

Research Article

Variation Within the Maliki School and its Implications on Nigerian Muslims

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Abstract. *Salat*, or Islamic prayers, plays a central role in the devotion of Muslims worldwide. However, different Islamic jurisprudential schools interpret and implement *Salat* in their own ways. Among these, the Maliki school stands out for its distinctive approach to *Salat*, which affects how the prayer is performed. In Nigeria, where the Maliki school is predominant among Muslims, these differences in practice are particularly important. Nigeria's diverse Muslim population provides a unique context to explore how Maliki jurisprudence influences the practice of *Salat* and religious identity. This study delves into the particular rulings and interpretations of the Maliki school on *Salat*, focusing on aspects such as the method of *Iqāmah*, *Adhān*, recitations, *Al-Qunūt*, *Qabd*, and *Sadl*. It further evaluates the relevance of these practices among Nigerian Muslims. The research uses textual analysis and comparative jurisprudence to explore the doctrinal differences and practical effects of

Maliki rulings on *Salat*. Data from Nigerian Muslim communities are used to highlight how these differences shape current practices and perceptions of *Salat*. The findings show that Maliki jurisprudence continues to be influential in Nigeria, providing a key foundation for religious guidance. Despite some differences, the core principles of *Shari'ah* and its sources remain unchanged. The paper concludes by emphasizing the importance of fostering dialogue and understanding among scholars, policymakers, and religious leaders to improve spiritual experiences and promote unity in Nigerian Muslim communities.

Keywords: *Salat*, Maliki school, Nigeria, *Qabd* and *Sadl*

INTRODUCTION

Salat is not just a series of physical movements but a profound act of devotion that spiritually connects believers and demonstrates their submission to the will of Allah. This paper examines the differences in juristic views on *Salat* within the Maliki school and explores its significance in Nigerian Muslim communities. The Maliki school, which originated in Madinah during the time of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), is renowned for its emphasis on preserving local customs and traditions. Its interpretations of *Salat* include specific rulings on the *Adhān*, *Iqāmah*, recitations, *Qabd*, *Sadl*, and other essential elements, offering a unique perspective on Islamic practice.

In Nigeria, the Maliki school plays a vital role in the religious landscape, being the most widely followed madh-hab among Muslims. Foundational texts from the Maliki scholars, such as the *Matn Risalat* of Al-Qayrawani, *'Izziyah* of Abu Hassan, *Al-Ahdari*, and *Matn al-Ashmawiyyah*, are highly regarded by Nigerian Muslims, especially for their focus on ritual practices. Analyzing specific ritual aspects within these works significantly shapes the *Salat* practices of Nigerian Muslims. This study aims to explore the juristic differences within the Maliki tradition regarding *Salat*, emphasizing its practical applications and implications for Nigerian Muslims committed to fulfilling their religious duties. By examining these legal variations, the research seeks to improve our understanding of Islamic jurisprudence and its impact on religious life. Additionally, it encourages dialogue and mutual respect for the diverse traditions within the Nigerian Muslim community, fostering greater unity in both religious practices and identity.

Methodology

This study utilizes a qualitative approach, specifically combining doctrinal legal analysis with empirical observations. It involves reviewing legal texts, scholarly viewpoints, and jurisprudential debates within the Maliki school concerning the practice of *Salat*. Furthermore, the research incorporates empirical data collected from Nigerian Muslim communities. A total of thirty individuals were interviewed from all six geopolitical zones of Nigeria, with five respondents from each zone.

Some interviews were conducted in person, while others were carried out over the phone. The participants, including imams, clerics, and members of the congregation, provided responses that were then analyzed. The researchers also relied on personal observations in certain cases and, in other instances, participated in the practices to gain firsthand insights.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Significance of *Salat* in Islam

Regularly performing *Salat* (prayer) is a fundamental pillar of Islam and a divine command from Allah. It holds immense significance, being both a physical and spiritual act of worship.¹ *Salat* is one of Islam's core practices, second only to faith, and is an essential component of Muslim identity, marking the distinction between believers and non-believers. Allah says in the Quran: "Guard strictly the (five obligatory) *Salawat* (prayers), especially the middle *Salat* (i.e., Asr), and stand before Allah in obedience" (Quran 2:238). According to Tirmidhi, the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) stated: "The difference between us (believers) and them (non-believers) is *Salat*; whoever abandons it has disbelieved."² *Salat* is not only an act of worship but also a means to draw closer to Allah, following Jihad and the pursuit of knowledge. Additionally, Abu Hurayrah reported that the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) relayed the words of Allah, saying:

Whoever envies My chosen servant (*Waliyy*) has declared war against Me. A servant can get closer to Me by performing obligatory acts, and will continue to grow nearer through supererogatory (*Nawafil*) acts until I love him. When I love him, I become his hands with which he touches.³

When performed correctly, *Salat* deeply impacts an individual by fostering the remembrance of Allah and seeking His forgiveness. This spiritual connection fills the person's heart with both reverence and hope in Allah. The result is a strong desire to preserve this elevated state of spirituality, discouraging disobedience to Allah. Allah says: "Verily, prayer prevents one from major sins and evil deeds" (Quran 29:45). From a health perspective, performing *Salat* is a highly beneficial exercise for overall well-being. Muhammad al-Shaayi asserts that prayer improves both physical and spiritual health.⁴

¹ Mahmud Ahmad Rāshd: *Al- Fiqh wa-adilatuhu*. First ed. Vol 1, (Qairat: Daru fawāid. 2011) 232

² Muhammad bn Isa at-Tirmidhi: *Sunan al- Tirmidhi*. (Cairo: Cairo publication, 1937) 149

³ Muhammad bn Ismail: *Sahih Al Bukhari*. Vol 2 (Beirut: Darut Turukin Najat, 1422 A.H,) 284

⁴ Muhammad al-Shaayi: *al-Furooq al-Laughawiyyah wa Atharahaa fi Tafseer al-Quran al-Kareem* (Riyadh: Maktabah al-Ubaikaan, 1993), pp. 249-254.

Formation and Establishment of Malik School of Law

The application of Islamic law according to the teachings and interpretations of Imam Malik (R.T.A) and his followers is known as Malikiyyah or Malakite. The Maliki school is one of the four major Sunni schools of jurisprudence accepted by all Sunni scholars. It was named after Imam Malik by the scholars of Madinah in the 8th century.⁵ Maliki Fiqh was transmitted through two main avenues: first, through Imam Malik's writings, with "al-Mu'atta" being the most prominent and authoritative text; and second, through his students, who carefully collected his reports, opinions, and teachings. These students compiled, edited, and derived rulings on various issues, engaging in discussions about principles and proofs. They became the primary bearers of Imam Malik's Fiqh, and many books were passed down through their work.

The influence of the Maliki doctrine extended beyond Madinah, reaching various regions, including Nigeria, through the efforts of Imam Malik's students and followers. These students spread Maliki Fiqh to areas such as North-West Africa, Andalusia, Tunisia, Qayrawan, and others. Scholars from these regions often traveled to Hijaz, particularly Madinah, to study Islamic sciences, which was the central hub for religious knowledge at the time.⁶

The Maliki School places considerable emphasis on specific sources to derive legal principles, with Imam Malik's focus on the practices of the people of Madinah (*Amal Ahli Madinah*) playing a key role in shaping the school's legal framework.⁷ The Maliki school's reliance on these practices, particularly the '*Amal of Madinah*', gives it a practical orientation and sets it apart from other Islamic legal traditions. This focus on local practices contributes to the pragmatic nature of the Maliki approach to jurisprudence. Imam Malik employed clear methods in selecting principles in Fiqh and the approach to Ijtihad. According to Abu Zahra, "Maliki pursued a clear methodology in respect of these principles and ranked them according to their importance. He placed the Book of Allah first, followed by the traditions, and then analogy and opinion. He disregarded anything not supported by reliable individuals with sound knowledge, especially if it contradicted the practices of the majority of the people of Madinah. He explicitly declared such rulings false and baseless."⁸

⁵ Umar Sulayman: *al-Madkhal ila Dirasat al-Madh-hab wa al Madaris al-Fiqhiyyah*. (Amman: Dar al-Nafa'is, 2007) 155.

⁶ Juan E. Campo: "Maliki Legal thought" *Encyclopedia of Islam*. (New York: An imprint base publishing, 2009) .455-456.

⁷ Bilal Philips: *Usool al-Hadeeth* . First ed, (Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: International Islamic publishing house, 2003) 158

⁸ Abu Zahra Muhammad : *The four Imams*. (India: Premier publishing company, 2005) 53

The Spread and Application of Maliki School of Law in Nigeria

During the time of the orthodox caliphs, Islam made significant progress into various regions. Under the rule of Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan of the Umayyad dynasty, Islam spread its influence into Africa. In 69 A.H/690 C.E., Zurhayr ibn Qays, a military commander for the Umayyads, arrived in Qayrawan with the mission of spreading Islam throughout the continent. Later, in 79 A.H/700 C.E., Hassan ibn al-Numan al-Ghassani led Muslim forces into Africa. By 84 A.H/706 C.E., Hassan had successfully conquered Qayrawan and Tunisia, establishing Islamic rule in the region. By 92 A.H/714 C.E., Islam had firmly established itself in North Africa.⁹ Islam and Maliki Law were spread to West Africa by Berber merchants, who not only engaged in trade but also actively promoted Islam.¹⁰

Prior to the colonial era in the 19th century, the Maliki school of law was the dominant legal system in what is now Northern Nigeria and in parts of neighboring countries. This system governed both private and public affairs.¹¹ Before the reintroduction of Islamic criminal law in Zamfara and eleven other Northern Nigerian states in 1999, Islam was considered a distinct category within customary law. Zayyanu notes that in Nigeria, religious verdicts (Fatawa) are not confined to one specific legal school; however, all legal matters pertaining to Muslims are governed by the Maliki school of law.¹² From the time of the Sokoto Caliphate to the present day, courts have relied on Maliki texts for law and procedures based on the Quran and Sunnah.¹³ The majority of mosques in Nigeria and their imams adhere to Maliki principles in their respective regions. The books used include: *Risalah* by Ibn Abi Zaid Al-Qairawani and its commentaries, *Tuhfatul-Hukkam* by Al-Qadi Abubakar Muhammad bn Muhammad bn Asim al-Andulusi al-Gharnadhi and its commentaries, *Mukhtasar Khalil* by Khalil bn Ishaq bn Musa bn Shu'aib al-Jundi (d. 767 A.H), *Irshad al-Salik (Askari)* by Shihab al-Deen, Abdul-Rahman bn Muhammad bn Askar al-Bagdadi, *Fathu al-Ali al-Maliki* by Shaykh Muhammad Ahmad Alish (d. 1299 A.H), and *Al-Qawanin al-Fiqhiyyah* by Ibn Juzai (d. 741 A.H).¹⁴

⁹ A. Rahim: *Islamic History*. (Lagos, Nigeria: Islamic Publications Bureau, 1991) 131.

¹⁰ A. Gwandu: *Abd Allah B. Fodio A Muslim jurist*. PhD Thesis. University of Durham, (1977) 34

¹¹ A. Gwandu: *Abd Allah B. Fodio A Muslim jurist*. ..34

¹² Zayyanu Musa Dogon daji: The Emergence and Application of Maliki School of Law and its Proliferation in Africa. *Global Journal of Research in Humanities & Cultural Studies*, 2(4), 167–173. (2022) <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.700189>

¹³ Z.I. Oseni: "Islam, Nigerian Muslims and Jihad Against Corruption: A Re examination", *Journal of Islam in Nigeria*, 2015. 5

¹⁴ Zayyanu Musa Dogon daji: The Emergence and Application of Maliki School of Law and its Proliferation in Africa. *Global Journal of Research in Humanities & Cultural Studies*, 2(4), 167–173. (2022) <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.700189>

Reasons for Juristic Differences

The diversity of opinions among Islamic jurists, known as *Ikhtilaf*, is a natural and intricate phenomenon shaped by various factors. Some key contributors to this divergence in opinions include:

- Differences in the interpretation of Quranic verses and Hadith texts
- Variations in the narration and application of Hadith
- Disagreement on the admissibility of certain principles
- Diverse methods of Qiyas (analogical reasoning).¹⁵

Ibn Taymiyyah outlines seven reasons for the differences in opinions among jurists, including:

- Unawareness of the evidence
 - Acknowledging a Hadith but doubting the reliability of its narrators, believing it contradicts a stronger report
 - Recognizing the evidence but misunderstanding it
 - Recognizing the Hadith but being unaware that it has been abrogated
 - Misinterpreting the evidence
 - Believing that one's differing opinion is supported by a stronger proof
 - Using a weak Hadith as evidence or relying on flawed reasoning
- These causes can be summarized into three broad categories:

- Disagreements over language, which affect the understanding and interpretation of Quranic texts
- Disagreements over the knowledge and authenticity of relevant Hadith
- Disagreements over the proofs and principles of *Usul Fiqh* (the foundations of Islamic jurisprudence).

Juristic Differences on *Salat* within the Maliki School

The regulations concerning *Salat* according to Maliki jurists have been extensively examined in various treatises of the Maliki school of Law, including *Ikhtilāf Aqwāli Malik wa-as-habihi*, *al-Muwatta*, *Risalah*, *Muqaddimatul 'Izziyyah* and *Mudawwanatul Kubrah*. These texts, particularly *al-Muwatta* and *Mudawwanatul Kubrah*, have served as primary reference points of Maliki law since the inception of the school. However, among these books the most adopted text by Nigerian Muslims are *Risalah*, *Muqaddimatullzziyyah*, *Ahdar* and *MatnAsh- mawiyyah* most especially in the ritual acts. Differences within the maliki school in some acts of *salat* shall be discussed

¹⁵ Bilal Philips: *The Evolution of Fiqh (Islamic law and The Madh-habs)* (Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: International Islamic publishing house, 2006) 96-98.

Mode of *Adhān* and *Iqāmah*

The term *Adhān* refers to the announcement signaling the start of prayer time. The legitimacy of the call to prayer is grounded in the Quran, the prophetic Sunnah, and the consensus of the Muslim community. Allah, the Almighty, says in the Quran: "O you who have believed, when the call to prayer is made on the day of Jumu'ah (Friday), hasten to the remembrance of Allah and leave off trade. That is better for you, if you only knew" (Quran 62:9).

Similarly, Ibn Umar reported:

When the Muslims came to Medina, they gathered and sought to know the time of prayer but no one summoned them. One day they discussed the matter, and some of them said: Use something like the bell of the Christians and some of them said: Use horn like that of the Jews. Umar said: Why may not a be appointed who should call (people) to prayer? The Messenger of Allah said: O Bilal, get up and summon (the people) to prayer.¹⁶

The *Iqāmah* signifies the announcement that the prayer has begun. Within Maliki jurisprudence, there are differing opinions regarding the procedures for the *Adhān* and *Iqāmah*. In *Al-Madawwanah*, Imam Malik strongly disapproves of the *Mu'adhdhin* (the one who calls the *Adhān*) turning around during the call to prayer. He also stipulates that only those who have reached puberty are allowed to perform the *Adhān*.¹⁷

In contrast, other figures within the Maliki school have differing views on the *Adhān* and *Iqāmah*. Ibn Qasim, for instance, allows the *Mu'adhdhin* to turn around during the call if it helps in being heard more clearly. Ibn Nafi' further suggests that it is acceptable for the *Mu'adhdhin* to turn around until reaching the phrase "*Hayya 'ala Salat*" (come to prayer), emphasizing the practical need to communicate the call effectively.¹⁸ Another point of divergence comes from Ibn al-Majshūn, who considers turning around an essential part of the call to prayer itself.¹⁹ Additionally, Ash-hāb argues that both boys and women are allowed to give the *Adhān*, challenging the traditional gender norms associated with this role. Abu Faraj goes further, stating that even non-adults can perform the call to prayer, broadening the eligibility beyond conventional expectations.²⁰

¹⁶ Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Rushd, *Bida'ayatul Mujtahid*, (Egypt: al-Maktabah at-Tajaareeyah al-Kubraa, n.d.), vol. 1. 405

¹⁷ Abd- Abd-ar-Rahman Ibn-al-Qasim: *al-Mudawwanah al-kubrā li-Imām Malik*. (Beirut: Dar Sader, 1999), vol 1 p 59

¹⁸ Yusuf ibn 'Abdullah Ibn Abdul-Barr: *Ikhtilāf aqwāli Maliki wa-ashābihi*. First ed. (Beirut: Dar Garbil- Islami, 2003) 105-116

¹⁹ Yusuf ibn 'Abdullah Ibn Abdul-Barr: *Ikhtilāf aqwāli Maliki wa-ashābihi*. First ed. (Beirut: Dar Garbil- Islami, 2003) 105-116

²⁰ Abdullah bn AbdIrahman: *Nawādir wa-ziyyādat*. First ed. (Beirut: Dar Garbil- Islami, 1999) vol 1, 168

However, Imam Malik maintains a more conservative position, stating that women are not required to call the *Adhān* or *Iqāmah*.²¹ Abu Hassan in *Maqadimatul 'Izziyah* argues that the *Mu'adhdhin* should raise their voice when pronouncing the *Shahādah* (testification of faith) and the phrase "Prayer is better than sleep" should be added during the second *Adhān* of the dawn prayer.²²

Recitation in *Salat* and Saying of *Amīn*

Recitation during prayer is one of the key components of *Salat*, whether one is praying individually or behind an imam. When it comes to the recitation of "*Bismillah*" (In the name of Allah), different Islamic jurisprudence schools hold varying opinions. Within the Maliki school, scholars have differing views on this matter. Imam Malik's position is clear: he asserts that "*Bismillah*" should not be recited during obligatory prayers, and it is better to refrain from doing so.²³

Similarly, Ibn Abdul Hakam mentioned that reciting *Bismillah* aloud during both voluntary and obligatory prayers is not recommended, except for those who recite the Qur'an casually in their voluntary prayers and wish to recite it in every chapter.²⁴ In another narration by Ismail ibn Ishaq, relayed by Abu Thābit, Ibn Nafi', and Malik, it is stated that there is no issue with reciting *Bismillah* in both obligatory and voluntary prayers.²⁵ Yahyah ibn Yahya also stressed that it should not be omitted in either type of prayer.

Strengthening and Clasping the Hands in *Salat* (*Sadl* and *Qabd*)

In the realm of Maliki school, scholars have held differing views on the positioning of the hands during prayer. Imam Malik discouraged placing one hand over the other in obligatory prayers, although he allowed it in voluntary prayers. According to Ibn al-Qāsim's account in *Al-Mudawwanah*, Malik expressed uncertainty regarding this practice in obligatory prayer, showing a preference against it. However, he permitted it in voluntary prayers, particularly when standing for prolonged periods, as long as one did not rely on this position for support.²⁶ Malik's statement, "I don't know of that in the obligatory prayer," reflects his usual method of deducing legal rulings, implying that he did not find any conclusive

²¹ Abd- Abd-ar-Rahman Ibn-al-Qasim: *al-Mudawwanah l-kubrā li Imām Malik...* 59

²² Abu al-Hasan ali al-Maliki Ash-shadhil: *Muqaddimah al-Izziyyah lil-Jama'at al-Azhariyyah*. (Beirut: Daarul-Fikr, 2003) 61-62

²³ Abd- Abd-ar-Rahman Ibn-al-Qasim: *al-Mudawwanah al-kubrā li-Imām Malik*. (Beirut: Dar Sader, 1999), vol 1. p 28

²⁴ Abdullah bn Abdurahman: *Nawādir wa-zīyādat*. First ed. (Beirut: Dar Garbil- Islami, 1999) vol 1, 289

²⁵ Yusuf ibn 'Abdullah Ibn Abdul-Barr: *Ikhtilāf aqwāli Maliki wa-ashābihi*. First ed. (Beirut: Dar Garbil- Islami, 2003) 111

²⁶ Yusuf ibn 'Abdullah Ibn al-Bārr: *AL- Kāfi fi fiqhī 'ala madhhab Ahl al- Medina*. First ed. Vol 1 (Riyadh:Maktab Riyadh Hadith. 1978) 205- 210

evidence strong enough to establish placing the right hand over the left on the chest as a Sunnah act in obligatory prayers. Similarly, in *Al-Wahdiha*, when Ibn Habib asked Mutarrif and Ibn Majshūn about this practice, they replied that there was no issue with it in both obligatory and voluntary prayers, citing Malik's approval. Ibn Bārr notes that placing the right hand over the left or leaving the hands at the sides, both are considered *Sunnah* in *Salat*.²⁷

Malik preferred placing the hands on the chest during voluntary prayers, while leaving them by the sides during obligatory prayers. This view was particularly emphasized by his followers in Basra.

Recitation of *al-Qunūt*

Al-Qunūt, a special non-Qur'ānic supplication recited during certain Muslim prayers, holds a nuanced position in Islamic scholarship. Within the Maliki school, there is general agreement that *al-Qunūt* is recited during the Daybreak Prayer, with the exception of Yahyah, who does not consider it an essential part of the prayer.²⁸ This reflects a significant dissenting opinion within the Maliki school regarding the importance of *al-Qunūt* in the Daybreak Prayer.²⁹

In *Al-Mudawwanah*, Ibn al-Qāsim and Ibn Wahb both agree that reciting *al-Qunūt* in the Daybreak Prayer is a recommended practice, specifying a particular recitation to be made at a designated time. However, Ibn Wahb emphasizes the recitation of *al-Qunūt* after the *rukū'* (bowing), considering it a more preferred practice in his view.³⁰ Similarly, Al-Qayrawānī holds that *al-Qunūt* can be recited either before or after the *rukū'* in the second rak'ah of the Dawn Prayer.³¹ On the other hand, Ash-Mawīyyah maintains that *al-Qunūt* is only recited in *Salat al-Subh* (the Dawn Prayer) and should be recited silently before *rukū'*. Furthermore, Abu Hassan in *Maqaddimatul 'Izziyyah* states that *al-Qunūt* is recited after the second rak'ah, before the *rukū'*, and silently in the *Subh* prayer.³² These varying viewpoints illustrate the diversity of interpretations within the Maliki school concerning the timing and manner of performing *al-Qunūt*, reflecting the broader diversity of opinions within Islamic jurisprudence.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Relevance of the Intra-School Differences to Nigerian Muslims

²⁷ Abd- Abd-ar-Rahman Ibn-al-Qasim: *al-Mudawwanah al-kubrā li-Imām Malik*...43

²⁸ Yusuf ibn 'Abdullah Ibn Abdul-Barr: *Ikhtilāf aqwāli Maliki wa-ashābihi*...111

²⁹ Yusuf ibn 'Abdullah Ibn Abdul-Barr: *Ikhtilāf aqwāli Maliki wa-ashābihi*...111

³⁰ Abd- Abd-ar-Rahman Ibn-al-Qasim: *al-Mudawwanah al-kubrā li-Imām Malik*...43

And Yusuf ibn 'Abdullah Ibn Abdul-Barr: *Ikhtilāf aqwāli Maliki wa-ashābihi*...111

³¹ Abdullah bin Zayd al- Qayrawānī The Risala: A Treatise on Māliki Fiq...97-99

³² Abdur-Rahman Al-Ahdariyy: *Matn-l Akhdariyy*. Nd. 40 and Abu al-Hasan ali al-Maliki Ash-shadhil: *Muqaddimah al-Izziyyah lil-Jama'at al-Azhariyyah*...62-63

Within Nigerian Muslim communities, several texts from the Maliki school hold particular importance, including *Ar-Risalat*, *Al-Ahdar*, *Maqaddimat al-Izziyyah*, and *Matn al-Ashmawiyah*. These texts address various aspects of religious practice, particularly *Salat* and purification, providing diverse viewpoints on these topics. However, as differences are a natural aspect of jurisprudence, variations in the practice of prayer among Nigerian Muslims are inevitable.

The majority of scholars in Nigeria base their ritual practices, especially *Salat*, on these foundational texts. Concerning the *Adhān* and *Iqāmah*, most Nigerian *Mu'adhdhins* practice turning around during the call to prayer. During an interview, Ustadh Abdulrafi', the current *Mu'adhdhin* of the Oke-okuta community mosque in Ilorin, explained that turning around during the *Adhān* helps improve the sound quality, ensuring better reception by the public. To further enhance the auditory experience and attract attention, *Mu'adhdhins* also use their arms to cover their ears.³³ These practices are aligned with the teachings found in *Risalat*, *'Izziyyah*, and *Ashmawiyah*, the most popular Maliki texts in Nigeria. Additionally, during the Dawn prayer *Adhān*, after saying "Come to success," the phrase "Prayer is better than sleeping" is included in the second *Adhān*, which aligns with the views of Abu Hassan in *Maqaddimat al-'Izziyyah* and *al-Qayrawānī* in *Ar-Risalat*.³⁴

Ethnic mosques, such as Hausa or Yoruba mosques, found in certain regions of Nigeria, do not influence the use of Arabic in the *Adhān* and *Iqāmah*. This is consistent with the stance outlined in *Maqaddimat al-'Izziyyah*.³⁵ Furthermore, in *Akdhar*, Abdur-Rahman al-Akdhariyy emphasizes that the *Adhān* is an essential Sunnah, performed in Arabic, and if abandoned in a community, it could invalidate the *Salat*.³⁶ During discussions with interviewees, it became clear that this view is highly regarded among Nigerian Muslims. This corresponds to Abu Hassan's view in *Maqaddimat al-'Izziyyah*.³⁷ which emphasizes that the *Mu'adhdhin* should raise his voice when pronouncing the *Shahadatān* and "*Hayya 'ala al-Falah*," as well as include "Prayer is better than sleeping" in the second *Adhān* during the Dawn prayer, as seen in *Risalat* and *Ashmawiyah*.

Differences also arise among Maliki jurists regarding the recitation of *Bismillah* (the Basmalah) during prayer. *Al-Qayrawānī* in *Risalat* asserts that *Bismillah* should not be recited before Surah Al-Fatiha or any other Surah during

³³ An oral interview conducted with Mallam Abdul Rafi' at Ilorin, Kwara state On 19th April, 2024.

³⁴ Abu al-Hasan ali al-Maliki Ash-shadhil: *Muqaddimah al-Izziyyah lil-Jama'at al-Azhariyyah*. (Beirut: Daarul-Fikr, 2003) 61-63 and Abdullah bin Zayd al-Qayrawānī *The Risala: A Treatise on Māliki Fiq...* 97-99

³⁵ Abu al-Hasan ali al-Maliki Ash-shadhil: *Muqaddimah al-Izziyyah lil-Jama'at al-Azhariyyah...* 62-63

³⁶ Abdur-Rahman Al-Ahdariyy: *Matn-l Akhdariyy*. Nd. 40

³⁷ Abu al-Hasan ali al-Maliki Ash-shadhil: *Muqaddimah al-Izziyyah lil-Jama'at al-Azhariyyah...* 61-62

prayer, and that the Imam should not say "*Amin*" aloud when reciting.³⁸ In contrast, Abu Hassan in *Maqaddimat al-Izziyyah* holds that the *Bismillah* should be recited, but only in voluntary prayers, and "*Amin*" should be said silently.³⁹ Similarly, *Al-Akhdar* contends that the *Basmalah* is discouraged in obligatory prayers, a view supported by *Al-'Ashmawiyyah*.⁴⁰

These differing opinions have led to variations in the way Nigerian Muslims approach the recitation of *Bismillah* and saying "*Amin*." Imam Saheed Akorede, the incumbent Imam of Akorede Mosque in Eleja, Lanwa, Kwara State, argued that many classical Imams in Nigeria adopt the practice of reciting *Bismillah* both aloud and silently in both obligatory and voluntary prayers. He stated that he personally recites it before Surah Al-Fatiha.⁴¹ On the other hand, Imam Hassan Abdulqadir confirmed that most classical Imams across Nigeria refrain from reciting *Bismillah* in both obligatory and voluntary prayers, based on his experiences during tours in regions such as Sokoto, Bauchi, Niger, Abuja, Oyo, and Osun states.⁴²

From our observations and the insights provided by these scholars, it is evident that some Imams follow Abu Hassan's perspective, as outlined in *Maqaddimat al-'Izziyyah*, and advocate for the recitation of *Bismillah* in obligatory prayers.⁴³ Conversely, those who oppose its recitation align with *Al-Qayrawānī's* view in *Risalat*, which insists that *Bismillah* should not precede the recitation of Surah Al-Fatiha or any other Surah during prayer.⁴⁴

Based on the findings, many Nigerian Muslims do not view the recitation of the *Basmalah* (*Bismillahir-Rahmanir-Rahim*) as compulsory when reciting Surah Al-Fatiha in *Salat*. They consider it as the opening verse of each chapter of the Quran. This perspective is prevalent among modern Nigerian Imams and scholars who neither recite the *Basmalah* aloud nor silently. However, medieval scholars in Nigeria, following the position of Abu Hassan in *Maqaddimatul 'Izziyyah*, adopted the practice of reciting the *Basmalah* before Surah Al-Fatiha in both obligatory and voluntary prayers.⁴⁵

³⁸ Abdullah bin Zayd al- Qayrawānī *The Risala: A Treatise on Māliki Fiqh*...100-112

³⁹ Abu al-Hasan al-Maliki Ash-shadhil: *Muqaddimah al-Izziyyah lil-Jama'at al-Azhariyyah*...62-63

⁴⁰ Abd al-Bari. al-'Ashmawiyah(nd) *Matn al-'Ashmawiyah*. 29

⁴¹ An oral interview conducted with Imam Saheed Akorede at Lanwa, Moro Local Government Kwara state on 20th of April, 2024

⁴² An oral interview conducted with Imam Hassan Abdul Qadir an Incumbent Imam of Ajisebutu mosque Ilorin, Kwara state, on 19th April, 2024.

⁴³ Abu al-Hasan al-Maliki Ash-shadhil: *Muqaddimah al-Izziyyah lil-Jama'at al-Azhariyyah*.62-63

⁴⁴ Abdullah bin Zayd al- Qayrawānī: *The Risala: A Treatise on Māliki Fiqh*...125

⁴⁵ Abu al-Hasan al-Maliki Ash-shadhil: *Muqaddimah al-Izziyyah lil-Jama'at al-Azhariyyah*...61-63

Regarding the issue of placing the hands during prayer (*Sadl* and *Qabd*), there has been considerable debate within Nigerian Muslim communities. *Qabd* refers to folding one's hands on the chest during prayer, while *Sadl* means letting the hands hang by the sides. Many of the key Maliki texts that Nigerian Muslims follow offer limited guidance on this matter, leading to disagreements. Owoyemi highlights doctrinal differences between the Tijaniyyah (who advocate for *Qabd*) and the Qadiriyyah (who prefer *Sadl*), contributing to distinct practices among their followers.⁴⁶ This difference has led to tensions, including violent clashes between the two Sufi orders. A notable example of this occurred in 1965, when riots broke out between the Qadiriyyah and Tijaniyyah orders, resulting in casualties, including the deaths of eleven policemen in the Yeldu district of Sokoto.⁴⁷

In Nigeria, many medieval scholars refrain from placing their hands on their chest during prayer, instead adhering to Malik's principles that favor *Sadl* (keeping the hands by the sides). This preference is echoed by the majority of Nigerian Muslims who follow the Maliki school, particularly those influenced by *Mukhtassar Khalil*.⁴⁸ Ustadh Nurudeen of Osogbo pointed out that most local mosques led by medieval scholars adopt the practice of *Sadl*.⁴⁹ This approach aligns with the teachings of various Maliki treatises, such as *Ar-Risalat* and *Akdhar*, which suggest that standing during recitation in *Salat* is obligatory, but placing the hands on the chest is not. While contemporary scholars may adopt the view of *Qabd*, some local Imams adhere to both practices, as noted by Mallam Abubakar of Owo Local Government in Ondo State.⁵⁰ Despite these local variations, it is important to recognize that Imam Malik himself regarded placing hands on the chest as a recommended action, though not necessarily during obligatory prayers.

Concerning the recitation of *al-Qunūt*, the findings reveal that Nigerian Muslims observe three main variations in its practice. The first group consistently recites *al-Qunūt* after the Daybreak Prayer (*Subh*), before the *rukū'*, regardless of the time of year. This approach aligns with Abu Hassan's position in *Maqaddimatul 'Izziyyah*, which specifies that the recitation of *al-Qunūt* in the *Subh* prayer should occur after the second *rak'ah*, before the *rukū'*, and be done silently, as also stated in *Ash-Mawiiyyah*. The majority of interviewees emphasized that this practice is

⁴⁶ S. A. Owoyemi: Towards Achieving Unity of Nigerian Muslims for National integration: Obstacles and Remedies. *Journal of Islam in Nigeria*, Vol. 3 No 2, 2018. 4-5

⁴⁷ Y.A. Quadri: All in the Name of God: The One Hundred and Thirty-Third (133rd), Inaugural Lecture, Ilorin: The Library and Publication Committee, University of Ilorin. 2013

⁴⁸ Khalil Ibn Isiaq : *Mukhtassar Ibn Khalil*. Second ed. (Beirut: Daru Madāri Islami, 2004) 27

⁴⁹ A Virtual interview conducted with Mallam Yunus Nurudeen at Osogbo, Osun state on 25th May, 2024 and A Virtual interview conducted with Imam Sa'adullah Sulyman Olarewaju an Incumbent Imam of Islamic Youth League of Nigeria Mosque at Garki Area 1 Sokoto street Abuja, on 15th April, 2024.

⁵⁰ An Oral interview conducted with Mallam Abubakar Jamiu at Owo local government, Ondo on 27th April, 2024

widely followed among Nigerian Imams. For example, Imam Raji of Ede, Osun, and Imam Barrister Zubair, the chief Imam of Al-Deen Mosque ⁵¹in Ilorin, confirmed that both medieval and contemporary Imams largely adopt this view.⁵² Regarding the recitation of *al-Qunūt* after *rukū'* of the second *rak'ah*, another group of Imams follows the position of Al-Qayrawani in *Risalah*, who asserts that *al-Qunūt* may be recited before or after the *rukū'* of the second *rak'ah* of the dawn prayer.⁵³ This practice represents a different approach within the broader Maliki tradition, where the recitation of *al-Qunūt* is flexible in its timing during the Daybreak prayer.

A separate group of Imams does not include *al-Qunūt* in the five obligatory daily prayers but reserves its recitation for voluntary prayers or in response to calamities affecting the community or the country. This practice is commonly observed in central mosques in Nigeria, especially during the holy month of Ramadan. It is also prevalent in mosques where the *Taraweeh* prayer is performed. For example, the Tahajjud prayer at Al-Noor Masjid in Abuja, led by Alkom Goni Jidda, is an instance where *al-Qunūt* is recited during voluntary prayers.⁵⁴

Concerning the *Tashahhud* and *Taslim*, when it comes to *Tashahhud* (the testimony of faith) and *Taslim* (the salutations of peace), Nigerian Muslims adhere to the guidelines set out by Al-Qayrawani, as discussed earlier. These principles shape the manner in which the concluding sections of *Salat* are performed, further illustrating the consistency of Maliki jurisprudence among Nigerian Muslims.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The importance of *Salat* in Islam has a profound impact on Nigerian Muslims, influencing their daily routines and spiritual lives. The differing interpretations and practices surrounding prayer reflect a strong respect for this central act of worship. Additionally, the Maliki School's historical presence and influence in Africa have shaped the religious identity and practices of Nigerian Muslims, offering a cohesive principle for engaging with *Salat*. The dynamic nature of Islamic jurisprudence, particularly the diversity in legal opinions, highlights the adaptability of the Maliki tradition, allowing it to accommodate cultural and contextual differences within Nigerian Muslim society. The variety of opinions surrounding *Salat* focuses primarily on recommended practices rather than its essential pillars, providing opportunities for spiritual growth and thoughtful engagement. This approach encourages a

⁵¹ Abdullah bin Zayd al- Qayrawāni: *The Risala: A Treatise on Māliki Fiqh...* 27

⁵² A Virtual interview conducted with Mallam Yunus Nurudeen at Osogbo, Osun state on 25th May, 2024 and Oral interview with Barrister Zubair Imam of Deen Mosque Ilorin, Kwara state on 20th May 2024

⁵³ Abdullah bin Zayd al- Qayrawāni: *The Risala: A Treatise on Māliki Fiqh...* 27

⁵⁴ A video clip Record titled as *Emotional Tajjud Prayer* at An-noor Central mosque Abuja. Accessed on Youtube 29th May

deeper connection to Islamic tradition while respecting regional customs and practical considerations.

This study proposes a comprehensive approach to improving the understanding and practice of *Salat* among Nigerian Muslims within the Maliki tradition. The recommendations are as follows:

Educational programs should intensify, these programs should be enhanced to spread knowledge of Maliki jurisprudence and its application to *Salat* across all educational levels. Furthermore, Imams should be provided with training and guidance to equip them with the skills needed to address differences in *Salat* rulings. Training could involve seminars, workshops, and mentoring led by experienced scholars.

Workshops focused on *Salat* practices should be organized within local communities, bringing together scholars, Imams, and community leaders. These events would provide a platform to address questions, clarify misunderstandings, and foster unity among worshippers.

The government should produce culturally relevant, user-friendly resources such as books, pamphlets, and online guides to provide practical guidance on *Salat* according to Maliki jurisprudence. These resources should be designed to accommodate various learning styles and preferences.

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