

## A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF MANHAJ SALAFI CUM AT-TAŞAWWUF AL-ISLĀMIY ON RADIO: A CLARION CALL FOR MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD

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### Abstract

Brotherhood is a watchword of the Islamic religion that both the Qur'an and Hadith clamour for emphatically. In achieving this, the role of *da'wah* on the radio could never be undermined due to its large coverage. *Salafi* and *Şūfi* groups could not but also use the medium to evangelise their views on some Islamic issues on weekly basis. Manhaj Salaf and At-Taşawwuf-İslāmiy are *da'wah* programmes on the radio that are aired on Albarka and Harmony stations respectively by the *Salafi* and *Şūfi* groups. Historical methods and interviews were used for the research work. Manhaj Salaf and At-Taşawwuf-İslāmiy are studied to bring forth their compliance with an objective of *da'wah* i.e., Muslim brotherhood. The paper discovered that Manhaj Salaf and At-Taşawwuf-İslāmiy are Islamic-oriented programmes anchored by Islamic scholars of various organisational affiliations. The use of the Qur'an, Hadith and other scholars' views as references is also common among them. The employment of action-reaction and retaliatory approaches tends to render the Muslim brotherhood phantom. In conclusion, recommendations are made that anchors of the programmes must adopt the major method of *da'wah* (*Al-Ĥikmahwal-Maw'izhah al-Ĥasanah*) on radio as that would not only aid in disseminating true Islamic worldview on every matter they discuss, but as well promote Muslim brotherhood among the generality of the Muslim *Ummah*.

**Keywords:** Manhaj Salaf, At-Taşawwuf-İslāmiy, *Da'wah* on radios, Muslim Brotherhood.

### Introduction

One unique thing about Islam is its acknowledgement of human freedom of thought that forms the secondary sources of Islamic law. Attempts to exercise such privilege must conform with the primary

sources of Islamic law i.e., the Qur'an and Traditions of the Prophet. Promulgation of the secondary sources of Islamic law is a pointer to the application of intellect towards the interpretation of the primary sources not only to clarify ambiguous issues but to also meet up with any contemporary issue to emancipate the *Ummah* from unnecessary and avoidable illusion. Classical Islamic scholars enjoyed the privilege reasonably for the sake of making teachings of Islam comprehensible to all. Though they could differ in approach and verdict yet they would respect each other's. In other words, the great scholars of Islam were at long hand to one another in opinions that affected the religion and social matters, yet maintained the bond of brotherhood among themselves. With this, Islamic doctrines and tenets were disseminated beyond their localities and led the world religiously and scholarly. Unfortunately, the reverse is the case with the current preachers and scholars whereby condemnation of one another, self-eulogy, and praise of affiliated groups become the order of the day. The trends of hostility and confrontation between several Muslim organisations abound to the effect that non-Muslims could not but perceive the attitude as a characteristic of the Islamic religion. Assaultive utterances of *Salafiyyah* and *Šūfi* members had been historic for decades when lives were terminated and properties were vandalised beyond repair shunning their fundamental faith-brotherhood. It was then the groups could go to the length of engaging in a conflictual relationship, not permitting each other access to the mosque, alleging each other of *Takfīr* (being polytheists) among others.<sup>1</sup> The invention of modern devices of communication has prompted a change of channels and approaches through which each group could publicise its ideas cum doctrines and condemn others even beyond imagination in the name of Allah.

Radio station, which is a social medium is not excluded from playing pivotal roles in disseminating organizational creeds and personal views on Islamic matters by those who could afford it, even if it is to the detriment of true Islamic worldviews on Muslim brotherhood. Truly, Muslim brotherhood is a paramount philosophy of Islam that the Glorious Qur'an called for in several verses and vehemently clamoured for by the Prophet Muhammad right from the dawn of his prophethood till his last sermon on pulpit.<sup>2</sup> The trends of criticism of the radio preachers have put their audience at a cross-road regarding which scholar is right and should be heeded since each would eloquently substantiate his view with evidence from the primary and secondary sources of Islamic law.

### **Salafiyyah and Šūfi Groups: A cursory Review**

*Salafiyyah* is an appellative term used to describe those who profess practicing Islam and living following the dictates of the Qur'an, *Sunnah* of the Prophet, *Ṣallālahu 'alayhi wasallam*, and the lifestyle of the companions and their followers.<sup>3</sup> The trends of attempting to practice and agitating for pristine Islam had gone through all sorts of upheavals to the extent that various titles were used to describe the people involved, such as *Ahl As-Sunnah wal-Jamā'*, *Ahl Al-Ḥadīth*, *Ḥanābilah*, *Ahl As-Sunnah*, and *Salafiyyah*. All the efforts of the scholars that strived for the revitalisation of the prudence of the Islamic religion became imperative to curtail the political tumor and religious bankruptcy and heresy of their time. Alternatively, the practicability of pure Islamic creeds and ideas is considered uncompromisable, relying on certain Qur'an verses and Traditions of the Prophet.<sup>4</sup>

Shaykh Abdur-Rahman Muhammad Al-Awwal bin Aliy Jabata, a citizen of Ilorin was born in 1961 to the family of a popular At-Tijāni member known as Shaykh Abubakri Aliy Jabata of Ilorin. He obtained Arabic and Islamic education at local and international levels, in Nigeria and Egypt respectively before venturing into the *da'wah* activities in Ilorin. He proclaims himself as a *Salafiy* member after receiving training from an Egyptian scholar called Muhammad 'Amr Abdullateef, and claims to employ the methodology of the *Salafiyyah* order in preaching and lifestyle<sup>5</sup>, major of which is "zero tolerance for any act considered to be innovation".<sup>6</sup> Aside from the physical *da'wah* activity of Jabata, which holds on Sunday sat Sheikh Jabata Mosque, Hajj Camp Area, Ilorin, his group members created an official Telegram platform on December 26, 2018, titled "Lectures Sheikh Muhammad Aliy Jabata<sup>sic</sup>" with about 981 subscribers as at the time of working on this paper. The platform serves majorly two purposes; uploading and accessing a series of Jabata's lectures and soliciting funds to finance the *da'wah* activities of their group and assist their members financially.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, he usually airs a programme titled *Manhaj Salaf* on the Albarka FM radio station, Ganmo, Kwara state on weekly basis. Truly, Jabata's approach to issues in the course of *da'wah* on the radio, to be specific is confusingly problematic, as he is fond of calling other preachers *Kuffār* (non-believers), especially the members of *Šūfi* on the ground of not sharing the same view with him on issues.

*At-Taṣawwuf Al-Islāmiy*, on the other hand, refers to the Islamic mystic order that purifies the minds and souls and disciplines humans to have good ethics to attain the level of *Iḥsān* (good character).<sup>8</sup> Though the

companions and their followers were not referred to as *Ahl At-Taṣawwuf*, yet they portrayed a mystic life in speech and action chiefly to attain the pleasure of Allah, which is the major vision of a *Ṣūfī* member.<sup>9</sup> *At-Tijāniyyah* is one of the major *Ṣūfī* orders practiced in Ilorin metropolis. The order was founded in the eighteenth century in Morocco by Shaykh Ahmad At-Tijāniy (d. 1815C.E).<sup>10</sup> However, the emergency of the *Tijāniyyah* order in Nigeria becomes a coin-side matter as each scholar records according to the information availed to him. Shaykh Adam Al-Ilori (D. 1995) opines Umar Al-Fūtiy (b.1798) to have been responsible for the introduction of the order into Nigerian society during the reign of Muhammad Bello in Sokoto who was initiated into the order by his teacher, Shaykh Aliy Ḥarāzim, a great acolyte (*Murīd*) and scribe of Shaykh Ahmad At-Tijāniy.<sup>11</sup> The emergence of Shaykh Ibrahim Abdullah Inyās (d. 1975C.E) as *Ṣāhib Al-Fayḍah* (Depository of the Flood) and Grand Khalifah of Ahmad At-Tijāniy, which the founder of his order had earlier prophesied makes the *Tijāniyyah* order a hallmark nationwide.<sup>12</sup> Shaykh Ibrahim endeared himself to the majority of people, youths, and others through the publishing of numerous books on Islamic law, Islamic ethics, Islamic exegeses, Sufism, converting people to Islam, and succoring victimised people and this contributed to having more followers in the order and a number of them especially gave him allegiance.<sup>13</sup> Hence, numerous groups in affiliation with the *Tijāniyyah* order were created such as *Ahl Al-Fayḍah*, *Tijāniyyah* Muslim Students Association of Nigeria (TIMSAN), and the International Organisation of *Tijāniyyah* Brotherhood (IOTB) that was initiated and created by Shaykh Hasan Cisse (1945-2008) in Nigeria in the year two-thousand (2000) chiefly to foster the chain of *Tijāniyyah* Brotherhood.<sup>14</sup>

In essence, the paper attempts to majorly dwell on two topics that the *Manhaj Salaf* and *At-Taṣawwuf Al-Islāmiy* anchored by Shaykh Jabata and the International Organisation of *Tijāniyyah* Brotherhood (IOTB) respectively to observe differences and relationship between their sources of reference and justify their prospective Brotherhood as Muslims. This as well would invite more people to the fold of Islam convincingly rather than blackmailing the religion in an undue portrait.

Analysis of *Manhaj Salaf* and *At-Taṣawwuf Al-Islāmiy* Programmes on Albarka (89.9FM) and Harmony (103.5 FM) Radio Stations on “Fasting on Friday of ‘*Arafah* Day” and “*At-Tabarruk* (Seeking Blessings of Allah via Revered Persons and Sacred Objects)

Knowing fully that the presenters of the two programmes have covered a series of topics yet the two topics are carefully considered for this paper simply because of their currency and sensitivity in a proud Muslim community, such as Ilorin.

### **Fasting on Friday of 'Arafah Day**

Friday is the sixth day of the week when the Muslims perform *Ṣalātul-Jumu'ah* (Friday Prayer). Aside from the fact that the canonical prayer has a special way to be followed for its performance, the day itself attracts distinctive features, which other days do not share according to Islam. The Prophet, Muhammad is reported to have declared the day as a festive day that demands certain socio-religious respects. Muslims are enjoined not to fast the day alone, encouraged to dress gorgeously moderate, take a spiritual bath as a way of according special honour to the day unlike the other days of the week,<sup>15</sup> and recitation of *Sūratul-Kahf* is likewise recommended.<sup>16</sup>

'Arafah day, on the other hand, refers to the ninth day of the twelfth month (*Dhul-Hijjah*) of the Islamic calendar. On that day, Muslim Pilgrims stay on the 'Arafah Hill in Makkah *after Fajr prayer until sunset, they stand in devotion, praying and supplicating for the mercy and forgiveness*<sup>17</sup> of Allah. As an element of the universality of Islam, Muslim brotherhood, and allowing non-pilgrim Muslims to also enjoy the blessing of the day, Prophet Muhammad enjoined Muslims who do not go on the pilgrimage to fast on the day purposely to benefit from the blessings of Allah embedded in the day of 'Arafah. According to the Prophet, fasting would expiate sins of the previous years and future years.<sup>18</sup>

It was coincidental that the day of 'Arafah came up on Friday, 09/12/1443H. corresponding to 08/08/2022 and for the fact that the Prophet was silent about such an uncommon incident hence extracting verdict(s) between fasting for the day of 'Arafah and not fasting on Friday became the responsibility of Islamic scholars to exercise their intellectual prowess on Islamic jurisprudence. Of course, the instrumentality of *Qiyās* (analogical deduction) in addressing such issues could never be underrated, to which anchors of *Manhaj Salaf*, Muhammad bin Ali Jabata and representatives of IOTB (International Organisation of Tijāniyyah Brotherhood) likewise contributed.

On 2nd July 2022, the anchor of *Manhaj Salaf* aired his view on the matter when he posited that fasting on Friday alone is *Ḥarām* (forbidden) regardless of any supererogatory fasting that coincides with fasting on the day of 'Arafah except one fast on Thursday or Saturday of

the week. He agitated further that fasting on Saturday alone is also un-Islamic and if 'Arafah day falls on the day, the Muslims should not fast that day alone except they fast the day before or after it. Jabata substantiated his stands with what he understood from Hadith one-thousand, one-hundred and forty-four (1,144) of Imam Al-Bukhāriy that quotes thus:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: لَا يَصُومُ أَحَدُكُمْ يَوْمَ الْجُمُعَةِ إِلَّا أَنْ يَصُومَ قَبْلَهُ أَوْ يَصُومَ بَعْدَهُ.

On the authority of Abu Huraira who reported that: The Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, said: **“Let not one of you fast on Friday unless he also fasts a day before or after it.”**

(The Hadith quoted with number 1144 is in the Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim while Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhāriy1144 discusses the importance of *Tahajjud* which contradicts the topic quoted for).

IOTB, on the other hand, maintains the stand that one has to fast on the day of 'Arafah to earn the blessings of the special day even if it occurs on Friday and that it is not compulsory to combine Thursday or Saturday fasting. According to the group, as much fasting on Friday is not *Ḥarām* and the blessings of the day of 'Arafah are aptly mentioned in the glorious Qur'an and the Hadith of the Prophet to the extent of enjoining the Muslim to fast on the day as such it would be an unavoidable opportunity to fast on the day by healthy Muslims.

On this, a group of scholars posits that fasting on Friday alone is discouraged by the Prophet save fasting the day before or after it, however fasting on the day alone is not *Ḥarām*. To the group, one could fast on Friday alone to atone for the missed *Ramaḍān* fasting moreover there are *'Aḥādīth* on the condemnation of fasting on Friday without recommending fasting on the day before or after it. To this end, the condemnation mainly discourages scheduling Friday alone for fasting whereby the day has been declared as a day of the festival.<sup>19</sup> To this group, fasting on 'Arafah day which falls on Friday without joining the fasting with the days before or after it is allowed.

In the same vein, An-Nawawi is on record to have posited that fasting on Friday is condemned by the Prophet yet it is not *Ḥarām* since Muslims could fast on the day together with days before or after it, for fulfilling oath made on recovery from sickness, and getting missions

accomplished. To him, the day is a day of worshipping and remembering Allah, and fasting on the day could hinder someone as a result of the weakness and dizziness that fasting could pose. An-Nawawi was aware that Imam Mālik and some other scholars did not support the view that the Prophet condemned fasting on Friday and he did fast on the day without fasting the days before or after it. The postulation is substantiated by a Hadith reported by Ibn Mas‘ūd as translated thus:

The Apostle of Allah used to fast for three days at the beginning of every month and rarely he would not fast (even) on Friday.<sup>20</sup>

Ibn Bāz also subscribed to the fact that fasting on the day alone is not a sin on the ground that one didn't fast on Friday to intentionally defy the order of the Prophet. However, it is more reasonable to add Thursday just to be free of doubt.<sup>21</sup>

### ***At-Tabarruk (Seeking Blessings of Allah via Revered Person/Sacred Something)***

Another bone of contention in the disagreement between the two groups on the media is seeking blessings of Allah through another creature identified to be extraordinary in the realm of spirituality. This has been an Islamic ideology that enjoys the diversity of opinions of Islamic scholars. The fact that anchors of the two concerned radio programmes do not affiliate themselves with the same Muslim group, of course, differ on the matter.

On the 19th of June, 2022, the representative of IOTB on Harmony FM Radio posited that the ideology is a special spiritual opportunity granted by Allah for devout Muslims to access His blessings through certain divinely revered persons, objects, periods, and places regardless of time, place, tribe, colour, and language. According to the group, anything made sacred by Allah during the lifetime of any Prophet or saint could be revered and accorded courteous respect to enjoy the blessings of Allah. He cited some references to support his stand, such as *Hajaratul-Aswad* (the sacred Black Rock located in Makkah), *Muqām Ibrahim*, clothes of Prophet Yusuf, which was used as a divine cure against his father's blindness, revering Prophet Isa as revealed in Q.19:31, some places revealed in the Qur'an as sacred places Q.2:158 and Q.22:36, the Glorious Qur'an itself when it was revealed Q.44:3, as well as Prophet Muhammad as a specially revered person who is worthy of being taken as a means of seeking blessings of Allah. He mainly dwelled on the personality of the Prophet referring to and interpreting Q.24:35. Buttressing his stand on the

matter, he referred to the incident of when a Muslim woman was discovered by the Prophet using the preserved sweat of the Prophet to rub herself and her children as a means of revering and seeking blessings of Allah as the Prophet.<sup>22</sup>

Jabata on the other hand believes in the Islamic city of the doctrine but with a different approach. Muhammad Aliy Jabata posited that a Muslim could seek the blessings of Allah through extra acts of worship such as *Nāfilah* (supererogatory prayer), *Ṣadaqah* (giving charity), etc. but referring to things specially associated with the Prophets as a channel to Allah is un-Islamic and such act is tantamount to hell punishment. Proving his opinion, he referred to how Umar bin Al-Khaṭṭāb reluctantly kissed *Hajaraul-Aswad* during his pilgrimage. He conclusively remarked that all the places which the Nigerian Muslims consider sacred in Nigeria should be demolished by the people of authority and those who engage in *Tabarruk* are not Muslims even if they carry out all prescribed rites in Islam.<sup>23</sup>

On this, Shaykh ‘Alawiy bin Abdul Qadir As-Saqqāf argued that preserving the material properties (relics) of the Prophet as a means of immortalizing him and imitating him in various acts to seek blessings of Allah are Islamically allowed. Nevertheless, seeking blessings directly from those materials and landmark places is considered an act of *Shirk*(associating partner with Allah).<sup>24</sup> In the same vein, Abdul Azeez bin RīsAr-Rīs posited that there are two types of *Tabarruk*, namely; permitted and forbidden. According to him, performing extra acts of worship that are Islamically recommended to seek Allah’s blessings is permitted. On this, he cited revering sacred periods, the first ten days of Dhul-Ḥijjah, revering sacred places, making extra Islamic good deeds, etc.

He defined forbidden *Tabarruk* as seeking blessings of Allah through what is declared un-Islamic, such as seeking blessings from saints and pious persons. Having agreed that one could access the blessings of Allah through prayers of pious persons, Ar-Rīs could not but uncover his enmity for the *Ṣūfi* people by considering waging war against them to be Islamically legal.<sup>25</sup>

Another scholar debated the genuineness of making *Tabarruk* even through saints and pious Muslims. Shaykh Mahmud Haykal maintained that seeking blessings of Allah through whom and what one identified to be revered is an Islamic practice, which had been in practice since time immemorial. According to him, numerous are occasions when companions of Prophet Muhammad sought Allah’s blessings with the Prophet’s natural and material properties. Aside from this, the companions and their



followers are referred to as indulging in seeking blessings of Allah using natural possessions of one another as an interception for that matter. The argument of Haykal is replete with narrations proving how and when companions and their followers practiced *Tabarruk* within themselves, reference was made that Imam Ahmad once washed Imam Shāfi'ī's wears and drank the water used in the name of seeking blessings of Allah as endowed Imam Shāfi'ī with knowledge. Nevertheless, Haykal lamented that the Wahabiyyah group and its allies mainly condemn *Tabarruk* and *Taşawwuf* to tag *Şūfi* people as *Mushrikūn* as a result of their interpretation underneath:

True devotion is due to God alone. Those who take others besides Him as their protectors say: 'We worship them for no reason other than that they would bring us nearer to God.' God will judge between them concerning all matters on which they differ. God will not grace with guidance anyone who is an ungrateful liar. (Qur'an 39:3).

Refuting the postulation of Wahab is against *Şūfi* people and valuing the Islamicity of *Taşawwuf* and the genuineness of its practices like *Tabarruk*, he quoted:<sup>26</sup>

Those whom they invoke strive to obtain their Lord's favour, vying with each other to be near Him. They hope for His grace and dread His punishment. Indeed, your Lord's punishment is something to beware of. (Qur'an 17:57).

### **Fasting on Friday of 'Arafah Day and At-Tabarruk: A Researcher's Stands**

Fasting occupies a space among the pillars of Islam. It was institutionalised during the second year of *Hijrah*.<sup>27</sup> There are basic *naqli* (scriptural) evidences on its obligation, necessity, legal regulation on those who are conditionally exempted and atonement to be made, and some ethics and meritorious acts that should be portrayed during the period of *Ramadan* fasting. (See Qur'an 2:183-187). In addition, Prophet Muhammad (*Şallallahu 'alayhi wasallam*) encourages and discourages fasting during certain periods of time for peculiar reasons.<sup>28</sup>

The fact that many things, which the current Muslims experience were not during the time of the Prophet yet that he gave certain insights on how to address such situations is an opportunity for the scholars to extract justifiable judgement. Based on this, every Islamic scholar, having possessed the needed qualities is at liberty to exercise his reasoning

perception on Islamic and contemporary issues with the utility of available Islamic resources and come out with an Islamically viable conclusion.<sup>29</sup>

The coinciding of Friday and 'Arafah day was not experienced by the Prophet in the only one *Hajj* that he performed. In essence, every scholar's view is subjected to either acceptance or rejection, which does not call for hatred, enmity, or cursing one another. As deducible from the above argument, one can posit that fasting on Friday alone is neither *Haram* nor a sin to Allah on the ground that one does not fast to mar the wish of the Prophet. In this case, fasting on 'Arafah day, which coincides with Friday alone can be considered genuine chiefly to tap the benefits of the blessed day which comes once out of 354/355 days of the Islamic calendar (equivalent to 365/366 of the Gregorian calendar). Going by Imam Malik's opinion on fasting on Friday, it would be considered *Sunnatic* to fast on Friday alone by those whose birthday falls on the day as the Prophet did on Monday marking his birthday. In this sense, if one could combine fasting on Thursday and Friday that coincides with the 'Arafah day as encouraged by some scholars well and good since one could have more rewards, while condemning one who could, is not Islamically justifiable.

Further still, *Tabarruk* and *Tawassul* are essential aspects of Islamic domains and practices, which had been enjoined by the past Muslim generations. The two are interchangeably referred to in the context of seeking Allah's favours. *Tabarruk* is defined as having abundant good and fortune things from Allah such as having good health, mundane amenities, cynosure in children, lucrative jobs/business, tranquility, prosperous long life, etc.<sup>30</sup> It is also seen as seeking the attainment of goodness by constantly reverting to what is considered a blessing from Allah.<sup>31</sup> *Tawassul* is defined as supplicating to and soliciting Allah for particular things concerning the considered sacred or worthy person(s) and/or things, such as Prophets, divine Scriptures, etc.<sup>32</sup> Ar-Rufā'iy defines it as moving closer to Allah (requesting from Him) by obeying and worshipping Him, imitating His Prophets and Messengers, with an act that He loves and pleases.<sup>33</sup>

Seeking the pleasure of Allah through Islamically revered persons, places, and objects are considered another blessing of Allah to grant quick response to the prayers of devout Muslims on their wishes and grant them peace of mind and any sort of grief and vicissitude.<sup>34</sup> The practice has the Qur'an and Hadith of the Prophet's support that his companions and pious individuals are reported to have been involved in it even upon the demise of the Prophet, as such one could only posit that those who are against the

Islamic practice only attempt to throw away the baby and the bath water together, which is not Islamically germane. The fact remains that there could be some pseudo-Muslims who abuse the grace by escalating the practice extravagantly, which could amount to imitating non-Muslims. Attesting to this is the statement of Solagberu when he lamented that some individuals and groups do commit atrocious and egregious attitudes in the name of the Islamic religion whereas such is out-rightly un-Islamic.<sup>35</sup> It is here necessary to highlight some observations made in the series of the two radio programmes that revealed that they are Islamic but need some adjustment as recommended later, below.

### The Findings

1. *Da'wah*, being a cardinal aspect of Islam has some set methods and approaches, which a trained preacher must employ for an efficient outcome as attained by the Prophet. The major method used by the Prophet that endeared him into the minds of people is *Al-Hikmahwal-Maw'izhah al-Hasanah* (application of wisdom and beautiful admonition) in line with the directive of Allah (Q.16:125).<sup>36</sup> The application of the method enabled the Prophet to deliver his divine message efficiently that people of various localities as Yathrib had accepted everything about him before his relocation into their midst. This, at the same time, convinced many powerful rulers of his time to surrender, accept and practice Islam.<sup>37</sup> Discouraging an abusive attitude, the Prophet is reported to have equivocally said:

Ibn 'Umar (May Allah be pleased with them) said: The Messenger of Allah (*Ṣallallahu 'alayhiwasallam*) said: "when a person (Muslim) calls his brother (in Islam) a disbeliever, one of them will certainly deserve the title. If the addressee is so as he has asserted, the disbelief of the man is confirmed, but if it is not true, then it will revert to him. Collected by Al-Bukhāriy and Muslim."<sup>38</sup>

2. The anchors of the radio programmes in question are fond of vain utterances smacking of character assassination. Though, they do catch the attention of their audience by promising a topic to be discussed at the beginning of their presentations, however, along the line retaliatory act would creep in abusing each other of being illiterate, liar, infidel, and ignoramus, as a result, derailment from scheduled topics becomes inevitable

and distraction cum loss of interest would render the programmes ineffective.<sup>39</sup>

3. A *Da'wah* administrator must be an embodiment of certain Islamic traits and demeanors that would portray him as an ambassador of the religion he preaches. Knowledge of the issue concerned, frequency and punctuality, leniency and moderation in speech and action, and devoid of grand-standing among others are the traits of a true preacher of Islam.<sup>40</sup> A true *Da'wah* exercise must be devoid of self-aggrandisement and any sort of un-Islamic behaviour which could hinder the success of *Dā'i* (an Islamic proselytiser) but those that could endear him affectionately to his audience (Q.76:9 and Q.68:4). It is pathetic to observe that the presenter of *Manhaj Salaf* engulfed his presentation with self-aggrandisement to the extent of comparing himself with another *Dā'i* and claiming that he is more knowledgeable in the science of Hadith, having more members and acolytes, being the source of development to a locality, etc.<sup>41</sup> Of course, one is permitted under Islamic ethics to mention Allah's favour on him but as a way of according due praises to Allah (Q.93:11).<sup>42</sup>
4. Another area of observation is that the anchors of the programmes mainly refer to the Qur'an and Hadith, which are the major sources of the *Shari'ah* (Islamic law). The anchors are clever enough to quote what would sufficiently translate their views on any matter on ground. In the same line, it is observed that they both do make references to interpretations of other scholars of their choice save that the anchor of Manhaj Salaf, Jabata exclusively refers to *Salafi* scholars unlike representatives of IOTB who do refer to scholars of various sectarian backgrounds both in poem and prose to support their own positions on various issues. This agrees with the view of Shaykh Muhammad Mukhtār Muhammad Al-Mahdiy who agitated for interdisciplinary research and cross-referencing. To him, referring to numerous scholars on an issue is an attribute of great scholarship and would avail one with various scholastic perceptions on an issue. He further argued that referring only to scholars of a similar group is an attribute of *Aṣḥābul-Takfīr* (group of people who call other Muslims infidels) which is un-Islamic,<sup>43</sup> meanwhile this is an attribute of the anchor of Manhajus-Salaf, Jabata who usually alleges any

individual and group which does not subscribe to his own ideas and so constitute for him infidels.<sup>44</sup>

5. It is obvious in the series of radio programmes delivered by Jabata to praise the scholars whom he revered such as the late Muhammad bin Abdulwahhab, Shaykh Rabī' Al-Madkhalīy, Shaykh Ibn Bāz, Shaykh Ibn Faozān, Shaykh Aṣ-Ṣābūniy, Shaykh Abdullahibin Aṣ-Ṣarfiy Az-Zubayriy, etc.<sup>45</sup> Likewise, representatives of IOTB do betray their preference for certain groups and subscription to ideas of certain scholars and mullahs such as Shaykh Imam Mālik Bin Anas, Shaykh Ahmad At-Tijāniy, Shaykh Ibn Taymiyah, Shaykh Ibn Jawziy, Shaykh Ibrahim Inyās among others. A good instance is when a brief biography of Shaykh Ahmad At-Tijāniy was aired by Mall. AbdulRahman AbdulBaqi on Harmony Radio, Ilorin.<sup>46</sup> He revealed their affiliation to different groups which do not share the same ideas but are Muslims.
6. The anchors of the two radio programmes share the Islamic culture of commencing communication with the Muslim congregation with *Isti'ādha*<sup>47</sup>, *Basmallah*<sup>48</sup>, and *Salām*<sup>49</sup> but differ in how much the introductory segment (*Muqaddimah*) of their presentations is concluded. In this sense, the anchor of Al-Manhaj As-Salafi is fond of reciting a Hadith of the Prophet which condemns the introduction of new ideas into the religion of Islam (Muslim: 2/592)<sup>50</sup> while representatives of IOTB would recite a portion of prayers for the Prophet known as *Ṣalātul-Fātiḥ*<sup>51</sup>. Moreover, the bone of contention between the two groups revolves around their understanding of the Hadith which Jabata usually recites at the beginning of his programme. Claiming to be a representative of the scholars mentioned above, Jabata sees any action in contrary to the exact way the Prophet had done it or commanded it directly as idol-worship according to the literal meaning of the Hadith hitherto referred to above. Of course, meaning and interpretation of the Hadith have generated heated debates among scholars of jurisprudence, linguistics, theology, the tradition of the Prophet, and Islamic philosophy.<sup>52</sup> Representing a faction of the scholars, Shittu and Abimbola succinctly posited that any attempt at generalising the meaning of the Hadith is nothing but an outrageous act of misleading and causing disagreement among the Muslim Ummah.<sup>53</sup>

## Conclusion

So far attempts have been made to examine Manhaj Salaf and At-Taşawwuf-Islamiy radio programmes, which are presented on Albarka and Harmony FM radio stations in Kwara state. Two scholars are considered, and their different approaches are brought forth and some findings are discussed accordingly. To foster Muslim Brotherhood among the groups through the two radio programmes, I recommend that each group should respect the other's perception on every matter as long as it does not contradict the fundamentals of Islam. At the same time, they should re-strategise their approaches in such a way that abusive and cursive statements are avoided, as such is considered a serious un-Islamic act (see Qur'an 49:11). By doing so, to a large extent, the programmes would foster peaceful co-existence not only between Salafis and Sufis but as well among Nigerian Muslim *Ummah* and beyond, against extremism, hostility, and conflict.

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- 45 Listen to Al-Manhaj As-Salafi delivered on 27/08/2022.
- 46 Listen to At-Taṣawwuf Al-Islāmiy delivered on 04/09/2022.
- 47 Seeking refuge from Allah against the accursed Shayṭān.
- 48 In the Name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.
- 49 May Peace, mercy, and blessings of Allah be with you.
- 50 “Every innovation is a misguiding and every misguiding is in the Hell”
- 51 “O Allah, convey blessings on our master Muhammad, the opener of what was closed, the seal of what had preceded, the helper of the truth by the truth, and the guide to Your straight path, and on his family, according to his immense position and grandeur.”
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