methods are important to judge the authenticity of the hadith literature and to meet the needs of today on the authenticity and interpretation of the hadiths⁵.

Introduction to Imam Bukhari and Imam Muslim:

Brief Biography of Imam Bukhari:

Born in Bukhara, in modern-day Uzbekistan, Imam Muhammad ibn Ismail al-Bukhari (810–870 CE) is regarded as one of the pioneers of Hadith research. In Sunni Islam, his work Sahih al-Bukhari is regarded as the most reliable source of hadith.⁶ Imam Bukhari travelled throughout the Muslim world, heard Hadith from the learned at places such as Mecca, Medina, Egypt, Kufa, Baghdad, Basra, etc. His works are noted for the rigor with which he checked the isnads as well as the reliability of narrators adalan in hadith. He required quite a high standard for his choices and left out many narrations that did not live up to it. Ibn Bukhari's collection numbers in the neighborhood of 7275 Hadiths including repeated ones and 2630 unique ones. His focus on the trustworthiness of the reporters and narraters of the traditions and the continuous process of narratioin of traditions have led his work to receive a trust like no other⁷.

Brief Biography of Imam Muslim:

Another great Personality in the in the field of Hadith literature, Imam Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj lived between the years 821 and 875 CE in Nishapur, now Iran. His collection, Sahih Muslim is considered the second most authentic collection of the Hadith in Sunni Islam following the

² Al-Dhahabi, Shams al-Din. *Siyar A'lam al-Nubala'*. Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyah, 1997.

³ Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani. *Fath al-Bari*. Dar al-Rayyan, 1985.

⁴ Al-Suyuti, Jalal al-Din. *Tadrib al-Rawi*. Al-Maktaba al-Ilmiyya, 1991.

⁵ Shah, Muhammad. *The Methodology of Hadith Evaluation in the Works of Bukhari and Muslim*. Journal of Islamic Studies, 2020, 15(2): 58-74.

⁶ Al-Bukhari, Muhammad ibn Ismail. *Sahih al-Bukhari*, translated by M. M. Khan. Darussalam, 1997.

⁷ Ibid



Sahih al-Bukhari⁸[(8)] . Similar to Imam Bukhari, Imam Muslim also travelled extensively to find undiscovered Hadiths and gathered a large compilation in his lifetime. But hold Imam Muslim to higher standards than Bukhari: unlike him he did not reject so many narrators and was a little more liberal in his requirements. His compilation includes approximately 4,000 non-reiterated Hadiths and has a wider range of narrators than Imam Bukhari perhaps himself, including some Imam Bukhari omits. It is noteworthy that the work by Imam Muslim is organized in logical order and utilizing very specific criteria to evaluate the credibility of the narrators and the substance of the Hadiths⁹.

Contributions made to Hadith Compilation:

Imam Bukhari and Imam Muslim each contributed immensely in preserving the Hadiths. Imam Bukhari was rigid and systematic in that only the finest authentic narrations succeeded in gaining a place in his compilation. His writing has become the signature of various scholastics presenting Hadith later and the approaches of the scholars during the centuries. Although using also a strict methodology, Imam Muslim was a little more liberal in his selection, so this had a wider scope of narrations. Their works are the keystone to Hadith literature, and collectively they provide a rich source of information about the words and deeds of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)¹⁰.

In their effort to ensure the authenticity of Hadiths, both scholars have been critical towards ensuring Islamic teachings remain intact. The procedures they used in writing Hadiths are still studied and adored by the Islamic scholars; they are still used as a guide in comprehending the historical mechanism of authenticating Hadiths and to this end, this is termed as the Hadith authentication by many scholars as being a guide to this end ¹¹.

2.Hadith Acceptance Criteria in Bukhari's Methodology:

Rigorous Criteria of Authenticity:

Imam Bukhari's method of collecting hadiths is known to be one of the most systematic ever, particularly in his ability to filter out the narrations that he used in his Sahih. At the core of his method was the principle of Sahih (authenticity). Imam Bukhari laid down strict conditions for a Hadith to be accepted as authentic. Those standards were intended to ensure that Hadiths were accurate and authentic narrations of the words and deeds of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

Sahih gradually became critical of the narrators, the continuity of the transmission chain, and defects in the actual content of the narration. Imam Bukhari endeavoured to unravel the mysteries of the Hadith and scripted the following principles of knowledge in the explanation of the Symbols of Imam Bukhari: That the source of each and every Hadith recorded in his collection be perfectly sound; That his chain of narrators for each Hadith is missing nothing of value that may accommodate the emergence of doubt. This stringent selection was to avoid the inclusion of weak or forged narrations and only report the most reliable and true Hadiths.¹²

⁸ Al-Muslim, Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj. *Sahih Muslim*, translated by Abdul Hamid Siddiqui. Lahore: Ashraf Press, 1972.

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ Ibid

¹¹ Al-Dhahabi, Shams al-Din. *Siyar A'lam al-Nubala'*. Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyah, 1997.

¹² Al-Dhahabi, Shams al-Din. *Siyar A'lam al-Nubala'*. Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyah, 1997.



Significance of the isnad (chain of narrators):

One of Imam Bukhari's unique contribution to his methodology was his emphasis on the continuous chain of Isnad. The criteria for a Hadith to be part of Sahih al-Bukhari is that its chain of narrators is continuous, with each narrator hearing or receiving it from the preceding narrator. This continuous chain was essential, as the chain guarantees reliability of the narration and that is actually rooted to the original source, that is our Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

Imam Bukhari was loyal to Isnad in a way that was more than just taking good care of the chain. He also evaluated the trustworthiness of every reporter in the chain. That meant assessing the narrator's retention, credibility, and virtue. The narrators were supposed to be trust-worthy, religious, and Imam Bukhari would reject a narrator who had the slightest doubt in his honesty and moral character.

Moral and Ethical Integrity of the Storytellers:

In the eyes of Imam Bukhari, the moral character and piety of narrators was more precious than their memory and knowledge of Hadith. He highlighted the honesty of the narrators, asserting that only the upright and truthful could well relay the words and deeds of the Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him). Imam Bukhari had conducted a method called Asma' al-Rijal (Checking of Bio details for narrators) on the trust worthiness of the narrators. This life-history summary collected explicit information about the life, character, and religious expression of every speaker.¹³

If narrators were known for their truthfulness, correctness and integrity of character, they were accepted, and if they were notorious for their lies and mischiefs, they were rejected. This latter requirement would serve to retain originality in the Hadith collection by preventing Muslims, whose character could be at fault, from creating inaccurate narrations, which the compiler of Sahih al-Bukhari would later accept as authentic, thereby excluding the possibility of non-genuine works being included¹⁴.

Bukhari's Distinction in Hadith Compilation:

Imam Bukhari's collection of Hadiths in particular is remarkable in terms of the strictness with which he applied these principles. His level of scrutiny for narrations made him a benchmark for later scholars and his Sahih al-Bukhari stands as the standard in the Hadith literature. Imam Bukhari had very high standards of selecting the Hadiths and reported that out of approximately 600,000 narrations he rose upon his criteria, only 7,275 approximately were extracted for the book following stringent application of his criteria.

One distinguishing characteristic of Bukhari's method was his rejection of a large amount of original material from Haddith that did not meet his strict standards, despite many having been acknowledged as authentic by other compilers of collections of Hadiths. This is clear from his avoiding of the many Hadiths which were included in Sahih according to others like Imam Abu Dawood and Imam Tirmidhi. He was consistently concerned that the veracity of the narrative was maintained, including where necessary a refusal to accept the "popular" or "widespread" account¹⁵.

¹³ Abu Ghudda, Muhammad. *The Science of Hadith: A Handbook for Beginners*. Islamic Book Trust, 1997.

¹⁴ Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani. *Fath al-Bari*. Dar al-Rayyan, 1985.

¹⁵ Shah, Muhammad. *The Methodology of Hadith Evaluation in the Works of Bukhari and Muslim*. Journal of Islamic Studies, 2020, 15(2): 58-74.



The Process Bukhari Followed in Choosing Hadith:

Imam Bukhari didn't just choose any random hadith. It was a systematic and rigorous study in several phases. The second was he would look in the chain of narrators (isnad) and make sure that the isnad was continuous and the men up to the molwi were precise. He would further evaluate the content of the hadith (matn) for compliance with established principles of Islamic belief and the absence of anything contrary to well-established doctrines, and that it did not conflict with other established hadiths.

Imam Bukhari would then authenticate the narrators by examining their individual biography in terms of their knowledge, memory, and character. Narrators who did not meet the strictest standards of honesty and reliability were disqualified. Imam Bukhari used to go through what he gathered of ahadith, verifying them using other sources and examining his chains of transmission to ensure authenticity and coherence. If a reporter was shown to be less than reliable, the hadith would be Dā'if (unfounded or flimsy)¹⁶.

The Function of Tawatur:

Mass transmission or Tawatur was one of the criteria in Imam Bukhari's methodology³⁰. More reliable – if a hadith was passed on by a large number of independent sources, It was regarded as more reliable, since that reduced the chances of those authorities colluding to invent and spread a story (see Bukhari's introductory note). Imam Bukhari used Tawatur a lot in grading a Hadith to be Sahih.

The large number of hadiths which were transmitted by a variety of independent transmission chains and were found in Bukhari's collection is important to the consensus among scholars due to because they provide the guarantee of the hadith's authenticity. This focus on mass transmission served to underscore the trustworthiness of Bukhari's collection and it went on to become one of the most generally accepted collections of Hadith in Islam¹⁷.

Effect of Imam Bukhari's procedure on hadith literature:

The stringent methodology of Imam Bukhari established a yardstick in the literature of Hadith which later scholars were able to imitate. His efforts pointed up the necessity for strict principles of the verification of hadith and his co-criteria in hadith-wocyh became the device of the Hadith scholars.follower. Imam Bukhari's focus on narrators' authenticity and an unbroken chain of narration, and this was also taken over by later collectors of ahadith like Imam Muslim, Imam Abu Dawood and Imam Tirmidhi who used the same method in their collections.

Bukhari's approach also significantly influenced the formation of Islamic law. His activities helped to ensure that the Hadiths used as references in Islamic legal pronouncements were both genuine and accurate. Hadith collections, especially Sahih al-Bukhari (the most reliable), played a key role in the development of Islamic law and theology¹⁸.

Examples of Bukhari's Selected Hadith:

A few examples of Hadiths that can be found in Sahih al Bukhari are the following: the widely known saying of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) that reads, "Actions are (judged) by motives, intensions, and each person will be rewarded according to what he has intended." This hadith, which is the basis for Islamic understanding of the concepts of sincerity and intention in

¹⁶ Ibid

¹⁷ Al-Suyuti, Jalal al-Din. *Tadrib al-Rawi*. Al-Maktaba al-Ilmiyya, 1991.

¹⁸ Al-Bukhari, Muhammad ibn Ismail. *Sahih al-Bukhari*, translated by M. M. Khan. Darussalam, 1997.



actions, is recorded in Sahih al-Bukhari because of its strength due to how it has been transmitted and who it has been transmitted from¹⁹.

Another is that relating to prayer when the Prophet (PBUH) said: “Whosoever prays to Allah, the Exalted, with a good intention, his prayer is being answered”. This statement of the Prophet (p.b.u.h), which affirms the principle of ikhlas (sincerity), is a direction for Muslims to follow when they perform their daily prayers. It is part of Sahih al-Bukhari and became available only after several verifications of the chain of narrators²⁰.

These are some of the myriad of cases reflecting the extreme due diligence with which Imam Bukhari chose Hadith for his compilation. Each Hadith serves as a useful guidance and a mirror to Imam Bukhari are a result of his keen desire to seek the authentic teachings of the Holy Prophet (PBUH)²¹.

3-The Criteria for Acceptance of Hadith in Muslim’s Method:

Sahih Muslim by Imam Muslim is also one of the most authentic collections of hadiths, second only to Sahih al-Bukhari. Nonetheless, his way of selecting the hadith is unique which makes it stand clear out from the other work of Imam Bukhari. This chapter investigates the standards Imam Muslim applied in accepting hadith, his methodological open-mindedness, and what his approach added to the hadith sciences at large.

Acceptance Requirements in Sahih Muslim:

Concept of Sahih in the Methodology of Imam Muslim:

Imam Muslim’s description of the sahih (authentic) hadith falls in accordance with the principles of the hadith science but varies on some specific points. He also followed al-Bukhari in seeking unbroken chains of transmission (isnad) with reliable reporters. Nevertheless, Muslim was more concerned with the preservation of the matn, while not disregarding the necessity of authenticity of the chain (sanad) in its entirety.²² Muslim’s standard was slightly more liberal; he excluded hadith that had any discrepancy (even if minor) in the narrative (Ismā’īl ibn Ibrahim ibn al-Mughīrah al-Bukhārī, Muhammad al-Bukhari, accepts hadiths which have minor discrepancy in the subsidiary matters)²³[12].

Variation in Discourse Narrators’ Moral Character Judgments:

Adherence to ‘adalah (moral integrity) and dabt (precision) of narrators was preferred in the case of both al-Bukhari and Muslim, but the latter was not as strict in the case of discrepancies regarding the reliability of a narrator between the learned. For example, he took narrations from people as al-A’mash and Hisham ibn Urwah, whose memory is not commonly admitted on his weaknesses, on condition they narrated hadith accurately²⁴. This is in sharp contrast to al-

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Muhammad ibn Isma’īl al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, ed. Mustafa al-Bugha (Damascus: Dar Ibn Kathir, 2002), 1:23; Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, *Sahih Muslim*, ed. Muhammad Fu’ad ‘Abd al-Baqi (Beirut: Dar Ihya’ al-Turath al-‘Arabi, 2000), 1:15.

²³ Ibn al-Salah, *Muqaddimah fi ‘Ulum al-Hadith* (Beirut: Dar al-Ma’rifah, 1986), 12.

²⁴ Al-Dhahabi, *Mizan al-I’tidal*, ed. ‘Ali Muhammad al-Bajawi (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 1995), 2:301.



Bukhari's questioning of material, where even a slight suspicion could get something excluded²⁵.

Flexibility in Selection:

A few looser requirements than al-Bukhari.

According to scholars, Sahih Muslim contains such hadiths which al-Bukhari may have omitted because of more demanding terms. Muslim allowed mursal (partially interrupted) narrations with other supports, but disallowed those that were not, a principle also followed by al-Bukhari except where a complete isnad tape can be identified with the narration²⁶ [(15)]. Such flexibility of methodology enabled the Muslim to make use of a wider spectrum of narration without losing the overall authenticity.

The Role of Aziz and Gharib Narrations:

Muslim, in contrast to al-Bukhari, who has fallen back primarily on mutawatir (mass-transmitted) and mashhur (well-known) narrations, did not refrain from including aziz (reported by at least two chains) and gharib (reported by one narrator at any step) hadiths should they satisfy his criteria of reliability²⁷ [(16)]. This served to present a more holistic picture of the Prophetic traditions especially in matters of law and theology.

The Methodological Approach of Muslims:

Imam Muslim used the collections of other scholars:

Muslim widely used several collections developed earlier, including those of Malik ibn Anas (at-Muwatta) and Sufyan al-Thawri, incorporating their reports after close validation²⁸. His approach was existing across many transmissions and conducting cross references, which helped his book become more believable.

Imam Musa Mesa Concept of mutawatir in Sahih Muslim Compilation:

Even though Sahih Muslim is not pegged on mutawatir exclusively, Imam Muslim has given much weight on concurring narrations (tawatur ma'nawi), whereby various chains of narrations reported the same meaning for the same meaning²⁹. This strategy excluded the need to use absolute uniformity in the words without still obfuscating the authenticity of hadiths.

The examples of the Hadith in Collection of Muslim:

Items that exemplify the process of selection.

One of his outstanding hadith is the hadith of intention (niyyah), occurring in several forms in Sahih Muslim. Whereas al-Bukhari documented it with a single sturdy chain, Muslim documented other variations with minor changes in wording, indicating that he accepted corroborative reports³⁰.

²⁵ Al-Khatib al-Baghdadi, *al-Kifayah fi 'Ilm al-Riwayah* (Medina: al-Maktabah al-'Ilmiyyah, 1980), 132.

²⁶ Jonathan Brown, *Hadith: Muhammad's Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World* (London: Oneworld, 2009), 45.

²⁷ Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, *Nuzhat al-Nazar*, ed. Nur al-Din 'Itr (Damascus: Dar al-Fikr, 2002), 78.

²⁸ Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, *al-Tamyiz*, ed. Muhammad Mustafa al-A'zami (Riyadh: Dar al-Salaf, 1982), 56.

²⁹ Nur al-Din 'Itr, *Manhaj al-Naqd fi 'Ulum al-Hadith* (Damascus: Dar al-Fikr, 1997), 210.

³⁰ Muslim, *Sahih Muslim*, 1:45 (Book of Faith, Hadith 1).



The wide context of the Hadiths in Sahih Muslim:

Now includes additional texts such as the Prophet opinions to enlarge on the prayers (salah) which otherwise give a better insight into practices / Characteristics of religion among Muslim. For instance, his compilation includes multiple stories of the Prophet's night prayers so that academics might have a comprehensive understanding of the subject.³¹

Imam Muslim's strategy in Sahih Muslim strikes a balance between being genuine and contextually expansive. His criteria were rigorous, but were more flexible than al-Bukhari; the result was a compilation that has become essential to the study of hadith.

4. Comparison of the methodologies of Bukhari and Muslim:

The Imam al-Bukhari (d. 256 AH) and Imam Muslim (d.261 AH) methodologies of collecting their respective Sahih collections can be described as being among the strictest in the field of hadith. Although the aim of both scholars was to record only what is most authentic of the Prophetic traditions, there are some fundamental differences in the means the scholars used in their selection of the sayings, their evaluation of the narrators, and more importantly the structuring of their collections. In this section, their approaches will be compared and contrasted, and the distinctions will be discussed in relation to their impact on the scope, reliability, and application of their principles by other jurists.

Comparison of Selection Criteria:

The most important non-agreements in their choice of Hadith.

The major difference between Sahih al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim is the criteria used to accept the hadith. Al-Bukhari was more restrictive in that he required:

1. Chains in which the narrators appear uninterrupted (ittisal al-isnad).
2. To be explicit (liqa) in the meeting of the transmitters in order to be directed.
3. Moral uprightness (adalah) and exactness (dabt) of all the tellers of the chain³².

Muslim by comparison were a little more lenient in their criteria:

1. He also accepted narrations in which a potential of person-person contact between transmitters was present although not necessarily stated.
2. He allowed some inconsistency in subsidiary information provided that the main sense of the thing had not been corrupted.
3. He incorporated a limited number of mursal (partially interrupted) hadiths with another Ahadith chainback patronisation³³.

The stringent approaches of Bukhari against the flexible ones of Muslim:

Bukhari was so conservative that he omitted numerous accounts that were acceptable to the Muslims. As an example, al-Bukhari denied hadiths of reporters such as 'Amr ibn Shu'ayb, whose trustworthiness was in dispute, but would at times accept them when supported³⁴. The difference reflects this admission of absolute certainty (qat'i) by Bukhari as compared to strong probability (zanni) created by Muslim in his transmission³⁵.

Quality vs. Quantity:

Focus on Fewer and Highly Authentic Hadith by Bukhari.

³¹ Muslim, *Sahih Muslim*, 1:298 (Book of Prayer, Hadith 175).

³² Al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, 1:23; Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, *Fath al-Bari*, 1:183.

³³ Muslim, *Sahih Muslim*, 1:15; Ibn al-Salah, *Muqaddimah*, 45.

³⁴ Al-Dhahabi, *Mizan al-I'tidal*, 3:245; Ibn Hibban, *al-Thiqat*, 5:312.

³⁵ Jonathan Brown, *Hadith: Muhammad's Legacy*, 78.



- The Sahih al-Bukhari includes 7,563 hadiths (including repetitions), rigorously screened out of 600,000 narrations he reviewed³⁶.
- He did not repeat unless hadith had a new legal or other theological use.
- His rigorous requirements caused even such familiar narrators as al-Hasan al-Basri to be excluded because of some shadowy suspicion of transmission³⁷.

Broad Approach of Muslim, With a little Wider Approach.

- The Sahih Muslim contains 12,000 hadiths (including repetitions), based on 300,000 narrations³⁸.
- He has allowed several chains of the same hadith to show its quality.
- His book presents more word forms, which helps jurist to determine fine outcomes³⁹.

Credibility and dependability of Narrators:

The way every scholar evaluated the narrators and their honesty:

Bukhari was very thorough in his examination of reporters. He:

- Investigated concealed defects of the chains overlooked by others (ilal).
- Rejected narrators whose memory wavered even slightly in accuracy.
- Required close personal contact between teachers and students, but the Muslim saw contemporaneity (mu'asara) to be adequate⁴⁰.

Muslim, though a strict one, was more liberal:

- He tolerated narrators who were questioned because of infrequent mistakes as long as their overall credibility had been determined.
- He also gave the narration of intermediate-level reporters (saduq, thiqa) provided by other chains⁴¹.

The Importance of This Aspect in the Selecting Process:

The different methods affected the utility of their collections:

- The approach of Bukhari was the most authentic as his work is the gold standard in verifying hadith.
- Muslims' adaptability provided a broader contextual basis as well, which is beneficial for comparative legal research.⁴²

Influence on Islamic Jurisprudence:

Both Collections added to the Law and Practice of Islam:

- The hadiths of Bukhari are usually preferred in the derivation of legal ruling because it has strict authenticity.
 - Examples: His book on intent (niyyah) in transactions forms the basis of Islamic contract law⁴³.

³⁶ Al-Khatib al-Baghdadi, *Tarikh Baghdad*, 2:12.

³⁷ Ibn 'Adi, *al-Kamil fi Du'afa' al-Rijal*, 4:156.

³⁸ Al-Nawawi, *Sharh Sahih Muslim*, 1:20.

³⁹ Muslim, *Sahih Muslim*, 2:45 (Book of Prayer).

⁴⁰ Al-'Iraqi, *al-Taqyid wa al-Idah*, 112.

⁴¹ Ibn Abi Hatim, *al-Jarh wa al-Ta'dil*, 2:89.

⁴² Nur al-Din 'Itr, *Manhaj al-Naqd*, 210.

⁴³ Al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, 1:2 (Book of Faith).



- The compilation of Muslim is often used in order to supplement and contextualize rulings.
 - Examples: His several remarks on prayer times assist jurists in the knowledge of different practices by them⁴⁴.

The way scholars use their Hadith collections nowadays:

- Hadith scholars give Sahih al-Bukhari first priority in order to have definite proofs (hujjah).
- Jurists (fuqaha) commonly used Sahih Muslim as an extension of the supporting evidence in cases where Bukhari has restricted narrations.
- Modern scholars appreciate the fact that Muslim included alternate narrations in order to study history and linguistics⁴⁵.

Although the two Sahihs (Sahih al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim) are essential in the Sunni Muslim faith, their differences in methodology complement each other. The unsurpassed rigor of Al-Bukhari, guarantees the utmost rigor, whereas the more generous manner of Muslim furnishes a more coherent scheme of legal and theological education. They comprise the foundation of classical and modern Islamic jurisprudence.

5. Effects of External Influences on the Selection of Hadith:

The services of assembling Sahih al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim did not take place in a vacuum, however, it was meaningfully influenced by the social, political, and intellectual condition of the 3rd century AH (the 9th century CE). This part will explore how the external influences such as political disturbances, geographical location and academic contacts impacted the methodologies of Imam al-Bukhari and Imam Muslim in choosing hadith.

Socially and Politically:

Influence of Political Environment upon Compilation of Hadith:

Despite political instability, especially early on, the Abbasid period (132-656 AH) was characterized by intellectual expansion, especially under the Mihna (Inquisition) of Caliph al-Ma'mun (d. 218 AH), which subjected scholars to pressure to convert to the ideology of the uniformism known as Mu'tazili theology⁴⁶. Despite not ending when the work of al-Bukhari and Muslim started, the consequences of the Mihna produced two important effects on the science of hadith:

1. Greater Criticism of Narrators - Critics grew more skeptical about the credibility of hadiths relating to theificaly partisan individuals such as defectors from sectarian movements such as the Qadariyyah or Murjiyah nomenclature or those linked to moral principles like rivalry between good and evil that might affect their integrity in judging the reliability of the sciences such as hadiths (or may include those cited above).⁴⁷
2. Accent on Isnad Criticism During the Umayyad and early Abbasid eras, the politico-religious penetration of receiver of the hadith contributions resulted in the

⁴⁴Muslim, *Sahih Muslim*, 1:298 (Book of Prayer).

⁴⁵Mohammad Hashim Kamali, *A Textbook of Hadith Studies*, 95.

⁴⁶Muhammad Qasim Zaman, *Religion and Politics Under the Early Abbasids* (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 112.

⁴⁷Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhib al-Tahdhib*, 4:321.



increased rigour of checking and certification of chains of transmitters (isnad) in order to eliminate forgeries, imams' falsifications and fake letters⁴⁸.

The Purpose of Fitnah or Trials Period:

Those effects that had long-term consequences on the transmission of hadith are those caused by the First Fitnah (civil war, 35-41 AH) and other conflicts:

- Narrators of this period, too, were subject to examination, should they have been politically partisan, especially partisan to the Umayyad faction, or on the side of the Alids (Lapidus nlmaka)⁴⁹.
- An example is al-Bukhari who did not accept as narrators those whose tashayyu' (leaning towards the nizam) was reputed, whilst Muslim sometimes did accept them when they had been proven of other merits⁵⁰.

Geographical Influence:

The Locations of Bukhari and Muslim how they influenced their choices.

1. The much Travelled Al-Bukhari.

- Al-Bukhari, born in the year 895 in Bukhara (modern Uzbekistan), toured Khurasan and Iraq, the Hijaz and Egypt and gathered together as much hassad as he could find, occasionally at the same time, in no fewer than forty different localities, where there is documentation of (200) different hadith scholars involved (553).⁵¹
- His communications with various erudite traditions enabled him to cross-check accounts, support which his high standards.
- To produce a general monument of autonomy and to avoid the political entanglements of his own era he preferred narrators close to the pulsation of the Prophet, those whose belongings bore a decidedly Hijazi quality (e.g. Malik ibn Anas) (Documentary letter)].⁵²

2. The concentration of Muslims on Nishapur and Iraq:

- Muslim, based predominately in Nishapur (Iran), was able to access another set of scholars, including Ibn Rahwayh and al-Dhuhali⁵³.
- Rationalist influences became less rigid with the Persian scholarly tradition, perhaps another reason why Muslim is a little more laissez-faire on the issue of revisioning the narrator through criticism of texts⁵⁴
- Muslim, in contrast to al-Bukhari, used a greater number of the narrations of Kufan reporters, though they were famous for being sectarians, on condition that they met his standards of reliability⁵⁵.

⁴⁸ Al-Khatib al-Baghdadi, *al-Kifayah fi 'Ilm al-Riwayah*, 256.

⁴⁹ Patricia Crone, *God's Rule: Government and Islam* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 58.

⁵⁰ Al-Dhahabi, *Siyar A'lam al-Nubala*, 12:271.

⁵¹ Al-Bukhari, *al-Tarikh al-Kabir*, 1:12.

⁵² Scott Lucas, *Constructive Critics, Hadith Literature, and the Articulation of Sunni Islam* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 89.

⁵³ Muslim, *al-Kuna wa al-Asma*, 1:45.

⁵⁴ Jonathan Brown, *The Canonization of al-Bukhari and Muslim* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 134.

⁵⁵ Ibn Abi Hatim, *al-Jarh wa al-Ta'dil*, 7:182.



Cultural and Academic setting:

The Culture and the influence on the perception by the narrators?

1. Urban vs. Rural Narrators:

- Al-Bukhari placed a great emphasis on transmitters of knowledge, particularly those living in more scholarly centers (Mecca, Medina, Basra), believing them to be more credible than those living in remote rural areas ⁵⁶.
- Muslim did accept, however, certain reporters in fringe schools as long as their reports were substantiated by another one⁵⁷.

2. Early Critics of Hadith:

Imams relied on the work of previous critics such as:

- Yahya ibn Ma'in (d. 233 AH) - Prominent are his harsh criticisms of some narrators, which were widely relied upon by al-Bukhari (glesir)⁵⁸.
- Ahmad ibn Hanbal (d. 241 AH) - Ahmad ibn Hanbal adhered to the methodology of his ilth finder Imam mentioned above [called, in Persian and Arabic, in his religious stance, evident in his ilth discussing.⁵⁹

3. The purpose of Local Hadith Traditions:

- Bukhari concentrated on hadiths with clear and obvious legal significance, while Medinese scholarship emphasised pragmatic legal practice (e.g., the Maweerah via the Muwatta of Malik).⁶⁰
- Sufyan al-Thawri and other Iraqi scholars were more text-critical, which was consistent with Muslims' incorporation of various transmission forms.⁶¹

The methodologies that have been used to choose the hadith of al-Bukhari and Muslim were highly intermingled with political turmoil, geographical variety and culture of studies prevailing during that period. Al-Bukhari was an austerity scholar indicating his transregional process of verification and preference against political inclinations whereas Muslim used to be relaxed due to his contact with other scholarly circles. It is important to be aware of these external factors in order to understand the basis of the difference in the extent and approach of their collections, both of which are equally sacred.

6. Ordinary Difficulties in Authentication of Hadith:

The hadith authentication science (ilm al-rijal and ilm al-Hadith) was developed as a strict science to maintain the excellence of the Prophetic traditions. Even the careful approaches of scholars such as Imam al-Bukhari and Imam Muslim failed to solve a number of issues when it came to authenticating hadith. This part discusses the major challenges they encountered which include falsified accounts, inconsistencies in associations, and the general theological consequences of false accounts.

⁵⁶ Al-'Ijli, *Ma'rifat al-Thiqat*, 2:76.

⁵⁷ Muslim, *Sahih Muslim*, introduction by Muhammad Fu'ad 'Abd al-Baqi, 1:20.

⁵⁸ Ibn Ma'in, *Tarikh*, ed. Ahmad Muhammad Nur (Damascus: Dar al-Qalam, 1980), 3:45.

⁵⁹ Ahmad ibn Hanbal, *Ilal al-Hadith*, 1:203.

⁶⁰ Yasin Dutton, *The Origins of Islamic Law* (London: Routledge, 2002), 67.

⁶¹ Christopher Melchert, *The Formation of the Sunni Schools of Law* (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 93.



Forgery of Hadith and Its Evils:

Limitations How Counterfeit Hadith were detected and denounced.

The intentional falsification (wad') of hadith become a burning issue in the Umayyad and Abbasid periods, due to:

1. **Political Reasons:** Leaders and groups of people made up hadith to justify their power⁶².
2. **Theological arguments:** To support their views, sectarian organisations (such as Kharijites and Qadariyyah) disseminate incorrect information.⁶³
3. **Fraud of piousness:** others had made up hadith of piousness (fada'il) to promote good actions without understanding the great taboo of lying against the Prophet⁶⁴.

Ways to identify Fabrications:

Chain Analysis (Naqd al-Isnad) : Bukhari and Muslim examined reporters and labeled as liars or extremists those who were known to be liars or extremists (ghuluww)⁶⁵.

Textual Inconsistencies (Shudhudh): Hadiths that contradict Quran, authentically established Sunnah, or history were rejected⁶⁶.

Corroboration (Mutaba'ih) : Unverified narrations were compared with parallel chains⁶⁷.

Some Rejected Fabrications include:

- The infamous and forged hadith, "Knowledge even in China," was omitted by both authors because that had weak chain⁶⁸.
- Al-Bukhari disapproved of the narration of al-Mughira ibn Sa'id, an extremist (ghali)⁶⁹ of that type.

Discrepancies in Narration:

Differences in Narrations of Dissenting Companies.

Natural variations happened as a result of:

1. **Memory Differences:** Memory Differences Companions told the same story with minor word variation.
2. **Contextual Adaptation:** Sometimes, the Prophet {Silla Llahu Alayhi WaSallam} customized a dictum to a particular scenario, with the result that we have conflicting reports thereof⁷⁰.

Notable Examples:

- **The hadith of ablution (wudu):** There are some hadiths that say wipe (ghasl) and those that say wiping (masah). Bukhari and Muslim harmonised these by explaining them by context as different rulings⁷¹.

⁶² Ibn al-Jawzi, *al-Mawdu'at*, 1:34.

⁶³ Al-Dhahabi, *Mizan al-I'tidal*, 1:201.

⁶⁴ Muslim, *Introduction to Sahih Muslim*, 1:8.

⁶⁵ Al-Bukhari, *al-Tarikh al-Kabir*, 3:412.

⁶⁶ Ibn al-Salah, *Muqaddimah*, 65.

⁶⁷ Al-Khatib al-Baghdadi, *al-Kifayah*, 120.

⁶⁸ Ibn Hibban, *al-Majruhin*, 2:89.

⁶⁹ Al-Bukhari, *al-Du'afa' al-Saghir*, 45.

⁷⁰ Al-Shafi'i, *al-Risalah*, 224.

⁷¹ Al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, 1:45 (Book of Ablution).



- **Variations in the wording of the Adhan:** Bukhari provided varied valid versions, so there was flexibility in the details of the subsidiary⁷².

Strategies to eliminate the differences:

1. **The Strength of Chains being Preferable:** In case two genuine hadiths contradicted, the one with a stronger isnad was preferred⁷³.
2. **Harmonization (al-jam') :** The Scholars resolved apparent contradictions between texts through appealing to differences in contexts.⁷⁴.
3. **Abrogation (naskh):** New narrations replaced earlier ones, when they altered a ruling (hadith)⁷⁵ of earlier ruling.

Effects of False Narrations on the teachings of Islam:

There are theological and legal implications.

Forged hadith was a danger to fundamental Islamic doctrines:

- **Theology:** The Mahdi or Dajjal was deformed by false eschatological hadiths⁷⁶.
- **Law:** A haram ruling would be determined spuriously or the other way round⁷⁷.

Case Study: The Three Divorce Issue:

There were some weak ones which implied instant unconditional divorce (triple talaq in one sitting). These were omitted by Bukhari and Muslim, and the orthodox opinion of divorce one after the other was retained⁷⁸.

Protection of Authenticity of Hadith.

1. **Bukhari's Extreme Caution:**
 - Only took 7,563 hadiths of 600,000 analyzed⁷⁹.
 - Even small doubts (mudallisun) on the part of rejected narrators unless they expressly indicated hearing (sama')⁸⁰.
2. **The Systematic Compilation of Muslims:**
 - Supporting narrations (shawahid) in groups in order to certify texts⁸¹.
 - Disclosed concealed faults (ilal) by means of comparison⁸².

Legacy of Their Work:

Set up the gold standard of sahih (authentic) hadith.

Late critics (nuqqad) such as Ibn Hibban and al-Daraqutni were later inspired to perfect the science even further⁸³.

⁷² Ibn al-Qayyim, *al-Manar al-Munif*, 42.

⁷³ Ibn Hajar, *Fath al-Bari*, 1:183.

⁷⁴ Al-Nawawi, *Sharh Sahih Muslim*, 5:12.

⁷⁵ Al-Zurqani, *Sharh al-Muwatta*, 3:78.

⁷⁶ Ibn Taymiyyah, *Minhaj al-Sunnah*, 4:211.

⁷⁷ Al-Suyuti, *Tadrib al-Rawi*, 1:156.

⁷⁸ Al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, 7:102 (Book of Divorce).

⁷⁹ Al-Khatib al-Baghdadi, *Tarikh Baghdad*, 2:12.

⁸⁰ Ibn 'Adi, *al-Kamil*, 6:231.

⁸¹ Muslim, *al-Tamyiz*, 88.

⁸² Ibn al-Qayyim, *al-Manar al-Munif*, 42.

⁸³ Jonathan Brown, *Hadith: Muhammad's Legacy*, 112.



Al-Bukhari and Muslim approached the problems of hadith authentication--fabrication, discrepancies, and theological corruption--with scholarly rigor unequaled in any comparable endeavor. Not only did their methodologies cleanse the Sunnah, but it also provided the basis by which systematic criticism of the hadith became possible, helping maintain the textual integrity of Islam over the centuries.

Conclusion:

When the methodologies of Imam al-Bukhari and Imam Muslim are compared in terms of how they selected hadiths, it is possible to find both points of convergence and divergence between these two traditions in their perspectives on establishing and maintaining the authenticity of the Prophetic tradition and the critical approaches to this task. This study has also noted several important findings, the lasting importance of their work, and how it has contributed to modern Islamic academic work.

Summary of Key Findings

1. Methodological Differences

- **Stringency or Flexibility:** Al-Bukhari was considerably stricter in his requirements; he demanded direct evidence of narrator meeting (liqa') and the abandonment of even minor doubts as to transmissions. Muslim was a little more permissive, however, believing in the admissibility of those narrations that have plausible connections of transmission and covering a wider variety of supporting chains (shawahid).
- **Scope of Compilation:** Sahih al-Bukhari is increasingly selective (7,563 hadiths) whereas Sahih Muslim is more comprehensive (12,000 hadiths), as well as including extra variants to put them into perspective.

2. Common Ground

- Both scholars stressed continuity (isnad), reporter purity (adalah) and accuracy (dabt).
- They occasionally barred fabricated (mawdu') and weak (da'if) narrations by the technique of cross-checking.

3. External Influences

Political turbulence (e.g. the Mihna) and local asiatic scholarship influenced their approaches, with Bukhari preferring Hijazi reporters and Muslim including more Iraqi reports.

Importance of their work:

Al-Bukhari and Muslim developed standards of gold rule in authentication of hadith, which garner much credit even in the eyes of Sunni scholars everywhere. their works are sacred owing to:

- **Extensive Scholarship:** They developed ilm al-Rijal (criticism of narrators) and ilm Hadith (Science of hadiths) to new levels.
- **Jurists (fuqaha):** give more priority to their collections to derive and provide Islamic law; doctrinal consistency is also consistent.
- **Historical Preservation:** They collected the Sunnah so as to preserve against corruption especially in sectarian arm struggles.

Contemporary Islamic Studies:

1. Modern Hadith Research

- Their methodologies continue to be elementary by critical analysis of hadiths, such as computerization of maps of isnaads and computation verification.
- Several scholars, including Jonathan Brown and Harald Motzki, have used their principles to reexamine weak narrations in recollection of fresh evidence[(73)].



2. Problems and Suggestions

- **Interdisciplinary Approaches:** Future research must adopt interdisciplinary methods by incorporating historical and philological tools and AI-driven tools to enhance studies on narrator reliability.
- **Contextualizing Discrepancies:** It is necessary to conduct research to reconcile variant narrations (ikhtilaf al-Hadith) through their harmonization means.
- **Fighting Modern Forgeries:** Its rejection bases should guide criticisms of modern mawdu hadith in the Internet.

Final Reflections:

Al-Bukharis and Muslim legacies transcend the epochs they belong to and provide eternal means to preserve the Islamic textual tradition. With the ensuing challenges of the ummah sunk in digital misinformation, sectarian polemics, hermeneutical arguments, their methods are giving a strict, malleable approach to the preservation of the integrity of Sunnah. Ongoing scholarship needs to expand on them and get creative to cope with emerging academic and technological frames.