

A Critical Analysis of Al-Mudtarib

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Abstract

This paper presents a comprehensive study of the concept of "Mudtarib" in hadith studies, focusing on its theoretical foundations and practical implications. The term "Mudtarib" refers to a hadith that exhibits significant inconsistencies in its transmission, where different narrators report conflicting versions of the same narration without one version being definitively more reliable than the others. The study begins by exploring the linguistic and technical definitions of "Mudtarib", followed by a detailed examination of the conditions under which a hadith is classified as such. Key distinctions between "Mudtarib" and other forms of discrepancy, such as "Iktilaf", are discussed to clarify the specific criteria that render a hadith "Mudtarib". The paper also addresses the scholarly rulings on "Mudtarib" hadiths, emphasising their impact on the reliability and acceptance of these narrations in Islamic jurisprudence. In the practical section, the paper provides illustrative examples of "Mudtarib" hadiths, analysing their chains of narration and the variations that lead to their classification as "Mudtarib". Through these examples, the study demonstrates how scholars approach the evaluation of these narrations and the methodologies used to determine their authenticity or weakness. The paper concludes by highlighting the contributions of classical Islamic scholars to the study of "Mudtarib" hadiths, with references to key works in the field. This research aims to enhance the understanding of "Mudtarib" in hadith studies and to provide a valuable resource for scholars and students engaged in the critical analysis of Islamic traditions.

Keywords: Hadith Studies, Hadith Authenticity, Mudtarib Hadith

INTRODUCTION

The science of hadith, which is dedicated to the preservation of the sayings of Prophet Muhammad, has long been a cornerstone of Islamic scholarship. Authentic chains of narration, known as isnads, have been meticulously recorded to safeguard these sayings, actions, and conditions. To distinguish between authentic and weak hadiths, scholars have developed a comprehensive set of rules and methodologies. Among the critical components of this scholarly endeavour is the science of "Hadith Terminology" (Mustalah al-Hadith), which provides the framework for evaluating the reliability of various narrations.

This research focuses on a specific type of hadith known as "Al-Mudtarib", which can be approximately translated into English as 'the confused' or 'inconsistent hadith'. The term "Al-Mudtarib" refers to narrations that exhibit significant inconsistencies in their transmission, where conflicting versions are reported by different narrators without one version being definitively more reliable than the others. The study engages with the views of esteemed scholars within the field, providing examples of Al-Mudtarib hadiths to illustrate these theoretical concepts. Additionally, biographical information of the scholars and narrators involved is provided to contextualise their contributions.

The research methodology includes the documentation of scholarly opinions from primary sources, supplemented by secondary sources when necessary. Furthermore, genealogical trees are drawn for each hadith example mentioned, and an index of the sources and references used is provided. This approach ensures a rigorous and systematic analysis of the Al-Mudtarib hadiths, contributing to a deeper understanding of their role and significance within the broader field of hadith studies.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The word "Mudtarib" originates from the verb "Idtiraba" (اضطرب), which is derived from "Darb" (ضرب). The root letters Dhaad (ض), Raa (ر), and Baa (ب) form a fundamental linguistic unit that is then extended metaphorically to various meanings. The basic meaning of "Darb" is the act of striking one thing against another. "Mudtarib" is the active participle of "Idtirab" (اضطراب), which means something that shakes, stirs, or

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is agitated. "Idtirab" also refers to the movement of a fetus in the womb, and the phrase "Idtiraba al-Habl" (اضطرب الحبل) is used when a group of people disagrees, meaning their words differ. An affair is described as "Mudtarib" when it is disordered, and a hadith is said to have a "Mudtarib isnad" (a confused chain of transmission). The waves are described as "Mudtarib" when they clash against each other, and people are said to be "Mudtarib" when they strike each other (Al-Khazrajī, 1290; Al-Razi, 1005).

According to Al-Hafiz Ibn As-Salah, "A hadith is considered 'Mudtarib' when there are conflicting narrations, with some narrating it in one way and others in a different, contradictory way. We only term it 'Mudtarib' if the two narrations are of equal strength" (Al-Shahrazuri, 1233; Al-Dhahabi, 1351) . Additionally, Al-Hafiz Ibn Hajar stated: "The differences among the hadith scholars regarding a hadith do not automatically render it 'Mudtarib' unless two conditions are met: (1) Equal Weight of Differences: If one version of the narration is stronger, then the stronger version is preferred, and the weaker one is not used to deem the hadith unreliable; and (2) Inability to Reconcile: If the differences are equally strong, and it is impossible to reconcile them based on the principles of the hadith scholars, and it becomes apparent that the particular narrator failed to accurately preserve the hadith, then the narration alone is judged as 'Mudtarib,' and the authenticity of the hadith is withheld from being declared" (Al-Asqalani, 1428; Al-Suyuti, 1474).

Notably, "Ikhtilaf" (discrepancy) is a broader term than "Idtirab" (confusion/inconsistency), as the condition for a narration to be considered "Mudtarib" (confused) is that the discrepancy must be detrimental (qadhih). In contrast, a discrepancy ("Ikhtilaf") may or may not be detrimental. Regarding this, Al-Iraqi stated: "But if one of the two narrations is preferred because its narrator is more reliable, or has spent more time in the company of the person from whom he narrates, or for other reasons that give preference to one narration over the other, then the preferred narration is not labeled as 'Mudtarib', nor does it carry the ruling of 'Idtirab'. The ruling, in this case, goes to the preferred narration" (Al-Iraqi, 1368; Al-Suyuti, 1474). Al-Mubarakfuri also remarked: "It has been established in the principles of hadith that mere discrepancy does not necessitate 'Idtirab'. Rather, one of the conditions of 'Idtirab' is that the differing aspects must be equal. If one of the narrations is stronger, it is given preference" (Al-Mubarakpuri, 1904).

A "Mudtarib" hadith is considered weak because it lacks one of the essential conditions of acceptance, which is precision (dhabt). Indeed, Ibn As-Salah mentioned: "Idtirab necessitates the weakening of the hadith because it indicates that the hadith was not accurately preserved" (Al-Shahrazuri, 1233) . However, it is possible for a hadith to be both authentic and "Mudtarib". As-Suyuti, explaining the words of Al-Hafiz, stated: "It has occurred in the statements of previous scholars of Islam that 'Idtirab' may coexist with authenticity. This happens when there is a difference in the name of a single man, his father, his lineage, or something similar, but the narrator is reliable, so the hadith is judged authentic. The difference in what was mentioned does not harm its authenticity, even if it is called 'Mudtarib'. There are many such examples in the Sahihayn (Bukhari and Muslim), and Az-Zarkashi also confirmed this in his abridged work, saying: 'Indeed, contradiction and confusion may occur in the categories of 'Sahih' (authentic) and 'Hasan' (good) hadiths'" (Al-Suyuti, 1490, 1494; Al-Hanbali, 1090).

For readers interested in further information about the concept of Al-Mudtarib, there are two world-renowned texts on this matter; namely, "Al-'Ilal" authored by Al-Daraqutni, for which Al-Hafiz As-Sakhawi mentioned: "There are many examples of 'Mudtarib' in both the text and the chain of transmission. The most frequent occurrence is in the chain, and such examples can be found in Al-'Ilal by Ad-Daraqutni" . Secondly, there is "Al-Muqtarib fi Bayan Al-Mudtarib", which was authored by Al-Hafiz Ibn Hajar.

CRITICAL DISCUSSION

Having defined the concept of Al-Mudtarib, this section of the paper aims to present real-world examples of it. To begin with, Abu Dawood mentioned in his *Sunan* (Al-Sijistani, 889) in the Book of Hajj under the section "Meat of Game for the Muhrim": Hadith No. 1581: "Qutaybah ibn Sa'id narrated to us, Ya'qub the Alexandrian narrated to us, from 'Amr, from Al-Muttalib, from Jabir ibn Abdullah, who said: 'I heard the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) say: "Land game is permissible for you so long as you do not hunt it and it isn't hunted for you."'"

Abu Dawood commented: "When the experts disagree on the narrations from the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him), it is important to consider what his Companions followed". This hadith was also reported by Ahmad ibn Hanbal in his *Musnad* (Al-Shaybani, 855) under *Musnad Jabir ibn Abdullah*, At-Tirmidhi in his *Jami'* (At-Tirmidhi, 884) under the chapter on what has been narrated about the permissibility of eating game for the Muhrim, and An-Nasa'i in his *Al-Mujtaba* (An-Nasa'i, 915) under the Book of Hajj Rites, chapter on when the Muhrim points to game and a non-Muhrim kills it. Narrators in the chain include:

- Qutaybah ibn Sa'id At-Thaqafi: Reliable (Thiqah) (Al-Asqalani, 1435).
- Ya'qub ibn Abd al-Rahman al-Madani: Reliable (Thiqah) (ibid).
- 'Amr ibn Abi 'Amr, Mawla of Al-Muttalib: Reliable, but sometimes made mistakes (ibid).
- Al-Muttalib ibn Abdullah Al-Makhzumi: Truthful, but a frequent Tadlis (concealing the name of the transmitter) and Irsaal (omitting a narrator) (ibid).

Regarding this chain, Al-Bukhari stated: "I do not know of any instance where Al-Muttalib ibn Hantab directly heard from any of the Companions" (Al-Suyuti, 1474). Similarly, At-Tirmidhi commented: "We do not know of Al-Muttalib having directly heard from Jabir" (At-Tirmidhi, 884; Al-Suyuti, 1474) . Therefore, the confusion (Idtirab) in this hadith stems from the possible inconsistencies in the chain of narration. Although the narrators are generally reliable, the issues of Tadlis and Irsaal, particularly concerning Al-Muttalib, raise questions about the direct transmission and authenticity of the hadith. The potential errors or omissions in the chain affect the reliability of the hadith, making it a candidate for consideration as "Mudtarib".

Another illustration of Idirab can be seen in the narration recorded by Ahmad in his *Musnad* (Al-Shaybani, 855) under *Musnad Jabir ibn Abdullah* through the transmission of Ibn Abi Zinad, from 'Amr, from a trustworthy man among Banu Salamah, who narrated it from him. In this version, the narrator is left vague as "a trustworthy man". Similarly, Ahmad also recorded it in his *Musnad* (ibid) under *Musnad Jabir ibn Abdullah* through the transmission of 'Abdul-Aziz ibn 'Abdullah Al-Majishun, from 'Amr, from a man from the Ansar, who narrated it from him. Here again, the narrator is left vague as "a man from the Ansar". Moreover, the hadith was also recorded by At-Tahawi in *Sharh Ma'ani Al-Athar* (Al-Tahawi, 933) under the Book of Hajj Rites, in the chapter on whether the Muhrim can eat the game slaughtered by a non-Muhrim through 'Amr, from Al-Muttalib, from Abu Musa Al-Ash'ari. In this version, it is presented as being from the *Musnad* of Abu Musa Al-Ash'ari via Al-Muttalib, although Al-Muttalib did not hear directly from him.

The hadith is primarily transmitted through 'Amr ibn Abi 'Amr, but it appears that he did not accurately preserve the hadith. The variations in the chain—whether the narrator is left vague or misattributed to different individuals—indicate a lack of consistency and reliability in transmission. This inconsistency is a hallmark of Idirab. Ibn At-Turkumani criticised this hadith for its Idirab in the chain of narration in his work *Al-Jawhar al-Naqi* (Al-Dhahabi, 1350) . Similarly, Al-Ghumari pointed out the Idirab in his *Al-Hidayah fi Takhrij Ad-
Daya* (Al-Ghumari, 1950) . A clear example of this can be seen in Figure 1.

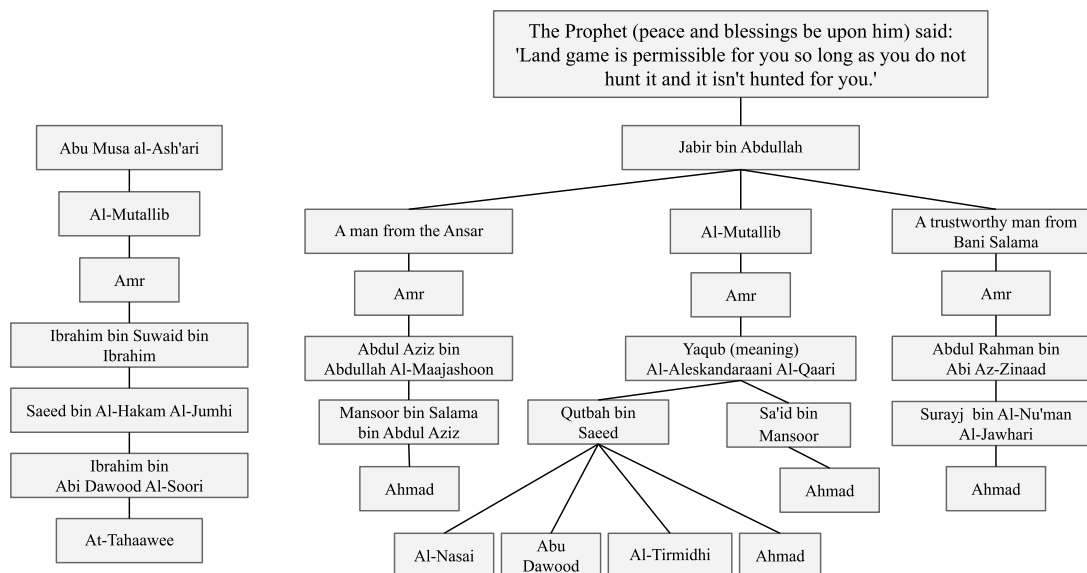


Figure 1. An example of Idtirab where the narrator is left vague

Another instance of Idtirab is noted by Abu Dawood who mentioned in his *Sunan* (Al-Sijistani, 889) in the Book of Hajj under the section "On 'Throwing the Pebbles": Hadith No. 1791: "Musaddad narrated to us, 'Abdul-Wahid ibn Ziyad narrated to us, Al-Hajjaj narrated to us, from Az-Zuhri, from 'Amrah bint 'Abdur-Rahman, from 'Aisha who said: 'The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) said: When any of you throws the pebbles at Jamrah al-'Aqabah, everything becomes permissible for him except for women". Abu Dawood commented: "This is a weak hadith. Al-Hajjaj did not narrate directly from Az-Zuhri, and he did not hear from him". Narrators in the chain include:

Musaddad ibn Masarhad Al-Basri: Reliable (Thiqah) (Al-Asqalani, 1435).

'Abdul-Wahid ibn Ziyad Al-Basri: Reliable (Thiqah) (ibid).

Al-Hajjaj ibn Arta'ah Al-Kufi: Truthful but made many mistakes and engaged in Tadlees (ibid).

Muhammad ibn Muslim Az-Zuhri: A well-known jurist and hafiz, universally recognized for his knowledge, precision, and reliability. He is among the leading figures of the fourth generation (ibid).

'Amrah bint 'Abdur-Rahman Al-Ansariyyah: Reliable (Thiqah) (ibid).

This hadith was recorded by Ad-Daraqutni in his *Sunan* (Ad-Daraqutni, 985) in the Book of Hajj, under the chapter "What has been reported about throwing the pebbles, hastening from Muzdalifah, and using perfume before Tawaf al-Ifadah", through the transmission of Al-Hajjaj, from Az-Zuhri, from 'Urwah, who narrated it from 'Aisha. In this version, Al-Hajjaj narrated from 'Urwah, whereas in the previous version, it was from 'Amrah. Moreover, Al-Hajjaj did not hear directly from Az-Zuhri. Additionally, the hadith was also recorded by Ahmad in his *Musnad* (Al-Shaybani, 855) under *Musnad 'Aisha* and by Ad-Daraqutni (through two chains) from Al-Hajjaj, from Abu Bakr ibn Muhammad, from 'Amrah, who narrated it from 'Aisha, with the wording: "'Aisha said: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) said: 'When you have thrown the pebbles, slaughtered your sacrifices, and shaved your heads, everything becomes permissible for you except for women".

The Idtirab in this hadith arises from the inconsistencies in the chain of transmission. Al-Hajjaj's narration varies between reporting it from 'Urwah and 'Amrah, and in another instance from Abu Bakr ibn Muhammad. Additionally, the fact that Al-Hajjaj did not hear directly from Az-Zuhri further undermines the reliability of the narration. These inconsistencies and the changes in the narrators and the chain affect the classification of the hadith, making it an example of a "Mudtarib" hadith. Furthermore, in this hadith, the inconsistencies continue to emerge; for example, in the version recorded by Ahmad and Ad-Daraqutni, the hadith is narrated

with the phrase: "When you have thrown the pebbles, slaughtered your sacrifices, and shaved your heads, everything becomes permissible for you except for women." Here, the hadith includes additional actions ("slaughtered" and "shaved") that were not mentioned in the earlier version, which only referred to throwing the pebbles. Moreover, the narrator changes from Az-Zuhri to Abu Bakr ibn Muhammad, and there is no explicit statement of direct hearing (sama') from Az-Zuhri, raising questions about the authenticity.

Ad-Daraqutni also recorded the hadith in his *Sunan* (Ad-Daraqutni, 985) in the Book of Hajj, under the chapter "What has been reported about throwing the pebbles, hastening from Muzdalifah, and using perfume before Tawaf Al-Ifadah", through the transmission of Al-Hajjaj, from Abu Bakr ibn 'Abdullah ibn Abi Juhm Al-'Adawi, from 'Amrah, who narrated it from 'Aisha, with the wording: "The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said: 'When he throws the pebbles, shaves his head, and slaughters, everything becomes permissible for him except for women'". In this version, the narration changes once more: it is now attributed to Abu Bakr ibn 'Abdullah instead of Abu Bakr ibn Muhammad, and there is an additional phrase in the text. Moreover, there is still no explicit statement of direct hearing (sama') from the source.

The hadith revolves around Al-Hajjaj ibn Arta'ah, and it seems that he did not accurately preserve the hadith. The variations in the chains of narration—whether it involves changes in the names of the narrators or the inclusion of additional actions in the hadith—indicate that Al-Hajjaj may have been inconsistent in his transmission. This inconsistency, or *Idtirab*, in both the *isnad* (chain of narration) and the *matn* (text) of the hadith raises doubts about its reliability. Al-Iraqi commented on this in *Tahrir At-Tathrib* (Al-Iraqi, 1355): "This hadith is weak; its chain of transmission revolves around Al-Hajjaj ibn Arta'ah, who is weak. Moreover, there is inconsistency in both the chain of transmission and the wording of the hadith". An alternate example of this can be seen in Figure 2.

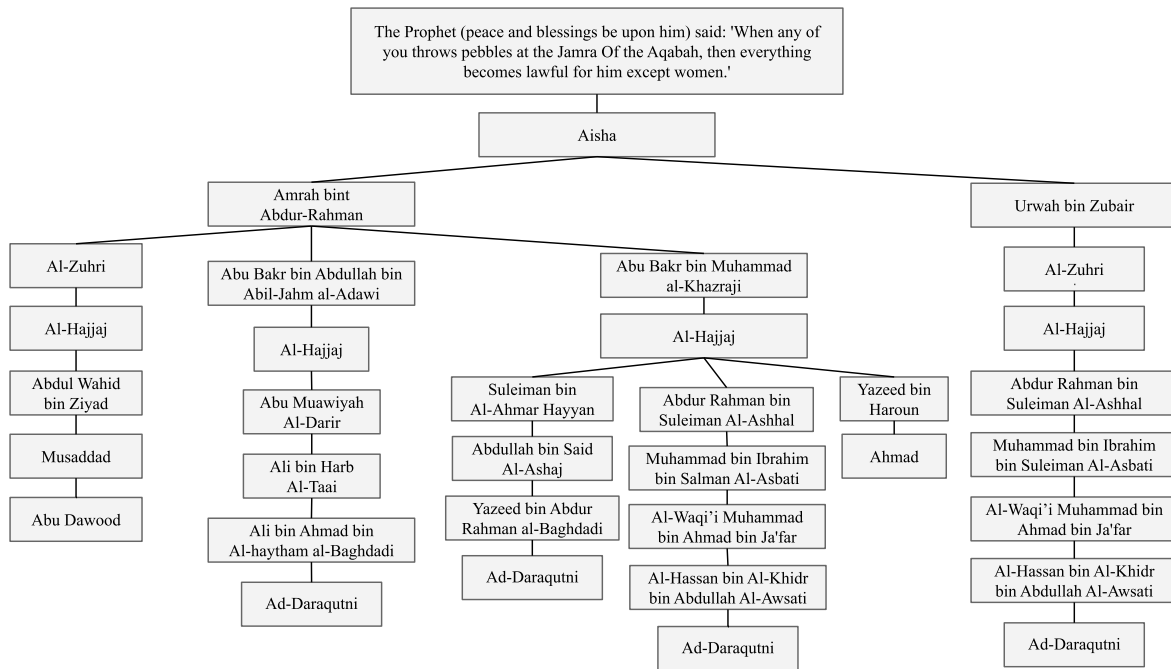


Figure 2. An example of *Idtirab* where there are variations in the chains of narration

Idtirab can also be noted where Ibn Majah mentioned in his *Sunan* (Al-Qazwini, 887) in the Book of Sacrifices under the section "The Sacrifices of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him)": Hadith No. 3122: "Muhammad ibn Yahya narrated to us, 'Abdur-Razzaq narrated to us, Sufyan At-Thawri informed us, from 'Abdullah ibn Muhammad ibn 'Aqil, from Abu Salamah, from 'Aisha or from Abu Hurayrah, that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) when he wanted to offer a sacrifice, he would buy two large, horned, white-and-black, castrated rams. He would slaughter one of them for his Ummah, for those who testified to the Oneness of Allah and bore witness to his message, and he would slaughter the other for

Muhammad and the family of Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him)”. This hadith was also recorded by Ahmad in his *Musnad* (Al-Shaybani, 855) through the transmission of ‘Abdur-Razzaq with a similar wording. Narrators in the Chain include:

Muhammad ibn Yahya al-Dhuhli: Reliable, a prominent hafiz (Al-Asqalani, 1435).

‘Abdur-Razzaq ibn Hammam As-San'aani: Reliable, a prominent hafiz, and a well-known author. He became blind in his later years, which led to some changes in his narrations, and he had a tendency towards inaccurate views (ibid).

Sufyan At-Thawri: Reliable, a prominent hafiz, jurist, worshipper, and an authoritative figure among the seventh generation (ibid).

‘Abdullah ibn Muhammad ibn ‘Aqil: Truthful, but his hadiths are considered weak, and it is said that he became confused in his later years (ibid).

Abu Salamah: Reliable, narrated extensively (ibid).

This hadith was recorded by Ahmad in his *Musnad* (Al-Shaybani, 855) and by Al-Bazzar in his *Musnad* (Al-Bazzar, 884) through the transmission of ‘Abdullah ibn Muhammad ibn ‘Aqil, from ‘Ali ibn Al-Husayn Zayn Al-‘Aabidin, from Abu Rafi’, who narrated it from the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him). In this version, the hadith is attributed to Abu Rafi’, indicating it is from his *Musnad*. The *Idtirab* in this hadith arises from the change in the chain of transmission. While the initial versions mentioned the hadith being transmitted from Abu Salamah, possibly from ‘Aisha or Abu Hurayrah, this version changes the chain by transmitting it from ‘Abdullah ibn Muhammad ibn ‘Aqil, through ‘Ali ibn Al-Husayn, from Abu Rafi’. This shift not only changes the narrator but also affects the classification of the hadith, making it part of Abu Rafi’s *Musnad* instead. The inconsistency in the *isnad* and the fact that ‘Abdullah ibn Muhammad ibn ‘Aqil is known for some weakness in his hadith further casts doubt on the reliability of the narration, making it an example of a "Mudtarib" hadith.

Another example of *Idtirab* can be found in a hadith that was recorded by Ahmad in his *Musnad* (Al-Shaybani, 855) through the transmission of ‘Abdullah ibn Muhammad ibn ‘Aqil, from Abu Salamah, from Abu Hurayrah, from ‘Aisha (see Figure 3). In this version, the narration is attributed to Abu Hurayrah, who transmits it from ‘Aisha, creating a change in the chain compared to other versions. Ahmad also recorded the hadith in his *Musnad* (ibid) with the following chain: “Ibrahim ibn Abi ‘Abbas narrated to us, ‘Abdur-Rahman ibn Abi Az-Zinad narrated to us, from ‘Amr ibn Abi ‘Amr, who was informed by his master, Al-Muttalib ibn ‘Abdullah ibn Hantab, that Jabir ibn ‘Abdullah said...” with a similar wording. In this version, the hadith is transmitted from the *Musnad* of Jabir ibn ‘Abdullah, through Al-Muttalib. However, Al-Bukhari has questioned the reliability of Al-Muttalib’s hearing from any of the Companions, indicating a potential issue with the chain.

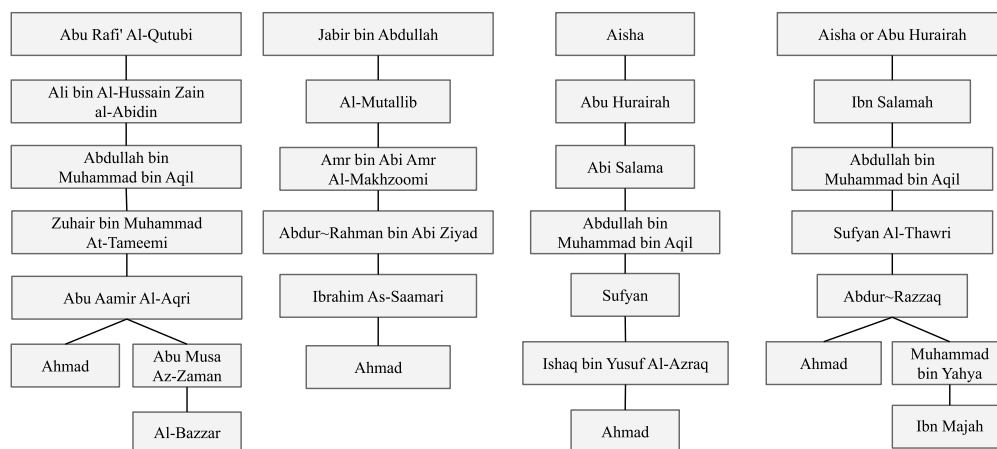


Figure 3. Isnad of the hadith 26483

The hadith revolves around ‘Abdullah ibn Muhammad ibn ‘Aqil, who appears not to have accurately preserved the hadith. The Idtirab becomes evident through the various chains of transmission: one version has Abu Hurayrah narrating from ‘Aisha, while another version has the hadith attributed to Jabir ibn ‘Abdullah via Al-Muttalib. The inconsistency in the isnad—particularly the questionable link between Al-Muttalib and the Companions—further weakens the reliability of the narration. Ultimately, this hadith’s transmission via Al-Muttalib was criticised due to its disconnection (Inqita’). Ad-Daraqutni highlighted the Idtirab in the isnad in his work *Al-‘Ilal* (Ad-Daraqutni, 986), and Ibn Abi Hatim mentioned the differing narrations in his *Al-‘Ilal* (Al-Razi, 935), where both Abu Hatim and Abu Zur’ah criticised the hadith due to the confusion introduced by Ibn ‘Aqil.

The final example of Idtirab that this paper analyses is one that Abu Dawood mentioned in his *Sunan* (Al-Sijistani, 889) in the Book of Prayer under the section "The Line If One Does Not Find a Stick": Hadith No. 689: “Musaddad narrated to us, Bishr ibn al-Mufaddal narrated to us, Isma’il ibn Umayyah narrated to us, Abu ‘Amr ibn Muhammad ibn Harith narrated to us: He heard Harith narrate from Abu Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) said: 'When any of you prays, let him place something in front of him, and if he does not find anything, let him set up a stick. If he does not have a stick, let him draw a line, and then it will not harm him what passes in front of him'". This hadith was also recorded by ‘Abdur-Razzaq in his *Musannaf* (Al-San’ani, 826) and by Ibn Hibban in his *Sahih* (Al-Busti, 965), both with similar wording. Narrators in the Chain include:

- Musaddad ibn Masarhad al-Basri: Reliable, a prominent hafiz (Al-Asqalani, 1435).
- Bishr ibn Al-Mufaddal Ar-Ruqashi: Reliable, steadfast, a worshipper (ibid).
- Isma'il ibn Umayyah al-Umayyad: Reliable, steadfast (ibid).
- Abu 'Amr ibn Muhammad ibn Harith: Or Ibn Muhammad ibn 'Amr ibn Harith, or Abu Muhammad ibn 'Amr ibn Harith; he is considered unknown (majhul) (ibid).
- Harith: A man from Banu 'Udhrah; his father’s name is disputed, and there is disagreement regarding his companionship. He is considered a non-companion by some, making him an unknown (majhul) narrator (ibid).
- Hammam ibn Yahya ibn Dinar Al-Awdi: Reliable, but sometimes made mistakes (ibid).
- Ayyub ibn Musa ibn Amr ibn Sa'id ibn al-As: Reliable (ibid).
- Ibn 'Am mentioned in the chain is considered unknown (majhul).

The hadith has been cited as an example of Idtirab by several scholars:

Ibn As-Salah mentioned this hadith in his work *‘Ulumul-Hadith* as an example of Idtirab (Al-Shahrazuri, 1233).

Zakariya Al-Ansari noted in *Fath al-Baqi* (Al-Zarqani, n.d.) that several scholars of hadith have ruled the chain to be muddled (mudtarib).

An-Nawawi criticized the hadith in his commentary on *Sahih Muslim* due to Idtirab in the isnad.

Al-Mizzi in *Tabdhib Al-Kamal* and Al-Dhahabi in *Miṣṣan al-‘Itidal* also pointed out the inconsistencies in the chain of transmission, indicating the presence of Idtirab.

The Idtirab in this hadith is highlighted by the fact that Abu Dawood At-Tayalisi recorded a similar hadith (Al-Tayalisi, 815) with the following isnad: “Abu Dawood narrated to us, Hammad narrated to us, from Ayyub ibn Musa, from one of his paternal cousins, who used to frequently narrate from Abu Hurayrah, that the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said: 'When any of you prays and does not have anything in front of him to shield himself, let him draw a line, and it will not harm him what passes in front of him'". This version introduces further confusion as it involves an unnamed cousin of Ayyub ibn Musa, who frequently narrated from Abu Hurayrah. This creates a level of ambiguity regarding the identity of the narrator, leading to a situation where the hadith is transmitted through an unknown narrator.

Notably, the confusion (Idtirab) in this hadith arises from the differing chains of narration and the status of some narrators. The ambiguity surrounding the identity of Abu 'Amr ibn Muhammad ibn Harith, along with the varying names and unclear transmission from Harith, casts doubt on the reliability of the hadith. The differing versions, particularly the one narrated by Abu Dawood At-Tayalisi with an unnamed narrator, further compound the issue, making the hadith an example of a "Mudtarib" narration. Fundamentally, the Idtirab is evident as the hadith involves variations in the chains of narration, and the reliability of the narrators is questioned, particularly in the context of whether the narrator was a companion or not. The hadith's authenticity is thus undermined by these inconsistencies; additional examples can be seen in Figure 4 and Figure 5.

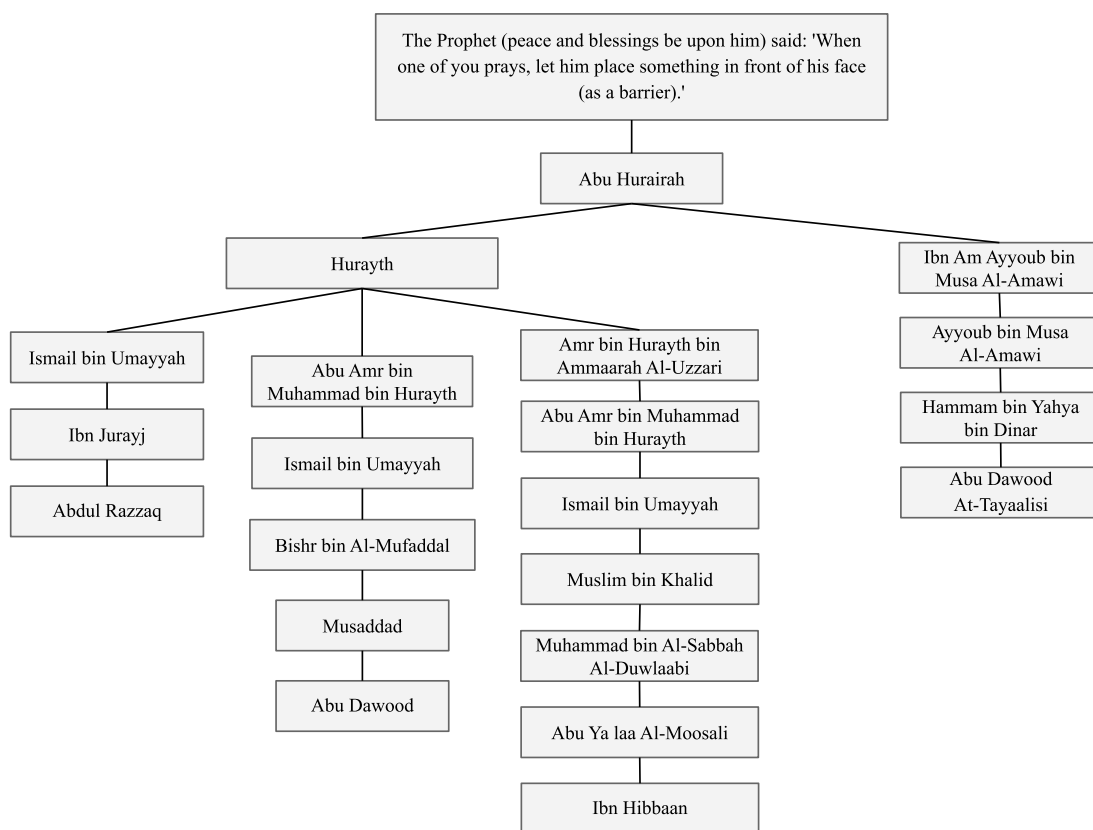


Figure 4. An example of Idtirab where there is inconsistency in the isnad

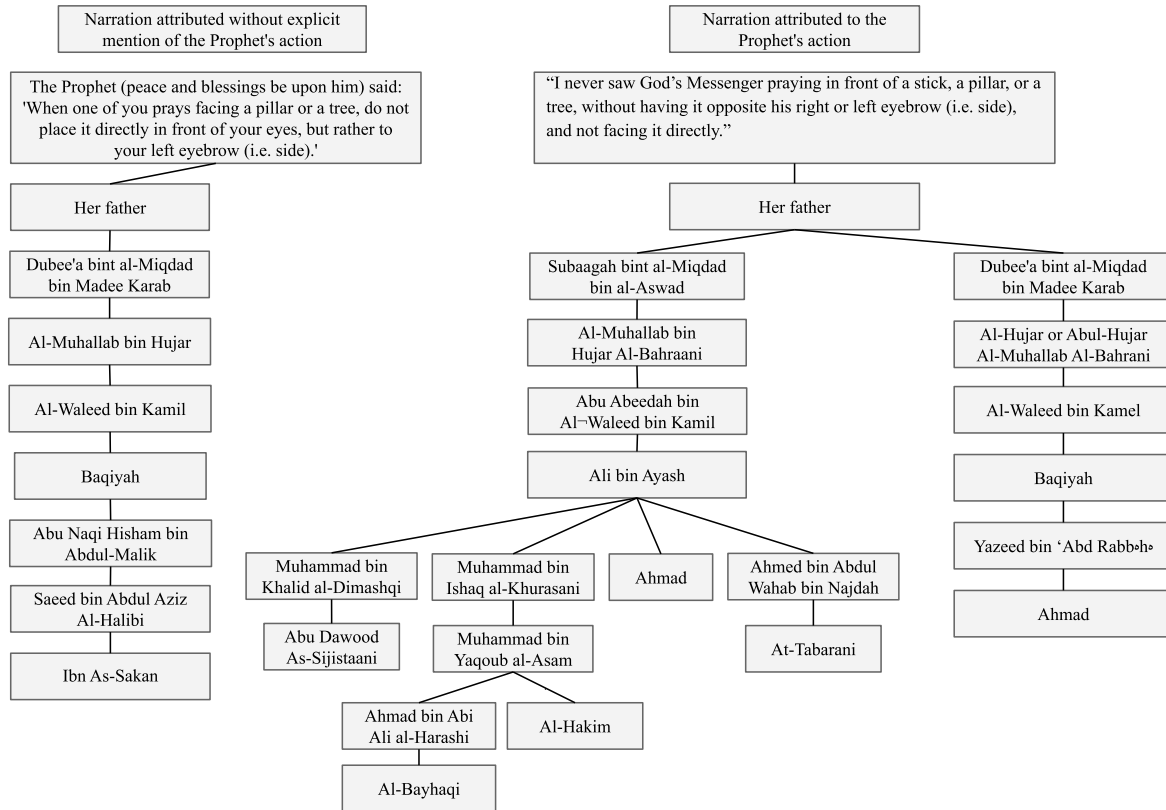


Figure 5. Additional examples of Idtirab

CONCLUSION

This study has provided a critical analysis of the concept of "Al-Mudtarib" within the domain of Hadith studies, shedding light on its theoretical foundations, the intricacies of its application, and its implications for the authentication of Islamic narrations. The paper traced the etymology of "Mudtarib" and distinguished it from related terms such as "Ikhtilaf", emphasising the specific conditions under which a Hadith is classified as Mudtarib. The discussion underscored that a Hadith is deemed Mudtarib only when conflicting narrations exist, with equal strength and irreconcilability, thereby undermining the Hadith's reliability. Through the examination of real-world examples, the study demonstrated the practical challenges posed by Mudtarib narrations, particularly in assessing their impact on Islamic jurisprudence. The examples illustrated the complexities involved in the transmission of Hadiths, where issues such as Tadlees, Irsaal, and inconsistencies in the isnad (chain of narration) contribute to the classification of a Hadith as Mudtarib. These instances highlighted the necessity for meticulous scholarship in Hadith studies, as even minor variations in transmission can significantly affect the authenticity of a narration.

In conclusion, the concept of Mudtarib serves as a critical tool for Hadith scholars, aiding in the preservation of authentic Islamic teachings by identifying and scrutinising narrations that exhibit signs of confusion or inconsistency. This study contributes to the ongoing scholarly discourse by offering a detailed exploration of Mudtarib Hadiths and reinforcing the importance of rigorous methodologies in the evaluation of Islamic narrations. Future research may further explore the implications of Mudtarib narrations in contemporary Islamic legal contexts, as well as the evolution of scholarly approaches to these complex cases. This research not only enhances the understanding of Mudtarib but also underscores the broader significance of Hadith studies in maintaining the integrity of Islamic tradition. As scholars continue to engage with these critical issues, the principles and examples discussed in this paper will serve as valuable resources for both students and seasoned researchers in the field.

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