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Virtues of the People of al-Shām: A Human Analytical Study and Comparative Evaluation with AI Models (ChatGPT and Gemini)

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the virtues of the people of al-Shām through a human analytical lens and compare the findings with those generated by artificial intelligence models. The research adopts an inductive methodology for data collection and analysis, alongside an applied approach to compare human interpretations with the outputs of AI models. The results indicate that the Gemini model demonstrated superior performance in understanding and analyzing religious and cultural texts, offering interpretations that were more accurate and contextually appropriate than those provided by ChatGPT. These findings underscore the importance of advancing AI models capable of effectively engaging with religious and cultural content, while also highlighting the distinctions between human and machine-based analysis.

Keywords: Virtues, People of al-Shām, Analysis, Human, Artificial Intelligence, Models, Comparison.

INTRODUCTION

Studying the **virtues of the people of al-Shām** is a significant topic in Islamic religious sciences, as it helps uncover implicit meanings and nuanced indications in religious texts. With ongoing technological advancement, it has become possible to employ **artificial intelligence (AI)** techniques in the analysis and **takhrīj** (hadith authentication and sourcing) of religious texts. Clarifying the theoretical framework and the traditional methodologies used in this field requires a deep understanding of the classical hadith sciences and the foundational principles upon which hadith scholarship has historically been built. Accordingly, the theoretical framework and traditional methodologies constitute the cornerstone of this study.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework of this research is based on integrating **AI applications** with **hadith studies**, exploring how AI can be used to analyze religious texts and support takhrīj procedures. Throughout history, hadith scholars have relied on traditional methods such as **isnād analysis**, **mutābaʿāt** (follow-up transmissions), and **shawāhid** (supporting narrations). This approach is well illustrated in the works of major scholars such as **al-Nawawī**, particularly his commentary on Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, and **Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī**, especially his commentary on Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, *Fatḥ al-Bārī*.

TRADITIONAL METHODOLOGIES

1. **Isnād (Chain of transmission):** tracing the chain of narrators and assessing each narrator's integrity (*ʿadālah*) and precision (*ḍabṭ*).

2. **Mutābaʿah (Follow-up):** examining the hadith through multiple transmission routes and evaluating variations between narrations.
3. **Shawāhid (Corroborating evidence):** using other narrations that support or contradict the hadith under examination.

Research Gap

The study identifies a research gap in two key areas:

- **Limitations of AI:** despite the growing use of AI in religious studies, current systems still face constraints in matching human-level accuracy in takhrīj and deep textual analysis.
- **Need for performance evaluation:** there is a need to evaluate AI models in analyzing the virtues of al-Shām and to compare their outputs with expert human analysis.

Significance of the Study

This study seeks to:

- Develop modern methodological approaches for analyzing the virtues of al-Shām using AI, improving the **accuracy** and **reliability** of results;
- Benefit from AI capabilities in detecting hidden meanings and implicit textual indications within religious texts.

Research Objectives

The research aims to evaluate the performance of AI models in analyzing the virtues of al-Shām by comparing AI outputs with human scholarly analysis. It also seeks to contribute to developing AI models capable of analyzing religious texts with high accuracy and reliability.

Methodology

- **Inductive approach:** collecting relevant data and conducting systematic analysis.
- **Applied/comparative approach:** comparing human results with outputs from AI models (e.g., **ChatGPT** and **Gemini**).

Expected Results

The study is expected to contribute to:

- developing AI models that analyze religious texts with improved accuracy and reliability;
- producing a deeper understanding of the virtues of al-Shām and advancing modern approaches to religious text analysis.

Scope and Research Tools

Scope:

- ***Thematic Scope:*** focusing on virtues-of-al-Shām narrations through human analysis and comparison with AI models (ChatGPT and Gemini).
- ***Methodological Scope:*** relying on inductive and applied approaches, with potential constraints inherent to each.
- ***Temporal and Spatial Scope:*** time and contextual constraints may affect analytical depth and breadth.

Tools:

1. ***AI Models (ChatGPT, Gemini):*** analyzing a sample of hadiths related to the virtues of al-Shām and comparing results with human analysis.
2. ***Text-Analysis Software:*** supporting linguistic and semantic analysis to detect implicit meanings.
3. ***Databases:*** using hadith databases and associated commentaries and annotations.
4. ***Prior Literature:*** reviewing existing studies on the virtues of al-Shām and AI applications in religious sciences.

These tools enhance analytical precision, reduce time and effort, and support developing AI systems capable of handling religious texts more effectively.

Anticipated Challenges

- ***Technical Challenges:*** limitations in using AI systems and textual analysis tools.
- ***Methodological Challenges:*** difficulties in research design and interpreting comparative outcomes.
- ***Linguistic Challenges:*** complexities of Arabic and the demands of religious-text processing.

Rationale for the Title and Research Hypotheses

The title *"Virtues of the People of al-Shām: A Human Analytical Study and a Comparison with AI Models (ChatGPT and Gemini)"* was selected due to:

1. The importance of the topic in religious sciences;
2. The expansion of AI capabilities in text analysis and takhrīj, opening new research directions;
3. The need to evaluate AI performance against human scholarly analysis.

Main Hypothesis: AI models can assist in analyzing the virtues of al-Shām with considerable accuracy and reliability, yet they still require further development to reach a consistently high level of precision. ***Sub-Hypotheses:*** AI can support religious text analysis and help uncover implicit meanings; it may also assist in evaluating hadith authenticity and distinguishing strong narrations from weak ones. These hypotheses, in turn, guide efforts to develop more robust AI models for religious-text analysis.

PREVIOUS STUDIES (TRANSLATED & SLIGHTLY CONDENSED)

1) "An Analytical Vision of AI Applications and Their Role in Serving Islam: ChatGPT as a Model" (2024)
Author: Rida Ibrahim Abd al-Jalil — UAE — *Journal of Scientific Research and Islamic Studies*, University of Sharjah, 16(1), 117–148.

Summary and Analysis:

This contemporary study discusses AI as a major civilizational development driven by algorithms trained on vast amounts of human-derived data. It examines AI systems and their role in serving Islam, especially amid claims about replacing human intelligence and "automating/ digitizing religion." It raises questions about whether AI strengthens faith and values or becomes a tool for distorting Islam. Using an analytical approach, the study stresses the need for ethical and religious safeguards to ensure AI is used fairly and without bias. It also presents an applied example of a dialogue with ChatGPT about Islam to assess these applications and propose future ethical guidelines. The study concludes that AI tools are valuable for serving Islam, yet they also pose serious risks depending on how they are trained and used, thus requiring careful regulation.

Critique

Although the study is valuable, it may require clearer methodological detail about how AI was applied to religious-text analysis. It could also benefit from deeper interpretation of outcomes and clearer discussion of limitations, including constraints related to model selection and training data.

Connection to the Current Study:

Both studies address AI use in religious sciences. The current study can benefit from the prior study's analytical framing and ethical emphasis, while focusing more specifically on hadith-related analysis of the virtues of al-Shām and implementing a direct comparison between **ChatGPT** and **Gemini**.

Key Difference:

The earlier study focuses broadly on AI in serving Islam, whereas the current study narrows the scope to a specialized hadith topic (virtues of al-Shām) and conducts a comparative evaluation across two AI systems.

2) "The Role of ChatGPT in Enriching Islamic Legal Academic Research" (2025)

Author: Sadiqa Abd al-Baqi — Algeria — *Qabas Journal for Humanities and Social Studies*, 1(9), 786–804.

Summary and Analysis:

This study explores ChatGPT's role in supporting Islamic legal scholarship, beginning with definitions of AI and its types, and placing ChatGPT within that context. It tests the usefulness of the tool for researchers in Islamic sciences and concludes that it offers advantages in tasks such as summarization, translation, and generating research questions. However, it also highlights drawbacks, including inaccurate information and methodological errors in citing sources, calling for further development and improved data foundations for higher accuracy in Islamic studies.

Critique:

The methodology appears useful but may need more detail on practical application procedures and evaluation criteria. The broad scope may also limit depth in specific subfields.

Connection to the Current Study:

The current research can build on these findings by shifting from general usefulness to **specialized hadith analysis**, aiming for structured comparison and higher methodological rigor in evaluating AI outputs for takhrīj-related tasks.

3) The Image of the Prophetic Sunnah in AI Applications: An Applied Study (2024)

Summary and Analysis (Translated & Condensed)

This study examines how the Prophetic Sunnah is represented in AI applications and evaluates the **accuracy** of these systems in handling Prophetic texts. It aims to improve and develop AI models so they can understand the Sunnah **more precisely and effectively**. The study adopts a **descriptive–analytical method**, describing and analyzing how AI models—specifically **ChatGPT-4o** and **Gemini-1.5 (Pro)**—process Prophetic texts and assessing whether they interpret the Sunnah correctly.

The study also reviews the **training resources** used by these models and evaluates their quality and coverage. The main findings indicate that, despite their notable capabilities, AI models exhibit **clear shortcomings** in properly understanding and applying **hadith methodology**. Their performance varies: they may be competent at **collecting information**, yet weak in consistently applying the **rules and critical standards of hadith scholars**. They also struggle to distinguish **ṣaḥīḥ** from **ḍaʿīf** narrations. Although the models can generally understand the relationship between the Qur'an and the Sunnah, they may produce **detailed interpretive errors**, especially when explaining hadiths and applying them to contemporary contexts.

The study recommends exercising **caution** when using AI with the Sunnah and avoiding absolute reliance on these tools. It urges experts to develop **more specialized and accurate algorithms** in collaboration with **hadith scholars**, to ensure correct, reliable answers across Sunnah-related questions. The study also stresses the importance of analyzing other Islamic and Arabic sciences within AI applications to enhance the **accuracy and objectivity** of these technologies.

Critical Review and Constructive Linkage (Translated & Condensed)

Strengths: The study's title/topic is relatively objective and focused; it employs a clear methodology for evaluating AI's contribution to hadith-related scholarship.
Limitations: The scope may be limited (e.g., the number of tested samples), and restricting evaluation to a single tool/model can reduce comparative robustness. The study may also require deeper analysis and interpretation because relying on one program risks overlooking other systems that could improve accuracy in hadith retrieval and analysis.
Relevance to the Current Study: The study aligns with your project in examining AI use in Islamic sciences—especially hadith—and supports the need to develop AI models capable of high-precision analysis of Prophetic texts, given that Sunnah is a primary legal source after the Qur'an.
Practical Benefit: It supports developing specialized AI for hadith analysis, improving the efficiency and reliability of Islamic research tools, and opening new directions for serving the Islamic (particularly hadith) scholarly corpus.

4) Islamic Foundations for the Ethics of AI Use within the Framework of Maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah (2024)

Summary and Analysis (Translated & Condensed)

This study argues that engaging with AI is no longer optional; it is a reality that requires integrating AI into many fields of life, which in turn necessitates **Islamic legal and ethical grounding**. The study addresses two core questions:

1. To what extent do AI uses align with Islamic ethical foundations?
2. To what extent can the maqāṣid of Sharīʿah accommodate AI outputs?

Using an inductive and analytical review of studies, research, and books, the study concludes—among its key results—that Islamic Sharīʿah is comprehensive and suitable for every time and place, and it can accommodate emerging issues.

Critical Review and Link to Your Study (Translated & Condensed)

Strengths: A clear methodology; deep analysis; reliance on credible Islamic sources.
Limitations: At times, it may remain too general, with insufficient practical examples showing how to operationalize Islamic AI ethics in real contexts; it may also have scope limits (sources/time/place).
Link to your Study: Your project can leverage its ethical framework—especially for responsible AI use in hadith analysis—while distinguishing itself by focusing on Prophetic narrations and implementing a **two-model comparison (ChatGPT vs Gemini)** rather than a general maqāṣid discussion.

5) AI and Its Impact on Liability (Ḍamān) in Islamic Jurisprudence: A Comparative Fiqh Study

Summary and Analysis (Translated & Condensed)

The study addresses contemporary fiqh developments related to AI: manufacturing systems that simulate aspects of human cognition (learning, inference, decision-making, autonomous execution). While AI provides

convenience and supports complex tasks, it may also become a source of harm (e.g., surveillance, tracking, violence), which requires clarifying Islamic legal positions regarding AI and determining **who bears liability for harms** and on what legal basis.

Critical Review and Linkage (Translated & Condensed)

Strengths: Clear methodology; thorough conceptual analysis; grounding in reliable fiqh sources. ***Link to your Study:*** It shares the Islamic framing of AI and can inform how your research treats AI's outputs as legally/ethically sensitive, reinforcing the principle that AI should align with Islamic values and maqāṣid.

6) The Feasibility of Using AI in Hadith Research (2025)

Summary and Analysis (Translated & Condensed)

This study explores whether AI can be used in hadith sciences by identifying domains where it may deliver more efficient and reliable results, especially for modern challenges. It also examines risks tied to AI-generated text—particularly the possibility of unintentionally spreading **fabricated (mawḍūʿ)** hadiths. Methodologically, it begins with a theoretical overview of AI capabilities (text analysis, pattern recognition), followed by practical experiments using **ChatGPT-4** to analyze hadith texts.

Key findings: AI has strong potential for **search and retrieval** in hadith corpora, especially for initial evaluation and classification of results. However, its current role remains largely **supportive**, imitating human reasoning within established scholarly frameworks. The study warns that misuse can facilitate the spread of fabricated narrations and recommends treating AI as a **tool that supports scholars, not a substitute**.

Critical Review and Link to Your Study (Translated & condensed)

The study highlights a research gap: prior work on AI feasibility in hadith research may be limited, and some literature emphasizes theory more than applied evaluation—creating an opening for more empirical work. Your study differs by focusing on a specific hadith domain (**virtues of the people of al-Shām**) and employing **two AI models** comparatively, which strengthens methodological and evaluative depth.

Overall Synthesis: Prior Studies vs. Your Current Study (Translated & Condensed)

Based on careful reading of the previous studies, your study is distinguished by:

- **A Focused Scope:** analyzing a specific theme (virtues of al-Shām).
- **Methodological Novelty:** applying AI directly to religious texts using **two systems (ChatGPT and Gemini)**, not one.
- **Potentially New Findings:** offering new comparative results and methodological insights for this topic.
- **Scholarly Significance:** emphasizing the importance of virtues-of-al-Shām within Islamic studies.
- **Innovation:** integrating AI into analysis while aiming for higher precision through cross-model comparison.

Chapter One: AI in Serving the Sunnah and Islamic Sciences

1) Human and Artificial Intelligence (Translated & Condensed)

Human Intelligence has been described as an activity through which a person acquires knowledge and learning, involving various mental abilities such as analysis, planning, problem-solving, inference, quick judgment, abstract thinking, organizing ideas, and language acquisition.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) refers to the ability of digital computers to simulate human intelligence to perform complex tasks (learning, understanding, and other advanced cognitive operations). It can also be defined as the science concerned with building machines that perform actions humans consider "intelligent," or enabling machines to make decisions by simulating human thought.

2) Differences Between Human and Artificial Intelligence (Translated & Condensed)

- Human intelligence is creative, flexible, and shaped by lived experience; AI operates through programmed rules and data and lacks genuine creativity.
- AI can outperform humans in narrow domains (e.g., image, speech, and natural language processing), but it lacks broad general inference and human social interaction.
- Humans make decisions based on personal expertise and adaptive reasoning; AI's "independence" remains bounded by data/architecture.
- Humans can multitask fluidly, while AI systems often require substantial design/training for specific tasks.

- Human intelligence is divinely created; AI is a human-made artifact—hence the comparison is inherently limited.

Conclusion of the Preface: Integrating AI with human intelligence can improve performance and outcomes; AI should be treated as complementary.

The Relationship Between AI and Hadith Studies (Translated & condensed)

Hadith scholars were among the earliest to systematize knowledge through rigorous classification, documentation, and indexing. With the rise of computing and information technology, early initiatives introduced digital tools into Sunnah studies (including indexing and verification projects), followed by specialized software and encyclopedias. Today, AI provides a new qualitative leap, making it reasonable to explore its role in hadith services—especially **takhrīj and grading**—because hadith science is inherently based on searching, extracting, and analyzing information. AI can help with source attribution, narrator biographies, and identifying possible defects, while **not replacing** expert scholarly judgment.

AI Applications in Serving the Sunnah (Translated & condensed)

Benefits include improved analytical precision, faster access to meanings and derived insights, and reduced time/effort in classification and interpretation. Challenges include data quality, reliability of analysis, and the need for continual algorithmic improvement.

Key Domains for AI in Serving Islamic Sciences and the Sunnah (Translated & condensed)

AI can be used for expert-like systems simulating scholarly tasks: takhrīj, grading, explaining jurisprudential implications, and responding to questions—provided outputs are verified. Core applications include: textual analysis (with deep comprehension), content generation (with statistics, translation, speech/video processing), and interaction.

Specific Fields of AI Use in Sunnah Studies (Translated & condensed)

1. Attributing hadiths to primary sources and supporting grading.
2. Analyzing isnād: narrator identification, biographies, continuity/discontinuity, defects.
3. Analyzing matn: rare vocabulary, meanings, jurisprudential implications, and resolving objections.
4. Teaching hadith sciences: innovative learning, memorization support, correct pronunciation of texts/narrator names, concept clarification.
5. Translating hadith texts and Sunnah sciences into multiple languages (text and speech).
6. Global communication and intercultural dialogue, presenting the Sunnah to broader audiences.

Challenges of Using AI with the Sunnah (Translated & condensed)

1. Linguistic and contextual programming: precise input and context sensitivity are difficult; Arabic hadith style requires careful phrasing and multiple formulations to refine outputs.
2. Rapid evolution: continuous training and updating are required.
3. Isnād complexity: assessing continuity, narrator reliability, subtle errors of trustworthy narrators, and contextual evaluation requires deep hadith expertise—difficult to fully automate.
4. Algorithmic limitations: technical infrastructure must continually improve to achieve reliable results.

Chapter Two: Takhrīj and Hadith Grading via AI Tools (Condensed translation)

AI tools are increasingly used in many domains; this chapter outlines how they can be applied to takhrīj and grading.

Major AI Tools Mentioned

Claude, Gemini, Copilot, ChatGPT, and a "Hadith Platform."

Definition of ChatGPT (Translated & condensed)

ChatGPT is an AI-based language model designed to communicate with users and generate professional answers quickly with reduced effort, in a manner resembling human interaction.

Dataset and Experimental Design: "Virtues of al-Shām" (Translated & condensed)

A custom dataset was constructed to assess how generative AI—especially ChatGPT—reproduces authentic hadith texts and associated scholarly metadata: **isnād**, **takhrīj**, and **grading**. Six hadiths were collected from the six canonical Sunni collections (Bukhārī, Muslim, Abū Dāwūd, Tirmidhī, Nasāʾī, Ibn Mājah), all related to virtues

of al-Shām, due to the topic's historical and doctrinal significance and its suitability for testing near-textual variations.

Each record includes parallel human vs AI inputs across four components:

1. **Matn (text)**
2. **Isnād**
3. **Takhrīj**
4. **Grading**

For AI generation, ChatGPT (GPT-4) was prompted to reproduce the same hadiths using short descriptions/keywords, without direct online database access, relying on internal learned representations. Outputs were manually aligned with human references. The final dataset was stored as CSV and processed in Python.

Preprocessing (Translated & condensed)

Given classical Arabic, preprocessing was required: normalization of spelling variants; removal of diacritics and elongation; filtering non-Arabic characters; unifying letter variants (e.g., و → ؤ/ئ; ي → ى; ا → آ/إ/أ). Tokenization was performed, and a stopword list removed function words to focus on informative tokens (narrator names, transmission verbs, doctrinal terms).

Similarity was measured using:

- Character-level similarity,
- Word-level Jaccard similarity,
- Token sorting similarity,
- Semantic similarity using multilingual SBERT (paraphrase-multilingual-MiniLM-L12-v2) via cosine similarity.

Quantitative Results: ChatGPT (Translated & condensed)

Structural Similarity: Character similarity was relatively high (around 0.76 in some cases), suggesting notable lexical overlap. However, Jaccard and token-sort scores were lower, indicating divergence in internal word order and phrasing.

Semantic Similarity: SBERT-based semantic similarity was high (roughly 0.81–0.99). For example, one hadith reached ~0.99 semantic similarity, implying strong meaning preservation even when phrasing differs.

Overall: semantic similarity tended to exceed structural similarity, indicating ChatGPT often preserves meaning while paraphrasing or altering word order—especially in technical sections like takhrīj and grading.

Quantitative Results: Gemini (Translated & condensed)

Gemini achieved high semantic similarity similar to ChatGPT (roughly 0.80–0.99). Structural similarity by character measures could be very high in certain cases (sometimes approaching 0.99), indicating closer surface-form matching for some hadiths. Yet some word-based measures (Jaccard/token-sort) varied by hadith, showing that surface similarity is not uniformly stable across all items.

Comparative Evaluation: ChatGPT vs Gemini (Translated & condensed)

Across four components (matn, isnād, takhrīj, grading), the comparative table you provided indicates:

- **ChatGPT** is slightly stronger in *semantic fidelity of the matn* (meaning-level closeness).
- **Gemini** is generally stronger in *structural fidelity* (surface wording/order) and performs better across isnād, takhrīj, and grading—sections that depend on established formulae and precise factual sequences.

The interpretation presented is:

- ChatGPT tends to **paraphrase while preserving meaning**.
- Gemini tends to **reconstruct closer to classical textual patterns**, often matching structure and formulae more closely.

Both models' performance declines in highly technical scholarly components, reinforcing that AI outputs require expert verification, especially for isnād integrity and takhrīj precision.

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