The behavioral approach of Imam al- Nawawy in his book al Menhaj

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Abstract:

The idea of the research is summarized by explaining the behavioral approach of Imam Al-Nawawi, may God have mercy on him, in his book The Curriculum of the students. It was not limited to words and jurisprudence only, but enriched his book with greater benefits and the arts of science and knowledge. This was evidenced by his method of shortening the book, its magnificence, and exaggeration of clarification, which made it easy for beginners as well as students who are indispensable to knowledge. In addition to the precious opinions included in the book, which are a behavioral beacon for the seeker of knowledge, explaining the importance of sincerity, evoking intent and impartiality in seeking knowledge for the disciple and defaming the offender who wanted to do so other than the face of God. and also a number of good manners and virtuous behavior were mentioned via his selection of terms in gentle formulas indicating the preponderance between the different sayings in the doctrine. These reasons and this behavior made Imam al-Nawawi an editor of the Shafi'i school of thought until the work of the jurists settled on what he believed and chose.

Keywords:( Al-nawawi – Imam – Shafi'i)

INTRODUCTION

Praise be to God, Lord of the Worlds, and blessings and peace be upon the trustworthy envoy, his family and all of his companions.

Imam al-Nawawi - may God have mercy on him - was not limited in his book "Minhaj Al-Talibeen" to clarify the jurisprudential rulings only, but that approach came with great benefits and followed a gentle path in it. Although he was a follower of the Shafi'i school of thought, it did not prevent him from taking an opinion other than the opinion adopted in the doctrine on several issues, and that he chooses what his evidence is stronger and is supported by the text, even if this behavior (choice) is contrary to the doctrine, this is evident to us in his book "Mihaj al-Talibin and the Umdah of the Mufti" and in the types of arts and knowledge that his book contains, most notably his gentle method of abbreviation, and his method of selecting words and terms. In addition to the valuables that he included and added, and the book should not have been devoid of them - as he says - and this is what we will learn in this research.
Research problem:

This research tries to answer:

How did Imam al-Nawawi shorten the book of the editor without any deleting?

How did he choose terms and words and what do they denote?

How did he implicit those valuables in the book?

The importance of the research and the reason for choosing it:

The importance of the research is evident to us from the stature of the author of the book _ Imam al-Nawawi, his greatness, his high status, his connection and his heart's attachment to the hadith of the Prophet "peace be upon him". He is one of the leading jurists and modernists in the seventh century, as his numerous writings and works on hadith and jurisprudence attest to him.

Then the importance is evident in the book "Mihaj al-Talibin and the Umdah of the Mufti"- the curriculum of the seekers and the mayor of the muftis - whose lights shone around the globe and was presented above all else by the consensus of scholars and their praise for it, and sayings that indicated its importance, so it became the butter of the Shafi’i jurisprudence, and the conclusion of the doctrine is undisputed, because it is small in size and few words, but it is considered one of the Shafi’i books most useful to the consensus of the doctrine, and the reason for this is that its author and the author of its origin are the investigators and revisionists of the doctrine, and the importance of research and the reasons for its choice is the strong desire to study the behavioral approach of Imam al-Nawawi in his book "Mihaj al-Talibin and the Umdah of the Mufti".

Previous studies:-

Despite the large number of explanations, abbreviations, and intense interest in the book “Minhaj al-Talibin” and its author by Imam al-Nawawi, according to my knowledge and research, there was no study that singled out his behavioral approach in an independent research.

Research Methodology:

The researcher follows the inductive approach in explaining the three axes in the book, which are: "the abbreviation" , "the choice of terminology and pronunciation" and include valuables. The nature of the research necessitated that it should be divided into an introduction and five topics:

As for the introduction, it included the literature of scientific research, namely: the problem of research, the importance of research, reasons for choosing it, previous studies and the methodology used.

As for the first topic, it included the definition of the Imam al-Nawawi, his position, name, lineage, nickname, birth, upbringing, scientific life and death, and the praise of scholars for him.

As for the second topic, it included introducing the book "Mihaj al-Talibin and the Umdah of the Mufti", and its place in the Shafi’i school of thought.

As for the third topic, it included his method of abbreviation.

As for the fourth topic, it included his methodology in selecting terms and expressions, their divisions and connotations.
As for the fifth topic, it included his methodology in the valuables included in the book.

As for the conclusion, I mentioned its findings.

The first topic: Introducing Imam Al-Nawawi: his name, lineage and nickname

He is Yahya bin Sharaf bin Meri, bin Hassan bin Hussein bin Muhammad bin Jumah bin Hizam al-Hizami, al-Nawawi al-Dimashqi, Muhi al-Din, Abu Zakaria, Sheikh of Shafi‘i, and the investigator of their doctrine, and the chief jurist of his time, and Muhyiddin was his title, and the reason for this title; because he liberalized the doctrine of Imam al-Shafi‘i, and Abu Zakaria is his nickname. That is not because he had a son with that name as he was not married in the first place, but after the the prophets, “peace be upon them”. Our master Yahya bin Zakaria was nicknamed ”Abu Zakariya”. Al-Nawawi was attributed to Nawa, a village in Houran from the works of Damascus, which is his birthplace, and Damascene is his lineage to Damascus, where he resided for about twenty-eight years.  

Birth and upbringing:

Everyone who translated to Imam Al-Nawawi agreed that his birth was in the month of God in Muharram in 631 for the Hijra, but they differed in which day of this month he was born in? And most of them determined that he was born on the middle ten of this blessed month.

Jamal al-Din al-Asnawi and others (2) were of the view that it was in the first ten days.

When the Imam reached the age of ten years, his father made him buy and sell in the store, but he was not distracted by buying and selling about the Qur’an and learning. Some righteous people noticed that and told his father it, so he made sure that he finished the Qur’an, and he was about to reach puberty. When he was 19 years old, he was taken to Damascus by his father in the year forty-nine to seek knowledge.

The Umayyad Mosque in Damascus, the place of knowledge, advocacy and work at that time, where all students of knowledge come from everywhere, was the first place where he set his feet for the purpose he wanted to achieve, then he joined the circle of the Shafi‘i Imam, and the Mufti of the Levant in his time, Sheikh Taj al-Deen, known as Farkah (3), and Al-Nawawi read his first lesson and remained with him for a while, and he lived in the Rawahiyya school (4), where he stayed until shortly before his death in Damascus, and he remained about two years without laying his side on the ground, and he got only the food offered by the school. He grew up an ascetic, convinced of little food and drink, abandoning suspicions, so he used to eat only one meal after dinner, and he only drank one drink after midnight, so that food and drink would not bring him too much sleep and boredom. He did not eat Damascus fruits, because most its orchards endowments and properties of the orphans and those who are legally under quarantine, and disposing of them is not permissible except to provide the most abundant and most joyful share for them, and people do not do that, but rather they advance their benefit over the interest of the orphan and the quarantined. So he did not eat anything except what his father sent him, which was dry cakes and figs of Hourani. He was raised on a large aspect of etiquette and respect for scholars and righteous people, revering them and revering their virtues and mentions them of the best remembrance and dignity, and does not detract from anyone and does not boast of anyone. In the year 651, he performed Hajj with his father, and he set off from his hometown, Nawa, from the beginning of Rajab. Then he stayed in Medina for about a month and a half. This Hajj was the proof of Islam in his right, and it was approved on Friday. And his father narrated about him that when he went to leave Nawa, he fell ill with a severe fever that did not leave him until the day of Arafah, and he was patient with it and did not inform anyone. Then he went to Haj again from Damascus.

This is the life of Imam Al-Nawawi from his childhood until he became a young man in the custody of his father, and perhaps his family was not famous, so God made it known as Imam Al-Nawawi, and his village as well, with many trees and farms and various herbs, and the Arabs used to descend there because of the
abundance of fertility in it, and it was said: Job's house May the blessings and peace be upon him was in Nawa, and in it is the grave of Sam bin Noah, peace and blessings be upon him, and God knows the truth of that, because the Holy Qur’an and the Sunnah of the Purgatory did not mention that, and he had brothers and a group of his relatives who descended with him in Al-Rawahiyyah.\(^{(5)}\)

**His death:**

Imam al-Nawawi died on the night of Wednesday twenty-four Rajab in the year (676 AH), in the last third of that night. When the news came of his death, Damascus and its environs shook with tears, and the Muslims regretted him deeply.\(^{(6)}\)

**Scholars praise him:**

Scholars praised Imam al-Nawawi until his reputation occupied a prominent position in the Shafi'i school of thought, and he was among the scholars praising him

1- Al-Subki \(^{(7)}\): (He is a professor of later scholars and an argument for the later.\(^{(8)}\))

2- Ibn Al-Attar: ( The only one of his time and the unique of his age, the fasting person who is righteous, the ascetic in the world, the one who desires the hereafter, the owner of satisfactory morals and the good deeds, the divine knowledge agreed on his work, faithfulness, majesty and asceticism, piety and worship, and his maintenance in his words, deeds and situations, he has clear dignities).\(^{(9)}\)

3- Al-Husseini: ( He was the editor of the doctrine and its revisionist, the well known and useful classifications … he worked hard seeking for knowledge until he surpassed his peers and the people of his time.)\(^{(10)}\)

**The second topic:** introducing his book, "Mihaj al-Talibin and the Umdah of the Mufti" and its stature:

The origin of the book “Mihaj al-Talibin ” is an abbreviation and a supplement to the book Al-muharir (the Editor) of Imam al-Rifa’i, which is an abbreviation in the meaning of explanation, as its author says. He did not delete anything from it or from its provisions. The origin of the book Al-Muharir ( The Editor) is an abbreviation of the book Al-Wajeez of Imam al-Ghazali. The origin of al-Wajeez is an abbreviation The origin of al-Waseet is a summary of his book Al-Baset ( The Simple) as well, and the origin of Al-Baset is an abbreviation from the book of al-Nihayah (the end) “Nihayat al-Matlab fi Dirayat al-Madhab” by Imam al-Haramayn\(^{(11)}\) Abdullah bin Abdul-Malik al-Juwayni, taken from the book of al-Shafi’i, may God have mercy on them all. That is why the book al-Minhaj is considered the mayor of the Mufti and the Mustafti in the Shafi'I school of thought, and it is a reference for the private and general, because with that chain his value is realized, and by that chain that connects him to the first ages, and the founder of the doctrine distinguished himself over other abbreviations. And accordingly, with others, Imam al-Nawawi assumed a high position in editing the Shafi'I school until the terminology of al-Shafi'I became familiar as the two Shaikhs : al-Rafi'I\(^{(12)}\) and al-Nawawi said. He abbreviated the doctorine in a nice way,without deleting - as we will know - and he wrote it in a wonderful way in brief words with abundant meanings and he has chosen the preponderant opinion, and brought nearer the objectives, and alerted about the deleted restrictions, and on al-Arafi'I, he corrected issues, changed strange words, achieved the supplications, some issues were presented to some and he explained the terms, sayings, opinions, texts and ranks of the disagreement until he highlighted it on thisimage.\(^{(13)}\)
The third topic: his approach to abbreviation:

The observer who contemplates the writings of the ancients finds that they were distinguished by the strength of the word, the difficulty of the phrase and the length of the expression. For this reason, Imam al-Nawawi, may God have mercy on him, took the path of shortening. So he refined many of the books adopted in the doctrine, such as his book "Rawdat al-Talibin", in which he has summarized the book of great explanation (al-Sharh al-Kabeer) of Imam Al-Rafi'I, and the book “Minhaj al-Talibeen and the Omdat of the Muftis” in which the editor book was summarized from the jurisprudence of Imam al-Shafi’i of Imam al-Rafi’i as well. The two Shaikhs al-Rafi'I and al-Nawawi assumed a prominent position in the Shafi'i school of thought. (14)

Imam al-Nawawi was considered the second revision of the doctrine after Imam al-Rafi'i. What is meant here is to revise the doctrine from the arguments and anomalies, and to explain what was approved by his jurists in the fatwa. Perhaps this is attributed to the large number of compilations in Shafi'i jurisprudence, and the spread of its jurists over a wide area of the earth, in which he found a number of explanations that contracted the origins of the doctrine and the likely connections.

At the end of the sixth century, Imam al-Rafi'i emerged to undertake a great effort in revising the doctrine that paved the way for Imam al-Nawawi so that their effort constituted the first and most important revision of the Shafi’i jurisprudence. (15)

As for the method he took to shorten the book of the Editor (al-Muharir) in the jurisprudence of al-Shafi'I by al-Rafi'I, al-Nawawi explained the reason for that shortening. After praising it, he said: (But in its size it has grown so much that most people of the age are unable to memorize it except for some talented people, and I saw that it was reduced to about half of its size, to make it easier to be memorized, with what I add to it, God Almighty willing, from the new valuable issues). (16)

However, despite the severe brevity that reached half the size, nothing omitted from its rulings, but rather it was completely contained, not incomplete, and its meaning is identical to what is in the text without deficiency as evidence by his saying in the introduction: (I hope that if this summary is completed, it will be in the meaning of the commentary to the book (al-Muharir), because I do not delete anything from the rulings, or from the dispute, even if it is flimsy). (17)

This abbreviation won the admiration of many scholars, which is evidenced by their praise for it and their sayings with sweet words. Ibn al-Attar (18) said, the student of Imam al-Nawawi: (Many people memorized the book after the death of al-Nawawi). (19)

The fourth topic: his approach to choosing terms and vocabulary:

Imam al-Nawawi mentioned in the introduction to his book “Minhaj al-Talibin” that he had singled out terms in this book and his way in that selection was his own one. The scholars paid much attention to the book and singled out these terms in special books because of their importance and the place of their meanings in the doctrine. These terms have become understood and circulated in all the books of the doctrine after selecting them, so the words of the Shafi‘i doctrine are not understood except by knowing the meanings of these terms and what they indicate in their pronouncements. This selection and this unique and wonderful way distinguished this book from those that preceded it and made it more important than others.
Terminology:

We can say that Imam al-Nawawi was the inventor of most of the Shafi‘i conventions and he was the one who introduced them, then he was followed by those who came after him until they became terms specific to the doctrine, and this is one of his characteristics, "may God have mercy on him. God Almighty has given in his compositions a special blessing and great care, as al-Subki showed by saying: (It is not hidden for anyone with insight that God, the Blessed and Exalted be He, takes care of al-Nawawi and his works.)\(^{(20)}\)

Terminology division:

First: The terms related to the founder of the Imam al-Shafi‘i school, "may God have mercy on him," which are\(^{(21)}\):

1- The most correct: It is a term used to refer to one of the two sayings of Imam al-Shafi‘i on one issue, it is more likely and the offset is likely and it is approved in the fatwa and judgment.

2- The famous: It is a term used to refer to one of the two sayings of Imam al-Shafi‘i and expresses in it the strangeness of what corresponds to him in terms of his perceptual weakness, as it is expressed by the large number of those who said this opinion in the doctrine.

3- Old opinion: It is a term given to the statement of Imam Al-Shafi‘i who compiled it in Baghdad before entering Egypt, whether it was a classification or a fatwa.

4- New opinion: It is a term given to the statement of Imam al-Shafi‘i after his entry into Egypt, whether it was fatwa, classification, or dictation.

5- In a saying: It is a term by which the saying of Al-Shafi‘i is intended, and by it is meant that there is a disagreement between his statements and that this saying is preponderant and the corresponding is the most correct one.

6- In an old saying: This is the saying of Imam Al-Shafi‘i whose works were mentioned while he was in Baghdad before he moved to Egypt, and it was said that this is what he said on his way before entering Egypt.

Second: The terminology of the Mujtahids of the Shafi‘i school are:

1- The most correct term: it is a term given to the most correct in the two aspects or aspects of the doctrine in a particular issue, and it is expressed in order to notice the strength of the disagreement in that issue, and the second aspect may be possible, but not as strong.

2- Al-Sahih: It is intended to be the most correct of the two aspects that are for the hard-working, and he will feel the weakness of the opposite aspect.

3- It was said: It refers to the weak aspect, and the correct and the most correct way is otherwise.

Third: The common terms between the sayings of the Imam and the sayings of the mujtahid, which are:

1- The text: the text of the Imam al-Shafi‘i is called a text because it is raised to him and attributed to him without objection, or because it is raised to the extent of the imam’s text on it.

2- The stipulation: It is more general than the text because it is the text of
al-Shafi’i on himself or his saying on the face

Fourth: The common convention of the previous three terms:

1. **The madhhab (doctrine):** it is a term given to the statement of the two sayings of the two sayings of the Imam or the two aspects that are narrated on the people of good opinions.

Fifthly: the term for the Imam, which is:

1- I said: And after him he says: (And God knows best): This is a term that shows the words of Al-Nawawi in Al-Minhaj in addition to Al-Muharrar, to distinguish his saying from the saying of al-Rafi’i. And we will discuss it in the next topic in the valuable issues.

The fifth topic: his approach to valuables:

Imam Al-Nawawi, may God have mercy on him, revealed one of his most important behavioral approaches in the book Al-Minhaj, which is the inclusion of valuable issues in the book, which the book should not be devoid of as he said in the introduction: (And among them are valuable issues that I add to it that the book should not be free from them). These valuable issues are indicated by his phrase, as it begins with his saying (I said) and ends with his saying (And God knows). The Shafi’i verificators and scholars of the doctrine have stated that these additional issues were reported by the imams of the doctrine, including Imam al-Nawawi, even if there was something contrary to the imam of the Imam al-Shafi’i doctrine, may God have mercy on him. However, upon their verification of it, it was found that it was not outside his doctrine, but rather it was brought either by deduction or analogy, or by choosing from his rules, or from an old saying by him, or a sound evidence and he himself acknowledged that and said, "If the hadith is authentic, then it is a doctrine of mine." From that we know that the valuable issues or opinions that al-Nawawi added in the curriculum does not mean a departure from the Shafi’i school of thought nor an independent endeavor, but rather it is a preference based on the rules of the doctrine and on following the strongest and most correct evidence, and how it does not increase and has attained a position in the doctrine and he is the investigator and reviser as we know.

Conclusion

1. The importance of Al-Mihaj and its position, as it is the mayor of the mufti as described by Imam al-Nawawi, being a link between the lengths and the abbreviations in Shafi’i jurisprudence.

2. The status of Imam al-Nawawi and Imam al-Rafi’i in the madhab (the doctrine), as they are the ones who validated the doctrine and revised it, as we have learned in the research.

3. Imam al-Nawawi is one of the hard-working imams in the Shafi’i school of thought, and he combined hadith and jurisprudence and spent his life studying and writing until he became reliable in the doctrine and the correctness of sayings is what he asserted.

Foot notes:


2- See: Al-Asnawi, Tabaqat al-Shafi‘i ‘i 2/266, al-Husayni, Tabaqat al-Shafi‘i, p. 268

3- He is Abd al-Rahman bin Ibrahim bin Sabaa bin Dhia al-Fazari, Sheikh Taj al-Din, who is known as al-Farkah. He is a young man whose books include “Al-Aqeed to Prevent Imitation”, “Al-Manhal Al-Safi”, “Sharh Al-Warqat” and others. He was born in the year 624 AH and died in the year 690 AH, may God have mercy on him. See: Al-Sobky, the classes of the Shafi‘is major: (8 / 163_164), the annual, the classes of the Shafi‘i jurists: (2 / 921_923), Al-Zarkali, the media (3/293)

4- It is one of the Shafi‘i schools that were in Damascus, attached to the Umayyad Mosque, from the east side, built and stopped by Abu al-Qasim Ibn RawahahZaki al-Din, the famous merchant at that time, and he died in (622 AH). See: Al-Nuaimi, a student in the history of schools 1/265, and Al-Dhahabi, the history of Islam and the deaths of famous people and the media 50/248, and Ibn Katheer, the beginning and the end 17/156


7- Ali bin Abd al-Kafi, al-Sabki, Taqi al-Din Abu al-Hasan al-Shafi‘i‘i, worked in science from a young age until he mastered in jurisprudence, hadith, history, and linguistics, and he has many works, and head of schools, was born in 683 AH and died in 756 AH. See his translation: Al-Asqalani, the latent pearls In the notables of the eighth century 2 / 425-428

8- Al-Sobky, Tabaqat Al-Shafi‘i‘i, 8/397

9- Ibn Al-Attar, Tuhfat Al-Talibin in the translation of Imam Muhyiddin, p. 69

10- Al-Husseini, Tabaqat Al-Shafi‘i‘i, p. 226

11- Imam of the Two Holy Sanctuaries: He is Abd al-Malik bin Abdullah bin Yusuf bin Muhammad, the scholar Zia al-Din Abu al-Maali. He sat to teach in the place of his father and was twenty years old. See: Al-Sabki, Tabaqat al-Shafi‘i Al-Kubra 5/165

12- Al-Rafi‘i: He is Abu QasimAbd al-Karim bin Muhammad bin Abd al-Karim bin al-Fadl ibn al-Husayn al-Rafi‘i, and it was named after the companion Rafeh bin Khadij, "may God be pleased with him." “Al-Aziz Sharh Al-Wajeez”, “Al-Sharh Al-Sagheer”, “Al-Muharr”, and others. He was born in the year 555 AH, and died in the year: 623 AH, may God Almighty have mercy on him. / 281_285) and Ibn Katheer, Tabaqat al-Shafi‘i‘i, 2/814

14- See: Al-Sobky, Layers of the Great Shafi’ism, 8/67, QawasmiAkram, Introduction to the Imam al- () Shafi’i School, pp. 373-374, Al-Ahdal, Greet the learner in need of knowledge of the symbols of the curriculum, p. 14

15- See: previous sources

16- Al-Nawawi, Minhaj Al-Talibin and the Mayor of the Muftis in jurisprudence p.3

17- Al-Nawawi, Minhaj Al-Talibin and the Mayor of the Muftis in jurisprudence p.3

18- Ibn Al-Attar is Ala AlDin Ali bin Ibrahim bin Dawood bin Suleiman Al-Attar. His father was Attar and his grandfather was a doctor, and he was the most famous of Al-Nawawi’s owners, and he was the most famous of them. He served him and benefited from him for a long time. He was born in the year 654 AH and died in the year 724 AH, may God have mercy on him. See: Al-Sobky, Tabaqat Al-Shafi’i Al-Kubra 10/130

19- Ibn Al-Attar, Tuhfat Al-Talibin in the translation of Imam Muhyiddin, p. 47

20- Al-Sobki, TabaqatShafi’i Al-Kubra, 8/98

21- See: El-Sherbiny, Muhammad Al-Khatib, 2006, Maghni who needs to know the meanings of the words of al-Minhaj al-Ahdal, p. 28, Sullam the learner in need of knowledge of the Minhaj symbols, pp. 31-40, Saqqaf, Meccan benefits in what the Shafi’i students need, pp. 47-55.

22- See: Al-Ahdal,Sullam the learner in need of knowledge of the Minhaj symbols, pp. 31-40, Saqqaf, Meccan benefits in what the Shafi’i students need, pp. 47-55.

23- Al-Nawawi, Minhaj Al-Talibin and the Mayor of the Muftis in jurisprudence p.3.

24- Saqqaf, Meccan benefits in what the Shafi’i students need, p. 59.