

BLINDNESS IN HADITH: TYPOLOGY OF LECTURERS' VIEWS ON HADITH ABDULLAH BIN UMMI MAKTUM IN SUNAN ABŪ DĀWŪD PERSPECTIVE OF DISABILITY PARADIGM

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ABSTRACT

Despite growing scholarship on disability in Islam, little attention has been paid to how classical hadith commentators conceptualize visual impairment through their interpretations of prophetic traditions. This study addresses this gap by analyzing the perspectives of hadith commentators (shurrāḥ al-ḥadīth) on visually impaired persons through the hadith of Abdullah ibn Umm Maktum in Sunan Abū Dāwūd and reconstructing a typology of their interpretations using the disability paradigm as an analytical framework. This study employed library research with an interpretative and comparative approach. Primary sources consisted of Sunan Abū Dāwūd, Sharḥ Sunan Abī Dāwūd by Ibn Raslān, Sharḥ Sunan Abī Dāwūd by 'Abd al-Muḥsin al-'Abbād, and Badhl al-Majhūd fī Ḥall Sunan Abī Dāwūd by Khalīl Aḥmad al-Sahāranfūrī. Data were collected through documentation and takhrīj bi al-lafẓ and analyzed using content analysis, comparative analysis, and interpretation based on the disability paradigm. The findings indicate that all three commentators agree that visual impairment does not prevent a person from serving as an imam, although they employ different interpretive emphases. Ibn Raslān represents an Inclusive-Legitimative typology through his emphasis on prophetic recognition of competence, al-'Abbād develops an Inclusive-Accommodative typology by highlighting practical support for religious participation, and al-Sahāranfūrī constructs an Inclusive-Dialogical typology through the presentation of diverse scholarly opinions. Collectively, these typologies reflect the principles of the Inclusion Model by recognizing the religious authority, participation, and dignity of persons with visual disabilities. This study contributes to hadith scholarship by introducing the disability paradigm as a framework for interpreting classical hadith commentaries and by proposing a conceptual typology that enriches contemporary Islamic disability studies.

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INTRODUCTIONS

Disability has become one of the major concerns in global discussions on human rights, social inclusion, education, and religion. According to the United Nations (UN), approximately 650 million people worldwide, or about 10% of the global population, live with disabilities. The World Health Organization (WHO) further reports that this number continues to increase due to population growth, advances in healthcare, and longer life expectancy, while the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) estimates that nearly 80% of persons with disabilities reside in developing countries.

Despite international commitments to equality, many persons with disabilities continue to face social, educational, economic, and religious barriers that restrict their participation in society (Robinson, 1998). These conditions have encouraged scholars from various disciplines to reconsider disability not merely as an individual impairment but as an issue closely related to equality, participation, and social justice.

The growing attention to disability has transformed the conceptual framework through which persons with disabilities are understood. Earlier perspectives, commonly referred to as the Traditional Model, tended to regard disability primarily as an individual limitation requiring charity or medical intervention. More recent approaches, particularly the Inclusion Model, emphasize equal rights, accessibility, participation, and recognition of persons with disabilities as active members of society (Santoso & Apsari, 2017). Accordingly, disability is increasingly understood as the result of interactions between individual conditions and social structures rather than as a purely personal deficiency (Widijantoro & Windrawan, 2019). This paradigm shift has also influenced Islamic studies by encouraging scholars to revisit religious sources, including the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad, through more inclusive perspectives that recognize the agency and social participation of persons with disabilities.

Within the hadith tradition, one of the most prominent figures representing persons with visual disabilities is Abdullah bin Umri Maktum, a blind Companion of the Prophet Muhammad. Numerous narrations describe that the Prophet entrusted him with important religious and public responsibilities, including serving as a *mu'adhdhin*, leading congregational prayers, and acting as the Prophet's deputy in Medina during several journeys (Al-Nasrullah, 2023; Malam, 2021). These narrations indicate that visual impairment did not prevent Abdullah bin Umri Maktum from occupying significant religious positions, making his story an important textual foundation for understanding Islamic perspectives on disability (Adnan, 2023). However, understanding a hadith cannot be separated from the tradition of hadith commentary, in which scholars explain prophetic traditions through linguistic, legal, historical, and methodological approaches that often produce diverse interpretations of the same narration (Rashid, 2019). Consequently, examining these commentaries provides valuable insight into how Muslim scholars have conceptualized blindness and the religious roles of visually impaired individuals (Alqazlan, 2026; Umam, 2024).

Previous studies have examined disability from the perspective of hadith in several directions. Most studies have focused on the normative rights of persons with disabilities, Islamic inclusivity, or thematic analyses of hadith related to disability (Khofifah et al., 2025; Puspitasari et al., 2024). Other studies have discussed the authenticity of hadith, sanad criticism, or juristic debates concerning the permissibility of blind individuals leading congregational prayer. Meanwhile, studies on the commentaries of Sunan Abū Dāwūd have generally emphasized the commentators' methodologies, the characteristics of the commentary literature, or the intellectual orientation of individual commentators (Sholeh & Musyafiq, 2025; Ur Rehman & Ramzan, 2025). Although these studies have enriched both disability studies and hadith scholarship, they have rarely examined how different commentators construct their understanding of blindness through their interpretations of the hadith of Abdullah bin Umri Maktum.

Despite these contributions, three important research gaps remain. First, a theoretical gap exists because previous studies have largely discussed disability from normative, legal, or thematic perspectives without employing the disability paradigm to examine how blindness is conceptualized in classical hadith commentaries. Second, a methodological gap remains because existing studies generally analyze either the hadith text itself or its legal implications, whereas comparative analysis of multiple hadith commentaries to reconstruct broader interpretive patterns has received limited attention. Third, a contextual gap exists because the commentaries on the hadith of Abdullah bin Umri Maktum in Sunan Abū Dāwūd have not been systematically analyzed to identify how different commentators understand blindness within the broader framework of disability studies.

This study contributes to the existing literature in three ways. First, it introduces the disability paradigm as a theoretical framework for examining classical hadith commentaries, thereby extending disability studies into the field of hadith interpretation. Second, it reconstructs a typology of commentators' perspectives on blindness through a comparative analysis of their interpretations of the hadith of Abdullah bin Umri Maktum in Sunan Abū Dāwūd, moving beyond merely describing individual opinions. Third, it enriches hadith commentary studies by demonstrating how different interpretive traditions shape religious understandings of disability beyond purely legal discussions. Accordingly, this study addresses three research questions: (1) How do the commentators of Sunan Abū Dāwūd interpret the hadith concerning Abdullah bin Umri Maktum? (2) What similarities and differences characterize their interpretations regarding blindness and religious participation? (3) What typology of perspectives on blindness emerges when these interpretations are analyzed through the disability paradigm?

Based on these questions, this study aims to analyze the perspectives of hadith commentators toward blindness through their interpretations of the hadith of Abdullah bin Umami Maktum in Sunan Abū Dāwūd, compare the arguments advanced by different commentators, and reconstruct the typology of their views using the disability paradigm as an analytical framework. The findings are expected to contribute theoretically by integrating disability studies into the analysis of classical hadith commentaries and enriching contemporary hadith scholarship with a more inclusive interpretive perspective. Practically, this study is expected to serve as a reference for developing more inclusive approaches to hadith interpretation and to provide broader insights into the diversity of scholarly perspectives on blindness within the Islamic intellectual tradition.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative library research design using written documents as the primary source of data. The research focused on the hadith concerning Abdullah bin Umami Maktum in Sunan Abū Dāwūd and its interpretations in selected classical commentaries. An interpretive approach was adopted to examine how commentators understood the hadith and constructed perspectives on blindness rather than to assess the authenticity or sanad of the hadith.

The study combined comparative analysis and qualitative content analysis. Comparative analysis was used to identify similarities and differences among the commentators' interpretations, while content analysis was applied to examine recurring themes, arguments, and interpretive patterns related to blindness. The unit of analysis consisted of interpretive passages concerning Abdullah bin Umami Maktum found in three classical commentaries: *Sharḥ Sunan Abī Dāwūd* by Ibn Raslān, *Sharḥ Sunan Abī Dāwūd* by 'Abd al-Muḥsin al-'Abbād, and *Badhl al-Majhūd fī Ḥall Sunan Abī Dāwūd* by Khalīl Aḥmad al-Sahāranfūrī.

Primary data were obtained from Sunan Abū Dāwūd and the three selected commentaries. Secondary sources included books, journal articles, theses, dissertations, and other scholarly publications related to hadith studies, hadith commentary, disability studies, and Islamic perspectives on disability. The disability paradigm proposed by Santoso and Apsari was adopted as the principal analytical framework because it emphasizes equality, participation, and social inclusion, providing a broader perspective than approaches that focus solely on medical impairment or social barriers.

Data were collected through documentation techniques. The hadith was first identified using *takhrīj bi al-lafz* through *al-Mu'jam al-Mufahras li Alfāz al-Ḥadīṣ al-Nabawī*, followed by collecting the corresponding discussions in the three selected commentaries. The data were then organized according to themes related to blindness, including legal reasoning, religious leadership, participation, and social inclusion.

Data analysis was conducted in four stages. First, relevant interpretive passages were selected through data reduction. Second, open coding and thematic coding were applied to identify key concepts and classify them into analytical themes. Third, comparative coding was employed to examine similarities and differences among the three commentators. Finally, the findings were interpreted using the disability paradigm to reconstruct the typology of commentators' perspectives on blindness.

To enhance the trustworthiness of the findings, this study employed source triangulation by comparing the three commentaries, comparative interpretation to evaluate consistency across interpretations, and cross-text verification by relating the commentators' explanations to the original hadith text and relevant secondary literature.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The hadith concerning Abdullah bin Umami Maktum constitutes the primary source of analysis in this study because it narrates the appointment of a blind Companion by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) to lead the Muslim community during his absence from Medina. Since this research examines how classical commentators interpreted the hadith in relation to blindness, it is necessary to verify the source and authenticity of the narration before proceeding to the comparative analysis.

The hadith was identified using the *takhrīj bi al-lafz* method through *al-Mu'jam al-Mufahras li Alfāz al-Ḥadīṣ al-Nabawī* compiled by A.J. Wensinck. The search employed the keyword *الأعمى* (*al-a'mā*), indexed under the root *عمي*, which led to the narration recorded in Sunan Abū Dāwūd and indicated by the symbol (⌘) in *al-Mu'jam al-Mufahras* (Wensinck, 1936). This result confirms that the narration examined in this study originates from Sunan Abū Dāwūd.

The sanad and matn of the hadith are presented as follows:

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ الْعَنْبَرِيُّ أَبُو عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، ثَنَا ابْنُ مَهْدِيٍّ، ثَنَا عُمَرَانُ الْقَطَّانُ، عَنْ قَتَادَةَ، عَنْ أَنَسٍ، أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ اسْتَخْلَفَ ابْنَ أُمِّ مَكْتُومٍ يَوْمَ النَّاسِ وَهُوَ أَعْمَى

Meaning: *Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Rahmān al-'Anbarī Abū 'Abdillāh narrated to us; Ibn Mahdī narrated to us; 'Imrān al-Qaṭṭān narrated to us; from Qatādah; from Anas, that the Prophet (peace be upon him) appointed Ibn Ummi Maktum as his deputy to lead the people in prayer although he was blind.*

The sanad analysis demonstrates that the chain of transmission fulfills the principle of ittiṣāl al-sanad (continuous transmission). The narrators are generally recognized as reliable by the scholars of al-jarḥ wa al-ta'dīl. Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Rahmān al-'Anbarī was classified as thiqah by Abū Zur'ah, Abū Ḥātim, and Ibn Ḥibbān (Mizzi, 1980). Ibn Hajar described 'Abd al-Rahmān ibn Mahdī as a distinguished ḥāfiẓ, imam, and leading scholar (Hajar al-'Asqalānī, 1325), while Ibn Ḥibbān (Mizzi, 1980) and (Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī, 1952) also regarded him as trustworthy. Although 'Imrān al-Qaṭṭān received different evaluations among hadith critics, Ibn Hajar classified him as ṣadūq (Hajar al-'Asqalānī, 1986), and his narrations remain acceptable as legal evidence. Likewise, Qatādah was consistently recognized as thiqah by Ibn Hajar and Ibn Ḥibbān (Hajar al-'Asqalānī, 1325), while Anas ibn Mālik, as a prominent Companion of the Prophet, is universally accepted as a reliable transmitter (Hajar al-'Asqalānī, 1415).

Although some differences exist regarding the reliability of 'Imrān al-Qaṭṭān, the majority of hadith scholars accept his narrations as ṣadūq. Therefore, the sanad and matn of this narration satisfy the criteria of acceptability and may be used as a valid textual foundation for analyzing the interpretations of classical commentators. Establishing the authenticity of the hadith is essential because the subsequent discussion focuses not on the validity of the narration itself, but on how different commentators construct their perspectives on blindness through its interpretation.

Discussion

Ibn Raslān's Interpretation of Blindness in Sharḥ Sunan Abī Dāwūd

Ibn Raslān discusses the hadith of Abdullah bin Ummi Maktum in the chapter Imāmat al-A'mā (Leadership of Prayer by a Blind Person). He interprets the phrase استخلف ابن أم مكتوم as referring to the Prophet Muhammad's appointment of Abdullah bin Ummi Maktum as his deputy during his absence from Medina (Raslān al-Maqdisī al-Ramlī al-Shāfi'ī, 2016). To strengthen this interpretation, Ibn Raslān does not rely solely on the narration recorded in Sunan Abū Dāwūd but also incorporates supporting reports (shawāhid). He cites the narration of al-Ṭabarānī from Ibn 'Abbās, which explains that Abdullah bin Ummi Maktum was entrusted not only with leading congregational prayers but also with managing some administrative affairs of Medina (Fatah & Andaluzi, 2025). In addition, he refers to the narration of Ibn Buḥainah describing Abdullah bin Ummi Maktum's responsibilities as a mu'adhdhin who delivered the adhān, announced the iqāmah, and led the Muslim community during the Prophet's absence.

Rather than focusing on the physical condition of Abdullah bin Ummi Maktum, Ibn Raslān consistently emphasizes the Prophet's trust and recognition of his competence. The accumulation of supporting narrations serves to demonstrate that the appointment was not incidental but reflected the Prophet's confidence in Abdullah's integrity, knowledge, and leadership. Consequently, blindness is not portrayed as a factor limiting religious authority. Instead, leadership is understood to be determined by competence, trustworthiness, and the ability to fulfill communal responsibilities.

This interpretation differs from approaches that discuss the hadith primarily as legal evidence for the permissibility of blind individuals leading congregational prayer. While the legal dimension remains important, Ibn Raslān extends the discussion by highlighting the social and religious significance of the Prophet's appointment. His commentary therefore shifts the focus from legal permissibility to the recognition of human capability and participation, offering a broader understanding of the hadith beyond jurisprudential debate.

From the perspective of Disability Studies, Ibn Raslān's interpretation closely reflects the principles of the Inclusion Model (Santoso & Apsari, 2017). Rather than defining Abdullah bin Ummi Maktum through his visual impairment, the commentary recognizes him as an active participant who was capable of assuming strategic religious and social responsibilities. This perspective also supports contemporary discussions on Islamic inclusion, in which participation in religious life is grounded in knowledge, integrity, and moral competence rather than physical condition. In this respect, the commentary demonstrates that prophetic practice acknowledged the dignity and agency of persons with disabilities within the Muslim community.

Furthermore, Ibn Raslān's interpretation contributes to a broader theological understanding of disability. The Prophet's appointment of Abdullah bin Umī Maktum illustrates that disability does not diminish an individual's eligibility to exercise religious authority (Arifin et al., 2023; Kudhori et al., 2024). Such an interpretation is consistent with inclusive theological perspectives that emphasize equal human dignity and the recognition of individual capacity as fundamental principles of Islamic teaching. Accordingly, the hadith may be understood not merely as evidence of legal permissibility but also as a reflection of an inclusive vision of leadership within the prophetic tradition.

Based on this analysis, Ibn Raslān's interpretation may be reconstructed as an Inclusive-Legitimative typology. This typology is characterized by the emphasis on prophetic legitimacy, recognition of competence, and the active participation of persons with visual disabilities in religious and public life. The distinguishing feature of this typology is that religious authority is derived from merit and trust rather than from physical ability.

In summary, Ibn Raslān's commentary presents blindness as a condition that neither restricts religious leadership nor reduces social participation. By emphasizing prophetic recognition of competence and integrity, his interpretation offers an inclusive understanding of disability that extends beyond legal discourse and reinforces the position of persons with disabilities as active contributors to the religious community.

'Abd al-Muḥsin al-'Abbād's Interpretation of Blindness in Sharḥ Sunan Abī Dāwūd

In Sharḥ Sunan Abī Dāwūd, Shaykh 'Abd al-Muḥsin al-'Abbād discusses the hadith of Abdullah bin Umī Maktum under the chapter Imāmat al-A'mā (Leadership of Prayer by a Blind Person). He considers the narration as explicit evidence that blindness does not prevent an individual from leading congregational prayer. This position is clearly expressed in his statement:

وهذا يدل على إمامة الأعمى، وأنه لا بأس بذلك ولا مانع منه

"This hadith demonstrates the permissibility of a blind person serving as an imam, and there is neither prohibition nor objection to it"

This statement indicates that al-'Abbād understands the hadith primarily as normative evidence affirming the religious legitimacy of blind individuals to lead prayer. Unlike interpretations that emphasize juristic disagreement over the preference of blind and sighted imams, al-'Abbād directly concludes that blindness itself does not constitute a legal barrier to religious leadership. His interpretation therefore places greater emphasis on equal religious eligibility than on physical capability.

Al-'Abbād further expands his discussion by referring to Abdullah bin Umī Maktum's role as the Prophet's mu'adhdhin. He explains that although a mu'adhdhin must accurately determine prayer times, blindness does not prevent an individual from fulfilling this responsibility, provided that reliable information regarding the prayer schedule is available. In this context, assistance from others is not interpreted as evidence of incapacity but rather as practical support that enables blind individuals to perform their religious duties effectively.

Compared with Ibn Raslān, whose discussion emphasizes prophetic trust and legitimacy, al-'Abbād adopts a more practical interpretation by focusing on the implementation of religious obligations. Rather than highlighting the historical significance of the Prophet's appointment, he explains how religious responsibilities can continue to be performed through appropriate support mechanisms. Consequently, the emphasis shifts from recognition alone to the practical conditions that facilitate equal participation in worship.

This finding supports contemporary disability studies, particularly the Inclusion Model, which argues that equal participation requires not only recognition of individual rights but also the provision of appropriate accommodations (Santoso & Apsari, 2017). Al-'Abbād's interpretation demonstrates that disability should not be viewed as an obstacle to religious participation, provided that reasonable support is available. His explanation therefore extends the discussion beyond legal permissibility by illustrating how accommodation functions as an integral component of inclusion within Islamic religious practice.

Furthermore, this interpretation is consistent with broader discussions on Islamic inclusion, which emphasize that the objectives of religious teachings are fulfilled when all members of society are able to participate according to their capacities. Rather than excluding persons with disabilities because of functional limitations, al-'Abbād presents an approach that accommodates those limitations while preserving equal religious obligations and opportunities. This perspective also resonates with the ethical principles of inclusive theology, in which accessibility and participation are regarded as expressions of justice and human dignity.

Based on this analysis, al-'Abbād's interpretation may be reconstructed as an Inclusive-Accommodative typology. This typology combines two complementary principles: recognition of the religious capacity of persons with visual

disabilities and the importance of reasonable accommodation to facilitate the exercise of religious duties. His commentary therefore illustrates that inclusion is achieved not only through acknowledging equal rights but also through creating conditions that enable meaningful participation.

In summary, al-'Abbād's commentary demonstrates that blindness does not diminish religious authority. Instead, it highlights that equal participation in religious life may require practical accommodation without reducing the dignity or competence of persons with disabilities. His interpretation thus broadens the understanding of disability in hadith commentary by integrating legal recognition with functional inclusion.

Khalīl Aḥmad al-Sahāranfūrī's Interpretation of Blindness in Badhl al-Majhūd fī Ḥall Sunan Abī Dāwūd

In Badhl al-Majhūd fī Ḥall Sunan Abī Dāwūd, Khalīl Aḥmad al-Sahāranfūrī discusses the hadith of Abdullah bin Umī Maktum in the chapter Imāmat al-A'mā (Leadership of Prayer by a Blind Person) (al-Sahāranfūrī, 2006). Unlike Ibn Raslān and al-'Abbād, al-Sahāranfūrī begins his discussion by examining the reliability of the narrators, particularly 'Imrān al-Qaṭṭān, through the evaluations of classical scholars of al-jarḥ wa al-ta'dīl. After establishing the acceptability of the sanad, he interprets the phrase استخلف ابن أم مكتوم as indicating that the Prophet Muhammad appointed Abdullah bin Umī Maktum as his deputy during military expeditions while entrusting him with leading the Muslim community in prayer despite his blindness.

Based on this narration, al-Sahāranfūrī concludes that the hadith constitutes clear evidence for the permissibility of blind individuals serving as imams, as reflected in his statement:

وهذا يدل على إمامة الأعمى، وأنه لا بأس بذلك ولا مانع منه

"This hadith indicates the permissibility of a blind person leading congregational prayer" (al-Sahāranfūrī, 2006).

However, al-Sahāranfūrī does not limit his discussion to this legal conclusion. Instead, he broadens the analysis by presenting a range of scholarly opinions regarding the position of blind imams. He cites Ibn al-Malik, who argues that the preference for a sighted imam applies only when both candidates possess equal religious knowledge. He also refers to Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, who explains that scholars generally agree on the permissibility of blind imams, while their disagreement concerns only the question of afḍaliyyah (relative preference). In addition, al-Sahāranfūrī includes al-Tūribishtī's historical explanation concerning the Prophet's appointment of Abdullah bin Umī Maktum during the Expedition of Tabuk, while 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib was entrusted with different responsibilities in Medina.

Compared with the previous two commentators, al-Sahāranfūrī adopts a distinctly dialogical method of interpretation. Whereas Ibn Raslān reinforces his interpretation through supporting narrations and al-'Abbād emphasizes the practical implementation of religious duties, al-Sahāranfūrī presents multiple scholarly opinions without privileging a single authoritative conclusion. His commentary therefore functions not merely as an explanation of the hadith but also as a presentation of the diversity of juristic reasoning that developed within the classical Islamic scholarly tradition.

This finding extends previous studies on hadith commentary by demonstrating that disability is not interpreted through a single legal framework but through an intellectual tradition characterized by scholarly plurality. Rather than reducing the discussion to the permissibility of blind leadership, al-Sahāranfūrī illustrates how different scholars approached the same narration from complementary legal and historical perspectives. Consequently, the commentary reflects an interpretive tradition that accommodates diversity of opinion while maintaining the shared recognition that blindness does not invalidate religious authority.

From the perspective of the disability paradigm, al-Sahāranfūrī's interpretation also reflects the characteristics of the Inclusion Model (Santoso & Apsari, 2017). Although he presents differing scholarly opinions regarding the relative merits of blind and sighted imams, his own discussion consistently acknowledges the legitimacy of blind individuals to perform religious leadership. The differing opinions are presented as part of the richness of Islamic jurisprudence rather than as arguments for excluding persons with disabilities from religious participation. This perspective is also consistent with contemporary discussions on Islamic inclusion, where diversity of interpretation is viewed as a means of expanding opportunities for participation rather than restricting them.

Based on this analysis, al-Sahāranfūrī's interpretation may be reconstructed as an Inclusive-Dialogical typology. The defining characteristic of this typology is its recognition of the religious capacity of persons with visual disabilities while simultaneously presenting a broad spectrum of scholarly arguments. Instead of directing readers toward a single interpretation, al-Sahāranfūrī encourages critical engagement with multiple juristic perspectives, thereby illustrating the dynamic nature of hadith commentary and Islamic legal reasoning.

In summary, al-Sahāranfūrī's commentary demonstrates that blindness is understood within a framework of scholarly dialogue rather than legal restriction. His interpretation emphasizes that differences among classical scholars concern the manner of understanding religious leadership rather than the exclusion of persons with disabilities. Accordingly, his commentary contributes to a more comprehensive and inclusive understanding of blindness within the tradition of hadith interpretation.

Comparative Analysis of the Commentators' Perspectives

The comparative analysis demonstrates that the three commentators consistently acknowledge the permissibility of blind individuals serving as religious leaders. However, they differ in their interpretive emphasis and the way they construct the meaning of blindness in relation to religious authority. These differences indicate that classical hadith commentaries do not present a single perspective on disability but rather offer complementary approaches that reflect diverse interpretive traditions. Table 1 summarizes the main characteristics of each commentator's interpretation.

Table 1. Comparative Analysis of the Commentators' Perspectives

Commentator	Main Focus	Disability Perspective	Reconstructed Typology
Ibn Raslān	Prophetic trust and legitimacy of leadership	Blindness does not diminish competence or religious authority	Inclusive-Legitimative
'Abd al-Muḥsin al-'Abbād	Equal religious participation through practical accommodation	Blindness is not a barrier when appropriate support is available	Inclusive-Accommodative
Khalīl Aḥmad al-Sahāranfūrī	Scholarly dialogue and juristic plurality	Blindness is interpreted through multiple legitimate scholarly perspectives	Inclusive-Dialogical

As shown in Table 1, Ibn Raslān emphasizes prophetic recognition of competence, al-'Abbād focuses on practical inclusion through accommodation, whereas al-Sahāranfūrī highlights the diversity of juristic interpretations. Although their approaches differ, all three commentators reject the assumption that blindness prevents individuals from exercising religious leadership.

This finding differs from previous studies that primarily discuss the hadith from legal or thematic perspectives (Mehmood & Parveen, 2024; Rohman, 2025). Rather than focusing solely on the permissibility of blind imams, this study demonstrates that classical hadith commentaries contain diverse interpretive frameworks for understanding blindness. By applying the disability paradigm, the present study extends previous scholarship through the reconstruction of three complementary typologies that illustrate how disability has been understood within the tradition of hadith commentary.

In summary, the comparative analysis shows that the commentators share a common recognition of the religious capacity of persons with visual disabilities while differing in their interpretive emphasis. These variations collectively contribute to a more inclusive understanding of blindness within the Islamic intellectual tradition.

Typology of Blindness in Hadith Commentary: A Disability Paradigm

The comparative analysis demonstrates that the three classical commentators share a common understanding that blindness does not invalidate an individual's capacity to perform religious leadership. However, each commentator constructs this understanding through a different interpretive emphasis. These differences form the basis for reconstructing a typology of blindness in classical hadith commentary using the disability paradigm as the analytical framework.

The first typology, Inclusive-Legitimative, is represented by Ibn Raslān. His interpretation emphasizes the Prophet's trust in Abdullah bin Umī Maktum as evidence that religious leadership is determined by competence, integrity, and moral authority rather than physical condition. Blindness is therefore understood as a personal characteristic that does not diminish an individual's religious legitimacy.

The second typology, Inclusive-Accommodative, is represented by 'Abd al-Muḥsin al-'Abbād. While affirming the legal permissibility of blind individuals serving as imams, he further explains that religious participation may require practical support, such as assistance in determining prayer times. This interpretation reflects the principle that equal participation is achieved not only through legal recognition but also through reasonable accommodation that enables persons with disabilities to perform their religious responsibilities effectively.

The third typology, Inclusive-Dialogical, is represented by Khalīl Aḥmad al-Sahāranfūrī. His commentary presents multiple scholarly opinions concerning the leadership of blind individuals without restricting the discussion to a single

legal conclusion. This dialogical approach demonstrates that differences among classical scholars concern interpretive preference rather than the exclusion of persons with disabilities from religious life. Consequently, scholarly diversity strengthens rather than weakens the inclusive understanding of disability within the Islamic intellectual tradition.

These three typologies demonstrate that classical hadith commentaries offer a broader perspective on disability than is commonly assumed. Instead of portraying blindness solely as a physical limitation or a legal issue, the commentators collectively present disability as compatible with religious authority, social participation, and human dignity. This finding supports the disability paradigm, which emphasizes inclusion, equality, and participation (Santoso & Apsari, 2017).

Accordingly, this typology constitutes the principal contribution of the present study. Unlike previous studies that primarily examined the legal implications of the hadith or the rights of persons with disabilities (Alqazlan, 2026; Umam, 2024), this research reconstructs the interpretive patterns of classical hadith commentators through the disability paradigm. The resulting typology enriches both hadith commentary studies and contemporary Islamic disability studies by providing a conceptual framework for understanding how blindness has been interpreted within the classical Islamic scholarly tradition.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the hadith of Abdullah bin Ummi Maktum in Sunan Abū Dāwūd is interpreted differently by classical commentators, although they unanimously agree that the hadith establishes the permissibility of blind individuals serving as imams. The differences among the commentators do not concern the legal conclusion itself but rather the interpretive strategies, arguments, and emphases employed in explaining the position of persons with visual disabilities in religious life.

The comparative analysis of Sharḥ Sunan Abī Dāwūd by Ibn Raslān, Sharḥ Sunan Abī Dāwūd by 'Abd al-Muḥsin al-'Abbād, and Badhl al-Majhūd fī Hall Sunan Abī Dāwūd by Khalīl Aḥmad al-Sahāranfūrī resulted in the reconstruction of three interpretive typologies. Ibn Raslān represents an Inclusive-Legitimative typology by emphasizing prophetic trust and the legitimacy of religious leadership based on competence. 'Abd al-Muḥsin al-'Abbād represents an Inclusive-Accommodative typology by highlighting the importance of reasonable accommodation to enable equal religious participation. Khalīl Aḥmad al-Sahāranfūrī represents an Inclusive-Dialogical typology by presenting multiple scholarly perspectives while consistently recognizing the religious capacity of blind individuals. Viewed through the disability paradigm, these typologies collectively reflect the characteristics of the Inclusion Model, demonstrating that blindness is understood not as a barrier to religious leadership but as a condition compatible with participation, competence, and human dignity. This study contributes to hadith scholarship by introducing the disability paradigm as an analytical framework for examining classical hadith commentaries. Unlike previous studies that primarily focused on legal rulings or thematic discussions of disability, this research reconstructs interpretive patterns among classical commentators and demonstrates that disability can be understood through multiple complementary perspectives within the tradition of hadith interpretation. This reconstruction enriches both hadith commentary studies and contemporary Islamic disability studies by providing a conceptual typology for future scholarly inquiry.

The findings provide a reference for developing more inclusive approaches to Islamic education, religious leadership, and disability discourse. The reconstructed typology may assist scholars, educators, and religious institutions in promoting interpretations of hadith that recognize the capacity, dignity, and participation of persons with disabilities within Muslim communities. This study has several limitations. First, the analysis is limited to the hadith of Abdullah bin Ummi Maktum recorded in Sunan Abū Dāwūd and three selected classical commentaries. Second, the discussion focuses specifically on visual disability and therefore does not encompass other forms of disability addressed in the hadith literature. Consequently, the findings should be understood within the scope of the selected texts and analytical framework. Future research may expand this study by examining disability-related hadiths in other major hadith collections, such as Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī, or Sunan al-Nasā'ī, as well as by incorporating additional classical and contemporary commentaries. Comparative studies involving different disability paradigms or broader Islamic theological perspectives would also contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of disability within the Islamic intellectual tradition.

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