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Contents

Evaluating the Effect of Occasions of Revelation (*Asbāb al-Nuzūl*) on the Literal Understanding of the Verses of the Holy Qur'an

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ABSTRACT: (Original Paper)

The present study aims to address the issue of how occasions of revelation *(asbāb al-nuzūl)* affect the understanding of the Qur'an. It also provides a basis for evaluating the impact of cultural studies on Qur'anic comprehension in prospective research. To accomplish this objective, the narratives of occasions were collected from three well-known resources, regardless of their documental and textual credibility, and their role in understanding the relevant verses was quantitatively and qualitatively evaluated. Consequently, twelve qualitative roles were identified, and each narration (*ḥadīth*) was quantitatively assessed with a score ranging from zero to three. Statistical analysis of the data revealed that 10% of the entire Qur'anic verses have occasions of revelation in the mentioned sources. About 10% of the studied verses (1% of the Qur'an) are completely dependent on the occasions of revelation to be understood, according to the evaluation method and assumptions of the survey. In 72% of the verses (7% of the Qur'an), the occasions of revelation have an impact on a better understanding of the verse, even though in the first encounter the verse has a customary appearance and no ambiguity. Likewise, 8% of the

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occasions of revelation examined have no impact on the understanding of the verse. Thus, the role of the occasions of revelation on the apparent meanings of the verses, although undeniable, does not create a significant dependency, since the impact of most of these narrations (82%) is as much as a slight improvement in the initial understanding of the verse (scores 1 and 2), so that the occasions of revelation are not the sole means of achieving a secondary understanding of that verse.

KEYWORDS: Apparent meanings of the Qur'an, Interpretation of the Qur'an, Occasions of revelation, Qualitative and quantitative evaluation.

1. Introduction

The interaction between the Qur'an and the culture of that era is an issue that has recently attracted the attention of scholars more than ever. The ancient exegetes did not disregard this matter and included it as one of their resources for exegesis (*tafsīr*), which is evident from their attention to occasions of revelation (*asbāb al-nuzūl*) as a source of understanding the Holy Qur'an. The commentators of the Qur'an have always explained and sometimes criticized the occasions of revelation under the verses, using them as aids in understanding those verses.

Today, with the emergence of innovative theories advocating a paradigm shift in Qur'anic studies and encouraging a more historically informed approach to this text as a scientific method, the subject of the Qur'an's susceptibility to the culture of the time of its revelation has become a significant matter. This choice significantly will influence an exegete's interpretive methodology and his or her understanding of the Qur'anic text. As a result of this paradigm shift, a spectrum of opinions and perspectives has arisen among Qur'anic scholars and exegetes. Some argue that the Qur'an is influenced by the culture of the time of its revelation, and the understanding of all its verses is contingent upon cultural studies. In other words, without studying the culture of the time of revelation, an accurate understanding of the Qur'an is impossible. Neglecting this interpretive source would lead to incorrect interpretations. However, others believe that the understanding of the Qur'an is independent of the cultural studies of the era of revelation, asserting that syntax, vocabulary, context, and textual structure are sufficient for comprehending the Qur'anic verses.

In addition, a middle view can be found, with some suggesting that a minimal understanding of certain Qur'anic verses is dependent on the study of the cultural context of the era of the revelation. Therefore, for the comprehension of these specific verses, an examination of the cultural context of the era of the revelation is deemed necessary (Khodamoradi et al. 2022).

Regarding the analysis and judgment regarding the above-mentioned issue, it can be broken down into smaller sub-issues and examined from various perspectives. This research focuses on the issue of the impact of occasions of revelation on the understanding of Qur'anic verses and restricts its data to three sources within the Sunni corpus of ḥadīth. Consequently, this article is limited to only one aspect of studying the Qur'anic cultural context, specifically focusing on the attention of Qur'anic exegetes to the occasions of revelation. However, it is important to note that while collecting the occasions of revelation into a dataset, two types of evaluations regarding these narrations (aḥādīth) are intended. First, how and in what way has the occasions of revelation affected the understanding of the verse? Second, how is this impact assessed quantitatively?

The first evaluation is qualitative and requires an appropriate description of how the occasions of revelation influence the understanding of the verses through an open coding method. Eventually, it aims to categorize and introduce qualitative types of influences. The second evaluation is quantitative that should assign a numerical value, based on a predefined coding scheme, to measure the impact of each narration on the understanding of the verses. This method allows for a precise assessment of the effectiveness of the occasions of revelation.

It is clear that the result of this study cannot be generalized to the principle of the effect of the occasions of revelation on the understanding of the Qur'an or the effect of the entire occasions of revelation on the understanding of the verses. Rather, it only determines the effectiveness and usefulness of the occasions of revelation, reported in Sunni sources, on the interpretation of the respective verses. As a next step, one can explore the occasions of revelation within the Shi'a tradition or study the impact of other cultural factors quantitatively and qualitatively.

The benefit of these research endeavours lies in their potential to serve as a paradigm for resolving the challenge of comprehending the Qur'an in contemporary times, especially when access to the contextual cues of the time of revelation is limited. Despite the attention of Qur'anic exegetes and scholars in the field of Qur'anic studies to the role of the

occasions of revelation in comprehending Qur'anic verses, as Maʿrefat (Maʿrefat 2002, 1: 97) indicates, discerning the occasions of revelation has proven to be quite arduous. This challenge stems from the fact that the early scholars did not extensively document significant material in this regard, except for a limited amount that may not be entirely conclusive. Perhaps, one reason for this lack of precise documentation was their familiarity with the context, leading them to believe that there is no necessity to record their knowledge and observations as future references. Subsequently, narrations on this matter emerged, but most of them possessed weak chains of transmission and were deemed untrustworthy.

In such a scenario, a serious question is whether, given the obstacles to accessing the occasions of revelation, one can claim that the understanding of many Qur'anic verses is so dependent on the understanding of these narratives that if the occasions of revelation are not accessible, the understanding of some Qur'anic verses becomes impossible today. Does such a conclusion not cast doubt on the principle of divine wisdom, general guidance, and the completeness of the proof (burhān)?

If the study of the occasions of revelation shows a great relative independence of the understanding of the verses from those narrations, this hypothesis will be substantiated that the apparent meaning of the Qur'an is sufficient for guidance and completion of the proof. In other words, the impossibility of obtaining all the occasions of revelation, which leads to the loss of evidence for the understanding of the Qur'an, will not significantly damage the guidance of any part of the Qur'an because it can be claimed that rational, Qur'anic, and literary arguments are more effective than cultural and contemporary arguments in eliminating the ambiguity of the verses and achieving their understanding.

1.1. Concepts and Terminology

Two important concepts that play a key role in this study are the occasions of revelation and the literal understanding of the verses of the Qur'an.

1.1.1. Occasions of Revelation (Asbāb al-Nuzūl)

The term *sabab* in its technical sense, meaning occasion of revelation, seems to start appearing in the works of al-Ṭabarī and al-Naḥās. Al-Jaṣṣāṣ

was the first to regularly use the term in introducing reports on the revelation of the Qur'an (Rippin 1985). Although the term "occasions of revelation" (*asbāb al-nuzūl*) is not a Qur'anic term and, seemingly, each of the two words, 'occasions' (*asbāb*) and 'revelation' (*al-nuzūl*), has been employed multiple times in various contexts within the Qur'an.

From the perspective of Qur'anic exegetes, particularly the late scholars, the occasions of revelation refer to any event or inquiry during the time of the Prophet, which necessitated the immediate revelation of one or more Qur'anic verses (Babaei et al. 2000, 144; Saeedi Roshan 1997, 15-14).

The term *sha'n nuzūl* (circumstances of revelation) has been used in some books of *tafsīr* and Qur'anic sciences, but most exegetes and scholars of Qur'anic sciences have not independently discussed, and they have not even provided a specific definition, which may be related to their view of *sabab al-nuzūl* and *sha'n al-nuzūl* being essentially the same. Thus, in many Persian interpretations, the term *sha'n nuzūl* is frequently used instead of *sabab al-nuzūl*. However, a contemporary scholar has provided a separate definition for *sha'n nuzūl* and made a distinction between these two concepts. The scholar defines *sha'n nuzūl* as something for which a Qur'anic verse or *sūrah* has been revealed, whether for an explanation, description or to draw lessons from it. The difference lies in the understanding that *sabab al-nuzūl* is specific to an event, incident, or issue that occurred or was raised at the time of revelation, and the verses were revealed to address that problem. In contrast, *sha'n nuzūl* encompasses events that have taken place during the time of Qur'anic revelation or even in the past (Babaei et al., 2000, 152). In this study, we did not distinguish between *sabab al-nuzūl* and *sha'n nuzūl*, and we considered any narration from the sources introduced as an occasion of revelation, even if it may pertain to *sha'n nuzūl*, since our groundwork was based on the three books collecting occasions of revelation.

1.1.2. Literal Understanding of the Verses

In this research, the term "literal understanding of the Qur'an" refers to the attainment of God's intended meaning in the most superficial layer of the text. It means that despite an ordinary reader's comprehension of the apparent meaning of a verse, their mind might be unaware of many deeper layers of meaning within the verse since the Qur'an is a text with multiple dimensions and layers of meaning according to narrations and the viewpoint of most Muslim scholars (Tayyeb Hosseini 2010, 30).

Some scholars, including Tabataba'i, believe that the literal meanings of all Qur'anic verses are understandable to the general public since they perceive the notion of incomprehensible verses as contradictory to the attributes of the Qur'an such as being a source of light, guidance, and healing (Tabataba'i 2011, 1:11). Furthermore, the idea that the Qur'an is not comprehensible to everyone is not in line with the Qur'an's universal call for reflection and the utilization of its guidance for all. Therefore, most of the Muslim scholars have considered relying on the literal meanings of the Qur'an for matters of belief and practice as legitimate. However, the meanings of Qur'anic verses are not always explicit at one level and degree. Sometimes, the literal meaning we understand from the Qur'an might be sufficient to express God's intended meaning; that is, the literal meaning of the verse is the same as God's intended meaning. Other times, understanding the true intention of God may require additional evidence, and one of these contextual pieces of evidence may be the occasions of revelation of a verse, which we have received through narrations.

Words, in terms of their indication of meaning, are divided into four categories: *naṣ* (explicit), *ẓāhir* (apparent), *mu'awwal* (esoteric), and *mujmal* (ambiguous). The literal understanding refers to words of the type of *ẓāhir* whose meaning is apparent, and their indication is evident to the intellect. This category can be further subdivided as follows:

1) *Ẓuhūr badwī* (immediate apparent): The meaning that immediately comes to mind upon hearing the word.

2) *Ẓuhūr 'urfī* (customary apparent): The meaning that comes to mind through rational and customary indications.

3) *Ẓuhūr jiddī* (intended apparent): The meaning that comes to mind after a complete examination of connected and disconnected evidences of the word. This latter type is the meaning that it is legitimate to rely on it, according to the scholars. (Hakim 1999, 175; Radmansh 1995, 206; Shaker 2003, 183).

Based on this explanation, the literal understanding refers to either immediate or customary apparent meanings, which means that the statement is understood according to the customary meaning of the words, syntax, and related clues (Babaei et al. 2000, 23-24; Rajabi 2004, 9-10; Rezaei Esfahani 2013, 31). In this study, secondary understanding is coined due to the influence of the occasions of revelation (as evidences) on the apparent meanings of the verse.

The distinction between the effect on understanding a verse and the effect on understanding, in general, is indeed noteworthy because there is no data that has no effect on human understanding.

For example, in this context, even if the occasion of revelation does not directly contribute to understanding the intended meaning of a verse or has credibility issues with its source, it can still contain valuable historical and sociological information. Similarly, if there is no narration regarding a specific verse's occasion of revelation, and the possibility of the Prophet and his companions remaining silent on it is noteworthy, the silence itself may convey characteristics of that verse. However, it may not have a direct impact on understanding the divine intent behind the verse.

1.2. Literature Review

Raghebi and his colleagues (2011), in the thesis entitled, "Comparative Study of the Occasions of Revelation from *Majma' al-Bayān* and Other Interpretations," examined al-Ṭabrisī's approach to explaining the occasions of revelation. They specifically focused on the occasions of revelation for five sections of the Qur'an (sections 16 to 20). They conducted a critical analysis of verses mentioned in the chosen book in comparison with Shi'ae and Sunni narrations from various works of exegesis (*tafsīr*). The four controversial verses included in this study are the verses of *Mi'rāj, Gharānīq, Ifk,* and *Li'ān*.

The closest work to current study is the paper by Piroozfar (2012) titled, "Investigating the Influence of the Narrations of Occasions of Revelation in Interpretation of the Qur'an." In her paper, Piroozfar presents a tripartite classification of the effects of the occasions of revelation: positive, negative, and neutral effects. She provides examples of each of these effects. This research begins with a holistic approach and assumes three types of effects of the occasions of revelation in Qur'anic exegesis based on the researcher's experience without expressing any reasons or methodology. It is considered the first step in categorizing occasions of revelation based on their impact on understanding the Qur'an, although the researcher did not intend to examine all occasions of revelation.

Raghebi and Khosravi's (2013) article, "The Role of Occasions of Revelation in Better Understanding the Verses of the Qur'an," highlights several benefits of understanding the occasions of revelation

in interpreting Qur'anic verses. These benefits include clearing up ambiguities within the verses, comprehending the status of the divine speech, selecting the most appropriate interpretation, gaining insight into the context of revelation, and understanding the characteristics of the people of that era. Knowledge of the occasions of revelation can facilitate a more accurate interpretation of the verses. The authors also provided some examples of how knowing the occasions of revelation helps in understanding various aspects of the Qur'an, such as recognizing Meccan and Medinan verses, abrogating and abrogated verses, generality or specificity of certain verses, and unveiling some of the miraculous aspects of the verses.

Hosseini and Yazdi (2017), in their article entitled, "The Role of Occasions of Revelation in Understanding Qur'anic Verses from the Perspective of Allama Tabataba'i," examined the significance of occasions of revelation in contemporary interpretations of the Qur'an. They focused on two prominent exegeses: *Al-Mīzān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān* (a renowned Shi'a exegesis) and *Tafsīr al-Maraghī* (an eminent Sunni exegesis). The authors explore the perspectives of these two exegetes regarding the occasions of revelation. Based on the result, although Tabataba'i does not attach significant importance to the context of revelation and occasions of revelation due to his interpretive school of thought, he acknowledges that mentioning these reports or reasons helps clarify the meaning and context of Qur'anic verses. In his *ḥadīth*-based interpretation, he incorporates these aspects and sometimes confirms his interpretations using them. However, Al-Maraghi has mentioned more than three hundred narrations of the occasions of revelation in his interpretation. If there is a confirmed occasions of revelation of a verse or chapter, he reports it. Al-Maraghi's method of criticizing and analysing these narrations involves comparing them with the Qur'an and rational evidence. This work focuses on the methodologies of these two interpreters, and its goal is to collect and evaluate narrations rather than providing a quantitative or qualitative analysis.

It is evident that in the theses and articles written on this topic, there has either been a general discussion of the issue of the occasions of revelation and a report on the status of its narrations, or an analysis of the approach taken by exegetes in using these narrations. None of them has provided quantitative or qualitative analysis and evaluation of the role of the occasions of revelation in understanding the verses based on a comprehensive statistical study.

1.3. The Method of Collecting and Evaluating the Occasions of Revelation

In this study, due to time constraints, the focus was only on collecting the occasions of revelation from Sunni sources. Thus, three prominent collections of occasions of revelation, namely *Al-Tashīl al-Wusūl ilā'l-Maʿrifatu Asbāb al-Nuzūl* by al-ʿAk, *Asbāb al-Nuzūl* by al-Wāḥidī, and *Asbāb al-Nuzūl al-Qurʾānī* by Inayah, were selected in order to collect as many relevant narrations as possible. It should also be stated that all the narrations (*aḥādīth*) in the mentioned sources were considered as data, without examining their documentary and textual validity. Therefore, the results refer only to the narrations in these sources, both authentic and non-authentic, and cannot be generalized to all the occasions of revelation or to the use of cultural and historical sources in exegesis.

First, we entered the verses, which, according to these source books, have the occasions of revelation along with the related narrations into a table in Excel software. In this table, there are nine columns for nine characteristics of the verse and its corresponding occasion, which include (1) Row number, (2) Address of the verse, (3) The verse, (4) Existence of ambiguity in the verse, (5) Explanation of ambiguity, (6) Occasion of revelation, (7) Source of the occasion, (8) The effect of the occasion on the understanding, (9) The degree of the effect of the occasion on the understanding. Each row is a record created for each occasion of revelation and contains nine feature columns. In this way, the structure of the dataset of occasions of revelation was formed.

In the first step, the contents of columns 1, 2, 3, 6, and 7 were completed. In the next step, characteristics based on the content analysis of the verses and narrations were examined and defined. This means that some features such as existence of ambiguity in the verse, explanation of the ambiguity, the effect of the occasion on understanding, and the degree of it, which require a method of analysing the verse, narration and assigning values to content-based features, were explained and quantified.

1.3.1. Existence of Ambiguity in the Verse

After contemplating the verse and providing a simple, faithful translation (rather than an interpretative one), the literal understanding, i.e., customary meaning of the verse was determined. Based on this, it was ascertained whether there was any ambiguity or question regarding

God's intention within that specific verse or not. The default value is the absence of ambiguity, for which nothing has been entered in the corresponding cell of the table.

1.3.2. Explanation of the Ambiguity

Ambiguities and questions, which arise regarding the literal meaning and cannot be clarified by a simple translation, were recorded in this column. The reason for including this feature is to help determine the effect of the occasions. In other words, it provides the context for determining the role of the occasions in understanding and removing ambiguity. The coding and assigning values to the feature of "role of the occasion in the understanding" was an open process. That is, as the study progressed, the researcher encountered different examples of roles, combined similar roles, and determined the code and value of 'role' for each combined category.

1.3.3. The Role of the Occasion in Understanding

This feature is the result of a qualitative assessment of the role of the occasions of revelation on the literal understanding of the verse. For this purpose, the literal understanding of the verse was compared with the meaning provided by the occasion of revelation in order to clarify what meaning was added to the literal meaning by the occasion of revelation. Then, an appropriate explanation was assigned to the way in which the meaning was added or clarified by the occasion.

1.3.4. Degree of the Impact of the Occasion on Understanding

This feature is the result of a quantitative evaluation of the impact of the occasion on understanding of the verse. Four quantitative modes of effect were defined as follows:

The first level (0): The occasion of revelation has no impact on the understanding of the verse.

The second level (1): The occasion provides an additional explanation, but without that explanation, the literal meaning of the verse is understandable, and the narration does not address a particular issue or difficulty at that level. If the verse has ambiguity, it does not significantly help in resolving that ambiguity.

The third level (2): If the verse contains ambiguity, the occasion partially resolves the ambiguity, although the verse is understandable to some extent through contextual clues and other related verses. If the verse does not have ambiguity, the occasion has a more noticeable impact on better understanding the verse compared to the previous level.

The fourth level (3): If the verse contains ambiguity, the occasion completely eliminates the ambiguity, to the extent that the verse is not understandable without the occasion of revelation. Table 1 presents a portion of the dataset prepared for this study.

Table 1. A part of the dataset of the occasions of revelation for the verses of the Qur'an

Row	1	2	...	312
The Verse Address	Q. 2:2,3,4	Q. 2:6	...	Q. 14:28
The Verse	This is the Book; in it is guidance sure, without doubt, to those who fear Allah; Who believe in the Unseen, are steadfast in prayer, and spend out of what We have provided for them; And who believe in the Revelation sent to thee, and sent before thy time, and (in their hearts) have the assurance of the Hereafter.	As to those who reject Faith, it is the same to them whether thou warn them or do not warn them; they will not believe.	...	Hast thou not turned thy thought to those who have changed the favor of Allah, with ingratitude, and caused their people to descend to the House of Perdition?
Ambiguity in the Verse			...	has
Explanation of ambiguity type			...	*dār al-bawār* (hell)

Row	1	2	...	312
The Verse Address	Q. 2:2,3,4	Q. 2:6	...	Q. 14:28
Occasions of Revelation	Abū ʿUthmān Zaʿfarānī, with references from Mujāhid, narrates that the first 4 verses of *Sūrah al-Baqarah* are about the believers, the following two verses are about the disbelievers, and the next 13 verses are about the hypocrites.	Ḍaḥāk says: These verses were revealed about Abū Jahl and five of his relatives.	...	It is narrated from Ibn Jarīr through ʿAṭā ibn Yasār that these verses were revealed about the slain on the Day of Badr.
Source	al-Wāḥidī 1998; al-ʿAk 2003; Inayah 1990	al-Wāḥidī 1998; al-ʿAk 2003; Inayah 1990	...	al-ʿAk 2003
Role of Occasions of Revelation	Reference to the subject matter of the verses	Mention of examples with little impact on understanding	...	Mention of examples with little impact on understanding
Degree of impact of Occasions on Resolving Ambiguity	0	1	...	0

2. Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis

Based on the data collected using the detailed method mentioned earlier, we have identified 12 distinct roles for the impact of the narrations of the occasions on understanding Qur'anic verses. In this section, each of these roles is explained along with an illustrative example.

2.1. Mention of Examples for the Qur'anic Concept

According to scholars, the occasions of revelation that provide examples for the verses or relate an external event to a verse are not exclusive to that verse, and the comprehensive meaning of the verse remains intact (Rajabi 2004). Therefore, introducing examples, as they only make concepts tangible, provides minimal assistance in understanding the verse. In the verse Q. 2:6, the Qur'an discusses the warning of the Prophet and its impact on the disbelievers. Three instances of the occasions of revelation have been cited for this verse, mentioning individuals like Abū Jahl, the Jews, and the Jewish rabbis around Medina It appears that these instances, given the further introduction of these individuals in other Qur'anic verses, provide limited assistance in understanding disbelief and the concept of disbelievers. Therefore, a score of one has been assigned to this case. Furthermore, in the verse Q. 86:5, the Qur'an emphasizes the importance of human attention to their origins of creation and mentions an example of an arrogant individual. Thus, it is evident that one of the benefits of this command is to confront feelings of arrogance. Consequently, it is rated as one.

2.2. Expressing the Background Story of the Revelation

Sūrah al-Qadr describes the revelation of the Qur'an on the Night of *al-Qadr*, elevating the significance of that night and ranking it above a thousand months, as it is the night when the angels and the Spirit descend (Tabataba'i 2011, 20:599). The verse itself is clear and carries the importance of the Night of *al-Qadr*. The occasion of revelation merely emphasizes the Prophet's amazement at the story of a man from the Children of Israel who wore armour for the sake of God for a thousand months. The occasion of this *sūrah* directed the Prophet's attention to something even more astonishing, which is the value of the Night of *al-Qadr* (Inayah 1990). It is evident that this narration does not significantly enhance the understanding of the intended meaning of the verse. Therefore, the role of the occasion of revelation in this case is classified as the first category, earning a score of zero.

The verse Q. 29:67 states "We have made the sacred house a means of livelihood for people, and a place of security." While the Arabs are indulging in insecurity, plunder, and killings everywhere, this land remains secure and safe (Makarem Shirazi 1992, 16:346). The verse itself is not ambiguous. The occasion of revelation of the verse, however,

addresses a problem. It explains the fear of disbelievers regarding embracing faith. They claimed that they did not believe because of their fear of the multitude of Arabs and that they were afraid the Arabs would annihilate them after accepting faith. The verse resolves this issue and elucidates that God has made the sacred house a sanctuary and provides reassurance. Although the verse may not seem ambiguous, the narration does play a role in understanding the verse, hence the score of one.

2.3. Description of the Psychological, Economic, Political, or Cultural Context

The verse Q. 9:38 was revealed to encourage going to the Battle of Tabūk. At the time, the Prophet issued an order to wage war against the Romans right after returning from Ṭāʿif and the Battle of Ḥunayn. This order came at an inappropriate time, as the weather was dry and hot, the dates were ripe, and the fruits were ready for harvesting. This directive posed a challenge for the people, as they preferred sitting in the shade and staying at home to setting out for war. God recognized their lethargy and hesitation, and thus, this verse was revealed. In this verse, there is a strong call for people to engage in *jihād*, sometimes using words of encouragement, sometimes reprimanding and reproaching them, and at times using a threatening tone. It enters through various doors to prepare them, urging them with different approaches (Makarem Shirazi 1992, 7: 414). Although this verse is understandable without knowing the narration, understanding the circumstances of revelation indeed provides details of the psychological atmosphere of the revelation and emphasizes the impact of the verse. Therefore, the impact of the occasion on understanding receives a score of one.

2.4. Explanation of Vocabulary to Clarify Verdicts

The verse Q. 17:110 is about the freedom to raise one's voice during prayers. According to a narration, the intended meaning of prayer (*ṣalāt*) in this verse is supplication (*duʿā*) (al-ʿAk 2003). Therefore, the role of this narration in understanding the verse falls into the third category with a score of two. This is because the prevalent assumption about prayer is its legal and religious context. Hence, it receives a score of two. Words that have genuine Qur'anic meanings require contextual evidence for their usage in their linguistic sense. If this narration is reliable, it will

serve as the context and reason for deviating from the legal meaning of prayer in the verse.

2.5. Determining the Subject Matter of the Verse

In the occasion of the revelation of *Surah al-Fīl*, the focus is on the intended target of Abraha's army, which is not explicitly mentioned in the *Sūrah* itself (al-Wāḥidī 1998). Therefore, it receives a score of two.

2.6. Explanation of the Customs, Traditions, and Beliefs of the Arabs at the Time of Revelation

The verse Q. 2:222 deals with the rules of marital relations during menstruation. There are three occasions of revelation for this verse, and two of them address pre-Islamic customs that the verse abrogated (al-Wāḥidī 1998). Although the verse itself and the rules within it are understandable without the narration, the Qur'an's approach to social laws is better understood with this narration. Therefore, the role of the narration in the third case is rated as two. The verse Q. 3:130 takes a stance against the prevalent economic practice and prohibits it. A narration explains this custom in detail, which has earned it a score of two.

2.7. Creating a Conceptual Connection between the Verses

The verse Q. 24:61 mentions the permissibility of eating food in one's own houses, the houses of relatives, or in the houses where one holds the keys, allowing him to eat collectively or individually. In this case, the verse is understandable and contains no ambiguity. The narration explaining the revelation of this verse establishes its connection with another verse, specifically Q. 4:29. The context is that before Islam, the people of Medina would withhold food from the blind, crippled, and sick individuals, and they did not share their meals with them, which is related to a misguided sense that it was improper to eat together with such individuals. However, after the advent of Islam, there were some groups that separated food for these individuals since they disliked sharing meals with them, because they wanted to ensure that the visually impaired people could see the food and eat it, while the able-bodied individuals refrained from eating before them. This act was against good

manners and ethics. Additionally, regarding lame or sick individuals, there was a fear that they might lag behind in the meal, and healthy individuals would get ahead of them. Therefore, this verse aimed to rectify these behaviours (al-Wāḥidī 1998). Thus, the verse Q. 24:61 was revealed to complement the guidance provided in the verse Q. 4:29, which clarifies that there should be no hesitation or concern regarding sharing meals with those who are ill or disabled (Makarem Shirazi 1982, 14:549). The impact of this occasion of revelation is significant in understanding this verse better, so it deserves a rating of two.

2.8. Expressing the Reason for Naming and Specific Titles

Addressing the Prophet with the description of *muzammil* in the first verse of this *sūrah* (Q. 73:1) is one of the cases in this category. *Muzammil* means someone who wraps himself in a garment to sleep or to ward off the cold. From the context of this verse, it is apparent that at the time when this *sūrah* was revealed, the Prophet had wrapped himself in a cloak (Tabataba'i 2011, 20:94).

The occasion of revelation explains the reason for the naming. The Quraysh wanted to give the Prophet a name that others would use to refer to him, and they proposed some names that were not suitable. When the Prophet learned about this situation, he wrapped himself in a garment, and Gabriel descended, providing this unique name for the Prophet (al-ʿAk 2003). The level of influence of this narration was determined to be two, as it does not directly affect the understanding of the verse.

2.9. Mentioning the Time of Revelation of the Verse

In verse Q. 5:67, two clear points are expressed. One is a directive given by God to the Prophet, albeit a strong directive with pressure and threat, to convey a new message to humanity. The other is a promise given by God to His Prophet to protect him from potential dangers that he may face in delivering this message. The ambiguity in this verse arises from what the message is that the Prophet was supposed to deliver. The occasion of revelation clarifies this ambiguity by explaining the time of its revelation, which was on the day of Ghadīr Khum. It explains the message that God commanded the Prophet to convey to the people, which was the designation of ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib to the authority. Therefore, the

level of impact of the occasion of revelation on understanding the verse is rated as three, as the understanding of the verse is closely tied to the occasion of revelation.

2.10. Explanation of Mujmal (Ambiguous Verses)

The verse Q. 4:37 refers to the stinginess of the unbelievers and their encouragement of people to be stingy. They concealed what God had given them out of His mercy (Makarem Shirazi 1982, 6:59). The verse is somewhat ambiguous in terms of what is meant by stinginess and concealment. There are three occasions for the revelation of this verse, all of which are effective in removing the ambiguity and clarifying the meaning of being stingy. It highlights that the Jews used to hide the attributes of the Prophet and were stingy in telling the truth when answering questions about the attributes of the Prophet (al-Wāḥidī 1998). The ambiguity in the verse is fully elucidated by knowing the occasion of its revelation. Therefore, the impact of the occasion of revelation on understanding the verse is rated three.

2.11. Response to the Words of the Prophet's Contemporaries

According to the literal understanding, the verse Q. 9:28 is a command to the believers not to allow the polytheists to enter Masjid al-Ḥarām because they are considered *najis* (impure). Therefore, the verse considers a kind of sanctity and purity for the Masjid al-Ḥarām and impurity for the polytheists, whatever it is, it is not a matter of avoiding meeting infidels while wet. In this context, the statement of "this year" refers to the ninth year after the Hijrah when ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib brought *Sūrah al-Barāʾah* to Mecca, reciting it for the polytheists and making it clear that they no longer have the right to circumambulate the Kaʿbah while naked. Moreover, no polytheist has the right to perform the circumambulation and pilgrimage. Then, the verse continues to say, if you fear that implementing this command may lead to economic decline and stagnation in your businesses, and you worry about falling into poverty, do not fear. God will make you self-sufficient from His grace shortly, and He will protect you from the poverty you fear (Tabataba'i 2011, 9:303).

In this verse, the relationship between the prohibition of polytheists entering Masjid al-Ḥarām and the fear of poverty among Muslims may

seem unclear. However, the narration explains that if the polytheists refrain from entering Masjid al-Ḥarām, the trade and businesses of the Muslims would suffer, and the market would experience a downturn (Inayah 1990). Therefore, due to the effectiveness of the occasion of revelation in clarifying this matter, it has been rated as three.

2.12. Emphasizing the Literal Meaning of the Verse

The verse Q. 3:77 is a general statement about the grave consequences of violating covenants and oaths, even though the occasion of its revelation involves a group of scholars from the People of the Book (*Ahl al-Kitāb*) who exchanged their divine covenants and oaths for a small worldly gain (Makarem Shirazi 1992). The narration serves as an additional explanation of the verse, and its role in understanding the verse is zero.

3. Statistical Analysis of the Role of Occasions of Revelation in Understanding the Verses

In this section, in order to assess the role of the occasions of revelation on the literal understanding of the verses, a corpus as shown in Table 1 was compiled and subjected to statistical analysis. Table 2 provides an example of a summary of the compiled corpus.

Table 2. A brief table of the role of the occasions of revelation in the understanding of the verses

The Verse	Role of the Occasions of Revelation	Degree of Impact of the Occasions on Resolving Ambiguity
Q. 2:2,3,4	Reference to the subject matter of the verses	0
Q. 2:189	Determining the question behind the occasion of revelation of the verse	1
Q. 2:189	Explanation of a pre-Islamic tradition	3
Q. 2:189	Explanation of a pre-Islamic tradition	3
Q. 2:189	Explanation of a pre-Islamic tradition	3

The Verse	Role of the Occasions of Revelation	Degree of Impact of the Occasions on Resolving Ambiguity
Q. 9:38	Explanation of the context of revelation affecting understanding	2
Q. 4:37	Explanation of Ambiguous Verses	3
Q. 4:37	Explanation of Ambiguous Verses	3
Q. 4:37	Mention of examples with little impact on understanding	0
Q. 4:37	Explanation of Ambiguous Verses	3
Q. 73:1	Expressing the Reason for Specific Naming	2
Q. 72:6	Mention of impactful examples on understanding	3
Q. 65:4	Determining the question behind the occasion of revelation of the verse	1
Q. 65:4	Determining the question behind the occasion of revelation of the verse	1
Q. 61:11	Explanation of the relationship between verses	1
Q. 17:110	Explanation of vocabulary to clarify verdicts	2
Q. 17:110	Explanation of vocabulary to clarify verdicts	2
Q. 17:110	Explanation of vocabulary to clarify verdicts	2
Q. 17:110	Explanation of vocabulary to clarify verdicts	2
Q. 17:110	Reference to the subject matter of the verses	2
Q. 9:28	Explanation of vocabulary to clarify verdicts	3

Based on the statistical analysis of the data set, it is possible to obtain the status of the quantitative effect of each of the 12 roles on understanding. Table 3 shows the number of narrations of each of the 12 roles and their average scores separately.

Table 3. Quantitative impact assessment of each of the 12 roles

Role	Total count	Count of score 0	Percentage of score 0	Count of score 1	Percentage of score 1	Count 0f score 2	Percentage of score 2	Count of score 3	Percentage of score 3	Percentage of total narrations	Average score
Mention of Examples for the Qur'anic Concept	677	78	0.11	516	0.76	48	0.07	35	0.05	0.61	1.06
Expressing the Background Story of the Revelation	33	5	0.15	26	0.78	1	0.03	1	0.03	0.02	0.93
Description of the Psychological, Economic, Political, or Cultural Context	5	---	---	2	0.4	3	0.6	---	---	0.004	1.6
Determining the Subject Matter of the Verse	10	---	---	8	0.8	1	0.1	1	0.1	0.009	1.3
Explanation of the Customs, Traditions, and Beliefs of the Arabs at the Time of Revelation	26	---	---	7	0.26	7	0.26	12	0.05	0.02	2.19
Creating a Conceptual Connection between the Verses	34	---	---	29	0.85	3	0.08	2	0.05	0.03	1.20
Response to the Words of the Prophet's Contemporaries	227	1	0.004	180	0.79	32	0.14	14	0.61	0.20	1.25

Role	Total count	Count of score 0	Percentage of score 0	Count of score 1	Percentage of score 1	Count 0f score 2	Percentage of score 2	Count of score 3	Percentage of score 3	Percentage of total narrations	Average score
Expressing the Reason for Naming and Specific Titles	4	---	---	---	---	4	1	---	---	0.0036	2
Mentioning the Time of Revelation of the Verse	5	---	---	4	0.8	1	0.2	---	---	0.004	1.2
Explanation of Ambiguous Verses	39	---	---	---	---	2	0.05	37	0.94	0.035	2.94
Explanation of Vocabulary to Clarify Verdicts	31	---	---	13	0.41	8	0.25	10	0.32	0.028	1.90
Emphasizing the Literal Meaning of the Verse	10	7	0.7	3	0.3	---	---	---	---	0.009	0.3
Total	1101	91	0.08	788	0.71	110	0.09	112	0.10	100	1.22

It is worth noting that only about 10% of the total verses of the Qur'an have the occasions of revelation according to the sources in this research because there are 1,101 occasions of revelation for 644 verses, which is about 10% of the 6,236 verses of the Qur'an.

As shown in Table 3, regarding the 1,101 cases of the occasions of revelation, among the twelve roles, the role of "Explanation of Ambiguous Verses" has the most significant impact with an average score of 2.94. This role is associated with approximately 39 narrations. Typically, the verses in this category contain ambiguity, and the reports of the occasions of revelation play an influential role in resolving these ambiguities. Following that there is the role of "Explanation of the Customs, Traditions, and Beliefs of the Arabs at the Time of Revelation" with an average score of 2.19, which is associated with approximately 26 narrations. Therefore, only 6% of the occasions of revelation in the sources in question have an impact greater than 2. The role with the

least impact on the literal understanding of the verses is "Emphasis on the Literal Meaning of the Verse," with an average score of 0.3. However, this category includes only 10 narrations, which make up just around 1% of the total narrations studied.

The highest number of occasions of revelation is related to the role of "Mentioning an Example for the Qur'anic Concept," with a rate of 61%. The average score of this category is 1.06, which indicates the lack of influence of the occasions of revelation on the literal understanding of the verses in this category because a score of 1 was given in cases where the narration provided minimal clarification for understanding the verse, but the verse itself was understandable without referencing the narration. Furthermore, the average effect of all the narrations examined on the literal understanding of the verses has a score of 1.2. This means that on average, these narrations do not have much effect on the understanding of the verses and do not resolve any ambiguities.

3.1. The Distribution of the Occasions of Revelation in the Four Categories

Figure 1 displays the distribution of the occasions of revelation based on the four categories. Approximately 10% of the narrations receive a score of 2, 10% receive a score of 3, and around 8% get a score of 0. The majority of narrations which is about 72%, receive a score of 1. Consequently, it appears that the understanding of most Qur'anic verses is not significantly dependent on the occasions of revelation. The verses are comprehensible by considering contextual clues and other verses.
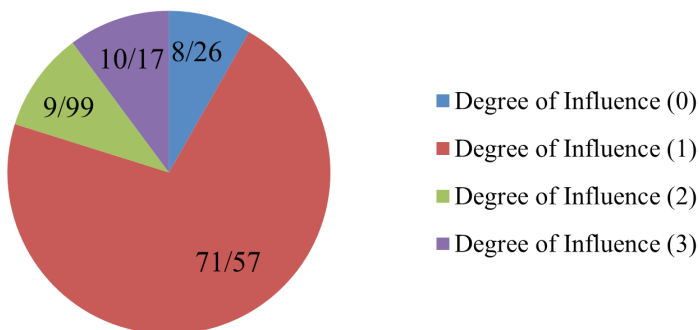

Figure 1. The distribution of the four states of the influence on understanding

4. Conclusion

It has been determined that about 10% of the total verses of the Qur'an have the occasions of revelation in the mentioned sources. On the other hand, some verses have multiple occasions of revelation, and in most cases, these narrations share the same subject matter. Additionally, some occasions of revelation are related to a specific *sūrah* or a portion of the Qur'an. Therefore, there is no one-to-one correspondence between the set of verses and the set of narrations related to them. If we assume that each verse approximately has one occasion of revelation, then the literal understanding of about 10% of these verses (1% of the Qur'an) depends entirely on the occasions of revelation.

In 72% of these verses (7% of the Qur'an), the occasions of revelation have an impact on a better understanding of the verse, even though the verse has a customary apparent meaning with seemingly no ambiguity . Moreover, 8% of the narrations have no impact on the understanding of the verses. Therefore, the impact of the occasions of revelation in question, on the understanding while not negligible, is not significant. In other words, the literal understanding of the verses does not depend much on the occasions of revelation. In most cases (82%), the impact is limited to minor improvements in the literal understanding of the verse (scores 1 and 2), which means that the narration is not the only way to reach a secondary understanding of the verse.

Acknowledgements

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The Story of Human Creation in the Qur'an and the Old Testament: A Linguistic-Narrative Approach for Reconstructing the Dominant Gender Discourse

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ABSTRACT: Original Paper

The application of the gender approach to the holy books has expanded with the rise of feminism in the modern era. The study and extraction of the gender discourses that dominate these books can help in the reconstruction and understanding of relevant historical features. Comparing the gender approach of these books can also introduce us to paradigm shifts in different historical periods. For this purpose, firstly, we have shown in this study that the Qur'an employs a moderate, complex, and hybrid form of all the three discourses: feminine, masculine, and egalitarian. Secondly, the linguistic/narrative approach to the pre-Qur'anic scriptures and its comparison with the Qur'anic approach shows the extent of the masculine and sometimes misogynistic approach of these books. A review of some post-Qur'anic exegesis and hadith books also shows that their gender discourse is more compatible with the masculine approach of pre-Qur'anic books than the moderate Qur'anic approach. Due to the large number of sources required for this research, only the gender discourse in the creation story was chosen as a case study.

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1. Introduction

The Qur'an is the most important source that has survived from the early Arab period. Thus, this text, in addition to being a sacred text and a book of Shari'ah, can be considered a source for extracting historical events. The application of a systematic method to study this book allows us to deduce the approaches and discourses that govern it, thereby reconstructing the historical approaches of the time.

Gender discourse(s) are one of the discourses that can appear in a text, reflecting the historical contexts around it. Three gender discourses that generally interest researchers in this field are masculine, feminine, and egalitarian. Indeed, societies play an important role in constructing and directing the use of these gender discourses within a text. However, power relations are complex, and their emergence is not necessarily discernible in a linear fashion, especially in a text such as the Qur'an, which has been consolidated over the course of 22 years, passing through tumultuous times. For this reason, a discursive analysis of its text would help to better clarify the gender relations within it and to extract historical evidence related to gender.

It seems that the quality of the application of these discourses does not follow a simple and linear model, but rather a non-linear and complex one (Darzi, et al. 2021). The initial analysis of this noticeable and apparent difference in the Qur'an can lead to the discovery of gendered layers and different discursive levels. This is a perspective that has not been taken into account in Qur'anic studies.

This analysis also shows that the historical context(s) of gender do not necessarily follow a completely masculine approach. Numerous studies show that masculine discourse was prominent in Arab society about a century or two after the revelation of the Qur'an. This would be complemented by our research because we could show that the Qur'an is not misogynistic at all. On the contrary, the existence of numerous verses in which egalitarian or feminine discourse is embedded demonstrates a moderate view of gender. Thus, the Qur'an, as the most important source in the Prophet's time, does not have a purely masculine approach. Not only is there ample evidence of an egalitarian approach, but there are also verses that show a feminine view.

The linguistic-narrative examination of other texts from that period seems to enable us to better understand the significance of this analysis in historical reconstruction of gender discourses and further to complete this research. Also, comparing the text of the Qur'an with other texts

written in later centuries can further clarify the discursive distinction of the Qur'an from those texts, revealing the impact of anti-woman historical contexts on the written collections of those times.

Here we will attempt in particular to compare the Qur'an with respect to its gender approach to the Torah and various Islamic texts. Given the fact that the story of creation is very gender-based and for this reason, it has been the focus of scholars of holy texts, we have focused solely on the story of Genesis. This comparative study shows that in this story, the Qur'an has a much more moderate approach to gender than its predecessor religious texts, especially the Torah, and that gender equality is more prevalent in it. Comparing these two different approaches to gender in the holy texts with the Hadith books compiled two or three centuries after the Qur'an also shows that they followed the pre-Qur'anic texts, especially the Torah, rather than the Qur'an.

The methodology used in this scientific article is a linguistic/narrative approach. The concept of narration is defined as "any sequence of clauses containing at least one temporal juncture" (Labov and Waletzky, 1967: 28). Through narrative analysis and a gender-focused lens, we examine the creation story in the Qur'an. Previous research has emphasised the relationship between "language and gender", such as Lazar's (2005) discourse analysis of gender in linguistic applications. In this study, we will also evaluate the use of narration in the Qur'an and Torah with a focus on gender. Therefore, it is important for us to emphasise gender in the use of terms in the creation narrative. The creation narrative is important for this research in two ways: first, it is used in a similar way in the Qur'an and the Torah, and the sequence of clauses is well seen in it; second, there is a clear distinction between these two narratives in terms of gender propositions, and thus, the comparison between the two is significant. It should be noted that although there have been many works that claim to extract the Qur'anic discourse on gender or the status of women in the Qur'an (e.g., see Barlas 2001; Barlas 2006: 255-273; Vahiduddin 1956: 1-6; Faruqi 1984: 36-49; Lamchichi 1995: 97-111; Awde, 2000), the focus of these studies has generally been on the common patriarchal readings of the Qur'an and not on what the text of the Qur'an indicates. Moreover, the gendered approach of the Qur'an has rarely been compared with other texts such as the Old and New Testaments and Hadith books. Smith and Haddad (1982), in one of the most important studies on the subject, have presented the Islamic image of women. This work, which has less of a linguistic-narrative approach, aims to show that in the Qur'an and some other Islamic sources women

are not secondary and subordinate to men. On the contrary, a subordinate and sometimes misogynistic approach to women is visible. Roded (2012) has also recently conducted an important research on human creation in the Qur'an and the Hebrew Bible. This research also focuses on feminist exegesis of the Qur'an, rather than focusing on the sentences and phrases of the Qur'an and the Torah. As a continuation of these two valuable studies, in this article we will take a linguistic-narrative look at the story of creation in the Qur'an, and by comparing the gendered approach of the Qur'an in this story with that of the Torah and some of the Hadith books, we will show the extent of intertextual interactions. We will also show a more moderate view of the Qur'an on gender than ever before.

2. Moderate and Multivalent Approach of the Qur'an to Gender

All three discourses of gender are found in the Qur'an, including masculine, feminine and egalitarian discourses (Darzi et al, 2021). Although the masculine discourse is more prominent than the other two discourses in this context, the linguistic applications of the text show that the feminist and egalitarian discourses are also relatively visible.

Regarding the egalitarian approach in the Qur'an, we can see two different patterns:

1. The use of gender-neutral devices like *man*[1] (who), *mā*[2] (what), *kull*[3] (every), *nafs*[4] (person), etc. Using such devices in the text could reduce the masculinity of the sentences (Darzi et al. 2021: a6228). There are many examples of this type (e.g., see Q. 57:4; 10:31) in the following verses, among which the following verse is a prominent example:

وَ لِلَّهِ ما فِي السَّماواتِ وَ ما فِي الْأَرْضِ وَ كانَ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيءٍ مُحِيطاً (Q.4:126)
And to Allah belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. And ever is Allah, of all things, encompassing.

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1. مَن
2. ما
3. كلّ
4. نفس

2. Simultaneous use of masculine and feminine gender indicators within a context (Darzi et al. 2021: a6228). Here the user of the language deals with a single subject or content in both its masculine and feminine forms. The following verses are significant examples of this type:

لِلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ وَلِلنِّسَاءِ نَصِيبٌ مِمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ (Q.4:7)

For men is a share of what the parents and close relatives leave, and for women is a share of what the parents and close relatives leave, be it little or much - an obligatory share.

لَا تَتَمَنَّوْا مَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بِهِ بَعْضَكُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ لِلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِمَّا اكْتَسَبُوا وَلِلنِّسَاءِ نَصِيبٌ مِمَّا اكْتَسَبْنَ (Q.4:32)

And do not wish for that by which Allah has made some of you exceed others. For men is a share of what they have earned, and for women is a share of what they have earned.

وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ شِقَاقَ بَيْنِهِمَا فَابْعَثُوا حَكَمًا مِنْ أَهْلِهِ وَحَكَمًا مِنْ أَهْلِهَا إِنْ يُرِيدَا إِصْلَاحًا يُوَفِّقِ اللَّهُ بَيْنَهُمَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا خَبِيرًا (Q.4:35)

And if you fear dissension between the two, send an arbitrator from his people and an arbitrator from her people. If they both desire reconciliation, Allah will cause it between them. Indeed, Allah is ever Knowing and Acquainted [with all things].

Another set of Qur'anic verses deals with the *dominant feminine approach*. There are two models of this kind.

1. Direct address to women in the Qur'an:

يَا مَرْيَمُ اقْنُتِي لِرَبِّكِ وَاسْجُدِي وَارْكَعِي مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ (Q.3:43)

O Mary, be devoutly obedient to your Lord and prostrate and bow with those who bow [in prayer].

يَا نِسَاءَ النَّبِيِّ مَن يَأْتِ مِنكُنَّ بِفَاحِشَةٍ مُبَيِّنَةٍ يُضَاعَفْ لَهَا الْعَذَابُ ضِعْفَيْنِ وَكَانَ ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرًا (Q.33:30)

O wives of the Prophet, whoever of you should commit a clear immorality - for her the punishment would be doubled two-fold, and ever is that, for Allah, easy.

Addressing the audience directly shows the importance we attach to the audience. This form of addressing women in Qur'anic verses has the effect of largely eliminating the dominance of the masculine approach.

2. Women representatives in the Qur'an:

وَضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا لِّلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا امْرَأَتَ فِرْعَوْنَ إِذْ قَالَتْ رَبِّ ابْنِ لِي عِندَكَ بَيْتًا فِي الْجَنَّةِ وَنَجِّنِي مِن فِرْعَوْنَ وَعَمَلِهِ وَنَجِّنِي مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ(Q.66:11)

And Allah presents an example of those who believed: the wife of Pharaoh, when she said, "My Lord, build for me near You a house in Paradise and save me from Pharaoh and his deeds and save me from the wrongdoing people".

وَمَرْيَمَ ابْنَتَ عِمْرَانَ الَّتِي أَحْصَنَتْ فَرْجَهَا فَنَفَخْنَا فِيهِ مِن رُّوحِنَا وَصَدَّقَتْ بِكَلِمَاتِ رَبِّهَا وَكُتُبِهِ وَكَانَتْ مِنَ الْقَانِتِينَ (Q.66:12)

And [the example of] Mary, the daughter of 'Imran, who guarded her chastity, so We blew into [her garment] through Our angel, and she believed in the words of her Lord and His scriptures and was of the devoutly obedient.

Such verses can be considered a good model for demonstrating the Qur'an's affirmation on the issue of women's leadership and thus provide us with good evidence of its supportive approach towards the feminine discourse. In these verses, women are seen as role models for people and even men. In some of these verses, women's leadership is also affirmed and viewed positively.

إِنِّي وَجَدتُّ امْرَأَةً تَمْلِكُهُمْ وَأُوتِيَتْ مِن كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَلَهَا عَرْشٌ عَظِيمٌ (Q.27:23)

Indeed, I found [there] a woman ruling them, and she has been given of all things, and she has a great throne.

These verses are only a limited part of the verses in the Qur'an that have a feminine approach. In the continuation of the article, and specifically in the narrative analysis of the story of human creation, we will show how egalitarian the Qur'an's view of women is.

According to what has been said in the previous section, and what is shown in full detail in the research of Darzi et al. (2021), it is clear that firstly, in its approach to gender, the Qur'an has focused on all forms: masculine, feminine, and egalitarian. Secondly, in the masculine

approach, the misogynist view can never be seen. This approach seems to be very advanced and moderate compared to other texts written before and after the Qur'an. To prove this hypothesis, we compare the Qur'an, the Torah, and some other Islamic texts in the narrative style of human creation. It seems that in contrast to the moderate gender approach to women in the Qur'an, the masculine and sometimes misogynist approach in the Torah and other pre-Qur'anic texts is explicit and transparent.

This study also shows that the Hadith books compiled after the Qur'an, instead of adopting a moderate Qur'anic discourse on gender, in some parts followed the historical-cultural context of their time and also the purely masculine approach of the Torah in their narrative style.

3. Creation Story in the Torah and Some Islamic Resources: A Gender Attitude

The story in the Torah begins with the creation of Adam from the ground. God then placed the man whom He had formed (created) in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:8) to cultivate and keep it (Genesis 2:15), and told him:

> You may freely (unconditionally) eat [the fruit] from every tree of the garden; but [only] from the tree of the knowledge (recognition) of good and evil you shall not eat, otherwise on the day that you eat from it, you shall most certainly die [because of your disobedience]. (Genesis 2:16-17)

The problem of man's loneliness is at the centre of the discussion, and God wants to bring man out of his loneliness (Genesis 2:18). So, first, the animals and birds were created to find a helper for him, but none of them were suitable for the job (Genesis 2:19-20). Then, it explains that woman was created from man, and her creation is seen as a subsidiary and branch of human creation. This narrative style states in the naming of Eve that woman is a subsidiary and subordinate of man:

> So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam; and while he slept, He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that place. And the rib which the Lord God had taken from the man He made (fashioned, formed) into a woman, and He brought her and presented her to the man. Then Adam said, "This is now bone of my bones, And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man." (Genesis 2:21-23)

The Hebrew text of the last verse is as follows.

שִׁאמֶ יֿכ ,הֶשָּׁא אֲרֵקַיִ תֺאזֹל ;יִרֽשָׁבְּמַ רֽשָׁבָּו ,יַמֽצַעֲמֵ םֽצֶעֶ הֽעַפַּה תֺאֹ ,סֹדֽאָה ,רֽמֶאֺיַ
.תֺאֺזֹ-הֵחָקֺל

In this phrase, הֶשָּׁא (*Īshah*) means female and שִׁא (*Īsh*) means male (Gesenius 1939, 1030, 35). In this designation, as in the terminology, the word woman is a subordinate for man. There are many traditions in Islamic sources that deal with the naming of women in a similar way. The following quotations may serve as good examples:

> ... He said to Abu Ja'far, peace be upon him, "Do you allow me to ask?" He said, "So, I will let you ask!" ... He said, "Why was Ḥawwā called 'Ḥawwā'?" He said, "because it was created from a living rib, i.e., Adam's rib" (al-Ṭabarsī 1966, 2:64-65; Barqī 1953, 336).

In another hadith, ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib, in response to a Jewish question about the reason for naming Ḥawwā, says that she was so named because she was created from animal (*al-ḥaywān*) (Ibn Bābawayh 1966: 1:1-2).

Therefore, it seems that some Islamic sources, just like the Torah, have taken a masculine approach in telling the story of Adam and Eve's creation. In addition to what we have said about the naming of Eve, these hadiths, generally quoted by Ibn ʿAbbās and Ibn Masʿūd (Māwardī 1987: 78; Ibn ʿAsākir 1995: 69:102), contain the main components of the Torah narrative. These components are: (1) Eve was created to dwell with Adam; (2) The creation of Eve occurred when Adam was asleep and God created Eve from his rib (al-Rāzī 1935: 3:2, Ibn Kathīr: 1:80; al-Ṭabarsī 1994: 1:194).

3.1. Woman Driving Man Out of the Garden

One of the most important parts of the creation story from a gender perspective is the part in which Eve is presented as the cause of the expulsion of man from the Garden of Eden. Islamic narratives, both Shi'a and Sunni, are closest in theme and narrative style to the narratives of the Torah and are therefore far removed from the discourse of the Qur'an in this story. Throughout the story, the woman is a deceived creature who succumbs to the serenity of the serpent and provides Adam with disobedience to God's command:

> And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was delightful to look at, and a tree to be desired in order

to make one wise and insightful, she took some of its fruit and ate it; and she also gave some to her husband with her, and he ate (Genesis 3:6).

In the continuation of Adam and Eve's conversation with God, Adam blames Eve for the disobedience and Eve blames the serpent:

God said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten [fruit] from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" And the man said, "The woman whom You gave to be with me—she gave me [fruit] from the tree, and I ate it." Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" And the woman said, "The serpent beguiled and deceived me, and I ate [from the forbidden tree]" (Genesis 3:11-13).

A very similar theme to this passage can be found in Islamic sources:

[God asked Adam] 'Why did you eat the tree I had forbidden?' He answered: 'Eve made me eat of that tree'. Then God asked Eve, 'Why did you give Adam the forbidden fruit?' Eve said, 'The snake gave me this order'. So, the Lord asked the serpent, 'Why did you give him this command?' The snake replied, 'The satan ordered me' (al-Ṭabarī 1960, 1:160).

Like the Torah narrative, here Adam is not the main culprit, and a series of causes have been considered, starting with Eve. In the following, it is therefore intended with a more specific emphasis on Eve's punishment. The pain of childbirth, her interest in her husband, and her husband's domination are identified as punishments for woman's disobedience. With regard to the punishment of Adam, the masculine approach is also quite evident; it is said that believing his wife's word is a cause for his punishment:

To the woman He said, "I will greatly multiply Your pain in childbirth; In pain you will give birth to children; Yet your desire and longing will be for your husband, And he will rule [with authority] over you and be responsible for you. Then to Adam the Lord God said, "Because you have listened [attentively] to the voice of your wife, and have eaten [fruit] from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it'" (Genesis 3:16-17).

In Islamic sources, too, the main blame is explicitly attributed to Eve, and she is removed because of her conduct:

… [But Adam] said to Ḥawwā, "Depart from me and the messengers of my Lord. What happened to me only happened because of you, and whatever has befallen me has done so through you" (al-Ṭabarī 1960, 1:160).

4. Creation Story in the Qur'an: A Gender Attitude

Unlike the Torah, where the story of creation is considered in a specific chapter, the Qur'an has dealt with it in various *sūrah*s. The creation of man and other related issues is mentioned in the following stages in the Qur'an:

1. Human is created and then angels are commanded to prostrate to his but Iblīs disobeys.

2. Adam and Eve are created from a single soul.

3. Adam and Eve begin their life in heaven.

4. Satan deceived them both (or just Adam) and they both disobeyed the command of God.

5. God accepts man's repentance.

6. God sends both to earth at the end.

Here we will first consider all these stageps in terms of gender approach and finally we will compare the Qur'an with the Torah.

4.1. Human Creation

On the contrary to the Torah, where the creation of human begins in a masculine way and is dedicated to Adam, in the Qur'an, the story begins with the creation of human being. In some verses, humans are referred to as a species:

وَ لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَاكُمْ ثُمَّ صَوَّرْنَاكُمْ ثُمَّ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ لَمْ يَكُنْ مِنَ السَّاجِدِينَ (Q. 7:11)

And We have certainly created you, [O Mankind], and given you [human] form. Then We said to the angels, "Prostrate to Adam"; so they prostrated, except for Iblees. He was not of those who prostrated.

Elsewhere, given the ambiguity in the verse, this creation may be related to the human species or to Adam:

<div dir="rtl">إِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي خَالِقٌ بَشَرًا مِنْ طِينٍ (Q.38:71)</div>

[So mention] when your Lord said to the angels, "Indeed, I am going to create a human being from clay.

<div dir="rtl">وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ صَلْصَالٍ مِنْ حَمَإٍ مَسْنُونٍ (Q.15:26)</div>

And We did certainly create man out of clay from an altered black mud.

These verses use words such as *bashar* and *al-insān* that have a general meaning and can include all human beings. As stated in the previous verses, after the creation of man, the angels were commanded to prostrate to him, but Iblīs refused to do so.

4.2. Creation of Eve

As we have seen in the Torah verses, the creation of Eve has completely a masculine aspect and the woman is introduced as a subsidiary of man. The Qur'an does not discuss the creation of Eve in a coherent narrative of human creation, but in other passages and in the dispersed form of the subject. These verses never explicitly refer to the creation of woman as a subsidiary of man's creation. In some verses, the creation of human beings is considered from one soul and instead of emphasizing the male gender. The creation from a single soul devoid of any specific gender is addressed in the following verses:

<div dir="rtl">خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ تَفْسٍ واحِدَةٍ ثُمَّ جَعَلَ مِنْها زَوْجَها (Q.39:6)</div>

He created you from one soul. Then He made from it its mate, …

<div dir="rtl">يا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ تَفْسٍ واحِدَةٍ وَ خَلَقَ مِنْها زَوْجَها (Q.4:1)</div>

O mankind, fear your Lord, who created you from one soul and created from it its mate and dispersed from both of them many men and women.

In another verse, by using the word "couple," the cause of such creation is considered the comfort for both sides:

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ (Q.30:21)

And of His signs is that He created for you from yourselves mates that you may find tranquility in them; and He placed between you affection and mercy.

4.3. Living in the Heaven

The issue of the prostration of angels to man and the disobedience of Iblīs (Satan) has no place in the Torah narrative of human creation. However, this debate plays a central role in the story of the creation and expulsion of Adam and Eve from heaven. Exactly after that, God warns Adam and Eve that Satan is their enemy and to be beware of him not letting themselves down. Addressing both men and women represents the balanced approach of the Qur'an to gender in this story.

فَقُلْنَا يَا آدَمُ إِنَّ هَذَا عَدُوٌّ لَكَ وَلِزَوْجِكَ فَلَا يُخْرِجَنَّكُمَا مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ فَتَشْقَى (Q.20:117)

So We said, "O Adam, indeed this is an enemy to you and to your wife. Then let him not remove you from Paradise so you would suffer.

Afterwards both are told to live in Paradise. According to the Torah, Eve is created after living in Paradise, but in the Qur'anic narration both are created before living in Paradise:

وَقُلْنَا يَا آدَمُ اسْكُنْ أَنْتَ وَ زَوْجُكَ الْجَنَّةَ وَ كُلَا مِنْهَا رَغَدًا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا وَلَا تَقْرَبَا هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةَ فَتَكُونَا مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ(Q.2:35; see also Q. 7:19)

And We said, "O Adam, dwell, you and your wife, in Paradise and eat therefrom in [ease and] abundance from wherever you will. But do not approach this tree, lest you be among the wrongdoers."

However, Eve has no place in the Torah narrative, until Adam was in paradise. As it is seen in two verses above, all the pronouns and verbs are addressed to both Adam and Eve. The form of address that is followed in the Qur'an is further evident in the story of Adam and Eve's disobedience about eating of the forbidden fruit.

4.4. *Adam and Eve's Disobedience and Acceptance of Their Repentance*

In the Qur'anic narrative, the story of the creation goes as if Satan's expulsion from the Divine grace was a cause for him to deceive Adam and Eve and to expel them from Paradise. Therefore, in all related verses, Satan is introduced as the agent and the cause of deception. However, the important question to be answered is who the devil has deceived primarily? In the masculine narrative of the Torah, it is Eve who is deceived by the serpent, and by her suggestion to Adam causes him to disobey God. Nevertheless, in the Qur'an, the narrative form of the story is quite different. Often the addresses are general and include both Adam and Eve simultaneously:

فَأَزَلَّهُمَا الشَّيْطَانُ عَنْهَا فَأَخْرَجَهُمَا مِمَّا كَانَا فِيهِ وَقُلْنَا اهْبِطُوا بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ وَلَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مُسْتَقَرٌّ وَمَتَاعٌ إِلَى حِينٍ (Q.2:36)

But Satan caused them to slip out of it and removed them from that [condition] in which they had been. And We said, "Go down, [all of you], as enemies to one another, and you will have upon the earth a place of settlement and provision for a time."

The verse above speaks in general terms of deceiving Adam and Eve, but the verses Q. 7:20-22 elaborate that both Adam and Eve were present in all conversations:

فَوَسْوَسَ لَهُمَا الشَّيْطَانُ لِيُبْدِيَ لَهُمَا مَا وُورِيَ عَنْهُمَا مِنْ سَوْآتِهِمَا وَقَالَ مَا نَهَاكُمَا رَبُّكُمَا عَنْ هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةِ إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُونَا مَلَكَيْنِ أَوْ تَكُونَا مِنَ الْخَالِدِينَ * وَقَاسَمَهُمَا إِنِّي لَكُمَا لَمِنَ النَّاصِحِينَ * فَدَلَّاهُمَا بِغُرُورٍ فَلَمَّا ذَاقَا الشَّجَرَةَ بَدَتْ لَهُمَا سَوْآتُهُمَا وَطَفِقَا يَخْصِفَانِ عَلَيْهِمَا مِنْ وَرَقِ الْجَنَّةِ وَنَادَاهُمَا رَبُّهُمَا أَلَمْ أَنْهَكُمَا عَنْ تِلْكُمَا الشَّجَرَةِ وَأَقُلْ لَكُمَا إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ لَكُمَا عَدُوٌّ مُبِينٌ (Q.7:20–22)

But Satan whispered to them to make apparent to them that which was concealed from them of their private parts. He said, "Your Lord did not forbid you this tree except that you become angels or become of the immortal." And he swore [by Allah] to them, "Indeed, I am to you from among the sincere advisors." So he made them fall, through deception. And when they tasted of the tree, their private parts became apparent to them, and they began to fasten together over themselves from the leaves of Paradise.

And their Lord called to them, "Did I not forbid you from that tree and tell you that Satan is to you a clear enemy?"

The words and phrases outlined illustrate the gender-equality approach to Adam and Eve in these verses. This egalitarian approach is evident from the beginning of the verses up to the end. The use of pronouns such as *humā* (dual form of 'them') and *kumā* (dual form of 'you') instead of directly addressing one of them, Adam or Eve, is very effective in applying this approach.

It is only in the verse Q. 20:120 that, unlike in the Torah where Eve is the addressee of Satan, Adam is the main addressee:

<div dir="rtl">فَوَسْوَسَ إِلَيْهِ الشَّيْطَانُ قَالَ يَا آدَمُ هَلْ أَدُلُّكَ عَلَى شَجَرَةِ الْخُلْدِ وَمُلْكٍ لَا يَبْلَى</div>

Then Satan whispered to him; he said, "O Adam, shall I direct you to the tree of eternity and possession that will not deteriorate?"

However, in the following verses, the address is re-generalized and involves both Adam and Eve:

<div dir="rtl">فَأَكَلَا مِنْهَا فَبَدَتْ لَهُمَا سَوْآتُهُمَا وَطَفِقَا يَخْصِفَانِ عَلَيْهِمَا مِنْ وَرَقِ الْجَنَّةِ وَعَصَى آدَمُ رَبَّهُ فَغَوَى</div>

(Q. 20:121)

And Adam and his wife ate of it, and their private parts became apparent to them, and they began to fasten over themselves from the leaves of Paradise. And Adam disobeyed his Lord and erred.

The crucial point in this verse is that although at the beginning of the verse Adam and Eve are both tempted by Satan, at the end it is Adam who is guilty. Here too, there is a clear distinction between the Qur'an and the Torah on the gender perspective because in the Torah, Eve is considered the main disobedient and Adam's sin is consequent of her disobedience. Accordingly, in most verses of the Qur'an, it is Adam who repents before God and God accepts his repentance:

<div dir="rtl">فَتَلَقَّى آدَمُ مِنْ رَبِّهِ كَلِمَاتٍ فَتَابَ عَلَيْهِ إِنَّهُ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ (Q. 2:37)</div>

Then Adam received from his Lord [some] words, and He accepted his repentance. Indeed, it is He who is the Accepting of repentance, the Merciful.

<div dir="rtl">ثُمَّ اجْتَبَاهُ رَبُّهُ فَتَابَ عَلَيْهِ وَهَدَى (Q. 20:122)</div>

Then his Lord chose him and turned to him in forgiveness and guided [him].

In a similar text but different application, the demand for repentance has been attributed to both Adam and Eve. Such an application is consistent with the generalization of the addressees that has already occurred much in the verses above:

قَالَا رَبَّنَا ظَلَمْنَا أَنْفُسَنَا وَإِنْ لَّمْ تَغْفِرْ لَنَا وَتَرْحَمْنَا لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ (Q.7:23)

They said, "Our Lord, we have wronged ourselves, and if You do not forgive us and have mercy upon us, we will surely be among the losers."

4.5. *Sending Both to the Earth*

The story of creation in the Qur'an ends with the fall of Adam and Eve to the earth. All the addresses in this section are general, including both Adam and Eve. The emphasis on the plural pronouns here also demonstrates the egalitarian approach of the Qur'an to gender.

قُلْنَا اهْبِطُوا مِنْهَا جَمِيعًا فَإِمَّا يَأْتِيَنَّكُمْ مِنِّي هُدًى فَمَنْ تَبِعَ هُدَايَ فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ

(Q.2:38)

We said, "Go down from it, all of you. And when guidance comes to you from Me, whoever follows My guidance - there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve."

قَالَ اهْبِطُوا بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ وَلَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مُسْتَقَرٌّ وَمَتَاعٌ إِلَى حِينٍ (Q.7:24)

[Allah] said, "Descend, being to one another enemies. And for you on the earth is a place of settlement and enjoyment for a time."

5. *Conclusion*

As discussed at the beginning of the article, the Qur'an has a moderate approach to gender, including all three gender discourses of masculine, feminine, and egalitarian. A comparative approach to the Qur'an and the Torah can reveal this moderate approach of the Qur'an to gender. The following findings indicate that the Qur'an has an egalitarian approach to gender in the creation story, in contrast to the Torah, which has a completely masculine and sometimes misogynistic approach.

According to the Qur'an, Adam and Eve were created before they were sent to heaven, but in the Torah, the creation of Eve takes place after Adam's dwelling in heaven.

The creation of Eve in the Torah has a completely masculine approach, i.e., Eve is a subsidiary of Adam; since no helper could be found for Adam among the animals, Eve was created from Adam's rib while he was asleep. However, there is a much more moderate approach in the Qur'an, so that the Qur'anic narrative in this regard is ambiguous in such a way that the creation of Eve can be like that of Adam.

Another way in which the Torah's approach to gender differs from the Qur'an is in the story of human disobedience. The Torah's approach in this respect is purely masculine, whereas many linguistic indications point to the Qur'an's egalitarian approach. In the Torah, it is Eve who is the main addressee of the serpent (the representative of Satan). She is deceived by him and misleads Adam with false advice. In the Qur'an, however, Satan speaks to both Adam and Eve together in heaven. The use of plural pronouns in the Qur'anic narration of this story is remarkable and significant, indicating the egalitarian approach of the text. In a few instances, Satan's main target in heaven is Adam. In contrast to the Torah, in the Qur'anic narrative, Adam is the main culprit, and it is he who commits disobedience.

In the Torah, Eve is the main culprit of disobedience to God, so the pain of childbirth is considered a punishment for her conduct, whereas in the Qur'an, it is Adam who is the main culprit of disobedience, and repentance is also done by him. It is important to note that although in the Qur'anic context of the verses about Satan's dialogue with Adam and Eve, the verbs are always used in the plural, in the story of repentance only Adam is present; he repents and God accepts his repentance.

Acknowledgements

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Analysis of the Conceptual Map of Consciousness as a Cognitive Function in the Qur'an

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ABSTRACT: Original Paper

This study delves into the concept of consciousness in the Qur'an, comparing it with cognitive science. While cognitive science views consciousness as a function of the brain, the Qur'an employs various terms such as "soul" (*al-nafs*), "heart" (*al-qalb*, *al-ṣadr* and *al-af'idah*), "hearing" (*al-samʿ*), "sight" (*al-baṣar*), etc. to describe tools of consciousness. In order to explore the Qur'anic perspective on consciousness and its compatibility with cognitive science, an in-depth analysis of relevant areas pertaining to human consciousness, as well as the capacities of the heart and brain, is essential. Employing an analytical-comparative method with an extra-religious perspective, we extract cognitive terminology associated with consciousness from the Qur'an. By employing graph-based tools to create and analyse a conceptual map of these terms, we find that the soul, heart, hearing, and sight emerge as crucial tools for generating consciousness. Of these, the Qur'an highlights the human soul as the primary tool for acquiring and processing consciousness, distinct from the spirit (*al-rūḥ*). This soul is balanced in such a way that it can collaborate with the body and brain of the human to achieve consciousness.

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1. Introduction

Cognitive science, as one of the modern human sciences, has achieved a unique position among disciplines related to humans. This interdisciplinary field focuses on the study of the brain and human cognitive functions. One of the most important and challenging topics in cognitive science is the concept of human consciousness, which has posed challenges for scientists to justify their theories by relying solely on the physical and material aspects of humans and their minds.

To examine the concept of consciousness in humans from the Qur'anic perspective and compare it with some findings of cognitive science, we must regard this divine book as a coherent whole, where all its verses are intricately connected within a unified system. For example, Tabataba'i in the interpretation of the verse (Q. 4:82), *"Do they not ponder about the Qur'an? Had it been from other than Allah, surely, they would have found therein so many contradictions,"* states that reflection (*tadabbur*) has two meanings. The first is to follow something after another thing, and the second is to contemplate on one verse after another or to be more careful and precise after initial consideration. However, since the purpose of the verse is to emphasize that there is no discrepancy in the Qur'an, and since discrepancies arise when more than one verse is considered, the second meaning is more appropriate. This indicates that for the interpretation and understanding of the meaning of a verse, it is necessary to examine the related verses alongside it (Tabataba'i 1996: 5:26). On one hand, a word can have a specific meaning within a particular context, but when it enters a different context, its meaning can change (Sadeghi 2016: 11). It seems that exploring the concept of human consciousness through the context of the Qur'an, its perspectives, and the use of vocabulary in this book can provide valuable assistance in finding an answer to the question of where the place of consciousness in humans is according to the Qur'an.

To profoundly investigate the domains related to human consciousness and examine the position of consciousness in humans from the perspective of the Qur'an and compare it with some cognitive science findings, it is essential to answer the following question: What

is the conceptual map related to human consciousness in the Qur'an? By answering this question, it is possible to examine the Qur'an as a coherent context in order to bring its literature' and cognitive science closer together and to answer the question, which according to this conceptual network, is the most important tool of human consciousness.

Research Methodology

Two approaches were used to find the vocabulary related to consciousness in the Qur'an and to create a conceptual map of consciousness through these terms; from the Qur'an to cognitive science, and from cognitive science to the Qur'an. The initial approach involved examining the verses of the Qur'an, from the beginning to the end, to identify cognitive terms associated with human consciousness, such as words that describe how individuals perceive themselves and their surroundings. This process generated a list of these specific lexicons. In the second approach, a list of cognitive functions related to consciousness was obtained from cognitive science resources, the most important of which include perceptual functions, attention functions, executive functions, social cognitive functions, and memory functions, all of which have sub-functions. After examining the cognitive functions, those with behavioural states were set aside. Then the remaining mental functions were investigated, and those related to the issue of consciousness were separated. Subsequently, the presence of these cognitive functions in each verse was examined.

In order to select cognitive lexicons, in addition to examining the text of the verses, attention was paid to the translation, literal meaning, and interpretations of each term. Finally, using both approaches, we found 288 cognitive lexicons related to consciousness in the Qur'an and categorized them. The cognitive functions related to consciousness were classified into five categories based on the conceptual connection of the lexicons with consciousness and according to the existing categories in cognitive science regarding consciousness, including presence and absence of consciousness, agent of consciousness, emotions resulting from consciousness, tools of consciousness, and consequences of consciousness.

The next step was to draw the conceptual map and ontology graph for these concepts. For this purpose, the most frequently occurring concepts were extracted (Figure 9) and the adjacency matrix of concepts

was obtained. This matrix showed that each concept was co-occurred with what concepts in the verses and with what frequency.

As the number of concepts related to consciousness was much larger than what could be represented in a general graph, it was decided to draw graphs of concepts related to consciousness in a step-by-step manner using adjacency matrix and specialized graph visualization online tools. Initially, graphs were drawn for concepts that had more than twenty co-occurrences (Figure 12), then for more than seventeen co-occurrences (Figure 13), and for more than ten co-occurrences (Figure 14). The central core of the graph was also drawn by pruning the vertices with a degree less than fifty (considering two co-occurrences for each vertex) (Figure 11). The degree of a vertex refers to the number of vertices connected to it. In the central core of the graph, vertices that had more than fifty connections with other vertices were included. Finally, by examining the Heart and Soul graphs as the most used tools of consciousness in the Qur'an and studying their connections with cognitive concepts related to consciousness, the focus was on solving the issue as to which of these two is the most important tool of human consciousness in the context of the Qur'an.

1.2. Literature Review

Numerous books and articles have been written on cognitive science and cognitive abilities related to human consciousness. However, only a limited number of these writings have examined the connection between cognitive abilities and religion. Among them, only a few articles have been able to establish a relationship between cognitive science and abilities, and the Qur'an. These connections have generally been discussed in a broad sense, but no research has been found on consciousness in the Qur'an and the associated conceptual map in our searches.

Kharrazi (2017) provided meanings and Persian equivalents for cognitive concepts in his book. Ghyasvand (2011) classified human consciousness and presented theories and classifications proposed by scholars in this field. In the book *"Human Agency: A Religious-Philosophical Approach"*, Bagheri (2020) explored human soul in the Qur'an and philosophy and explained various perspectives in this regard. He also discussed the definition of cognition and its categories and presented his own view on each of these topics. In addition, the book *"The Mystery of Consciousness"* written by John Searle (2015) is an important book

in the field of consciousness discourse that presented a theory on the dual aspect of consciousness. Chalmers (2010) presented arguments for the fundamental nature of consciousness and its universality in the world. These research works have been used as sources in this article, although the objective, methodology, and results of the current research are completely distinct from the aforementioned studies.

2. Lexical Review

2.1. Consciousness

Cognitive science utilizes tools from psychology, computer science, linguistics, anthropology, philosophy, and neuroscience to investigate human intelligence. In cognitive science, the mind refers to the collection of intelligent and conscious phenomena, such as thinking, perception, memory, reasoning, and so forth (Shariati 2016: 45). In essence, cognitive science attribute all cognitive abilities of humans and their consciousness to the brain and the associated neural system. However, there are differing opinions among cognitive science experts regarding the concept of the mind. The term "consciousness" has become the basis for various discussions, ranging from denying its existence and considering it as an illusion to attributing consciousness as a non-material, independent, and irreducible criterion.

The consciousness was derived from the Latin word *conscientia*. Ferdinberg (2020: 565) writes in his definition of consciousness that it is the quality of mental experience. John Searle, as one of the physicalists seeking the origin of consciousness and exploring the mind-body relationship, discusses the definition of consciousness. He says, like many terms, consciousness does not have a specific definition that is based on its nature, characteristics, or necessary and sufficient conditions. However, it is very important to be precise about what we are talking because the phenomenon of consciousness needs to be distinguished from other phenomena such as attention, knowledge, and self-consciousness (Searle, 2019: 16). However, if we make a distinction between analytical definitions, which aim to analyse the underlying nature of the phenomenon, and definitions based on commonsense, which only clarify what we are talking about, presenting a definition based on commonsense is by no means difficult. In my opinion, consciousness is an internal, first-person, and qualitative phenomenon (Searle, 2015:

15). Chalmers (1997: 11) describes consciousness as a mental state that is conscious if there is something it is like to be in that state. I call this the quality of experience or phenomenal consciousness. Additionally, he (1995: 53) divides the problem of consciousness into the "easy" and "hard" parts, considering experience or phenomenal consciousness as the hard part.

Due to the existence of different definitions of consciousness, researchers have expressed their own understanding of consciousness based on its definition or its types and categories in various studies. In this research, we will focus on examining two types of consciousness that are more frequently used in the Qur'an: phenomenal consciousness and representational consciousness. Perhaps the simplest definition for a better understanding of phenomenal consciousness is that when observing a disease in someone else, our information is formed through observation or the patient's statements (functional consciousness). However, if we ourselves become the patient, the information stored in our mind will be first-hand information (phenomenal consciousness). Therefore, consciousness (phenomenal) is equal to storing information in the mind and perceiving it (Hamidizadeh 2017: 1). To define representational consciousness, we first need to define representation. Mental representations are providers and reflectors of an object's or a real situation's characteristics (Friedenberg and Silverman, 2020: 4-5). Therefore, when we become aware of the existence of something, such as a disease, and think about its characteristics, we have representational consciousness.

2.2. Graph

A graph is a collection of vertices (also known as nodes) connected together by a set of edges (also known as arcs). The edges can be either undirected or directed, with each type serving various purposes. The main application of graphs is in modelling various phenomena and conducting analysis on them. With graphs, one can easily store a large map or an extensive network within a matrix called an Incidence matrix of the graph or apply suitable algorithms to it (Cormen et al. 2001: 529). One type of graph employed in this research is an ontological graph, which is used to represent the network of concepts found in the text. As it visually represents logical relationships, it helps prevent cognitive errors in inference and reasoning. Ontology encompasses two main

elements, concepts (and concept instances) and relationships (between concepts) (Sanatjoo 2012: 220).

The Conceptual Map of Consciousness in the Qur'an

To extract cognitive functions related to consciousness from the Qur'an, two methods were employed. First, after studying cognitive books related to consciousness, verses of the Qur'an were examined in order, taking into account the vocabulary indicating human perception of oneself and the surrounding environment, leading to consciousness. Then, we referred to cognitive books to extract fine cognitive functions from them. The most important cognitive functions in cognitive science include perceptual functions, attentional functions, executive functions, social cognitive functions, and memory function, each of which has its own sub-functions mentioned below. However, behavioural functions and functions unrelated to consciousness have been removed from this list. Then, we proceeded to match the obtained list with the Qur'an.

3.1. Categorization of Concepts Related to Consciousness

After extracting the words related to consciousness from the Qur'an and homogenizing the words that convey a unified meaning despite their different appearances, 288 terms were obtained. These terms were divided into five general categories based on their relationship with the concept of consciousness (Figure 1). These five categories include presence and absence of consciousness, the agent of consciousness, emotions resulting from consciousness, tools of consciousness, and consequences of consciousness.
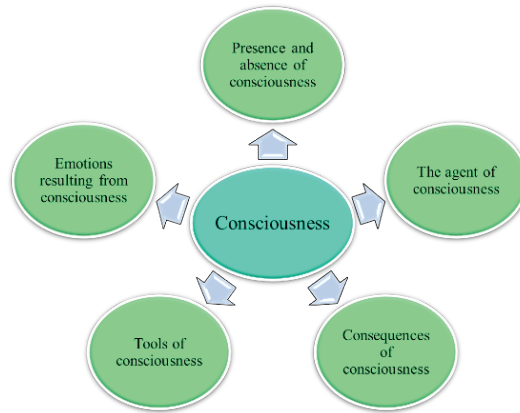
Figure 1. Five general categories of consciousness in the Qur'an

3.1.1. Presence and Absence of Consciousness

This category includes 59 cognitive functions that consists of words directly related to presence and absence of consciousness, such as notice, information, and ignorance. The list of these lexicons is shown in Figure 2.
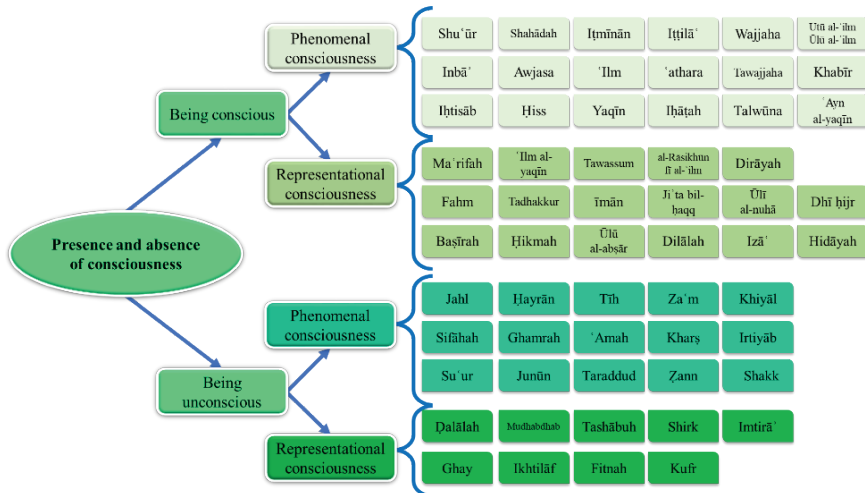

Figure 2. Classification of the terms associated with presence and absence of consciousness in the Qur'an

3.1.2. Agents of Consciousness

This category encompasses processes that contribute to creating or preventing consciousness in humans, serving as facilitators or inhibitors in attaining consciousness. These processes can be further divided into internal and external categories. External processes involve an external agent, such as inspiration or temptation, being the cause of creating or inhibiting consciousness. On the other hand, internal processes involve an internal agent, such as thinking or heedlessness (*ghaflah*), being the cause of creating or inhibiting consciousness in an individual. The internal category consists of two types of processes: sensory-phenomenal (creating consciousness through the five senses) and non-sensory-phenomenal (creating consciousness through internal perceptions), each of which involves internal causes and obstacles to consciousness. The external category also includes external causes and obstacles to consciousness. We identified 44 words in this category, which can be seen in Figure 3.
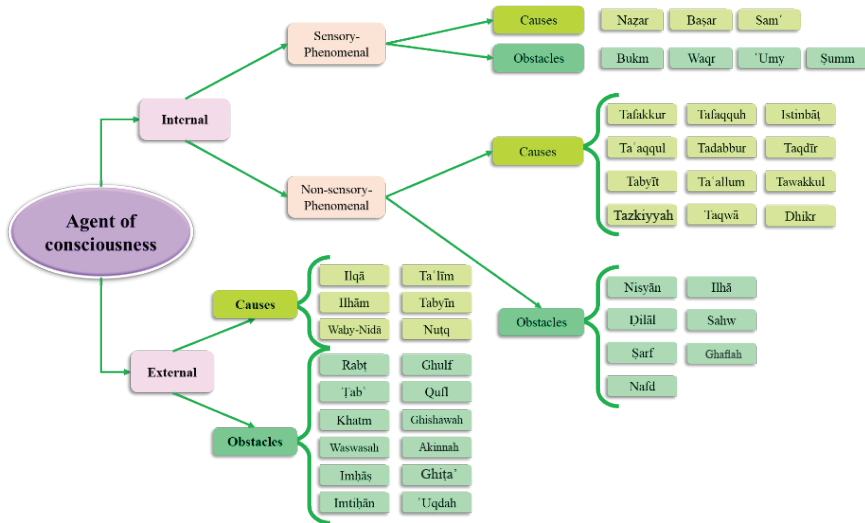

Figure 3. Classification of the terms associated with agents of consciousness in the Qur'an

3.1.3. Emotions Caused by Consciousness

This category includes 131 cognitive functions related to consciousness. It encompasses emotions and feelings that are generated by being or becoming conscious of something. For example, becoming conscious of

a certain issue can lead to discomfort or anger in an individual. To classify these emotions and feelings, it is necessary to examine their well-known classifications in cognitive science, enabling easy categorization of emotions in the Qur'an as well. The Emotion Wheel is one of the most renowned classifications of emotions in cognitive science (Figure 4).

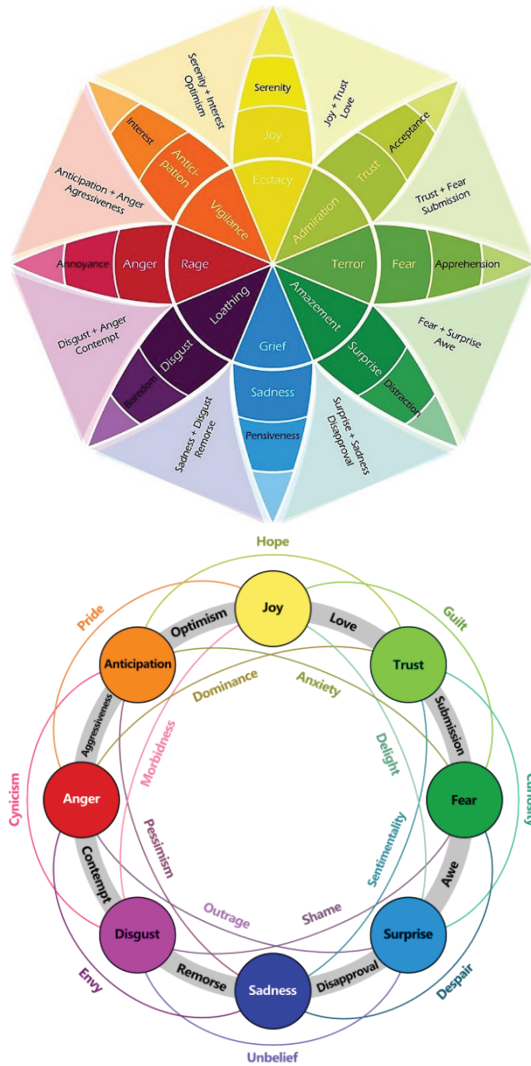**Figure 4.** a. Emotion Wheel (Plutchik 2000); b. Graph displaying the primary, secondary, and tertiary dyads on the Plutchik wheel of emotions (ChaoticBrain 2019).

Based on Plutchik's classification, the categorization of emotions stemming from consciousness in the Qur'an was addressed (Figure 5).

Figure 5. The terms associated with emotions caused by consciousness in the Qur'an based on the classification of Emotion Wheel
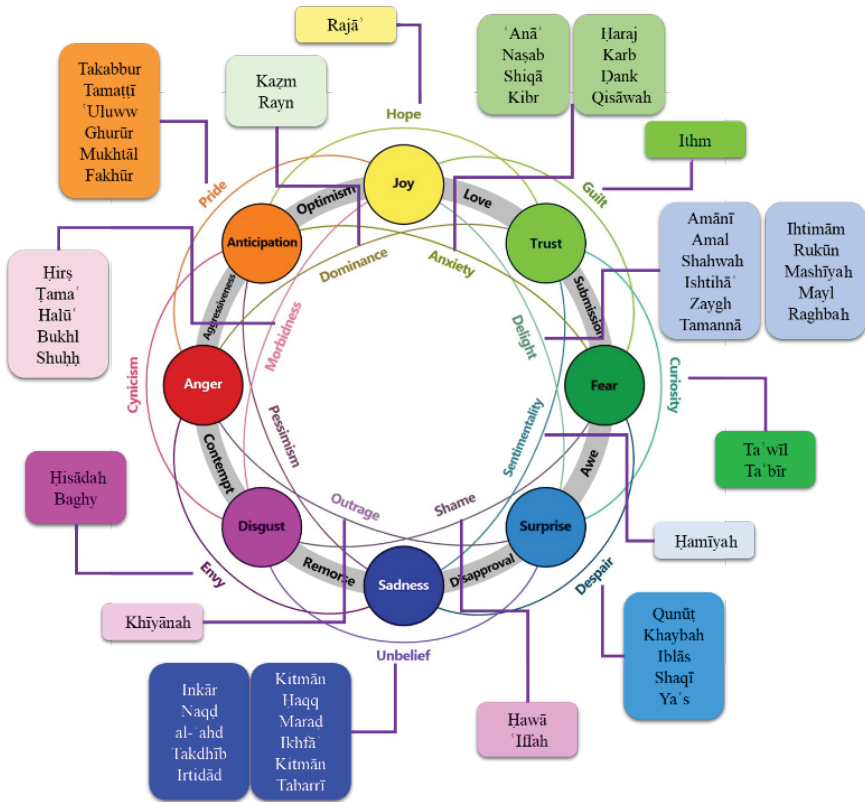
Figure 6. The terms associated with emotions caused by consciousness in the Qur'an based on Plutchik's Emotion Wheel redesigned by ChaoticBrain (2019)

3.1.4. Tools of Consciousness

This category includes 24 terms divided into two classes, sensory and mental. The sensory tools include the tools of the five senses, four of which are mentioned in the Qur'an, viz., eye (*'ayn*), ear (*udhun*), tongue (*lisān, afwāh*), and touch (*aṣābi'*). The mental terms consist of non-sensory tools mentioned in the Qur'an that are attributed with various cognitive functions, which will be discussed in subsequent sections. Figure 7 illustrates these tools and their categorization.
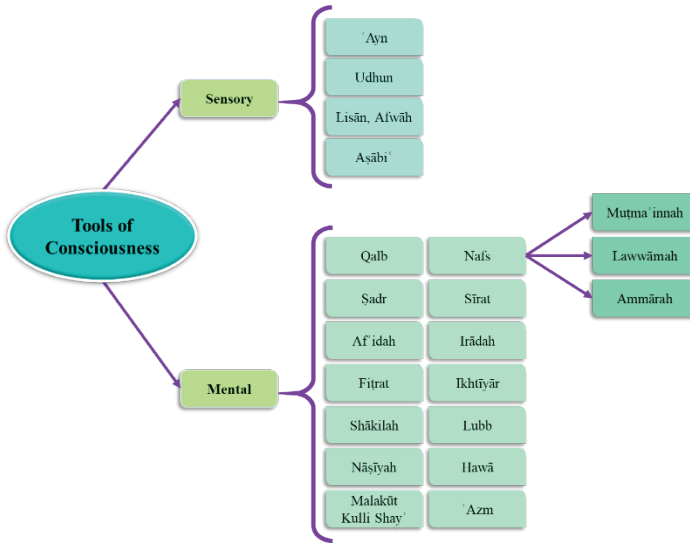
Figure 7. Classification of the terms associated with the tools of consciousness in the Qur'an

3.1.5. Consequences of Consciousness

The terms in this category consist of words that are the results of being aware or unaware. For example, a conscious human recognizes his or her duty to obey God and His righteous servants, while an unconscious individual tends to engage in disobedience. The words present in this category are 30 in total, and their list is provided in Figure 8.

Figure 8. The terms associated with consequences of consciousness in the Qur'an

3.2. Constructing the Conceptual Map of Consciousness-related Terms

After extracting the terms related to consciousness using the two mentioned approaches, the most frequent concepts were identified to create a conceptual map of consciousness-related terms (Figure 9). Then, the concept of adjacency matrix was obtained. This matrix revealed which concepts co-occurred with each other in the verses and the frequency of these co-occurrences. Since the number of concepts related to consciousness was much larger than what could be graphed in its entirety, it was decided to gradually draw the concept co-occurrence graph of consciousness-related terms using the co-occurrence matrix and online graph visualization tools. For this purpose, a graph was initially drawn for the concepts that had co-occurrence more than twenty times (Figure 12), followed by graphs for co-occurrence more than seventeen times (Figure 13), and more than ten times (Figure 14). The central core of the graph was also drawn by pruning the nodes with a degree of less than fifty (considering two co-occurrences as the threshold for considering an edge) (Figure 11). The degree of a node refers to the number of connections attached to that node, and in the central core graph, nodes with more than fifty connections to other nodes were represented.
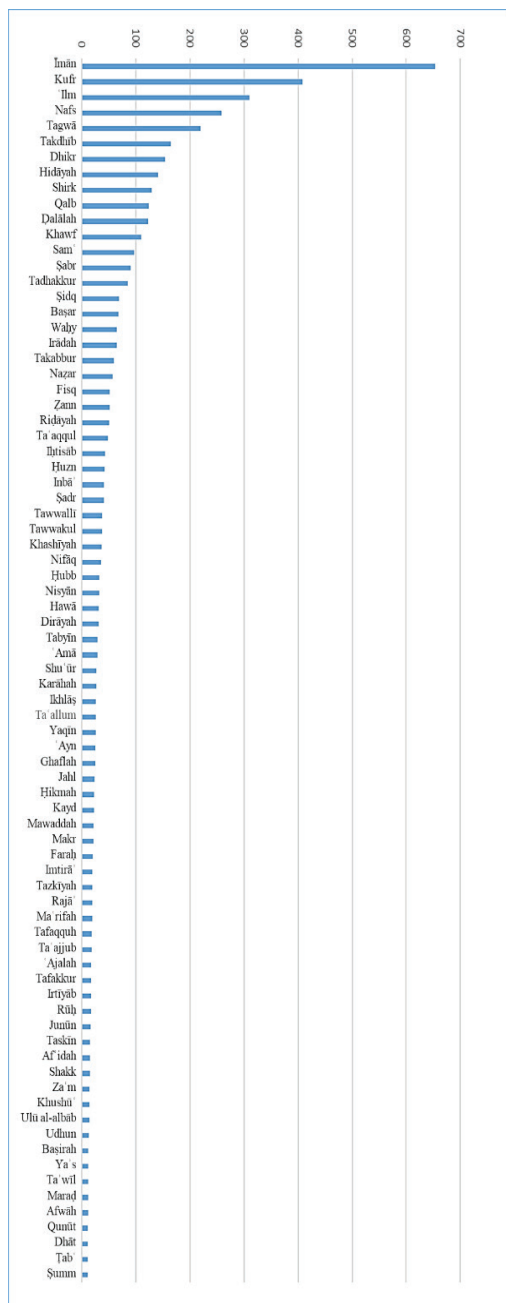
Figure 9. The most frequent concepts related to consciousness in the Qur'an

After examining all the verses of the Qur'an and extracting cognitive functions, a total of 3,268 verses, which is more than half of the Qur'an verses, were selected as having one or more cognitive functions. The distribution chart of these terms is as follows (Figure 10).

$$y = 3598.3e^{-0.804x}$$
$$R^2 = 0.9849$$
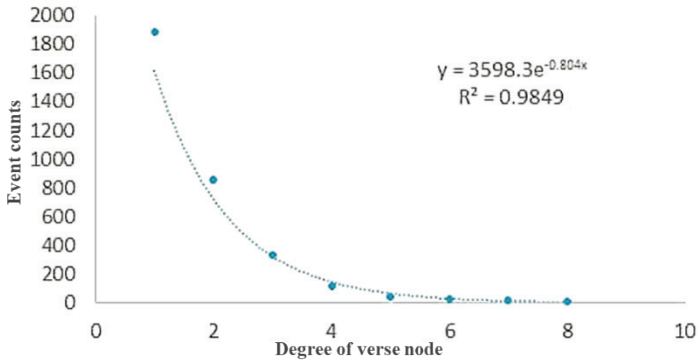
Figure 10. Distribution of event counts for verse node degree

After categorizing the terms, a conceptual map of them was drawn to facilitate analysis and graphing. Initially, the core of the concept graph related to consciousness in the Qur'an was drawn. To draw the core graph, nodes with a degree of less than fifty (considering the co-occurrence threshold for edge inclusion) were pruned. In other words, among all the extracted concepts from the verses, only the concepts that had a co-occurrence relationship (more than two times) with more than fifty other concepts were considered (Figure 11).
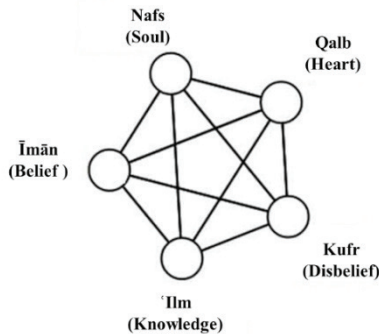
Figure 11. The core of the graph of the consciousness-related concepts in the Qur'an

This graph demonstrates that every individual, according to Qur'anic strategies, should consider other cognitive pillars to enhance their faith. That is, refining the soul (*nafs*), purifying the heart (*qalb*), seeking knowledge (*'ilm*), and staying away from disbelief (*kufr*) are necessary for the elevation of faith (*īmān*). After drawing the core of the graph, edges were drawn for concepts that had co-occurrences more than twenty times, meaning edges with weights less than twenty were pruned in the graph (Figure 12).
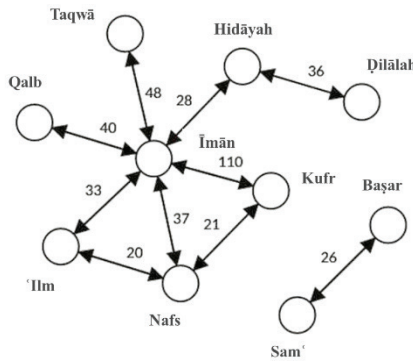
Figure 12. The concepts related to consciousness with co-occurrences more than twenty times in the Qur'an

An interesting point in this graph is that the verse Q. 2:130, *"And who turns away from the religion of Abraham, but such as debase their souls with folly,"*[1] is clearly evident in this graph. On one side, the soul is connected with a weight of about twenty to disbelief, and on the other side, it is connected with a weight of twenty to knowledge, and knowledge is connected to faith. Therefore, it can be concluded that increasing knowledge can bring the soul closer to faith. Then, a graph was drawn for co-occurrences more than seventeen times, meaning edges with weights less than seventeen were pruned in this graph (Figure 13).

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1.   وَ مَنْ يَرْغَبُ عَنْ مِلَّةِ إِبْراهيمَ إِلاَّ مَنْ سَفِهَ نَفْسَهُ (البقرة/130)
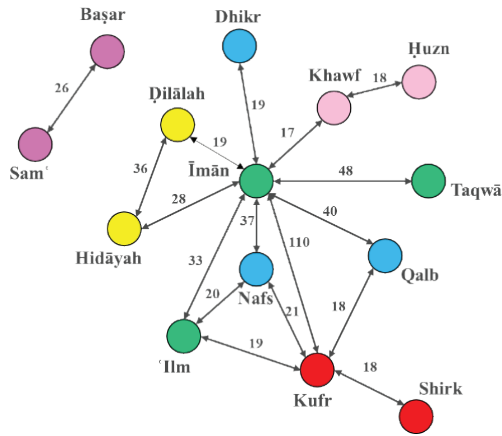
Figure 13. The concepts related to consciousness with co-occurrences more than seventeen times

After that, to facilitate the analysis and examination, the graph was drawn for co-occurrences more than ten times, which summarizes all the relevant concepts related to consciousness. It represents the conceptual map and terms related to human consciousness in the Qur'an (Figure 14).

Figure 14. The conceptual map of consciousness-related concepts with co-occurrences more than ten times in the Qur'an

This graph includes important cognitive concepts related to human consciousness. The concepts, in the order of the number of repetitions and their connections, include *īmān* (faith), *kufr* (disbelief), *nafs* (soul), *taqwā* (virtue), *takdhīb* (denial), *dhikr* (remembrance), *hidāyah* (guidance), *shirk* (polytheism), *qalb* (heart), *ḍalālah* (misguidance), *khawf* (fear), *sam'* (hearing), *ṣabr* (patience), *tadhakkur* (recall), *ṣidq* (truthfulness), *baṣar* (sight), *waḥy* (revelation), *irādah* (will), *takabbur* (arrogance), *naẓar* (foresight), *fisq* (immorality), *ẓann* (suspicion), *riḍāyah* (satisfaction), *ta'aqqul* (contemplation) and *iḥtisāb* (assumption). The graph shows that soul, heart, hearing, and sight are the most frequently used tools for generating consciousness, which are extensively mentioned in the Qur'an and assigned various cognitive functions.

3.2. Analysis of the Graph of Qalb and Nafs

Considering the second question of the study and finding the most important tools of human consciousness in the Qur'an, we will examine

the graph of *qalb* (heart) and its synonymous terms in the Qur'an, as well as the graph of *nafs* (soul) as two significant tools of consciousness.

3.2.1. Qalb (Heart)

The analysis of the connections between the heart and other consciousness-related terms shows that there are four types of relationships between the heart and these terms from the perspective of the Qur'an (Figure 15):

A. Having (a feature): the heart possesses certain features and functions such as *īmān* (faith), *kufr* (disbelief), comprehension, *taʿaqqul* (contemplation), *tadabbur* (meditation), *khawf* (fear), *sakīnah/ ikhbāt* (calmness), *ishmiʾzāz* (abhorrence), *niyyah* (intention), etc.

B. Getting (a feature): the heart can get *hidāyah* (guidance), *ghaflah* (negligence) *ilhāʾ* (wandering), and *qisāwah* (inclemency).

C. Being affected: The heart can be affected by some external features that often reduce consciousness, such as, *khatm* and *ṭabʿ* (sealing). However, *nuzūl al-Qurʾān* (revelation of the Qur'an), which was on the heart of the Prophet, is included in this category because it is considered an external factor that affects the heart.

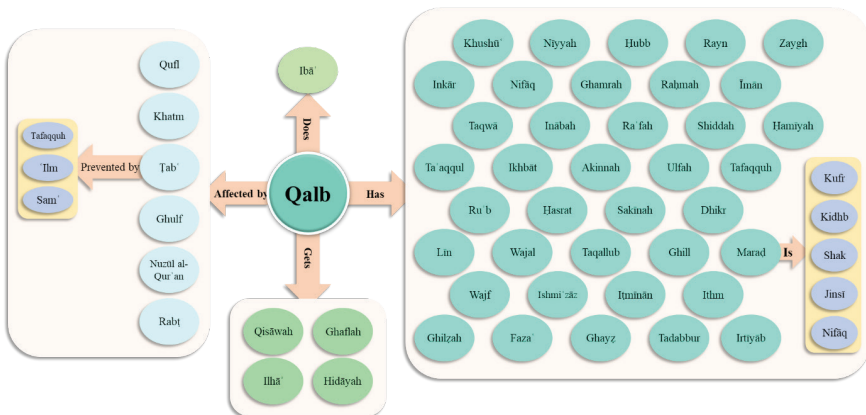D. Doing: the heart can refrain (*ibāʾ*) from certain things.

Figure 15. Graph of the connections of qalb with other consciousness-related cognitive terms in the Qur'an

It is also worth noting that among the functions of the heart mentioned in the Qur'an, only two terms, *dhikr* (remembrance) and *nīyyah* (intention), are common with the concept of *nafs* (soul).

3.2.2. Af'idah (Hearts)

The connection of *af'idah* with other cognitive terms in the Qur'an is of the type of "having" that shows what characteristics, functions or abilities *af'idah* can have (Figure 16).
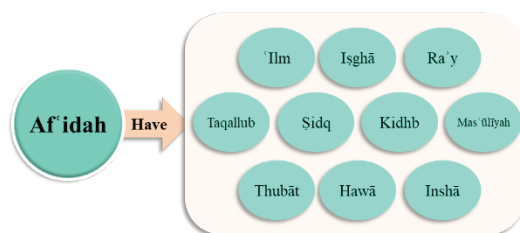
Figure 16. Graph of the connections of af'idah with other consciousness-related cognitive terms in the Qur'an

Furthermore, the findings show that *af'idah* and *qalb* have two functions in common, which are *kidhb* (falsehood) and *taqallub* (variation); however, *af'idah* and *ṣadr* (chest) do not share any similar function.

3.2.3. Ṣadr (Chest)

The term *ṣadr* (chest), according to the perspective of the Qur'an, has three categories of connections with other cognitive concepts related to consciousness (Figure 17):

- A. Having: *ṣadr* possesses certain features and functions such as *niyyah* (intention), *waswasah* (temptation), etc.
- B. Being the position of: This category demonstrates that *ṣadr* is the position of *qalb* and the Qur'an.
- C. Doing: *ṣadr* can conceal (*ikhfā'*) secrets from the perspective of the Qur'an.

It is noteworthy that *ṣadr* and *qalb* have two functions in common, which are *niyyah* (intention) and *ghill* (spite). Furthermore, they are both introduced as the position of the Qur'an.

Out of the eleven characteristics of *ṣadr* in the Qur'an (not counting being a position for *qalb*), seven characteristics, that is about 64% of its characteristics, are shared with *nafs*, which include *waswasah* (temptation), *nīyyah* (intention), *ḍayq* (tightness), *ḥaraj* (straitness), *ḥājah* (need), *dhāt* (essence) and *ikhfā'* (concealment). This issue shows that probably the meaning of *ṣadr* in the Qur'an is not the common meaning of the physical human chest.

Figure 17. Graph of the connections of ṣadr with other consciousness-related cognitive terms in the Qur'an
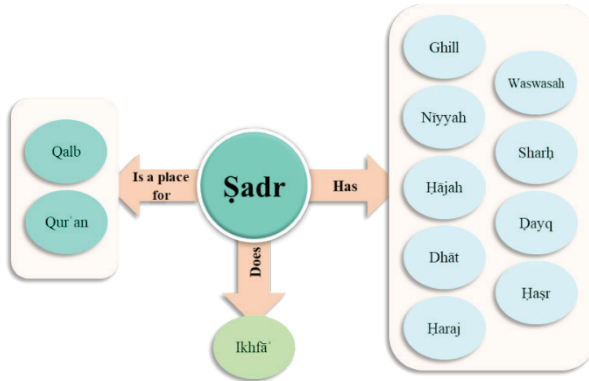
3.2.4. Nafs (Soul)

The graph of *nafs* connections with other cognitive terms, as the most connected tool for creating consciousness, was drawn considering all meanings and uses of *nafs*, not just the meaning of soul (Figure 18). The subsequent graph only illustrates the connections of *nafs* – that is, the soul – in the Qur'an (Figure 19).

70
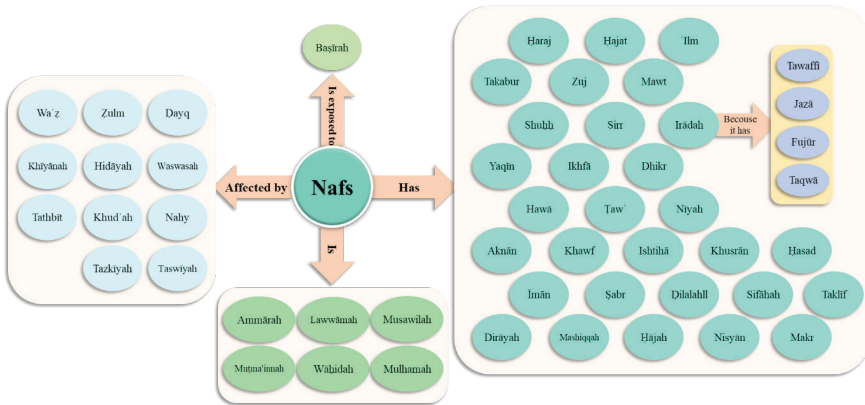
Figure 18. Graph of the connections of nafs with other consciousness-related cognitive terms in the Qur'an

This graph demonstrates that *nafs* as the most frequently used tool of consciousness has four types of connections with other cognitive concepts related to consciousness:

A. Having: *nafs* possesses several cognitive attributes and functions such as *dirāyah* (cleverness), *'ilm* (knowledge), *yaqīn* (certainty), *zawj* (couple), *hawā* (craving), etc.

B. Being affected: Various factors can influence *nafs* such as *ẓulm* (injustice), *waswasah* (temptation), *taswiyyah* (balancing), etc.

C. Being in a state: This connection represents that *nafs* can be in different states such as *al-nafs al-ammārah* (the willing soul to evil), *al-nafs al-lawwāmah* (the blaming soul), *al-nafs al-muṭma'innah* (the fully assured soul), *al-nafs al-mulhamah* (the inspired soul), *al-nafs al-musāwilah* (the deceptive soul), and *al-nafs al-wāḥidah* (the unique soul).

D. Being exposed: *Nafs* can be exposed to *baṣīrah* (insight) of human beings. This connection is mentioned in verse Q. 75:14, which states, *"In fact, people are well-aware of their own soul."*[1]

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1. «بَلِ الْإِنْسانُ عَلى نَفْسِهِ بَصيرَة» (القيامة/14)
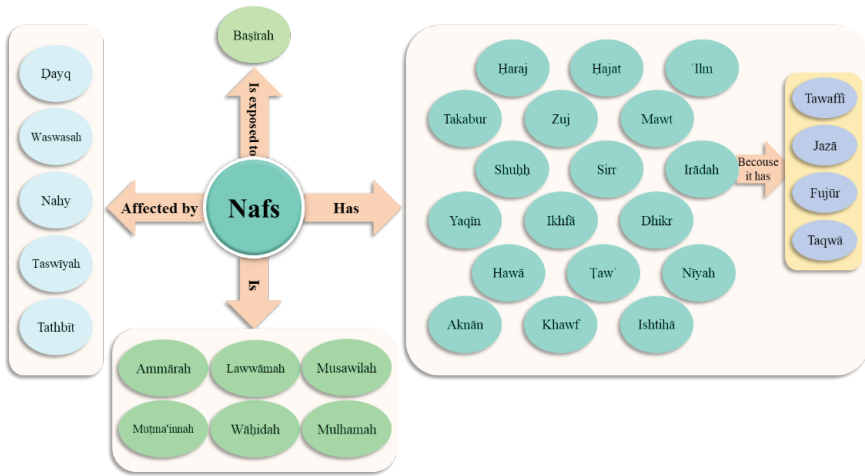
Figure 19. Graph of the connections of nafs only in the meaning of soul with other consciousness-related cognitive terms in the Qur'an

Examining the graph of *qalb* and *nafs* shows that despite the several similarities between their functions, the Qur'an assigns the features of *mawt* (death) and *'ilm* (knowledge) as well as *taswiyyah* (balancing) only to *nafs*:

"When it is properly shaped and I have blown My Spirit into it, you should then bow down in prostration" (Q.15:29; 38:72).[1]

Although most interpreters consider *taswiyyah* to refer to balance in the human body (Tabataba'i 1996: 12:154; al-Ṭabarī 1991: 14:22; al-Ṭūsī 2002: 8:580), there is a view that believes that *taswiyyah* is attributed to *nafs*, not physical body, in this verse. *Taswiyyah* is derived from the root "S,W,Y" meaning equality and moderation between two things, and in the form of verb, it means creating balance and equality. So, what does creating moderation in humans mean? According to verses Q. 91:7-8,[2] the object of moderation is *nafs*, not the body, and the consequence of this balancing is the inspiration of immortality and piety to *nafs*. It seems that in the balancing stage, the human soul was equipped with the two forces of immorality and piety, and moderation was established

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1. «فَإِذا سَوَّيْتُهُ وَ نَفَخْتُ فيهِ مِنْ رُوحي فَقَعُوا لَهُ ساجِدين» (الحجر/29 و ص/72)

2. «وَ نَفْسٍ وَ ما سَوَّاها * فَأَلْهَمَها فُجُورَها وَ تَقْواها» (الشمس/7-8)

"By the Soul, and the proportion and order given to it, and its inspiration as to its wrong and its right" (Q.91:7-8).

between these two. Along with this event in the realm of the Kingdom, the divine spirit was blown into the soul (Q. 15:29; 38:72; 32:9). As a result, the blowing of the spirit is the origin of human's special perception of good and evil and inspires piety to *nafs* while the physical creation is the origin of bodily needs and desires (*hawā*) (Q. 79:40), and inspires immortality, that causes the temptation (*waswasah*) for the soul (Q. 50:16). Thus, the human soul is influenced by his two dimensions, the earthly and the spiritual. It seems that with the improvement of human material creation, the soul was created, which had the ability to coexist with the divine spirit while being dependent on soil and matter (Rohani Mashhadi 2018: 71-72).

Having these three exclusive characteristics, i.e., *mawt* (death) and *'ilm* (knowledge) as well as *taswiyyah* (balancing) for the soul, along with its other characteristics, can indicate that God has chosen the name *nafs* for the human mind as a means of consciousness and has balanced it in such a way that it can be connected to the human body and brain. Although more extensive research is needed in this issue, indications of this debate have also been seen in cognitive science.

Hasker (1999: 189-190), as an emergentist, says, "The soul is not an external and additional component of the body. When the material parts are organized in a complex relationship and with the necessary proportion, the field of consciousness emerges and manifests itself." Chalmers' discussion of the fundamental nature of consciousness has similarities to the concept of *taswīyah* of *nafs* in the Qur'an. Chalmers claims that first, the evidence indicates the existence of consciousness; second, it is possible to conceive of a (physical) world without consciousness. Therefore, consciousness has been added (attached) to this physical world. To explain this attached consciousness (which is not reductive), what should we do? He answers that we should develop our ontology by adding consciousness to other fundamental forces. If someone asks how we know that our physical world possesses consciousness, Chalmers gives the famous and perennial answer, that is, introspection. The first-person introspection forms the basis of our perception of consciousness. He takes first-person as a criterion for receiving introspection and says, "Our knowledge of conscious experience is primarily derived from ourselves, while external evidence at best plays a secondary (or incidental) role" (Zakeri & Hosseini 2017: 178-179).

In this way, based on the functions of *nafs* in the Qur'an and the recent discussions in cognitive science, some of which were mentioned,

it can be concluded that the existential factor of human, which possesses consciousness, is likely *nafs*. It should be noted that *nafs* is completely different from *rūḥ* (spirit), however they have sometimes been considered the same, in philosophy or interpretation of the Qur'an. The applications of *rūḥ* in the Qur'an show that it is not the agent of human consciousness but rather this responsibility has been entrusted to *nafs* (Figure 20).

Figure 20. Graph of the connections of rūḥ in the Qur'an (Rohani Mashhadi 2021: 127)

4. Conclusion

The conceptual map created from terms related to human consciousness in the Qur'an shows that the concepts of *qalb* (heart), *nafs* (soul), *īmān* (faith), *kufr* (disbelief) and *'ilm* (knowledge), which have co-occurrence with more than fifty other consciousness-related terms, constitute the central core of this graph. This can suggest that, for example, increasing faith can be associated with refining the soul and heart, increasing knowledge, and avoiding disbelief. This map also indicates that *nafs* (soul), *qalb* (heart), hearing (*samʿ*), and sight (*baṣar*) are the most used tools for creating consciousness, which several cognitive functions attributed to them.

In total, 288 terms related to consciousness were extracted from 3,268 verses, which were classified into five categories including the presence and absence of consciousness, the agents of consciousness, emotions resulting from consciousness, tools of consciousness, and consequences

of consciousness. This issue suggests that in more than half of the verses of the Qur'an, i.e., 52% of the verses, attention has been paid to the discussion of consciousness and cognitive functions related to it.

According to the general and special features the Qur'an assigns to *nafs* such as *mawt* (death), *'ilm* (knowledge), *taswiyyah* (balancing), etc., it seems that *nafs* is a term chosen for the human mind in the Qur'an. *Nafs* has been balanced in such a way that it can communicate with both earthy and spiritual dimensions of humans and lead them to consciousness. In other words, based on the functions the Qur'an introduces for *nafs*, as well as some recent discussions in cognitive science, it seems that the existential factor within humans, possessing consciousness, is likely *nafs*, which is completely different from the spirit (*rūḥ*), from the perspective of the Qur'an; however, sometimes they are mistakenly considered the same.

Finally, it should be said that although the Qur'an possibly refers to the mind as *nafs*, further studies are still required to answer the question of what exactly *nafs* is, just as the precise nature of the mind has not yet been determined in cognitive science.

Acknowledgement

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A Qur'anic Approach to the Formulation of Political Participation in an Illegitimate Political System

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ABSTRACT: Original Paper

In both theory and practice, political participation is considered to be one of the most significant political challenges. The Qur'an is the main religious source that makes it possible for political explanations to be given in respect of such issues. This study aims to formulate the types of political participation in an illegitimate political system in order to identify acceptable types in the light of the teachings of the Qur'an. The hypothesis of this research, carried out with the method of thematic interpretation, is that from the Qur'anic perspective, in an illegitimate political system, diverse types of positive and negative participation are authorised, depending on the circumstances, from participation in power structures to conflicting with the aim of reducing or eliminating oppression.

In this regard, seven types of positive and negative political participation in an illegitimate political system have been identified in the Qur'an: positive political participation such as criticism and objection, guidance through dialogue and debate, and participation through *taqiyyah* (religious dissimulation); negative political participation such as non-cooperation, civil disobedience, declaration of aversion, struggle against it and overthrowing it. Based on this, the article concludes that according to the Qur'an, various types of positive and negative political participation are permissible in confronting an illegitimate political system.

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The Qur'an describes the behaviour of the prophets and Qur'anic figures in the confrontation with an illegitimate system as a wide range of minimal to maximal participation with the aim of eliminating oppression.

KEYWORDS: Political participation, illegitimate political regime, critical participation, suppressive participation, political-thematic interpretation of the Qur'an, political theology.

1. Introduction

Political participation has always been a significant challenge in both theoretical and practical contexts. The complexities and nuances of political systems and their impact on societies require a comprehensive understanding of the various forms of participation that can be considered acceptable. The interpretation and application of religious texts have been significant in shaping political explanations and approaches towards such issues. In this regard, the Qur'an, as the main religious source in Islam, offers valuable insights that shed light on the types of political participation in an illegitimate political system that align with its teachings.

This study aims to explore and formulate the types of political participation that are permissible within an illegitimate political system, based on the teachings of the Qur'an. Through the method of "thematic interpretation", the hypothesis of this research is that the Qur'an authorizes diverse forms of both positive and negative political participation in such systems, depending on the circumstances. These forms range from participation within power structures to engage in conflicts aimed at eliminating oppression.

The Qur'an provides a rich description of the behaviour of prophets and other Qur'anic figures in their confrontations with illegitimate systems, showing various types of authorized participation. The teachings of the Qur'an encourage believers to adopt different strategies, depending on the specific circumstances. By providing guidance on the types of participation allowed, the Qur'an serves as a valuable resource in understanding and addressing the challenges of political participation within an illegitimate system that will be examined in detail.

1.1. Literature Review

There are few articles about political participation from the perspective of the Qur'an, such as the article on the right of citizens to participate and political freedom with an emphasis on the Holy Qur'an (Seyyedbagheri 2019, 41-65), which observed political participation and its role in freedom in three stages. Another article is political participation in the Islamic utopia from the perspective of the Qur'an and traditions (Yazdani 2018, 48-73). In addition, the books named "Political Participation in Shi'a Political Jurisprudence" (Izdehi 2016), "The Index of Political Participation in the Model of Islamic Progress" (Kholusi 2015), and "The Strategies in Shi'a Political Jurisprudence to Expand Political Participation" (Rahmani 2014) provide a jurisprudential description of political participation. However, in this study, an attempt has been made to collect and analyse all relevant verses with a comprehensive view of the Qur'an in order to obtain the Qur'anic perspective on the types of political participation in the face of illegitimate political systems.

1.2. Theoretical Framework: Types of Political Participation

Political participation is primarily of a positive nature. Although some have considered any voluntary and conscious political action effective in the political destiny of the individual and society as political participation, even if it is negative, (Reynolds 1979, 180; Majdi Nasab 2014, 55). Political participation in the positive dimension refers to legitimate political behaviours that include the following: (1) Voting, (2) Campaigning, (3) Supporting parties or candidates, (4) Membership in political associations, (5) Membership in pressure groups or political subcultures, (6) Political party membership, (7) Attitudinal and behavioural affiliation with (and not necessarily membership in) political factions, and (8) Any questions, criticisms, objections, and advice regarding the political system.

The negative dimensions of political participation can also be observed in the following examples: (1) Following extremist ideas, (2) Acting violently, (3) Murder or political assassination and (4) Rebellion, because this type of illegitimate behaviour is a form of political participation that, if widespread, is more influential and decisive than voting for the political policies of the government (Reynolds 1979, 180).

On this basis, some have divided forms of political participation into two types: conventional and non-conventional. Conventional political

participation is such as election campaigns, and non-conventional political participation includes legal and illegal actions. Begley also mentions six types of political participation: cognitive, expressive, organizational, electoral, governmental, and guerrilla (Majdi Nasab 2014, 55). Dahl also classifies political participation based on legality and illegality into peaceful political participation and non-peaceful political participation (Mosaffa 2016, 56). In this study, by accepting the division of political participation into positive and negative, positive political participation means peaceful participation based on cooperation and interaction. The foundation of negative political engagement is conflict, struggle, and subversion.

1.3. Research Methodology

This is a library research using inferential thematic interpretation (*tafsīr mawḍūʿī*) method. There are several definitions for thematic interpretation among experts (Sobhani 2006, 1:11). In the method of thematic interpretation, the commentator (*mufassir*) does not examine the Qur'anic verses in order from beginning to end, but rather tries to focus his research on one of the subjects dealt with in the Qur'an and explain and study it (al-Ṣadr 2019, 12). Some scholars have said that thematic interpretation is a method that discusses various issues of the Qur'an (which have unity of meaning or unity of purpose) by collecting scattered verses in the *sūrah*s of the Qur'an ('Abd al-Sattār 1997). Maʿrefat also considers thematic interpretation as an answer to various issues from the perspective of the Qur'an; whether the issue is taken from the Qur'an or from the realities of life and social needs. This second type can be considered making the Qur'an speak, which can also be gleaned from the words of Imām 'Alī[1] (Marviyan 2007).

Selected definition of thematic interpretation in this research using Jalili's definition (1993, 170) is that thematic interpretation is an effort to understand methodically the opinion of the Qur'an on issues arising from human knowledge that the Qur'an is expected to have a word about, through collection of related verses that are united in terms of meaning or purpose.

In the thematic interpretation method, it is also possible to use narrations (*aḥādīth*), history, and sciences related to the verses in order to explain the issue (Javadi Amuli 1995, 40-50; al-Nahāwandī 1979, 1:28).

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1. *dhālika al-Qur'ān fastanṭiqūh* (al-Raḍī 2000).

2. Concepts and Terminology

2.1. Political Participation

There are different definitions and views of political participation among political science thinkers, arising from different intellectual and theoretical origins (Feyrahi 1998, 44; Mosaffa 2016, 9; Alikhani 1998, 61). However, there are commonalities in some components. Political participation is associated with important theories that limit and expand the scope of political participation. Elitism theory limits and restricts significant political participation to the elites and considers the masses mainly inactive or tools of the elites. Pluralism theory views political participation as key to political behaviour because it is an important factor in explaining the distribution of power and determining policy. This view can be useful if it is separated from its absolute pluralistic and epistemological content, which is unacceptable from the Islamic point of view, and if it is limited to political processes. Political participation is also important in Marxist theories, but the disadvantages of this approach are the class nature and the extreme attention to structures and the neglect of the objectivity of the agent.

Lucian Pye (1991) defines it as any voluntary action, successful or unsuccessful, organized or unorganized, periodic or continuous, which involves the use of legal or illegal methods to influence the choice of public policies, the administration of public affairs, the selection of political leaders at any level of local or national government. In Rush's definition, political participation is the involvement of an individual in various levels of activity in the political system, ranging from no involvement to holding an official political position (Rush 1998, 123).

The definition chosen in this research is that political participation is the active and often conscious participation of members of society, individually or collectively, in the public arena and the process of social influence and the exercise of power, decision-making and implementation in a supportive, controlling, and competitive manner. On this ground, first, most of the unconscious actions are removed; second, passive actions are eliminated. In addition, the desirable and ideal political participation from the religious point of view is an activity that considers the overall material and spiritual well-being of society and does not reduce it to a specific form and dimension, especially material well-being. This research also takes into consideration the relationships

and the relations of exercising power in the society and towards the government.

2.2. Illegitimate Political System

The political systems may be illegitimate in terms of behaviour or the origin of the ruling, or both, and refer governments that have rebelled against the divine governance and opposed the just rule or usurped the power unjustly.

Wilāyat Ṭāghūt is a theory in Shi'a jurisprudence according to which any government that is not headed by an infallible Imam cannot be considered legitimate and obedience to it is not allowed (Tabataba'i 2006, 493). Illegitimate political systems in the Qur'an are introduced with titles such as the unjust government, the infidel government (Q. 4:141), the government of the cruel, the rule of the hypocrites, the arrogant rule (Q. 35:43; 71:7; 2:34; 28:39), and the rebellious rule (*ṭāghūt*). The word *ṭāghūt*, which is somewhat a collection of the above titles, is mentioned eight times in the Qur'an (Q. 2:256-257; 4:51, 60, 76; 16:36; 39:17; 55:60). Although the word *ṭāghūt* has various examples that include all non-divine and evil manifestations, one of the most important examples of it is governance, which the majority of commentators have acknowledged (Tabataba'i 1996, 2:76).

3. Qur'anic Approach to Forms of Political Participation

Political participation based on the validity of the political system can be divided into political participation under the legitimate political system and the illegitimate political system, including both positive and negative participation. However, these two types do not have a single ruling (*ḥukm*) in the Qur'an. In this section, we are going to examine how the Qur'an suggests participating in an illegitimate political system.

3.1. Positive Political Participations

3.1.1. Criticism and Protest

The first action of socio-political activists is to criticize and protest against the illegitimate political system. The Qur'an well describes in various verses the critical confrontation of the prophets with the rulers.

For example, it gives a clear and definitive account of Moses and Aaron's critical dealings with Pharaoh. In the verse Q. 20:47, Moses and Aaron's criticism (by divine command) of Pharaoh's political behaviour in persecuting the Children of Israel is expressed in gentle and benevolent but clear language.

> So go ye both to him, and say, 'Verily we are messengers sent by thy Lord: Send forth, therefore, the Children of Israel with us, and afflict them not: with a Sign, indeed, have we come from thy Lord! and peace to all who follow guidance'[1] (Q. 20:47).

According to the Qur'an, the first steps of political participation, even with regard to an oppressive system, should be with words of peace and encouragement.

> But speak to him mildly; perchance he may take warning or fear) Allah[2] (Q. 20:44).

While the protest should be mild, it should also be clear and firm. In verse 47, the choice of the word *fa'tīyāh* instead of *idhhabāh*, which indicates the greatness of the prophecy and the inferiority of Pharaoh's reign, shows this point (Tabataba'i 1996, 14:158; al-Zuḥaylī 1997, 4:1523; al-Ṭanṭawī n.d., 9:110). Additionally, the phrases "verily we are messengers sent by thy Lord'" and "with a Sign, indeed, have we come from thy Lord," ironically criticize Pharaoh's claim to be their Lord.

Another example is Abraham's clear and logical criticism of Nimrod's claim to divinity and his arrogant and exploitative political system. In verse Q. 2: 258, the Qur'an recounts Abraham's critical political action against Nimrod:

> Hast thou not turned thy vision to one who disputed with Abraham about his Lord, because Allah had granted him power? Abraham said: "My Lord is He Who Giveth life and death." He said: "I give life and death". Said Abraham: "But it is Allah that causeth the sun to rise from the east: Do thou then cause it to rise from the west." Thus was he confounded who (in arrogance)

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1. فَأْتِيَاهُ فَقُولَا إِنَّا رَسُولَا رَبِّكَ فَأَرْسِلْ مَعَنا بَنِي إِسْرائِيلَ وَ لا تُعَذِّبْهُمْ قَدْ جِئْناكَ بِآيَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّكَ وَ السَّلامُ عَلى مَنِ اتَّبَعَ الْهُدى (طه/47)

2. فَقُولَا لَهُ قَوْلاً لَيِّناً لَعَلَّهُ يَتَذَكَّرُ أَوْ يَخْشى (طه/44)

rejected faith. Nor doth Allah Give guidance to a people unjust[1] (Q. 2: 258).

All the exegetes considered the person before Abraham to be Nimrod (al- Balāghī 1999, 1:230; Tayyeb 1999, 3:24; Husseini Hamedani 1984, 2: 316). In this critical confrontation towards reforming participation, Abraham challenged and defeated Nimrod's alleged political domination with strong logic (Husseini Hamedani, 1984, 2:318).

3.1.2. Guiding through Dialogue and Debate

Another way to participate in political life in an illegitimate system is to guide and invite people to come to know the Truth and Justice. In this type of participation, people are invited to the truth and justice through dialogue, argument, and debate so that preparations are gradually made for the establishment of a faith-based political system. The debates of the Prophets with the leaders, nobles, and political elites who were adherents of the illegitimate system and their invitation to acknowledge the truth is one of the manifestations of this type of political participation in the Qur'an.

Abraham's debates with various individuals and elites (Hassanpourdehnavi et. al. 2019), especially Nimrod, belong to this category. The verse Q. 2:258 depicts Abraham's reasoned debate with the tyrant of the time. Abraham speaks of death and resurrection by God, while Nimrod arrogantly and ignorantly calls himself the killer and the reviver. Abraham replies that God makes the sun rise from the east – "If you can, then you are right' make it rise from the west." However, this demand cannot be answered by Nimrod.

The debate of Prophet Moses and Aaron with Pharaoh is another example mentioned in several places in the Qur'an. The verses Q. 26:23-48, narrate a serious and challenging conversation between Moses and Pharaoh, which shows the courage of Moses and his theoretical and practical proofs (miracles) against Pharaoh's arrogance and threats. The verses Q. 7:104-107 and Q. 20:49-56 likewise provide another account of Moses' debate with Pharaoh.

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1. أَ لَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِي حَاجَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ فِي رَبِّهِ أَنْ آتَاهُ اللَّهُ الْمُلْكَ إِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّيَ الَّذِي يُحْيِي وَ يُمِيتُ قَالَ أَنَا أُحْيِي
وَ أُمِيتُ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْتِي بِالشَّمْسِ مِنَ الْمَشْرِقِ فَأْتِ بِهَا مِنَ الْمَغْرِبِ فَبُهِتَ الَّذِي كَفَرَ وَ اللَّهُ لَا
يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ(البقرة/258)

The Qur'anic record of the Prophet's invitation to the elites and nobles of Makkah (Orujlu 2005) is very remarkable. In addition to the call to the heads of the Banī Hāshim tribe by a divine command (Q. 26:214), the debate with the political leaders and social elites (Nazimian Fard 2017) was also considered to be a positive political participation of the Prophet.

Some of the Prophet's efforts in this regard included the debate with ʿAbdullāh ibn Zabʿarā (Q. 21:101-102) and ʿAbdullāh ibn Abī Umayyah (Q. 17:90-93) beside the Kaʿbah and in front of a group of Quraysh tribal leaders such as Abū al-Bakhtarī, ʿUtbah ibn Rabīʿah, Abū Sufyān, Ibn Wāʾil, Abū Jahl, etc., as well as the debate with Umayyah ibn Khalaf and Walīd ibn Mughayrah, some of which are reflected in the Qur'an (Majlisī 1983, 9:269-280). Some exegetes have considered verses Q. 36:78-79 to be referring to the Prophet's conversation with Umayyah ibn Khalaf:

> And he makes comparisons for Us, and forgets his own (origin and) Creation: he says, "Who can give life to (dry) bones and decomposed ones (at that)?" Say, "He will give them life Who created them for the first time! For He fully knows all"[1] (Q. 36:78-79).

It is also said that verses Q. 19:66-67 are meant to answer Umayyah ibn Khalaf and some others. His endeavours in this respect were so great that God warned him against getting himself into trouble and described him as an aggressive leader. In this way, debating and inviting to the right can be considered one of the types of political participation under the illegitimate system, which the Prophet of Islam experienced in many positions, and he challenged the opinions of the opponents by raising doubts.

3.1.3. Taqiyyah

Taqiyyah is another type of positive political participation, which means caution and fear, and is the verbal noun derived from *ittiqāʾ* (al-Rāghib 1991, 881). It means to avoid, to keep, and to hide (Ibn Manẓūr, 1993). It is defined as hiding one's religion or refraining from expressing it in cases where a person is in danger of personal or financial loss (Sarakhsī

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1.   اَوَ لَم يَرَ الإِنسٰنُ اَنّا خَلَقنٰهُ مِن نُطفَة فَاِذا هُوَ خَصيمٌ مُبين وَضَرَبَ لَنا مَثَلاً وَنَسِىَ خَلقَهُ قالَ مَن يُحىِ العِظٰمَ
   وَهِىَ رَميم قُل يُحييِها الَّذى اَنشَاَها اَوَّلَ مَرَّة وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ خَلق عَليم (يس/78–79)

1999, 24:45; Rashīd Riḍā 1990, 3:280) or showing oneself to be of the same religion as others in order to save one's life. The political action of *taqiyyah* can be explained in two kinds of silence and influence. Two verses of the Qur'an refer to the type of silence and concealment which, according to some Islamic traditions, is divided into two types of *khufiyyah* and *mudārātiyyah* (Mohsenzadeh and Rezaei Isfahani 2013; Arabi, 2014: 275-287), which is mentioned by some commentators, jurists, and theologians.

One is the verse Q. 3:28, which states:

Let not the believers take for friends or helpers unbelievers rather than believers: if any do that, in nothing will there be help from Allah except by way of precaution, that ye may guard yourselves from them. But Allah cautions you (to fear) Himself; for the final goal is to Allah[1] (Q. 3:28).

Another one is the verse Q. 16:106, in which the first sentence is about *taqiyyah* of ʿAmmār ibn Yāsir (feigning disbelief) in front of the polytheists in order to be free from torture, which was approved by the Prophet (al-Wāḥidī 2008, 190).

Anyone who, after accepting faith in Allah, utters Unbelief, except under compulsion, his heart remaining firm in Faith, but such as open their breast to Unbelief, on them is Wrath from Allah, and theirs will be a dreadful Chastisement[2] (Q. 16:106).

The Hadith of *rafʿ*, the Hadith of *lā ḍarar*, the evidences of the *tawriyyah*, the hadiths related to *kitmān*, and *ikrāh* are among the most important narrative evidences of *taqiyyah* (al-Kulaynī 1987, 5:280; 292-294; al-Majlisī 1983, 5:303; al-Anṣārī 1991, 40). Moreover, consensus and reason also imply it. *Taqiyyah* is divided into obligatory, forbidden, recommended, undesirable, and permissible according to the jurisprudential ruling. The history of Shiʿism is also full of political participation based on *taqiyyah*.

Participation in governing institutions to support what is right is another type of political participation based on *taqiyyah* in an illegitimate

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1. لا يَتَّخِذِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الْكَافِرِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ مِنْ دُونِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَ مَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذلِكَ فَلَيْسَ مِنَ اللَّهِ فِي شَيْءٍ إِلاَّ **أَنْ تَتَّقُوا مِنْهُمْ تُقَاةً** وَ يُحَذِّرُكُمُ اللَّهُ نَفْسَهُ وَ إِلَى اللَّهِ الْمَصِيرُ ﴿آل عمران/28﴾

2. مَنْ كَفَرَ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ إِيمَانِهِ إِلاَّ **مَنْ أُكْرِهَ** وَ **قَلْبُهُ مُطْمَئِنٌّ بِالْإِيمَانِ** وَ لكِنْ مَنْ شَرَحَ بِالْكُفْرِ صَدْراً فَعَلَيْهِمْ غَضَبٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿النحل/106﴾

system, which can be called influence, and the Qur'an has references to it. The verse Q. 40:28 speaks of the believer in Pharaoh's family who kept his faith secret:

> A believer, a man from among the people of Pharaoh, who had concealed his faith, said: "Will ye slay a man because he says, 'My Lord is Allah'? when he has indeed come to you with Clear Signs from your Lord? And if he be a liar, on him is (the sin of) his lie: but, if he is telling the Truth, then will fall on you something of the (calamity) of which he warns you: truly Allah guides not one who transgresses and lies[1] (Q. 40:28).

Many commentators have considered him the one who secretly informed Moses that they intended to kill him according to Q. 28:20 (Tayyeb 1999, 11:371). This verse specifies the presence and *taqiyyah* of this believer in Pharaoh's court and his help to Moses and informing him of the political news coming from Pharaoh's court:

> And there came a man, running, from the furthest end of the City. He said: "O Moses! The Chiefs are taking counsel together about thee, to slay thee: so get thee away, for I do give thee sincere advice"[2] (Q. 28:20).

Most commentators have considered the man in the verse to be the believer of Pharaoh's family whose name was Ezekiel or Ḥabīb Najjār (Fayḍ Kāshānī 1998, 2:924; al-Ṭabrisī 1993, 8:139; Ibn ʿĀshūr 1999, 24:183). There are various reports about his name, occupation, and relationship with Pharaoh (Samarqandī 1993, 3: 204; al-Baḥrānī 1987, 4: 257).

In fact, by praising this person and his action, these two verses approve this kind of political participation in the illegitimate and oppressive political system and prescribe it in order to reform the thoughts and behaviour of the agents of the illegitimate system and support what is right. The Qur'an talks about the participation of the believer in the decision-making of the Pharaoh political system not to kill Moses after

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1.   وَ قالَ رَجُلٌ مُؤْمِنٌ مِنْ آلِ فِرْعَوْنَ يَكْتُمُ إِيمانَهُ أَ تَقْتُلُونَ رَجُلاً أَنْ يَقُولَ رَبِّيَ اللَّهُ وَ قَدْ جاءَكُمْ بِالْبَيِّناتِ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَ إِنْ يَكُ كاذِباً فَعَلَيْهِ كَذِبُهُ وَ إِنْ يَكُ صادِقاً يُصِبْكُمْ بَعْضُ الَّذي يَعِدُكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لا يَهْدي مَنْ هُوَ مُسْرِفٌ كَذَّابٌ (غافر/28)

2.   وَ جاءَ رَجُلٌ مِنْ أَقْصَى الْمَدينَةِ يَسْعى قالَ يا مُوسى إِنَّ الْمَلَأَ يَأْتَمِرُونَ بِكَ لِيَقْتُلُوكَ فَاخْرُجْ إِنّي لَكَ مِنَ النَّاصِحينَ   (القصص/20)

his mission was revealed to them. In the history of Shi'ism, we can also give an example of 'Alī ibn Yaqṭīn who, with the coordination of the Imām of his time, was involved in the government structure while practicing *taqiyyah* (al-Kashī 1988, 203).

Thus, according to the Qur'an, political participation based on *taqiyyah* is recommended. As some commentators have also paid attention to it and have given hadiths about *taqiyyah* under the verse (Sabziwārī Najafī 1986, 6:212) such as, "*Taqiyyah* is my religion and the religion of my fathers" (al-Barqī 1952, 1:255; al-'Āmilī 1988, 16:210), "One who does not practice *taqiyyah* has no religion" (al-'Āmilī 1988, 16:210), and "*Taqiyyah* is God's shield on earth, for if the believer of Pharaoh's family had shown his faith, he would have been killed (al-Ṭabrisī 1993, 8:521).

Muḥammad 'Izzat Darwazah, one of the Sunni commentators, also refers to the views of the Shi'a scholars on *taqiyyah* and their arguments on this verse, in spite of the criticism on it, but in the end, he accepts *taqiyyah* towards the unbelievers as well as towards the wicked Muslims. At first, he considers it specific to the *Sharī'ah* of Moses and does not accept its extension to Islam (Darwazah 1963, 4:368-370), but later, according to the totality of the verses and traditions (*aḥādīth*) and the logic of the discussion, he validates it and recognizes it as acceptable for evildoers and persecutors, but rejects its application by the Shi'a, which seems to be due to a political and not a scientific attitude. That is, the difference is in the examples.

It can thus be said that according to the thematic interpretation of the Qur'an and Shi'a discourse, both types of *taqiyyah*, i.e., silence and influence, are acceptable in situations where no other type of participation is possible. It is up to the leaders and elites of the religious community to determine which type of political participation should be adopted in each situation.

3.2. Negative Political Participation

3.2.1. Non-cooperation

The non-cooperation and non-willingness to engage with the illegitimate political system can be considered one of the types of negative political participation according to the Qur'an. This notion is stated in the verse Q. 11:113:

And incline not to those who do wrong, or the Fire will touch you; and ye have no protectors other than Allah, nor shall ye be helped[1] (Q. 11:113).

The verb *tarkanū* derived from *rukūn* means to be willing and calm (Ibn Manẓūr 1993, 13:185). The verse forbids a little desire for the oppressors and cooperation with them, which means disobeying their social system in general. Under this verse, some commentators have mentioned the story of Ṣafwān Jamāl renting his camels to Hārūn Abbāsī, which Imam Ṣādiq forbade due to tacit cooperation and implied consent to the continuation of the tyrants' political system (Tayyeb 1999, 7:135).

3.2.2. Civil Disobedience

Another form of political participation is civil disobedience, which means defying government authority as a sign of moral protest (McLean & McMillan 2011, 563). The Qur'an refers to some examples of civil disobedience, such as Abraham's non-attendance at the annual feast mentioned in verses Q. 37:88-89:

Then did he cast a glance at the Stars. And he said, "I am indeed sick (at heart)"[2] (Q. 37:88-89).

According to all interpretations, Abraham declared his illness by looking at the stars in response to his people and refused to go to the annual celebration (Najafī 1999, 16:356). Some have said that he spoke ambiguously, some have considered it an expedient lie, and some have thought it to be true (Qorashi 1998, 9:159; Tabataba'i 1996, 7:228). Others have also regarded it as *taqiyyah*, and some have viewed it as a sickness in his faith against the religion of his people (Mudarrisī 1998, 11:249-250), which seems more acceptable. In any case, Abraham's absence can be considered a kind of negative struggle and civil disobedience, considering his next action in breaking the idols.

Another instance of civil disobedience in the Qur'an can be seen in the command not to refer to the illegitimate political system in matters of social life. The verse Q. 4:60 is explicit in this regard:

Hast thou not turned thy though to those who declare that they believe in the revelations that have come to thee and to those

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1. وَ لا تَرْكَنُوا إِلَى الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا فَتَمَسَّكُمُ النَّارُ وَ ما لَكُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مِنْ أَوْلِياءَ ثُمَّ لا تُنْصَرُون (هود/113)

2. فَنَظَرَ نَظْرَةً فِي النُّجُومِ فَقالَ إِنِّي سَقِيمٌ (الصافات/88-89)

before thee? Their (real) wish is to resort together for judgment (in their disputes) to the Tagut (Evil), though they were ordered to reject him. But Satan's wish is to lead them astray far away (from the right)[1] (Q. 4:60).

The verse considers the reference to the *ṭāghūt* to settle disputes and enmity as a great misguidance, the will of the devil, and against the divine order. *Ṭāghūt* comes from the root "Ṭ,Gh,W" or "Ṭ,Gh,Y" which means to go beyond the limit. It is an infinitive meaning 'rebellion', but it is used in the sense of the active participial adjective (rebellious), indicating exaggeration (Ibn Manẓūr 1993, 9:15; al-Ṭabrisī 1998, 2:313). The word *ṭāghūt* is believed to be Arabic, Jewish, Christian, or Abyssinian. *Ṭāghūt* has three examples: (1) Deniers and disobedient to God's command and the rules of religion, (2) The usurpers of the right of the legitimate ruler and the infallible Imam, and (3). Tyrants and trespassers.

This verse was also cited by Imām Ṣādiq in the famous narration of 'Umar ibn Ḥanzalah. The cause of revelation of the verse is said to be referring to the conflict between a Muslim and a Jew or a non-Muslim and the non-acceptance of the authority of the Prophet by the Muslim (Fayḍ Kāshānī 1998, 1:466, al-Ālūsī 1994, 3:66; al-Rāzī 1999, 5:416). Moreover, there are also various narrations on the prohibition of referring to a tyrannical or usurping ruler for judgment (al-Baḥrānī 1987, 2: 116). Staying away from the *ṭāghūt* is also emphasized in verse 16:36. Furthermore, verse Q. 2:188 advises the believers not to take their disputes to an unjust ruler:

> And do not eat up your property among yourselves for vanities, nor use it as bait for the judges, with intent that ye may eat up wrongfully and knowingly a little of (other) people's property[2] (Q. 2:188).

In a narration, Imām Ṣādiq has said about the meaning of this verse that God knows that unjust rulers will appear in the society, and the address in this verse is directed to them, not to the just rulers. If you have a claim against someone and invite him to go to one of the faithful

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1. أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ يَزْعُمُونَ أَنَّهُمْ آمَنُوا بِمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَ مَا أُنْزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ يُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يَتَحَاكَمُوا إِلَى الطَّاغُوتِ وَ قَدْ أُمِرُوا أَنْ يَكْفُرُوا بِهِ وَ يُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَنْ يُضِلَّهُمْ ضَلَالاً بَعِيداً (النساء/60)

2. وَ لَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَ تُدْلُوا بِهَا إِلَى الْحُكَّامِ لِتَأْكُلُوا فَرِيقاً مِنْ أَمْوَالِ النَّاسِ بِالْإِثْمِ وَ أَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ (البقرة/188)

judges, and if he does not accept and does not consent except to refer to unjust rulers, he will be one of those who take the conflict to the *ṭāghūt*, which is forbidden in the verse (al-Kulaynī 2008, 1:168).

3.2.3. Declaration of Aversion

One of the types of political participation in the destiny of society from the perspective of the Qur'an is aversion (*tabarrā*), which is expressed in two ways: public declaration of this aversion or emigration from the illegitimate political system. It also has an affirmative place in Shiʿa and Islamic theology. *Tabarrā* is an infinitive that comes from the root of "B,R,'", which means to loathe and to stay away from something with which proximity is abhorrent (al-Rāghib 1983). The derivatives of this root are repeated 30 times in the Qur'an. A *sūrah* of the Qur'an begins by stating that God and His Prophet abhor polytheists, hence named it *barā'at*. The Qur'an has used *tabarrā* almost in its literal meaning, which is to loathe and stay away from God's enemies and followers of falsehood.

A. Public and Verbal Declaration of Aversion

Examples of this type of aversion can be found in Abraham's explicit and determined aversion to Babylonian society and in the Qur'an's aversion to polytheists. The verse Q. 60:4 praises Abraham's political perseverance and presents him and the community of believers as a model for everyone for their reasoned and faithful persistence against the polytheistic political system:

> There is for you an excellent example (to follow) in Abraham and those with him, when they said to their people: We are clear of you and of whatever ye worship besides Allah: we have rejected you, and there has arisen, between us and you, enmity and hatred for ever...[1] (Q. 60:4).

Other verses also indicate this issue, such as Q. 43:26, where Abraham addresses Āzar as a representative of the political system and the people of his land and declares his aversion to them and breaks relations with them. In verse Q. 6:78, after protesting against the polytheists and

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1.   قَدْ كانَتْ لَكُمْ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ في إِبْراهيمَ وَ الَّذينَ مَعَهُ إِذْ قالوا لِقَوْمِهِمْ إِنَّا بُرَآؤُا مِنْكُمْ وَ مِمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ كَفَرْنا بِكُمْ وَ بَدا بَيْنَنا وَ بَيْنَكُمُ الْعَداوَةُ وَ الْبَغْضاءُ أَبَدا (الممتحنة/4)

logically refuting their views, he expresses his aversion to them. Other examples of aversion to the polytheists include Hūd's aversion (Q. 11:54), the Prophet of Islam's aversion (Q. 26:216; 6:19; 10:41), Noah's aversion (Q. 11:35), and God's and His Messenger's aversion (Q. 9:1,3).

B. Emigration from the Illegitimate Political System

Another type of aversion is in the form of emigration from the centre of the illegitimate political system. Two prominent examples are the emigration of Prophet Abraham from Babylon and the emigration of the Messenger of Islam from Mecca to Medina, which is reflected in the Qur'an. The emigration of Abraham from Babylon to Syria and Jerusalem together with Lūṭ and Sārah (Sabziwārī Najafī 1998, 4:509) is recorded in verses Q. 29:26 and 21:71. The Qur'an praises the Prophet's emigration as well. According to commentators, verse Q. 9:40 describes and praises God's help in the Prophet's emigration from Mecca to Medina. Some verses implicitly refer to the emigration of the Prophet and explicitly praise and even command this kind of political action. Ten of these verses can be listed in the Qur'an, each referring to an aspect of the emigration in the way of God:

- ‣ Q. 2:218, referring to the divine mercy to the emigrants;
- ‣ Q. 3:195, referring to the cleansing of sins and their entry into heaven;
- ‣ Q. 8:72, 74-75, referring to God's help to the emigrants, their true faith, and their closeness to each other;
- ‣ Q. 9:20, referring to giving the emigrants the highest degree of reward;
- ‣ Q. 16:41, referring to the worldly and hereafter rewards for the emigrants;
- ‣ Q. 16:110, referring to God's forgiveness for the emigrants;
- ‣ Q.22:58, referring to the granting of divine sustenance to the emigrants;
- ‣ Q. 4:100, referring to emigration to join the Islamic army, which is a superior, praised, and highly rewarded political act.

Moses' emigration from Egypt can also be included in this category (Q. 28:21). However, because of his political silence after leaving Egypt, this emigration carries less political significance.

3.2.4. Struggling and Overthrowing

Another type of negative political participation in the Qur'an is conflictual and protesting political action. The first stage of this is protest against oppression, which is permitted in the Qur'an as a minimum confrontation against the oppressors.

> Allah loveth not that evil should be noised abroad in public speech, except from one who had being treated unjustly; for Allah is He who heareth and knoweth all things[1] (Q. 4:148).

According to the interpretations, this verse includes both the cry of a lawsuit and the recounting of the cruelty of the oppressors, and this action is excluded from the prohibition of backbiting (Tayyeb 1999, 4: 253; Ibn 'Āshūr 1999, 4: 294).

Other verses that express this political action are the verses about enjoining good and forbidding evil, which include both protest and conflict. These verses in the Qur'an do not explicitly refer to violent action against an illegitimate political system. In theology and jurisprudence, however, one of their examples is rebellion against an oppressive Muslim ruler, which of course has its supporters and opponents. According to the predominant opinion, enjoining the good and forbidding the evil (*amr bi'l-maʿrūf wa'n-nahyi ʿani'l-munkar*) has stages, the last of which is the uprising and overthrow of the illegitimate system. This matter is repeated nine times in the Qur'an and those who do so are praised (Q. 3:104; 3:110; 3:114; 7:157; 9:71; 9:112; 22:41; 31:17).

Imām Ḥusayin said the following about the reason for his uprising: "I rose up only to reform my grandfather's nation and to enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil" (Majlisī 1983, 44:329). This statement fully indicates the permissibility of uprising against a tyrant. He also said to Ḥurr ibn Yazīd Rīyāḥī and his army:

> Whoever sees a tyrannical ruler who considers what is forbidden by God to be lawful, who breaks God's covenants, who opposes the Sunnah of his Prophet, who behaves aggressively among God's servants, but he should not express his opposition to him by his speech and his behaviour, it is appropriate that God should take such a person to the place (hell) where the oppressors go, and he has a common fate with them (Majlisī 1983, 44: 382).

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1. لا يُحِبُّ اللَّهُ الْجَهْرَ بِالسُّوءِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ إِلاَّ مَنْ ظُلِمَ وَ كانَ اللَّهُ سَمِيعاً عَلِيماً (النساء/148)

In addition, the uprising of 'Abdullāh ibn Ḥanzalah in the incident of al-Ḥarrah in 62 AH, which has been praised by scholars, is also one of the examples of the legitimacy of uprising against an unjust ruler.

Furthermore, Abū Ḥanīfah considered the scope of enjoining good and forbidding evil up to the stage of rebellion, so he supported the rebellion of Zayd ibn 'Alī and the Ḥasanīs (al-Jaṣāṣ 1984, 1:81). Therefore, from the verses of enjoining good and forbidding evil, it can be understood that after going through the steps and when it is convenient, one should violently fight against the illegitimate political system.

In this regard, the contradictory behaviour of the prophets and other Qur'anic figures in the face of the illegitimate system is noteworthy. The subversive purpose of these conflicts towards the government is evident that is why they all faced harsh responses from the regime. In general, the Qur'an introduces one of the purposes of sending prophets to avoid and oppose the tyrants. Although the word 'tyrant' has a general meaning, one of its most obvious examples is the illegitimate political system.

> For We assuredly sent amongst every People a Messengers, (with the Command), Serve Allah, and eschew Evil...[1] (Q. 16:36).

Abraham's conflict with Nimrod and the pagans under his rule is one of the examples of confrontational political participation in the illegitimate system in the Qur'an. Abraham exerted all his efforts to overthrow the system of polytheism and tyranny and did not give up on any possible action until he was arrested, tried, and thrown into the fire. That is why the name of Abraham appears 69 times in 25 *sūrah*s of the Qur'an, and one *sūrah* of the Qur'an was named after him. This point is well recognized from Nimrod's dream and its interpretation by interpreters (al-Ṭabrisī, 1993, 4: 96), which caused him to do such acts as killing newborn boys out of fear of being overthrown (Majlisī, 1983, 12:42). Breaking the idols was Abraham's first act of confrontation. According to the Qur'an, he even informed the pagans and agents of Nimrod of his intention to do so.

> And by Allah, I will certainly plan against your idols, after ye go away and turn your backs[2] (Q. 21:57).

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١.   وَ لَقَدْ بَعَثْنا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولاً أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَ اجْتَنِبُوا الطَّاغُوت ... (النحل/36)

٢.   وَ تَاللهِ لَأَكِيدَنَّ أَصْنامَكُمْ بَعْدَ اَنْ تُوَلُّوا مُدْبِرِينَ (الانبیاء/57)

Then, in their absence, he cleverly broke the idols, and because of this act, he was finally thrown into the fire (Q. 21:51-70).

The conflict between Moses and Pharaoh is another example of the struggle to destroy tyrants. The verse Q. 28:4 considers Pharaoh as one of the corrupters and narrates his arrogant and megalomanic behaviour which goes as far as killing children and mentions Moses confrontation with him. The next verse tells of the end of Moses confrontation as the leader of the oppressed against Pharaoh. This verse promises God's great will and grace in their political and economic salvation and victory.

> Truly, Pharaoh elated himself in the land and divided its people into sections, depressing a group among them: their sons he slew, but he kept alive their females: for he was indeed an evil doer. And We wished to be Gracious to those who were being depressed in the land, to make them leaders (in faith) and make them heirs[1] (Q. 28:4-5).

The verse Q. 7:110 implicitly states the political objective of Moses to take the power out of the hands of the corrupt and establish a legitimate political system. However, Pharaoh and his entourage, in order to create a psychological war, distorted this objective and told the people that he wanted to drive them out of their land.

The conflict between the Prophet of Islam and the illegitimate political system of the Quraysh in Mecca is another prominent example in this regard. The use of the privative method in the Prophet's dealings is very evident. God commanded the Prophet and the believers to keep away from the infidels and not to consider the religion and norms of the polytheists as equal to their religion, and not to consider them as friends and protectors (Q. 73:10; 37:174; 15:94; 6:106; 7:199; 3:28; 4:144). Moreover, the Prophet's aversion to polytheism and his firmness and inflexibility regarding principles are expressed in Q. 109:1-6 and Q. 68:9. Figure 1 provides a brief overview of the types of political participation in an illegitimate political system.

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1. إِنَّ فِرْعَوْنَ عَلا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَ جَعَلَ أَهْلَها شِيَعاً يَسْتَضْعِفُ طائِفَةً مِنْهُمْ يُذَبِّحُ أَبْناءَهُمْ وَ يَسْتَحْيِي نِساءَهُمْ إِنَّهُ كانَ مِنَ الْمُفْسِدينَ وَ نُرِيدُ أَنْ نَمُنَّ عَلَى الَّذِينَ اسْتُضْعِفُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَ نَجْعَلَهُمْ أَئِمَّةً وَ نَجْعَلَهُمُ الْوارِثِينَ (القصص/4–5)
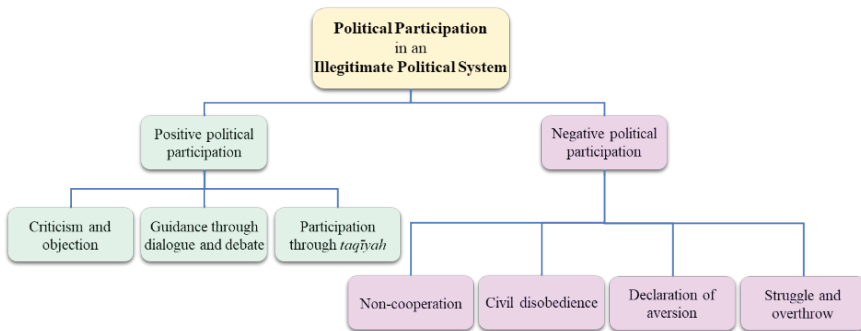
Figure 1. A brief overview of the types of political participation in an illegitimate political system.

4. Conclusion

Political participation is one of the most fundamental political issues to be examined from the perspective of the Qur'an. The study of political participation in religious texts, especially in the Holy Qur'an, requires attention to a point that today's concepts such as political participation, which are discussed in the contemporary environment, cannot be completely taken from the concepts and terms of the past. There is no specific term and address for political participation in the Qur'an. However, there are some general addresses referring to political participation, either in the form of direct references, such as Jihad, enjoining good and forbidding evil, or in the form of implicit references.

The levels of political participation in an illegitimate political system have been categorized as positive and negative, with the negative being possible in both peaceful and non-peaceful ways, all valid in various circumstances in accordance with the Qur'an. Seven types of positive and negative political participation in illegitimate political regimes were identified in the Qur'an. Positive political participations include criticism and objection, guidance through dialogue and debate, and participation through *taqiyyah* (religious dissimulation). Negative political participations encompass aversion, non-cooperation, civil disobedience, and struggle and overthrow.

Accordingly, it is concluded that the Qur'an approves and recommends different types of positive and negative political participation under an illegitimate political system. The Qur'an's description of the prophets and Qur'anic figures in the confrontation with an illegitimate system

is a multi-staged behaviour in the pursuit of eliminating oppression, which includes a range of peaceful to violent behaviours in terms of methods and means in different situations.

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Study on the Possibility of Miracle in Qur'an Verses 55:19-22 of the Qur'an: How the Qur'an Has Revealed the Formation Process of Pearls and Coral from River to Sea

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ABSTRACT: (Original Paper)

A study was conducted to examine the miraculous nature of verses 55:19-22 in the Qur'an, using four key parameters: Explicitness, Validity, Accuracy, and Precedence. Through this analysis, the true meaning of the verses was studied. Further comparison with other verses revealed that the geological phenomenon described in these verses is where freshwater and seawater meet, forming a river plume. This river plume exhibits all of the characteristics mentioned in the verses as a barrier and point of interaction. Additionally, it provides essential elements such as Calcium for the formation of coral and pearls. Historical data was also examined to demonstrate that at the time of the Qur'an's revelation, it was not known that lime played a role in the structure of pearls and coral, nor was Calcium discovered yet. Therefore, it seems that these verses are a suitable candidate for being considered as the scientific miracle of the Qur'an.

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1. Introduction

The Qur'an is believed by Muslims to have divine origins and is considered a holy book that provides guidance for humanity. While it shares similarities with other scriptures, it is believed to go beyond them in its teachings. Although not a scientific text, the Qur'anQur'an discusses natural phenomena and the role of natural factors in their occurrence. This has sparked debate among contemporary thinkers, with both supporters and opponents of the idea. Therefore, studying the Qur'anQur'an from a scientific perspective is deemed significant.

The Qur'an contains scientific statements that surpass the knowledge of the time it was revealed and are now confirmed by scientific progress (Mu'addab, 2007). This serves as evidence of the divine origin or scientific miracle of the Qur'an. When studying these statements, scientists should consider factors such as Explicitness or The level of certainty in the accuracy of the statement, Validity or The level of certainty in drawing the conclusion from the statement, Accuracy The level of certainty in the reliability of the scientific information, Precedence or the level of confidence that the statement did not exist during the speaker or author's era and could not have been known through scientific progress and Authenticity or the level of certainty that the statement was made at the claimed time and by the specified speak (Talebpour, Rohani Mashhadi and Moradi 2022).

Some natural phenomena mentioned in the Qur'an are easily understandable, such as:

> … We created you out of dust, then out of sperm, then out of a leech-like clot, then out of a morsel of flesh, partly formed and partly unformed… (Q. 22:5)[1]

However, some require closer examination, like the verses:

> He has let free the two Seas, meeting together: Between them is a Barrier which they do not transgress: Then which of the favours of your Lord will ye deny? Out of them come Pearl and Coral (Q. 55:19-22).[2]

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1. … فَإِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ عَلَقَةٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ مُضْغَةٍ مُخَلَّقَةٍ وَغَيْرِ مُخَلَّقَةٍ … (الحج/5)

2. مَرَجَ الْبَحْرَيْنِ يَلْتَقِيَانِ بَيْنَهُمَا بَرْزَخٌ لَا يَبْغِيَانِ فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ يَخْرُجُ مِنْهُمَا اللُّؤْلُؤُ وَالْمَرْجَانُ (الرحمن/19 – 22)

In current work, the probability of a scientific miracle in verses 55:19-22 has thoroughly examined. Firstly, the precise wording of these verses carefully analysed. Next, whether the scientific phenomenon mentioned in these verses can be attributed to them or not, was investigated. In the third step, the scientific validity of the claim was evaluated. Finally, the precedence of this concerning human understanding during that period, was assessed. The score of each item and average score have also calculated.

2. Lexical Review

The exact meaning of the words *maraja*,[1] *al-baḥr*,[2] *yaltaqīyāni*,[3] *barzakh*[4] and *yabghīyāni*[5] need to be studied very precisely to clarify the meaning of the verses. The meanings of these words are summarized in Table 1.

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1. مَرَجَ
2. البحر
3. يَلْتَقِيَانِ
4. برزخ
5. يَبْغِيَانِ

Table 1. The meaning of the main words of the verses (Muṣṭafawī, 1989; Al-Jawharī, 1986; Ibn Fāris, 1979; Al-Fayyūmī, 1993; Ibn Manẓūr, 1995).

Word	Meaning
maraja (M,R,J)	Arrival, moving away and stir. Send. It is the sending and launching of something in a natural flow and freeing it from constraints.
al-baḥr	The Sea. Unlike the land, it is known for its vastness and depth, and every great river is a sea.
yaltaqīyāni (L,Q,Y)	The act of everything that comes to meet another thing and contacts. Complete contact between two things. It is a meeting with connection, so there must be constraints. However, the concepts of coincidence, perception, and confrontation: they are effects of the original [act].
barzakh	A barrier between two things, as if there is a spacious gap of land between them.
yabghīyāni (B,GH,Y)	Strong intention. Cross the limit.

According to the meanings of the words, the verses are trying to express the meaning that the two bodies of waters come freely to a point or line into contact with connections, but no visible merging is seen due to the presence of a boundary and limit. Pearls and coral are extracted from both waters.

3. Geological Investigation

According to the verse (Q .25:53), these two great waters are sweet and salt waters or great rivers and seas or oceans.

> It is He Who has let free the two bodies of flowing water: one palatable and sweet, and the other salt and bitter; yet has He made a barrier between them, a partition that is not to be passed (Q. 25:53).[1]

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١. وَ هُوَ الَّذي مَرَجَ الْبَحْرَيْنِ هذا عَذْبٌ فُراتٌ وَ هذا مِلْحٌ أُجاجٌ وَ جَعَلَ بَيْنَهُما بَرْزَخاً وَ حِجْراً مَحْجُوراً

(الفرقان/53)

A river plume is formed when a large river carrying freshwater flows into the salt water of the sea or ocean. This plume is a distinct mass of low-salinity water (sweet) that is released from the mouth of the river and enters the nearby coastal waters. In tropical systems, freshwater runoff mainly occurs during short-lived floods. These floods push freshwater through estuaries and into coastal waters, where it mixes (turbulence) with saltwater due to differences in density. The thickness of the freshwater layer is influenced by various factors such as wind stress, Coriolis force and gravity (Furnas 2011). More details about river plumes are presented in other references (Wolanski and McLusky 2011).

River or stream water discharged into coastal waters forms a shallow wedge near the mouth, which is accelerated away from the coast by gravity and buoyancy. The Coriolis force causes the flowing plume of river water to turn parallel to the coast, creating a buoyancy current. The plume eventually flattens and disperses due to turbulence as it moves along the coast (Figure 1) (Burrage et al. 2003). The exchanges between two waters does not limited to nutrients and exchange of marine organisms could occur (Giachini Tosetto et al. 2022). River plumes sweat waters mix with saline seawater so slowly that a sharp salinity gradient is produced at the plume-sea interface or border (Osadchiev et al. 2022).
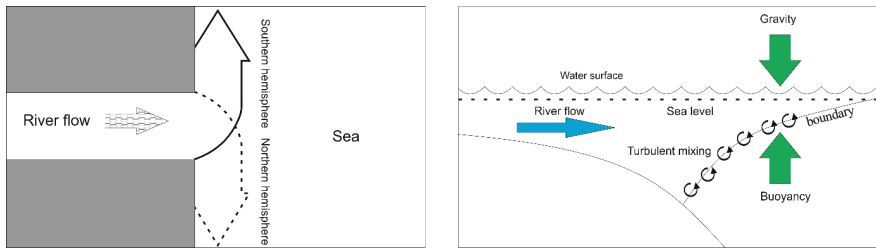

Figure 1. A. The top view of plume in different hemisphere. B. Chematic section through a river plume. Figures were redesigned from (Burrage et al. 2003; Giachini Tosetto et al. 2022; and Osadchiev et al., 2022)

The verses indicate the presence of a barrier that prevents rivers and seas from crossing over, yet allows for mixing. It is evident that the boundary between the river plume and the sea/ocean allows for mixing, making plume water the subject of these verses. Therefore, verses 55:19 & 5:20 are about river water (plume) introducing seawater.

4. The Formation of Pearls and Coral

4.1. The View of Science

Corals, belonging to the class of Anthozoa within the phylum Cnidaria, are sessile invertebrates that exist in a vast array of species and abundance. They can be found living in colonies or solitaries. Although corals are present in all oceans worldwide, their distribution is limited to the latitudes between the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn (Green 2001). The factors that determine their distribution include biotic elements such as coral's intra and interspecific competitions, corallivores, reproductive and recovery capacity, as well as their ability to withstand environmental stress. Abiotic factors such as light, water temperature, pH, salinity, turbidity, and depth also play a significant role (Ella Howes, Silvana NR Birchenough, 2018). Altering these parameters can have a severe impact on coral health and survival (Siro et al. 2022). The body structure of corals is uncomplicated and comprises a sac-like body with retractable tentacles that possess nematocysts, which are stinging cells. The coral has two tissue layers, namely the gastrodermis and epidermis, which are separated by a gelatinous matrix known as the mesoglea. These layers originate from the endoderm and ectoderm during the coral's life cycle (Barott et al. 2015). Corals can be categorized into two types based on their physical texture: hard coral and soft coral. Hard corals, also known as stony corals or scleractinian corals, possess an outer skeleton composed of calcium carbonate ($CaCO_3$) arranged in a crystalline form called aragonite. The hermatypic stony corals that form reefs grow by shedding $CaCO_3$ skeletons, which is an essential component of reef formation and structure. These hermatypic corals are crucial calcifying organisms that contribute to the biodiversity of coral reefs. Conversely, soft or ahermatypic corals have small spikes of calcium carbonate embedded within their bodies (Green 2001). The chemical composition of Pearl and Coral are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Chemical composition of Pearls and Coral (Pearls and other organic gems, n.d.; Furnas, 2011)

	Compound	Percentage
Pearls	Calcium carbonate (CaCO3)	~ 86
	Water	2-4
	Conchiolin	~ 10
Coral	Calcium carbonate (CaCO3)	~ 100

Biomineralization is a natural process that results in the formation of various solid inorganic structures by living organisms. This phenomenon is widespread and can be observed in prokaryotes, protozoa, algae, invertebrates, plants, and even pathological biominerals. The process involves converting ions into solid minerals through reaction and precipitation. Organisms use their synthetic organic macromolecules to manipulate the process of inorganic crystal nucleation, growth, and molecular arrangements to produce minerals with unique properties such as optical, magnetic, and mechanical properties (Arias and Fernández 2008; Zhang, Xie and Yan 2019).

Corals undergo biomineralization through a process called calcification; CO2 molecules are absorbed by the ocean and combined with calcium ions to form calcium carbonate. This process is primarily carried out by calcifying organisms, including corals, molluscs, calcareous algae, foraminifera, sponges, and echinoderms, with corals being the primary producers of calcium carbonate precipitates. For corals to survive, they require specific physiological and environmental conditions. They thrive in temperatures between 18 and 30 °C and a salinity range of 32 to 40% (Souter and Lindén 2000).

The process of biomineralization in Pinctada pearl oysters, specifically fucata, involves the uptake of precursor ions such as Ca2+ and HCO3- from the surrounding environment. This is facilitated by the body epithelium or gill, which may also originate from food sources. The ions are then transported through the hemolymph and directed towards the outer mantle epithelium. Under precise regulation, significant amounts of calcium ions are continuously deposited onto the framework (Zhang, Xie and Yan 2019).

4.1.1. The Role of Sea and River

Coral and Pearls are constructed from calcium ions, so the formation of coral and pearls requires and consumes calcium ions. Therefore, the concentration of calcium in seawater will decrease over time if there is no supply of calcium. Coral and pearls cannot form in low concentrations of calcium. Without a continuous supply of calcium, their formation will decrease and stop. What are the sources of calcium of seawater?

Calcium (Ca) is supplied to the oceans mainly by rivers, but also by hydrothermal circulation, with calcium derived from the alteration of the continental and oceanic crust (Holland 1984; Milliman 1993; Schmitt, Chabaux and Stille 2003; Griffith et al. 2008). Rock weathering is estimated to be two-thirds of riverine calcium ions at a global scale. Over geological timescales, Ca is released from silicate minerals during weathering of both the continental and oceanic crust and transferred to the carbonate reservoir. According to a research, approximately one-third of the total calcium ion supplied by rivers to the oceans (Tipper et al. 2010). The balance of calcium ions depends on riverine completely.

Supplying of nutrients specially calcium is necessary for formation and growth of coral and pearls. Rivers and specially runoff waters are main suppliers of these nutrients, so they have a main and necessary role in the formation of coral and pearls (Gagan, Sandstrom and Chivas 1987; Devlin and Brodie 2005; Furnas 2011).

The formation of coral and pearls relies on the presence of calcium and other nutrients. These essential elements are obtained by coral and nacre from seawater, with the majority of calcium and nutrients being supplied by rivers.

4.2. The View of the Qur'an

According to the Qur'an, coral and pearls are formed through a process involving both river and sea waters. This suggests that there are certain elements present in these waters that are necessary for the formation of these precious gems. It is possible that these elements differ between the two types of water, or they may be the same. Regardless, they must be extracted from both sources and transferred to the pearls and coral for their formation.

4.2.1. Precedence of the Verses

The focus of this discussion is on whether people during the time of the Qur'an revelation had knowledge about the formation of coral and pearls. To answer this question, it is necessary to examine historical data on their origin and formation.

Pliny the Elder (23-79 CE) in his book *Naturalis Historia* described coral's shapes, sizes, values, behaviour, types and usages but not about chemical composition or condition of formation (Pliny the Elder n.d.). The information about pearls is even more limited, and nothing about the composition of pearls is mentioned. Manusmriti, an old Indian book, mentioned pearls and coral without any details too. Bīrūnī (973-1048 CE) in his comprehensive book *Al-Jamāhir fī'l-Jawāhir* (*Kitāb al-Jamāhir fī Maʿrifat al-Jawāhir*) has discussed pearls very comprehensive and in details and supposed coral as pearls. He discussed names, characteristics, humidity, prices, correctness, essence, shells, occurrences, diving, etc. But nothing shows that he or other scientists or that era were aware of chemical composition of pearls (Bīrūnī 2001).

Centuries later, Donati examined the body of corals in his discoveries (Donati 1752). He attempted to convert the coral body to ash using fire but was unable to determine the origin of the coralline substance or the presence of lime or calcium. It was not until Hatchett's discovery in 1800 that it was revealed that nacre, pearls, and coral are made from lime (Hatchett 1800). Calcium was discovered by Humphry Davy in a series of experiments in 1808 (Davy 1808). He tried to reduce moist lime by electrolysis in various condition and ultimately discovered the calcium element. Davy conducted the experiments with equipment and knowledge that were not available until centuries. Silliman Jr. quantitatively analysed many corals and measured their calcium contents in 1846 (Silliman Jr. 1846). Following these discoveries, scientists recognize the impact of seawater's calcium ion concentration on Coral and Pearls formation. For example, Darwin thus asserts:

> "It will, perhaps, be suggested, that the quantity of carbonate of lime in different parts of the sea, may regulate the presence of [Coral] reefs." (Darwin 1842)

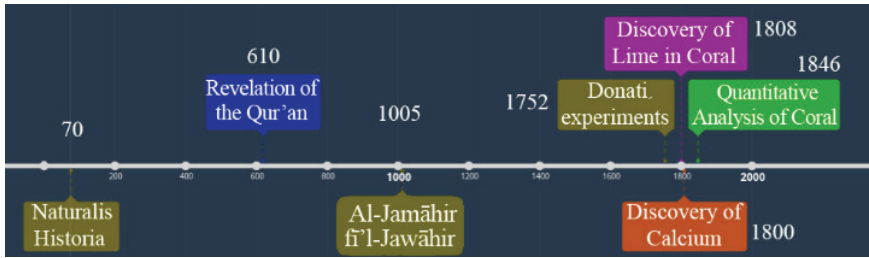The timeline of this history is presented in Figure 2.

Figure 2. The timeline of history of knowledge about the formation of pearls and coral. The first development is in 1800.

Although there is no evidence to suggest that scientists during the time of the Qur'an revelation were aware of the existence of a lime-like compound in coral and pearls, it is possible that an unknown individual who did not publish any texts may have known about it. However, given the limited scientific knowledge and technology of that era, it is not possible that they were aware of the calcium's existence in corals, pearls, and seawater. Without this knowledge, they would not have been able to identify the process by which calcium moves from rivers to seawater via plumes or how it is extracted from seawater by coral and nacres. Therefore, it can be concluded that the role of both rivers and seas in the formation of pearls and coral was not known during the time of the Qur'an revelation.

5. Comparison of Two Views

The verses state that coral and pearls are formed by the waters of rivers and seas. The scientific facts presented in section 4.1 confirm the accuracy of this statement. Notably, the verb *yakhruju*[1] (extract) is used in the verse. This can refer to how corals and Pinctadas extract elements from seawater, which is then obtained by the sea from river runoff. Extraction involves separating a part of something (in this case, ions) from the whole (water). The verses lacked clarity on the extracted element(s), which is mainly Calcium ion. The wording of these verses is scientifically sound and accurate, with no contradictions between them and scientific knowledge. The scores of Explicitness, Validity and Accuracy are 0.9/1, 1/1 and 1/1 respectively. These scores and the scores of Precedence and Authenticity are presented in Table 3. The overall

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يَخْرُجُ .1

0.93/1 by formula was provided by Talebpour, Rohani Mashhadi and Moradi, 2022.

Table 3. The scores of main parameters of possibility of the miracle in verses.

Parameter	Score
Explicitness	0.9
Validity	1
Accuracy	1
Precedence	1
Authenticity	1
Overall	0.93

7. Conclusion

The first phenomenon described in the verses pertains to the meeting point of river plume/runoff water and sea/ocean. The descriptions in the Qur'an align with physics, too. Although the Qur'an's descriptions may have been far ahead of their time, this aspect was not studied here. The second phenomenon pertains to the formation of pearls and coral through extraction from both waters. The scientific facts and Qur'anic descriptions are completely similar. It should be noted that the Qur'an did not provide a detailed account of the entire process.

A survey of available historical data reveals that it was not possible, with the knowledge and equipment available at the time of the revelation of the Qur'an, to describe the formation of pearls and coral as accurately as stated in the Qur'an.

Achieving 100% certainty is difficult due to factors such as biases, limited information, and complexity. However, strong evidence can lead to confidence in propositions, as seen in scientific theories and legal cases. While 100% certainty may not always be possible, confidence can still be achieved through strong evidence.

The aforementioned evidence shows that verses Q. 55:19-22 possess all factors of a miracle with score of 0.93/1. However, further research is necessary before claiming it as a miracle, and it is important to consider other scientists' opinions on this matter.

Acknowledgements

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Without *Naskh*: Interpreting the Qur'an with *Maqāṣid*

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ABSTRACT: (Original Paper)

For centuries, *naskh* (abrogation) has played a critical role in Islamic legal philosophy as a unifying rubric through which Muslim scholars accepted the logic of divine law and their relationship to it. However, this paradigm has been challenged by new competing theories of abrogation. This paper has examined five of them: Non-abrogation theory (Muhammad al-Jabri), dialectic theory (Nasr Hamid Abu Zaid), didactic theory (Abdullah Saeed), punitive theory (Muhammad Mahmoud Taha), and *maqāṣid*ic theory (Jasser Auda). It has been argued that although these theories have contributed to the overthrow of the classical paradigm, only the *maqāṣid*ic theory has the persuasive power to replace it completely. The other theories fell into three basic pitfalls: 1) contradiction (non-abrogation theory); 2) anarchy (didactic and dialectic theory); 3) idealism (punitive theory). *Maqāṣid*ic theorists, however, spurned linguistic arguments and focused instead on legal objectives, debating what God intended, not what He said. This allowed them to appeal to "reason" and "rationality" while maintaining a faithful connection to certain modes of classical legal theory. This enabled them to challenge *naskh* without appearing to undermine the epistemic foundations of the traditional exegetical worldview, of which *naskh* is merely one element.

KEYWORDS: The Qur'an, *naskh*, abrogation, *maqāṣid*, Jasser Auda, *al-Sharīʿah*.

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Introduction

The concept of *naskh* has been an essential part of Islamic legal philosophy for centuries. Externally, it provided a framework for conceptualizing the relationship of the Holy Qur'an to earlier revelations as a final act of divine abrogation. Internally, it offered a spectacularly successful theory (Burton 1990, 18) to resolve [perceived] contradictions in Qur'anic verses, *ḥadīth* literature, *tafsīr* (Qur'anic exegesis), and *uṣūl al-fiqh* (roots of law) (Esposito 2003, 230). In this latter sense, jurists adopted abrogation as a discursive device to harmonize legal indications, assuming that later revelations superseded earlier ones. This was the central unifying rubric through which legal theorists, jurists, Qur'anic exegetes, and ordinary Muslims accepted the logic of divine law and their relationship to it. However, against this established paradigm rose several competing counter theories, of which five are prominent. Some of these theories fault the traditional understanding of abrogation; others reject the idea of abrogation itself. I shall call these counter theories non-abrogation theory (Muhammad al-Jabri), dialectic theory (Nasr Hamid Abu Zaid), didactic theory (Abdullah Saeed), punitive theory (Muhammad Mahmoud Taha) and *maqāṣid*ic theory (Jasser Auda). While these scholars advance modern articulations, the fundamental claims of three of these theories are not unique to their authors, for one can clearly find their traces in the literature. The exception is the Punitive and Dialectic Theories. I chose these five authors, however, because they have fully expressed the range of circulating notions of *naskh* in elaborate theoretical frames.

I argue that while these theories have contributed to upsetting the traditional paradigm, only the *maqāṣid*ic approach possess the persuasive power to replace it. Other theories face significant hurdles. Beyond their irreverent attitudes, these other theories fell into three fundamental pitfalls: 1) contradiction (non-abrogation theory); 2) anarchy (didactic theory & dialectic theory); 3) idealism (punitive theory). These pitfalls are, in some sense, the result of these theorists' attempt to beat tradition at its own game: linguistic analysis of revelations. Yet, by resorting to linguistic analysis, these theories simply ventured into established linguistic debates as the most recent of many other marginal (*shādh*) readings.

The *maqāṣid*ic approach, however, moves the debate from the strict sphere of linguistic arguments to the sphere of legal philosophy. It debates not on what God said but what He intended. This allows

*maqāṣid*ic theorists to draw both on old and modern legal motives. The *maqāṣid*ic argument responds, on the one hand, to the modern drive for systematization. It also claims a credible link to a thoroughgoing legal logic, which their traditional interlocutors cannot entirely dismiss. Straddling both worlds, *maqāṣid*ic theorists are better mediators of tradition than other modernists. They could question the value of *naskh* without seeming to undermine the epistemic foundations of the traditional exegetical worldview, of which *naskh* is but one element. *Naskh* claims are not approached as signs of a systemic failure of classical exegetical frames, but rather as isolated instances of overlooking the overarching logic of the text—a logic, which is ubiquitous and readily accepted within the tradition.

Moreover, *maqāṣidic* theorists find both support and vindication in the work of other opponents of *naskh*. Although not central to their criticism of *naskh*, Saeed, Abu Zaid, and al-Jabri have all invoked *maqāṣid* as an advantageous hermeneutical approach. *Maqāṣid*ic theorists can, therefore, tie their project with the modern appeal for 'reason' and 'rationality' as well as to certain modes of classical legal theory, especially to the works of respected medieval scholars, such as Qarāfī (d. 1285), al-ʿIzz al-Dīn ibn ʿAbd al-Salām (d. 1262) and Shāṭibī (d. 1388). However, before discussing these theories and their respective merits, it behoves us to define abrogation and explain why the debate on abrogation remains quite relevant today.

1.1. Why Abrogation?

Beyond the widely debated verse of *al-sayf* (sword) (Q. 9:5), which some classical exegetes argued has abrogated many verses encouraging kindness to non-believers (al-Ṭabarī 2001), there are other critical aspects of Muslim law, which the concept of *naskh* has rendered difficulty to practice in the modern context. Consider, for example, the question of succession law. Laws of succession have, as other aspects of Islamic law, evolved over the period of revelation. Early revelations only mandated a general will to parents and family (Q. 2:180). Later revelations brought a more detailed mandate, with fixed shares to a defined list of successors. If *naskh* is accepted as salient hermeneutic framework, the cluster of verses (starting with Q. 4:11 would deprive individual Muslims from the flexibility, enshrined in the early verses, to adapt succession to changes in socio-economic conditions. This becomes even more restrictive if

one permits the abrogation of the Qur'an by *ḥadīth*, as some jurists do (al-Zarkashī 1992). For instance, the *ḥadīth* prohibiting any will for designated heirs would make it impossible to assign extra resources to specified heirs, even if changes in socio-economic conditions and family dynamics seem to warrant so. Without *naskh*, both Q. 2:180 and Q. 4:11 can, in theory, be harmonized and complimentarily applied. This is true of other verses subject to claims of abrogation either by the Qur'an or by Sunnah.

Although the theorists I discuss below are not part of the traditional class of *'ulamā'*, the fracturing of religious authority, which began in the 19th century and continued in earnest thereafter (Eickelman and Piscatori 1996), has allowed non-jurists to participate in and affect religious debates. As *fuqahā'* lost their default monopoly over religious sciences (Warren 2021), many intellectuals with no traditional jurisprudential training emerged as influential authorities. Outside professional circles of jurists, intellectuals such Nasr Abu Zaid, al-Jabri, and Shahrur are as frequently cited on Qur'anic topics as many of their cotemporary jurists. The latter are often forced to respond to these intellectuals' arguments on their own merits without being able to dismiss them as irrelevant. Discussing their views and their impacts is therefore justified.

1.2. Lexical Review

Linguistically, the word *naskh* (abrogation) is a verbal noun derived from the root *N,S,Kh*. The verb *nasakha* could refer to prevention, effacement, annulment, replacement, metamorphosis, as well as changing, and copying (al-Fīrūzābādī 2005, 261). As an Islamic exegetical and legal term, abrogation defines the lifespan of legal effectiveness, whereby an act of abrogation may declare 1) the institution of a new law, 2) the discontinuation of an old one, or 3) the two events at once. A *naskh* event entails the existence of two legal texts: *nāsikh* (abrogating) and *mansūkh* (abrogated). For instance, Ibn al-ʿArabī (1992) defines *naskh* as the textual stipulation that a ruling established by a preceding revelation is henceforth discontinued, in manner illustrating that the original ruling would have otherwise been upheld.

Historically, one could trace the concept of *naskh* to the earliest extant sources, suggesting that early Qur'anic exegetes were as conscious of legal and theological implications as later Muslim scholars (Melchert 2002). However, some early authorities dismissed the concept all

together (Abdelnour 2023). What is remarkable about abrogation is the evolution of its meaning and its application. Although abrogation in the sense of replacement typified the understanding of some scholars, including those from the early generations of exegetes, exegetes and legal theorists have also used *naskh* (abrogation) to mean specification, circumscription, exception, and elaboration (al-Qasimi 1957). While the Prophet's Companions have used the term broadly and freely in line with its direct linguistic connotations, the term took on a more specialized meaning of replacement over time.

However, this notion of abrogation resulted in an inflation in abrogation claims as more cases of textual nuances, such as specifications and exceptions, were counted as *naskh*. This tendency to restrict the meaning to replacement meant that later generations did not enjoy the legal directness, flexibility and creativity that was typical of the early generation where different shades of linguistic meanings permitted different possibilities of text reconciliation (Auda 2013). As a result, the question of abrogation became a source of entrenched disagreements over occurrences of abrogation. These disagreements were further exacerbated by the difficulty of conclusively establishing the timeline of some revelations. Without a clear chronology, many claims of *naskh* were rendered untenable (Abdelnour 2023).

This prompted a sense of scepticism and a desire to bring down the number of claims to a manageable level. Weeding through hundreds of claims, the 15_{th} century Egyptian scholar, Suyūṭī, found only 30 cases of real abrogation. In the 18_{th} century, the Indian scholar, Shah Waliyullah, did the same, and arrived at a much reduced list of only 5 verses (Abdelnour 2023). Two centuries later, Mustapha Zayd (1987) arrived at similar conclusion. In the same vein, some modern thinkers considered abrogation to be an invention of Muslim jurists. In *Abrogating the Qur'an and Islamic Law*, Louay Fatoohi (2013, 7) considered abrogation to be a "myth," and argued that in others the term *naskh* never appears in the Qur'an in the meaning it acquired in Islamic law. Finally, as we discuss below Qur'anic abrogation debates include topics such as, "abrogating earlier revelations," "abrogating specific Qur'anic text," "abrogating Sunnah," and "being abrogated by Sunnah."

2. Critique of Five New Theories of Abrogation

2.1. Abdullah Saeed: The Didactic Theory

In *Interpreting the Qur'an*, Abdullah Saeed speaks of a profound mismatch between the lived reality of most Muslims and the traditional exegetes' understanding of many Qur'anic directives. The complexity of modern life made it difficult for ordinary Muslims to live by, much less defend, many prominent classical arguments. For Saeed, Muslims are not alone: Other faith-based communities face similar challenges (Saeed 2006).

Yet for Muslims, the problem is more urgent. The divergence between pre-modern law and the legal codes of most Muslim countries are so stark, even in places that claim to implement the *Sharī'ah*. It is not just that these laws have been circumscribed to limited spheres by the governing elites, they are also being ignored by a growing share of ordinary citizens, who find them in conflict with, or irrelevant to, their worldly aspirations. Wherever pre-modern Islamic law is enforced, it is often done against the will of a clear majority (Saeed 2006, 2).

Saeed (2006) traces the problem to the old battle between the people of *ra'y* (rationalists) and people of *ḥadīth* (traditionists), a struggle in which the latter triumphed. Their defeat ushered in an era where law ceased to be a process of reasoning to relate texts to events. Saeed blames Shāfi'ī (d. 820) for initiating this process by relegating *qiyās* to a marginal position in the hierarchy of legal indicants. This position was further consolidated first by his student, Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (d. 855) and much later by the polymath Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 1328) and the exegete Ibn Kathīr (d. 373). Where Ibn Taymiyyah privileged the views of the *Salaf*, Ibn Kathīr favoured the range of meanings supported by traditions. Their success led first to privileging preceding generations over their successors, and ultimately to the ossification of Islamic law. Ever since, the realities of Muslims and their legal processes have been effectively divorced.

Abdullah Saeed's book, *Interpreting the Qur'an*, was a project to resolve this conundrum. In this work, he makes the case for a rational interpretation of the Qur'an, considering the flexibility, complexity, and approximate nature of meaning. These critical characteristics stem from the defining role of context, without which words remain abstract. Interpreters, furthermore, must stress the hierarchy of values rather than the rhetorical power of words. Because of the centrality of context to meaning making, Saeed calls this approach the Contextual Approach.

The concept of abrogation plays a critical role as the central hermeneutic device validating the constitutive role of context, and the mutable and transient nature of meaning. This device derives its legitimacy from its embeddedness as a Qur'anic modus operandi.

Although he cites abrogation, as just one of several elements supporting contextual reading, Saeed's Contextual Approach is untenable without the validating power of abrogation. This becomes readily apparent when we examine the most ambitious aspect of Saeed's work: his attempts to devise Implementation Values to overturn ethico-legal commandments. Indeed, without furnishing well-reasoned, practical, and legally justified alternatives for the most controversial aspects of traditional ethico-legal commandments (corporal punishments), his contribution would be very modest. Take, for instance, the following passage where Saeed uses Qur'anic and prophetic statements to support his Implementation Values. Here he argues that specific measures can be authorized as substitutes to corporal punishments outlined in the Qur'an. The following passage deals with the punishment for fornication:

According to al-Rāzī (d. 923), repentance could waive punishment. This also seems to be the view of Shāfiʿī and of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (d. 855). Ibn al-Qayyim (d. 1350) also offers a similar opinion in his book, *Iʿlām* (1991). As for the implementation of the punishment for *zinā* (unlawful sexual intercourse), in the case of the Companion Māʿiz, Ibn al-Qayyim is of the view that it was the latter insistence on punishment and repeated requests that led the Prophet to impose the punishment. The implication is that Māʿiz could easily have repented and avoided the punishment (Saeed 2006, 135).

Not only is Saeed forced to acknowledge that his exceptions (the annulment of corporal punishments based on repentance) have also been recognized by the very people whom he faults for the ossification of Islamic law, his use of these exceptions also undermines his central arguments about the stubborn literalism of these authorities. However, whereas these very authorities use clear Qur'anic and prophetic texts to justify their acceptance of these cases as exceptions, Saeed lacks a clear authoritative basis for their use to create a general legal approach, not a conditional one. Whereas the textual approach, supported by clear indicants, presents two defined alternatives (a crime + repentance = mitigated discipline, and a crime + no repentance = applying the *ḥad*), the contextualist approach of Saeed remains very fluid (a crime with or without repentance will be punished based on a changing variable= context).

Beyond the Qur'an and Sunnah, Saeed refers to the dynamism of the first generation of Muslims, who provide a precedent of liberal engagement with the text. Approaching the text freely, intuitively and with no governing methodology, this generation has created a proto-contextualism, which offers a legitimating precedent for his contextualism. This is yet another curious instance where Saeed tosses Salafi arguments out of the door only to admit them through the window. If this proto-contextualism derives its authority from its temporal status, then why should one readily dismiss privileging the views of *Salaf.* That argument is after all not based on a denial of the importance of context (extralinguistic elements such as time-place and interlocutors). In fact, the driving force behind Salafism is an argument, not about texts, but about the capacity of those who live within their context (of revelation) to define their meanings better than those who live without it (Saeed, 2006).

This much Saeed implicitly accepts. However, his proto-contextualism was favoured as an approach, not as a final reference to meaning. To accept it as a reference would limit the flexible reading of the text as approximation, preclude interpretation based on reason, overlook complexity of meaning and assume the presence of a transhistorical and immutable divine text. This is unthinkable for Saeed, for he sees the text primarily as a discourse, a product of a dialogic relationship between the language (the abstract) and the context (the concrete). While the former can have a status of permanence, being committed to books or to human memory, the latter is ever changing.

On this much, Saeed and the traditionalists he critiques agree. However, for these traditionalists, not all contexts are created equal. The constitutive context (of revelation) matters precisely because it anchors the text and grants its language a definite meaning, without which it remains either unrevealed or always in revelation. To accept the primacy of the early context does not negate others but rather assumes that revelation has been completed. To understand the relevance of revelation to any given context, one must return to its constitutive application in the original context. Saeed's call for a modern contextualism based an early proto-contextualism is an acknowledgement, at once, that the text has been revealed, and that its revelation is ongoing. To prove a claim of this magnitude, Saeed needs to prove that the text in its earlier revelation warrants an ongoing revelation. This is where it becomes apparent that Saeed's entire project of contextual reading rests on the persuasive power of his section on abrogation.

Saeed's theory of abrogation is relatively simple, albeit quite unorthodox. The Holy Qur'an instituted abrogation as a mechanism to account for change in time and social conditions. Some Qur'anic commandments (including ethico-legal commandments) were either gradually instituted or were initially imposed, ultimately diminished or completely withdrawn. This fact must be taken seriously. Saeed argues that *naskh* provides a justification for reinterpreting some of the ethico-legal texts in line with the changing needs of Muslims. By changing ethico-legal rulings of the Qur'an to suit different situations of Muslims during the Prophet's time, which the theory of abrogation suggests, God appears [the emphasis is mine] to be providing the community with an important tool with which it can make the Qur'an relevant to people's needs and circumstances (Saeed, 2006, 6).

Unlike classical exegetes, Saeed (2006) considers these changes to mean something beyond the gradual imposition of certain restrictions, their progressive relaxation or eventual cancelation. One must not focus simply on the outcome. The process itself has a didactic meaning. Since the only observable variable is the position of the early community (shift in space: Mecca to Medina; shift in status: persecuted to semi-independent, to sovereign), abrogation must be understood as a suggestive process, extending beyond its own proper boundaries. In other words, abrogation must be understood as a perpetual revelation of a limited text through the intelligent enactment of its discursive techniques, not by the blind following of its words.

This position is only partly new. Taking cues from Qur'anic processes (as suggestive) is as old as Islamic law itself. For example, gradualism (*tadarruj*) is unanimously recognized by Muslim jurists as a divine law embedded in nature, as inescapable as, say, gravity. However, for traditional scholars, accepting gradualism cannot and would not lead to overturning a final ruling established by text and consensus. However, going this far would not have advanced Saeed's argument. Saeed needs a process in which overturning ethico-legal commandments follows from a faithful enactment of the Qur'anic abrogative scheme. To this end, Saeed correlates the time of revelation, the changes it warranted and the parallel changes in geography, social norms, and structures. Saeed (2006, 83) states that this notion is that change can and should play an important part in the discussion of *naskh*. The Qur'anic revelation occurred over 22 years (610–632), during which the Prophet put his mission in place. Within that period, even though the community remained largely within the confines of Hijaz (around Mecca and Medina), a number of

ethico-legal instructions given in the earlier period of the mission were changed once, twice or even thrice.

Saeed focuses on the brevity of time (22 years), the frequency of change (once, twice, or even thrice) and the limited geographic sphere (the confines of Hijaz) to conclude, or even just to insinuate that the context did not warrant all the changes, if change (=abrogation) was not a necessary and vital modus operandi. In other words, God must be suggesting that the community has an abrogative license vis-à-vis Qur'anic text:

From a contextualist point of view, with changes like these to ethico-legal rulings in response to different situations, *God appears* [the emphasis is mine] to be providing the community with an important tool with which to change rulings in line with changing needs and circumstances. If that is the case, there is a problem in holding the view that all Qur'anic rulings must be immutable or unchangeable, in the sense that another ruling cannot be devised or implemented to match with broader Qur'anic objectives (Saeed 2006, 84).

For Saeed, abrogation is not limited to cases where subsequent verses overturn earlier ones, modify, or specify them. Abrogation extends as well to changes in focus and tone. Consider this passage where Saeed comments on the shift in focus between the Meccan and Medinan Qur'an.

[In the Meccan period], the focus was largely on the spiritual and moral development of the individual. There were also rulings for the support of the poor and deprived. Beyond instructions like these, there was very little in the Qur'an in the Meccan period about governing the community and maintaining harmonious relationships among the various groups, clans and tribes, as such guidance was not relevant. The shift in emphasis occurred in Medina. The language as well as the tone of the Qur'an changed in line with the changes in the community. This change, to a certain extent, is embodied in the concept of naskh (Saeed, 2006, 85).

Saeed finds the underlying reasons for this change in focus to be the shift in socio-political circumstances. The Muslim Medinan community was engaged in creating and sustaining a polity. This new task of state-building required focused legal and political instructions different from the general calls to God-consciousness and entreaties to kindness typical of the Meccan period. These shifts to accommodate this project should constitute an ongoing warrant. Saeed blames traditional

exegetes for not seriously considering the 'logical implication' of these shifts in focus. Indeed, if they had done so, they would have inevitably empowered subsequent exegetes to assume functions beyond simple interpretation.

Saeed's idea, however, encounters the inevitable stumbling block. These shifts are too evident to miss, and most Qur'anic exegetes have recognized them. While some of these exegetes may have attributed them, much like Saeed, to changes in circumstances, most have not viewed them as signs of a grand scheme of *naskh*. Some have indeed debated whether specific commandments abrogated certain earlier ones. However, in their vigorous debates, an established case of abrogation has always meant a permanent settlement. It is not clear how could Saeed's abrogation competes with this view, which acknowledges change (as a divine law) and accounts for context (through various legal devices: *'urf*, necessity, *rukhaṣ* and so on), but at the same tine assumes a finality in divine law. This is a view that not only cites as many (if not more) Qur'anic verses in its defence than Saeed's abrogation scheme. Nevertheless, it is furthermore supported by consensus and centuries of continued practice. Saeed's declaration that '*God appears* [the emphasis is mine] to be providing the community with an important tool' is clearly too weak and speculative to overturn it.

2.2. Mahmoud Taha: The Punitive Theory

The late Sudanese reformist, Mahmoud Taha, elaborated the most involved and controversial theory of abrogation. To understand his expansive abrogation theory, one needs to outline Taha's overall view of the divine revelation. For Taha, God's original and final plan always entailed an unqualified license for man to enjoy a freedom without restriction. However, one thing always stood in the way: man's own failure to use it properly. In response to man's frequent failings, God issued amendments (revelations) over time to help him overcome his weaknesses (selfishness, gluttony, carelessness, and proclivity to violence). All these revelations share two things, a central abstract core (*islām*) intended to remind man of his place in the universe, and a series of procedures (list of dos and don'ts) to tame his wild spirit (*īmān*). The first is always too general, and the second is often very specific.

Taha's book, *Second Message of Islam* (*al-Risāla al-Thāniyyah min al-Islām*) explores this idea in the Qur'an. In it, Taha (1969) speaks of

two Islams. The first is the Islam practicing Muslims recognize. This Islam started with the Prophet's migration to Medina, and it eventually developed into a communal way of life, with its governance values, its legal norms (*Sharī'ah*) and collective rituals. This Islam places greater emphasis on the external aspects of worship and on social organization. In addition to its faith tenets, this Islam sets a list of obligations, outlines certain measures of reward as well as strategies for discipline. This *islām* is in fact not Islam but *īmān*, and its adherents should, accordingly, be called *mu'minūn,* not *muslimūn*.

In contrast, the second Islam has been revealed but has not been practiced. Its evolution in time was truncated by the inability of humankind to rise to its liberating potentials. Unlike *īmān*, this Islam is individualist and, as such, does not require the establishment of specific rituals, the legislation of certain laws or the institution of particular governing techniques. For this Islam, people need to look forward in time to discovering it, not backward to reviving it. Its eventual and inevitable arrival would mark the climax of human evolution and, in the truest sense, the real conclusion of divine revelation. In the words of Taha (1969, 168), its conclusion is the great pilgrimage or "*yawm al-Hajj al-akbar.*" At that moment, the human being can make proper use of his unrestrained freedom and seek unity with God, although he could never fully reach it.

Linguistically, Taha did not veer away from the traditional conception of the *naskh* as specification, annulment, or replacement. Like most classical scholars, Taha (1969, 132) argued that the verse of *al-sayf* (sword) (Q. 9:5) and its 'sisters' clearly abrogated all entreaties to kindness in the Qur'an. It is true that for Taha this abrogation is a temporary punishment exacted on people during the Prophetic age for their failure to rise up to the true essence of Islam. Unlike classical *fuqahā'*, Taha did not see the chronology as an important factor in abrogation except in one respect: the proceeding element provides a temporary but necessary state of exception to the preceding general paradigmatic vision. Abrogation in Taha's understanding is a transitory exception not a settlement (Taha 1969).

One area where Taha's understanding differs greatly from classical scholars is the question of Meccan vs. Medinan Qur'an. Meccan Qur'an contains the most general and central aspects of Islamic doctrine. This includes, for instance, the emphasis on the Oneness of God and the vivid descriptions of the Hereafter. The Meccan Qur'an, however, does not involve many of the details of inheritance laws, *zakāt*, and public policy.

These important sociological aspects of Islam became key features of the Medinan Qur'an. This difference held consequences for Qur'anic exegetes and legal theorists. While classical *maqāṣid*ic theorists (such as al-Ghazālī, ʿIzz al-Dīn ibn ʿAbd al-Salām, al-Qarāfī and most notably Shāṭibī) saw the divergence as one between the universals (*al-kulliyyāt*) and particulars (*juz'iyyāt*) of Islam, where the former precedes the latter in importance, the default legal and hermeneutic approach of the majority of Muslim legal scholars tended to privilege subsequent revelations over earlier ones. This is particularly true where both preceding and succeeding verses addressed the same subject matter.

Despite this divergence, classical scholars did not think that Meccan Qur'an could replace the Medinan or vice versa. That idea of wholesale abrogation was Taha's innovation. Not unlike the *maqāṣid*ic theorists, Taha privileges the principles established in the Meccan Qur'an. Yet, Taha's distinction is based on the notion that Medinan Qur'an temporarily abrogated the 'true' message of Islam, which was outlined in Meccan revelations. The Medinan revelation of legal details, of socio-economic and military regulations, which were embodied in the Prophetic praxis, were harsh punitive measures to create a community of believers (*mu'minūn*), not of submitters (*muslimūn*). Because of the temporary abrogation, the real Islam has not been practiced, nor has it won any convert. The sole convert is the Prophet himself, a man who journeyed from an advanced state in the future of human evolution where Islam is possible (Taha 1969).

There are several evident problems in this abrogative scheme, which explains why it never held a great appeal outside the circles of Taha's Republicans. This abrogative act means that *Sharīʿah* (including what Abdullah Saeed calls the ethico-legal commandments) was not at all essential to Islam. Taha (1969, 148) explicates:

> "We come, based on our previous discussion, to the determination that most facets of Islamic law, which we have today, were not intended [as a finality] by Islam itself. They were rather revealed to meet the demand of the time and human energy."

This recognition is hardly liberating. A close reading of Taha indicates that any attempt to make Islam relevant by embarking on a gradual revision or reinterpretation of these facets of legislation is misguided. Taha's Islam has no past and hence has no sociological or juridico-political precedents to build upon. This Islam is too idealist because no one can clearly know when humanity would be ready to

accept it. Taha has little appreciation for the political, economic, and ideological systems of his time. He finds little guidance in practiced Islam; considers Communism as a major misguidance; and calls Capitalism 'exploitative.' In short, Islam's distance in future does not seem to have been abridged.

Furthermore, Taha's abrogation theory is textually untenable. His linguistic analysis of the few verses he uses to support his distinction between *īmān* and *islām* is contradictory at times, and very unconvincing at others. It is not clear why should one abandon the established classical positions and embrace his. Finally, this idea that God has sent messengers, all of whom failed to fulfil His will of emancipating humanity, seems ungodlike. This notion of prophets without portfolios, or with unsuccessful ones, stands not just against the foundational principles of Islamic philosophy, but it also fails to pass Ibn Rushd's famous definition of a messenger as the person who brings a working/able legislation.

2.3. Al-Jabri: Non-Abrogation Theory

The renowned Moroccan intellectual, Muhammad Abed al-Jabri, is another prominent modern Muslim scholar who responds to *naskh*, in two of his monographs on the Qur'an, *Madkhal ilā'l-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, and *Fahm al-Qur'ān al-Ḥakīm*. Al-Jabri employs two strategies in his refutation of classical *naskh* claims. In the first strategy, al-Jabri endeavours to show that the classifications of abrogation are practically useless and quite burdensome. In his second and most central strategy, al-Jabri demonstrates that all claims of abrogation are based on a misunderstanding of the word *āyah* (verse). He argues that the Qur'an never uses the word *āyah* in the sense of a Qur'anic unit of meaning (verse). Instead, the Qur'an uses the word *āyah* to mean a sign, miracle, or lesson.

Al-Jabri's mission to undermine *naskh* starts with his condemnation of classical categories of abrogation. He insists that these classifications contradict the essential presumptions held by Muslims about the Qur'an and its central mission. To demonstrate this, al-Jabri (2006) invokes his own procedural distinction between the Qur'an and the history of the Qur'an. He limits the first category to the *Muṣḥaf*, which was collected during the reign of 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān (d. 656). The second category comprises all accounts pertinent to when, where, and how the revelations

were received, collected, and preserved. While data derived from the latter allow us to appreciate how the text took its final shape, and even how its various components relate to one another, they cannot be used to justify adding or subtracting from the existing text in the *Muṣḥaf*.

2.3.1. Categories of Naskh

Al-Jabri proceeds to apply this distinction to the three most central classifications of *naskh* in the literature. These include:

1. The category where both the words and the ruling where abrogated. For al-Jabri, this claim is not just impractical; it also insinuates that the existing Qur'an is not complete. "There is no point of speaking of this except to prove that something is missing from the *Muṣḥaf*, in word or in substance" (al-Jabri, 2006, 97).

2. The category where the ruling is abrogated, but its recitation remained. For al-Jabri this category constitutes the bulk of abrogation claims. However, he insists that it creates irresolvable contradiction without adding anything of practical value. How can there be a Qur'an for recitation only, and yet it has an unambiguous and clear meaning. As far as we are concerned, the only thing in the Qur'an that is only to be recited is the broken/fragmented letters. Everything else, i.e., the entirety of the Qur'an, is preserved because it has meaning, real or figurative. The question of whether it should be fully applied or whether it has been qualified/restricted at a later time, or has been postponed, or stopped, for one reason or another, is a completely different matter. It is, anyway, a matter of *ijtihād* (al-Jabri 2006, 97).

3. The category where the recitation is abrogated, but the rule remained in effect. Al-Jabri opines that this category always involves claims made by or attributed to individual Companions. This, for instance, includes the famous stoning verse of ʿUmar (d. 644) and ʿĀyishah's (d. 678) controversial adult breast-feeding verses. Once again, al-Jabri invokes the *Muṣḥaf* argument. "These [cases] should not be considered a part of the Qur'an. When we speak of the Qur'an, we speak of what is in the *Muṣḥaf*, of what is collected during the reign of ʿUthmān" (al-Jabri 2006, 97). All other details, which pertain to the process of its collection, belong to the history of the Qur'an, not to its texts and their meanings.

Al-Jabri (2006, 96) concludes that those who presume the presence of abrogation go too far in their application of the concept. They create classifications, which are nothing but hallow logical frames, which they then fill with whatever elements they find. This leads them to extreme fragmentary readings and to wild hypotheses that have no value except creating and imagining polemical scenarios, which burden Islamic jurisprudence. Al-Jabri (2006, 98) quotes Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 1201) who, after examining all cases of *naskh*, concludes that it is clear from a close inspection of the *nāsikh and mansūkh* that all cases of *naskh* are figments of imaginations (*takhrīf*, hallucinations). Although Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 1201) was still willing to accept a few cases of real abrogation, he considered most claims to be qualifications and restrictions.

Furthermore, al-Jabri marshals the support of the Andalusian *maqāṣid*ic theorist, Abū Isḥāq Shāṭibī (d. 1388), who asserts that most cases of *naskh* could be reconciled if understood as particular cases specifying or qualifying a universal injunction. In this way, both original verdicts on these cases remain relevant. Many other cases, Shāṭibī argues, have to do with prohibitions that trump the original presumption of permissibility. Under these falls almost all pre-Islamic customs and practices which were subsequently prohibited by Islam. Shāṭibī cites alcohol, usury (*ribā*), and gambling and thus concludes that one rarely finds any cases, which fall under the category of abrogation. Finally, al-Jabri alludes to Shāṭibī's use of *maqāṣid* to limit the scope of *naskh*. Al-Jabri notes that for Shāṭibī all legal universals, whether pertinent to necessities (*ḍarūrāt*), needs (*ḥājiyyāt*), or ameliorations (*taḥsīniyyāt*), are never subject to abrogation. Abrogation only touches on the particulars (al-Jabri 2006).

A-Jabri, however, is not satisfied with overruling most of abrogation claims. He is conscious that even those scholars who narrow the number of cases implicitly accept the possibility of *naskh*. Their evaluations centre on re-interpretations of verses that others considered abrogated. This does not resolve the problem. One interpretation disputing a claim of *naskh* does not preclude other interpretation affirming it. "The only final resolution to the problem of abrogation must come from Qur'an itself. If we can prove that there is no evidence in the Qur'anic text for abrogation, we could resolve the problem from its base" (al-Jabri, 2006, 99).

Now, al-Jabri turns his attention to the definition of the word *āyah*. He notes that the term is linguistically restricted to three essential meanings, viz., sign, lesson, and miracle. This lexical definition is different from

the term *āyah* used by the Qur'anic exegetes to designate a discrete unit of Qur'anic text. He is emphatic that all occurrences of the word *āyah* or its derivatives, in the Qur'an, refer to one meaning, a miracle. Unlike the word *sūrah*, which is a Qur'anic term, designating a chapter of the Qur'an itself, there is no equivalent Qur'anic use of the word *āyah* to mean a section of the Qur'an. The word *sūrah* has been mentioned in singular and plural in clear references to Qur'anic chapters. The verses, Q. 10:38, Q. 11:3, and Q. 2:23 are three prominent examples. As a term, *āyah* is used more frequently and in several derivative forms, but never to mean a discrete Qur'anic unit in any of its many forms. Al-Jabri cites Q. 54:2, Q. 7:106, Q. 10:20, and Q. 17:12 to prove his contention. This holds true even where *āyah* is referred to as being heard or recited (Q. 45:6-8, for instance). Indeed, recitation in this context does not mean producing Qur'anic utterances but the adumbration of these miracles. Outside the Qur'an itself, al-Jabri considers all references in Ḥadīth to *āyah* as a Qur'anic unit to be clear forgeries (al-Jabri 2006).

Al-Jabri applies this understanding to the five most widely cited abrogation verses:

1. When We substitute one revelation for another, and Allah knows best what He reveals (in stages), they say, "Thou art but a forger": but most of them know not (Q. 16:101).

The circumstantial evidence presented by traditional exegetes is untenable. The idea that it responded to the Meccans' mockery of how the Prophet frequently changed his commands is also cited in reference to other verses. The story refers either to this verse or to the others. It cannot be about both at the same time. Al-Jabri points to how a veteran exegete like al-Qurtubī ignored this report and chose instead to understand the *āyah* to mean a previous legislation. The linguistic context supports this understanding. The following verse says:

Say, the Holy Spirit has brought the revelation from thy Lord in Truth, in order to strengthen those who believe, and as a Guide and Glad Tidings to Muslims (Q. 16:102).

This suggests that *āyah* refers to the Qur'an as a whole (al-Jabri 2009). The meaning would then be as we had made the stick turn into a snake for Moses, for instance, we had also substituted this miracle with another one for Jesus to support his message. This miracle is the gift of speaking in the cradle. Al-Jabri (2009, 103) commented that this choice of interpretation elucidates and strengthens the meaning of the verse.

2. But those who strive against Our Signs, to frustrate them, they will be Companions of the Fire (Q. 22:51).

Al-Jabri (2009) dismisses again any inkling that *āyāt* in this context could mean verses. Instead, he maintains his positions that the word means signs of God's power.

3. Never did We send a messenger or a prophet before thee, but, when he framed a desire, Satan threw some (vanity) into his desire: but Allah will cancel anything (vain) that Satan throws in, and Allah will confirm (and establish) His Signs: for Allah is full of Knowledge and Wisdom (Q. 22:52).

Here, too, al-Jabri maintains that the word *yansakhu* (abrogates) does not mean to abrogate but to 'wipe out.' The act of *naskh* here is an act of wiping out, not something the Prophet had recited (actual Qur'anic statements), but ideas he had entertained.

4. We did send messengers before thee, and appointed for them wives and children: and it was never the part of a messenger to bring a Sign except as Allah permitted (or commanded). For each period is an appointment. Allah doth blot out or confirm what He pleaseth: with Him is the Mother of the Book. "Allah effaces whatever He wills and retains whatever He wills. With Him is the Mother of the Book" (Q. 13: 38-39).

For al-Jabri (2009), this is a response to an earlier request (Q. 13:7) by the Meccans for the Prophet to show a miracle, as such receiving a treasure from heaven. He argues that the meaning of the word 'efface' pertains to the miracle. The general meaning of the sequence of verses is to tell them that I (God) have sent earlier messengers. These have all been regular humans, who were not capable of performing miracles, except by God's permission. Some of these miracles have been inscribed by God in His books, such as the Qur'an and others were left out. The term 'efface' has nothing to do with any abrogation within the text of the Qur'an.

5. None of Our revelations do We abrogate or cause to be forgotten, but We substitute something better or similar: Knowest thou not that Allah Hath power over all things? (Q. 2:106)

This verse constitutes the most important claim of abrogation. Once again, al-Jabri (2009) sees no *naskh* or any indication thereof in the Qur'anic text. The fact that the verse ends with "Are you not aware that Allah is All-Powerful?" indicates that the reference is not to verbal *āyah*

(verse) but to an *āyah* (sign) of acts and events. Thus, he concludes that it is crystal clear from the context in which this verse of abrogation occurs that what is being abrogated by the verse is not the words of a Qur'anic verse (*āyāt*), but rather the preceding (pre-Islamic) prophethoods and messages. In this sense, Prophet Muḥammad is the 'seal of the Prophets.' With that conclusion of prophetic missions, God has abrogated all those *āyāt* (miracles) which God has given to earlier Prophets. Those miracles (breaks in physical laws) have been abrogated thus reinstituting the norm. The only general miracle, which all people must consider, is what is being mentioned in the second part of the (Qur'anic verse) and in the following verse:

> Allah is All-Powerful. Are you not aware that the dominion of the heavens and the earth belongs to Allah, and that none apart from Allah is your protector or helper? (Q. 2:107)

Despite all his rhetorical skills, al-Jabri's central argument is based on the meaning of the word *āyah* in the Qur'an. If other scholars can prove that the word *āyah* means, in one of its many occurrences in the Qur'an, a Qur'anic verse, then al-Jabri's entire argument becomes untenable. One does not need to go back to classical *mufassirūn* to find such an argument. Al-Jabri's contemporary and liberal scholar, Nasr Hamid Abu Zaid (2014, 118), does exactly that. Referring to Q. 16:101, he states that there is no doubt that the meaning of *āyah* in this context refers to the text and its essential elements. The context is the recitation of the Qur'an and initiation of [the act] by seeking refuge from the Satan. It, furthermore, refutes the charge of fabrication and stresses that the Qur'an is from Allah, transmitted by the Trusted Spirit (*rūḥ al-amīn*). The context also includes refutations of the Meccans' allegations that someone dictates the Qur'an to Muḥammad. The meaning of replacing (*ibdāl*) an *āyah* with another one would then be the changing of a ruling stipulated in one text by another text, while maintaining both texts.

As Muhammad Imara (2011) notes in his response, *Radd Iftirā'āt al-Jabrī ʿalā'l-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, that al-Jabri's monographs on the Qur'an contain curious inconsistencies. The section on abrogation is no exception. Ironically, al-Jabri closes his section on abrogation by citing Q. 11:1, to argue that the concept goes against the integrity and finality of the Qur'anic text. The verse reads thus:

> Alif, Lām, Rā. [This is] a Book whose verses are perfected and then presented in detail from [one who is] Wise and Aware (Q. 11:1).

Al-Jabri (2009, 110) adorns the verse with his interpretations. These are highlighted in brackets.

1. *A Book whose verses are perfected* [in a comprehensive system]
2. *Then presented in detail* [with elements revealed according to circumstances].

Al-Jabri does not comment on whether the word *āyātuhu* (sing. *āyah*) means units of Qur'anic text, miracles, or signs, as he insists all along. This is quite enigmatic, for if it meant the latter, it would not have helped his case to exclude abrogation of Qur'anic verses. If, on the other hand, he consciously uses the word to mean units of Qur'anic text to exclude the possibility of abrogation, he would have fallen into a blatant contradiction and undermined the most critical element in his Non-abrogation Theory.

2.4. Abu Zaid: Dialectic Theory of Abrogation

Abu Zaid addresses abrogation in his book, *Mafhūm al-Naṣṣ*, that criticizes traditional discourses of Qur'anic exegetes. For Abu Zaid, the starting point of any sober study of the Qur'an is the recognition that it is a message. As such, it has three essential elements: the sender, the message, and the receiver. The message clearly addresses the human and his environment. The primary fault of traditional exegetes is their failure to grasp the centrality of the dialectic relationship between humans and their environment. This methodological error led to an ever-expanding quest to find a comprehensive portrait of God in the text. With time, humans and their dialectic experience with reality ceased to exist in exegetical works. This descending dialectic meant that the text became sanctified and closed to real textual analysis: its message is confused, and its receiver becomes preoccupied with obtaining individual redemption before the sender (Abu Zaid 2014).

To resolve this conundrum, Abu Zaid suggests a contrasting approach, where the role of the dialectic relationship with reality is restored. This approach, which Abu Zaid calls transcending dialectic, takes *a priori* the belief that the sender cannot be studied for evident practical reasons. The only accessible part is what the text says to and about the first receiver (or all other receivers) and his cultural environment. Understanding how the text and receiver shape and are shaped by the environment becomes therefore the most preeminent hermeneutical objective. It is

only through this approach that one can clearly place legal indicants in their proper temporal context within the global evolution of the text. This approach sharpens our understanding of the evolution of law, the text's objectives and its modus operandi (Abu Zaid 2014).

Abu Zaid argues that had classical scholars focused on the nature of the dialectic relationship between revelation and reality, they would have placed more emphasis on investigating historical reports and given less reverence to speculative views of early authorities. This would have helped them eschew the casuistry, which entangled them for many centuries. They would have had less incentive to invent many of the discursive devices they found necessary to accommodate the conflicting views of all the *salaf* as valid understandings of the text. Yet, Abu Zaid recognizes that not all of these devices are useless, although classical scholars have abused them (Abu Zaid 2014).

Naskh is, for instance, one of three interrelated analytical devices proving the dynamic interaction between revelation and reality. The other two are *asbāb al-nuzūl* (reasons of revelation) and the question of the Meccan and Medinan Qur'an. What makes these three elements essential is the centrality of time and space. Yet, classical exegetes did not tap into these potentials in their search for a harmonious reading of the text. Take, for instance, the question of the Meccan vs. Medinan. Rigorous research into where a Qur'anic verse or cluster verses were revealed is of great utility. It assists in the other avenue of research about *asbāb al-nuzūl*, the correlation between events and texts. It is also of great analytical value in tracing the evolution of legal concepts. It furthermore opens a window into the general framework of divine legal philosophy (Abu Zaid 2014).

While the existing reports cannot resolve all the queries about when and where each verse was revealed, other discursive features of the text could be used to exclude most, if not all, improbable claims. Abu Zaid (2014) cites the variance between the two essential functions of the prophetic message as a distinguishing factor. One of these functions is warning, while the other is discoursing (*risālah*). The former requires brevity and emphasis, and hence rhymes and simplified structures. The latter necessitates details and hence extended discourse. Because the Meccan period is the formative period of Islam, one can safely attributes all short and rhymed verses to this period. Longer and detailed verses clearly reflect a more advanced level of discourse and are hence Medinan. Yet, for Abu Zaid the important fact is not the location; it is the reality.

Therefore, all discursive verses, that is, those with mature ideological components, are Medinan, even if they were revealed in Mecca.

Abu Zaid (2014), however, laments that these potentials were hollowed by the reluctance of exegetes to dismiss any reports attributed to the Companions. This resulted in the acceptance of a wild array of conflicting claims, not just about when a given verse was revealed, but also about whether it could have been revealed more than once and for multiple reasons. This had ramifications for *naskh* as well, for such claims complicate the essential concept of *naskh*, a proceeding text abrogating a preceding one. The acceptance of multiple revelations and the confusion about what is Meccan and Medinan meant that one verse could feature in one claim as abrogating and yet in another as abrogated. This does not only violate the integrity of the text, but it also contradicts the widely held view of the permanence of the original scripture in the Preserved Tablet.

Despite this, Abu Zaid recognizes that *naskh* supports his central thesis of a dialectic interaction between the revelation (*waḥyi*) and reality (*waqiʿiyyah*). He is, however, not sure what to make of *naskh* nor what type of *naskh* he should accept. While willing to entertain the traditional views of *naskh* as replacement and annulment, he dismisses two categories of the *naskh*. He considers irrational that the recitation could be abrogated while the rulings are maintained. He equally finds it curious to think of verses where both the ruling and recitation are abrogated. The thought brings more problems than it solves for rulings and texts must not be divorced. Therefore, Abu Zaid adopts a modest definition; abrogation is a replacement of rulings not texts. "Understanding abrogation as the complete erasure of texts contradicts the wisdom of *taysīr* and *tadarruj,* facilitation and gradualism" (Abu Zaid, 2014, 123).

Although old, the concepts of *taysīr* and *tadarruj* fit in Abu Zaid's dialectic thesis. For instance, Abu Zaid cites the gradual prohibition of alcohol as a clear instance of the Qur'an's deference to reality. He notes that the Qur'an mentions, during the initial stance, the harm caused by alcohol without commenting on its legality. The Qur'an then treats the community's addiction by proscribing its consumption before daily prayers. This limits its consumption to evening, helping gradually wean society from dependence on alcohol. Once conditions were ripe, alcohol was banned.

What is true of alcohol is true of other legal matters as well. The main point is, however, that abrogating and abrogated texts must always lead a contemporaneous existence. People's conditions change, and their

change warrants the co-existence of antithetical rulings, each applicable in its proper context. It is only in this sense that Abu Zaid struggles to accept the third category of abrogation: verses whose rulings have been abrogated but whose recitation was retained. Of course, Abu Zaid finds no meaning in allowing Ḥadīth to abrogate Qur'anic verses. He takes Shāfiʿī's view that an abrogating text must be of the same level of the abrogated text (Abu Zaid, 2014).

In summary, abrogation does not annul texts or their legal relevance. For Abu Zaid, abrogation is a facet of the dialectic interaction between the Qur'an and the socio-cultural realities of its early recipients. It is limited to the temporary preference of certain legal injunctions over other equally valid and textually maintained alternatives. There is, however, no notion of superiority or of permanence. In principles, real conditions, not conscious legal aims, dictate the choice between a binary of legal preferences. This view is somewhat liberating because it allows for a continuous revelation, but it is restrictive because of its binary nature. It, more importantly, provides no clear justifications for why these maintained alternatives are the sole possible ones. The logical premises of Abu Zaid's work leave ample room for textual evolution.

2.5. Jasser Auda: The Maqāṣidic Theory

To speak about the *maqāṣid*ic approach, one needs first to define *maqāṣid*. Linguistically, the word *maqāṣid* is the plural form of *maqṣid*, which is in turn a derivative of the verbal noun, *al-qaṣd*. The latter means the aim, the intent, or the direction. The word also signifies moderation or a 'straight path.' In legal theory, the term *maqāṣid* refers to the overarching legal and ethical aims of Islamic law. The root word *qaṣd* is often contrasted with the word *laghw* that means a vacuous speech, or a purposeless act. In this sense, *maqāṣid* refers to the meaning and purpose of acts. An act that has no *maqṣid* is one that has no purpose. A speech without *maqṣid* (or *maqāṣid*) is a meaningless speech. Ibn ʿĀshūr (2001), one of the early Arab intellectuals to write about *maqāṣid* in the modern era, defines *maqāṣid* as, the discernible meanings and wisdoms in all or most instances of *tashrīʿ*. To Allal al-Fasi (1993) *maqāṣid* are the goals and the underlying notions placed by the Lawgiver with every rule. Yusif Hamid al-Alim (1991) sees *Maqāṣid* as these worldly and otherworldly interests of people. Al-Qaradawi (2008) considers *maqāṣid* to be the aims, which the texts intend from the orders and prohibitions. Raysuni

defines *maqāṣid* as the aims, which the *Sharī'ah* has been established to concretize in order to serve the interests of people.

*Maqāṣid*ic theorists share with many secularists their displeasure with the concept of *naskh*. However, unlike these secularists, *maqāṣid*ic theorists' dismay is not driven by a question of historicity. It is rather engendered by their interest in a systematized reading of Islam. *Naskh* and its classical debates are key challenges to this systematized reading. To do away with *naskh*, modern *maqāṣid*ic theorists employ two tactical approaches and one central strategy. Not unlike secularists, *maqāṣidic* theorists' first tactic involves deploying the works of classical and modern authorities who have sought to limit actual cases of abrogation. These authorities include al-Suyūṭī (d. 1505) and Shāṭibi (d. 1388) who have both claimed that cases of actual abrogation are minimal. *Maqāṣid*ic theorists further use the extensive work of Mustafa Zayd (1987) who limits abrogation to six cases. In their second tactics, the *maqāṣid*ic theorists argue that law is not a law unless it is finally established. This means that not all initial stages of a given law are abrogable because they are not complete.

*Maqāṣid*ic theorists' main strategy is to focus on the overarching legislative themes in the Qur'an to demonstrate a preponderance of concordance. They consider all cases of conflicts as pseudo-conflicts generated by the limitations of literalism, which dominated classical exegetical works. *Naskh* is only one of several consequences of these limitations. A proper resolution to the question of *naskh*, and many other shortcomings in classical exegeses, must stem from re-evaluating this approach. Questioning literalism should not be equated with overlooking the letters of the text, nor assuming that meaning is fluid. It simply means reading the text with a close attention to the global effects and outcomes it seeks to engender.

A reading of this magnitude differentiates between injunctions, which serve as means, and aims presented as injunctions. The means may be plural, but the intended outcome is always singular. While the means are often neither arbitrary nor dispensable, to view them as finalities or even temporary breaks with their antecedents is a clear deviation. It is, instead, the elucidation and classifications of the legal aims that are essential to a roadmap where all injunctions coalesce to form a comprehensive system of precepts. The primary feature of this system is its dual logic of endorsing a stable reading of texts pertinent to rituals and of employing a purposive, flexible, and goal-oriented reading of all non-ritual texts. A consequence of this choice is the *maqāṣid*ic

determination that verses with two distinct commandments always fall within the non-ritual sphere. These legislative verses must, therefore, remain relevant but not in any antithetical relationship. In other words, the text is an ongoing process, while the aim is settlement.

In *Naqḍ Naẓariyyah al-Naskh*, Jasser Auda (2013) outlines a *maqāṣid*ic critique of the concept of abrogation. His point of departure is the idea that Islam has both global and special legal aims. The global aims are the themes and values observable in all states of Islamic law. These include promoting *taysīr* (facility), *samāḥah* (kindness), *ʿadl* (justice), *ḥuriyyah* (freedom), and *fiṭrah* (the innate state of goodness). Special legal aims are those interests and values typical within a specific area of law. These would comprise, for instance, in the area of family law, preserving the wellbeing of children. This difference allows exegetes to determine the scale of priorities, and hence the proper interpretive scheme applicable when encountering an apparent contradiction. This classification allows scholars to apply all injunctions, while turning a comfortable blind eye to classical claims of contradictions. The scale of priorities considers not just the context (cultural and spatio-temporal), the area of legal interests, but more importantly, the general *ratio legis*.[1] Auda argues that this is consistent with the doctrine that the Qur'an, in its entirety, is complete and always relevant. This is a position, which classical legal scholars have documented in their maxims as an ideal, albeit one they were not able to reach; applying texts is more meritorious than overlooking them.

If the application of all texts is more meritorious, and if reconciliation takes precedence over preponderance (*al-jamʿ awlā min al-tarjīḥ*), as the other legal maximum goes, then one must assume consonance, not conflict. This is possible to conceive, considering that presumed conflicts are produced by a lag in time, which explains the exegetical positions of the Companions. For every two seemingly discordant revelations, the Companions have taken three logical positions. One group heard revelation I, but not revelation II. One group knew of both revelations but preferred the most recent. The third group heard and applied both but depending on circumstances (Auda 2013).

Auda (2013) considers the latter approach to be superior because it does not view injunctions as independent variables but as context-dependent technologies for self-refinement of the believers. While these technologies vary, the rulings do not, for instance, some alcohol consumption may be

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1. *Ratio legis* is a Latin term that means the reason or purpose of the law. It is here used to translate the Islamic legal term *ʿillah*.

permitted in certain times, for certain reasons. This position is supported by both the Qur'anic gradual prohibition of the substance, but also by other ubiquitous legal maxims such as necessity trumps prohibitions. These exceptions, however, do not change the default ruling, which is a prohibition. The correlation between a partial prohibition and a final one is not one of negation but one of consolidation. The final verdict is what best engenders the broad aims of *Sharīʿah*: the establishment of a physically healthy, mentally sober, and socially harmonious society.

With these theoretical frames in mind, Auda (2013) examines the key Qur'anic verses customarily cited in the debates about abrogation. Much like al-Jabri and Abu Zaid, Auda precludes that the recitation of any verse could be abrogated, for this contradicts the notion of revelation (read revealing) and casts doubt over the integrity of the Qur'an. The Qur'an, as the book itself states, is preserved. Much of what is left then is cases of specifications and exceptions (Q. 26: 224-227; Q. 16: 106), explications and elaboration (Q. 9:120-122), or the gradual institution of a final ruling (Q. 2:219; Q.4:43; Q. 5: 91-92). The exceptions are two references to replacement in Q. 2:106 and Q. 16:101.

Much like al-Jabri, Auda (2013) precludes that Q.16:101 could refer to legislative abrogation, for the verse is clearly Meccan. Yet, unlike al-Jabri, Auda does not need to comment on whether the verse points to a Qur'anic textual unit in general. Auda's task is more precise. What is relevant is whether a verse refers to a legislative verse (ritual verses cannot be abrogated). Because it is Meccan, it is certainly not legislative. As for Q. 2:106, the preceding and succeeding cluster of verses address the relationship with the People of the Book. It is, therefore, safe to assume that it addresses the abrogation of prior religious texts. However, even if one assumes that it has to do with intra-Qur'anic dynamics, the verse itself speaks of the possibility, but contains no reference to an actual case. Abrogation is a consequential event that cannot be established by speculations or conjuncture.

Once Auda (2013) established that the Qur'an contains no definitive proof of *naskh*, he turned his attention to Ḥadīth. His conclusion is very categorical: "A reading of what we know today of Ḥadīth proves that the root N,S,Kh did not feature in the Prophet's discourse referring to abrogation, in any fashion whatsoever. It is not in the ṣaḥīḥ (sound) nor in *ḥasan* (good) *aḥādīth* reported in al-Bukhārī (d. 870), Muslim (d. 875), al-Tirmidhī (d. 892), al-Nasāʾī (d. 915), Abū Dāwūd (d. 889), Ibn Mājah (d. 886), *Musnad* of Aḥmad, *Muwaṭṭaʾ* of Mālik (d. 795), al-Dārimī (d. 869), Ibn Ḥibbān (d. 965), Ibn al-Jārūd (d. 920), Ibn Khuzaymah (d.

924), al-Bayhaqī (d. 1066), al-Dāraquṭnī (d. 995), or in the *Musnad* of Shāfiʿī. Auda finds but one exception reported by al-Bayhaqī. Masrūq (d. 682) reported that ʿAlī (d. 661) stated that *zakāt* abrogated all charities, major purity shower (*ghusl*) annulled all other showers, Ramadan fasting abrogated all other forms of fasting, and Eid sacrifice overruled all other prescribed sacrifice. Auda dismisses this *ḥadīth* as weak (*ḍaʿīf*) because of clear defects in its content. The chain of narration is flawed as well. Maqdisī (d. 1245) and others noted that it was reported by Musayyib ibn Sharīk (d. /802), ʿUtba ibn Yaqẓān, Shaʿbī (d. 724), Masrūq, and ʿAlī. The first link in this chain is Musayyib and the consensus is that he is a liar, and his *ḥadīth* must be rejected (Auda 2013, 96).

3. Conclusion

The above discussion of the works of Saeed, Taha, al-Jabri, Abu Zaid and Auda covers the modern range of positions on the topic of *naskh*:

1. The Medinan Qur'an abrogated the Meccan;
2. *Naskh* is an underlying process where the Qur'an endorsed and enacted legal change, a mandate that must remain open;
3. Actual cases of abrogation are the exception;
4. The concept of *naskh* does not exist within, nor apply to, Qur'anic laws;
5. The Qur'an is a cohesive and coherent divine text, and abrogation is a misnomer.

While the democratization of Qur'anic interpretations has lowered the entry bar into the sphere of *tafsīr*, not all these theories offered convincing interpretation of, or alternative to, the theory of abrogation. Saeed's didactic theory uses *naskh* to claim a consistent underlying logic and an ongoing warrant for change. However, this warrant promises little beyond chaos, for one cannot validate an ongoing and unlimited license without invalidating the license-giver: the text itself. Saeed does not provide a convincing anchor. His idea of two continuing strands of revelation (praxis and God-inspired leaders) complicates rather than illuminates his view. It is not clear in what logic one should dismiss classical consensus only to follow an undefined "divine guidance which is continuously provided by God to those who are God-conscious."

Taha's wholesale punitive *naskh* theory does not readily flow from the Qur'an, and his proposed alternative of reviving the abrogated Islam seems too idealistic. Moreover, al-Jabri's gaze into the contradictions of classical *naskh* claims is not without consequence. His venture to prove that the word *āyah* (verse) was never used in the Qur'an to refer to a unit of meaning culminates into its own contradiction. Much like Saeed, Abu Zaid's theory sought to focus more on what the text says about the recipient (the messenger/followers) and his environment, and much less about the Sender. Nevertheless, where *naskh* is rejected, dyadic alternatives are instituted. Abu Zaid is vague on whether these are fixed options as his close reading of the text suggests, or rather a general dialectic process where the notion of variance, not specific injunctions, is what ultimately matters. If it is the former, then his theory remains less liberating than what classical jurists admit through casuistry, notions of *'urf, ḍarūrah*, and *maṣlaḥah*. The latter option is as chaotic as Saeed's.

In contrast, the *maqāṣid*ic theorists' interest in abrogation is not in conflict with the classical exegetical paradigm as a whole, nor with *naskh* specifically. Their solution, therefore, does not lie in appreciating or refuting the classical arguments of *naskh*. For *maqāṣid*ic theorists, citing the inconsistencies of *naskh* claims is not part of a strategy to challenge the traditional exegetical worldview as a whole, nor is it an opportunity to test fragmentary explanations. Like other shortcomings of classical exegesis, the *naskh* claims merely provide an opportunity to prove the explanatory power of their comprehensive exegetical theory. Finally, the *maqāṣid*ic theory shares all the essential foundations of classical exegesis. It views the Qur'an as a book in revelation (for 22 years), but coherent and purposeful since its completion.

Moreover, where proponents of *naskh* note textual discrepancies and see abrogation as a necessary exegetical tool to reconcile them, *maqāṣid*ic theorists see no discrepancies and therefore no need for abrogation. The reason for this contrast is that proponents of *naskh* (unlike the *maqāṣid*ic theorists) fail to recognize that a rule is not a rule until it is finally established. More fundamentally, they tend to equate injunctions, which serve as means, with aims expressed as injunctions. Instead, *maqāṣid*ic theorists insist that the diversity of means must not make the reader lose sight of the intended outcome, which is always singular and consistent. Knowing the proper classification of indicants removes the confusion.

Acknowledgements

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The Extent of the Validity of the Custom (*'Urf*) in the Interpretation of the Qur'an

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ABSTRACT: (Original Paper)

Throughout history, numerous exegetes of the Qur'an have presented interpretations of the verses of the Qur'an in accordance with the customary understanding, while not methodically specifying the extent of the validity of the customary understanding, in the process of interpreting the Qur'an. Hence, it is essential to properly clarify the validity and position of customary understanding in the interpretation of diverse types of verses, such as doctrinal verses, ethical verses, verses concerning social and cultural issues, and scientific verses.

The results of this study indicate that the customary understanding is admissible as an indication and evidence in the interpretation of the Qur'an and can be used to understand all the concepts of the verses at the level of literal meaning; however, at the level of intended meaning it is only allowed for the understanding of specific verses referring to customary practices, not for metaphysical concepts or verses with specific Qur'anic terminology.

KEYWORDS: Custom, *ʿurf*, customary understanding, customary interpretation, validity of custom, interpretation of the Qur'an, exegesis of the Qur'an.

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1. Introduction

Every human school dealing with the human community is closely related to custom (*'urf*). Similarly, the role of custom in all aspects of human life has received particular attention in Islam as a social school. Accepting the principle of using custom, God orders His Prophet in the Qur'an to set forgiveness as a principle of life and order based on rightful custom:

> Hold to forgiveness; command what is right; But turn away from the ignorant[1] (Q. 7:199).

Based on this verse, attention should be paid to customs that have rational value; that is, worthwhile norms that are used in life to regulate various aspects, mainly when these norms are rooted in the pure human interior; they seem inherently correct. Nevertheless, the verse does not clarify the realms and conditions under which the customs are valid.

Among the Western schools of thought, liberalism strongly depends on the criterion of custom, so this school cannot be regarded as anything other than custom. Unlike absolute democracy, in which the governance of society is based on custom, this school of thought has no other way of governance, and it defines the will of the people as a general custom. Because of this viewpoint, the most despicable practices, which originate from the whims of the soul and are formed against intellect and religion, have become customary and even legal in Western society. Nevertheless, these actions have no validity from the point of view of Islamic logic (Khamenei 2005).

It is worth noting that the relationship between the validation of customary understanding and the scientific interpretation of the Qur'an is of great importance. If we acknowledge that the real intentions of the Qur'an deal with objective facts and not with common notions based on people's customary perception, then the definite sciences, whether modern or traditional, can be used to understand the divine intention and discover the scientific points of the Qur'an.

Shi'a scholars believe that custom is authoritative only when it shows the opinion of the divine legislator. Custom in this sense is in a way a subset of the Infallibles' tradition, and its authoritativeness is associated with the origin of the custom rather than the custom itself. In other words, if the custom is confirmed by the legislator, it is legitimate; that

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1. خُذِ الْعَفْوَ وَ أْمُرْ بِالْعُرْفِ وَ أَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْجَاهِلِينَ (الأعراف/199)

is, custom per se cannot be an independent source. Thus, it can be said that custom by itself cannot be used to establish a legal ruling; rather, only a custom that is contemporary with the time of the Infallibles (*maʿṣūmīn*) and corroborated by an Infallible can be used (Anṣārī 2020, 3:42).

In this regard, Shahīd al-Ṣadr states that if the common behaviour that people repeat in their habits of life is neither addressed nor rejected by the Shariʿah, then it can be said that the Shariʿah confirms and accepts it. This type of custom, which is called the general custom or the conduct of the wise, is founded on recognizing the agreement of the Shariʿah with the contemporary custom of the era of legislation by not prohibiting this custom in the Shariʿah. This is because, if the Shariʿah was against such a custom, it should have prohibited it, so the non-prohibition is the evidence of agreement (al-Ṣadr 2013, 3:454). Thus, in order to have authoritativeness in deriving rulings and ethical issues from the Qurʾan and the Sunnah, the conduct of the wise or general custom requires verification or non-prohibition by the legislator, and its validity relies on the validity of its approver. Therefore, it is not acceptable to propose it as an independent source in line with the Qurʾan and Sunnah. This type of custom is not the subject of discussion in this article.

The validity of the general custom in interpreting the verses of the Qurʾan, which the present article aims to explain its extent, is generally accepted as a tool and source for understanding and interpreting the Qurʾan and the Sunnah. According to this approach, the role of custom in interpreting the Qurʾan is to be a tool, an indication, and a proof in the process of interpretation. This role can be examined at two levels: the role of custom at the level of the literal meaning of the Qurʾanic verses, and the role of custom at the level of the true intentions and instances of the Qurʾanic verses. In this regard, notable scholars such as ʿAllāmah Tabatabaʾi, Imam Khomeini, Shahīd al-Ṣadr, Ayatollah Maʿrefat, and Imam Khameneʾi have put forth their viewpoints on the two realms of concepts and instances, literal meaning and intended meaning of the verses, which are delineated in the following sections of the article. Thus, this study answers this question: In which positions and under which titles do modern Qurʾanic scholars, especially Tabatabaʾi, consider the reference to custom to be valid in the interpretation of Qurʾanic verses? To this end, the qualitative research method was adopted, and the data were collected through the library research method.

2. Literature Review

There are some general works on the validity of the custom in Qur'anic interpretation that have addressed the role of custom in jurisprudential inference. These works include books such as, "Jurisprudence and Custom" by Abolqasem Alidoust; "Criterion of Custom: The Qur'anic, Narrative, and Intellectual Principles of Custom; Viewpoints, Challenges, and Theorization" by Kavous Ruhi; "The Place of Custom in Inference" by Naghavi Kanani; "Al-'Urf: Ḥaqīqatuhu wa Ḥujjiyyatuhu" (Custom: Its Reality and Authoritativeness" by As'ad Kāshif al-Ghīṭā'; "An Introduction to Custom in Jurisprudence" by 'Ali Jabbar Golbaghi; "The Place of Custom in Jurisprudence" by Sayyid Muhammad Wase'i, "Naẓarīyyah al-'Urf bayn al-Sharī'ah wa al-Qānūn" by Nazir Hasani; "Al-'Urf wa Atharuhū fī al-Sharī'ah al-Islāmīyyah wa al-Qānūn al-Waḍ'ī" by Maḥmūd Ṣāliḥ al-Alwānī; "Al-'Urf: Ḥujjiyyatuhū wa Atharuhū fī Fiqh al-Mu'āmilāt al-Māliyyah 'ind al-Ḥanābilah" by Adil Qutah; and a master's thesis entitled "The Examination of the Position of Custom in the Jurisprudence of Islamic Denominations" by Amir Mohammad Amini.

In addition, there are some specific works on the subject of this article, such as the article, "Typology of Qur'anic Concepts and the Realm of Customary Understanding" by Abolqasem Alidoust et al. They first analyse, investigate, and define custom, then identify different types of Qur'anic concepts and terms, and finally determine the validity level of customary understanding in each type. Adopting the approach of analytical philosophy of language, this study analyses different types of Qur'anic concepts and their relationship with the customary understanding. Although it is a worthy study, it is not based on the analysis of the viewpoints of Sunni and Shi'a exegetes (*mufassirūn*) in this regard. Another article, "Providing a Model for Evaluating the Dependency of Comprehension of Qur'an Verses on Cultural Studies" by Reyhaneh Khodamardi et al. (2022), is related to the customary understanding of the Qur'an, but has not determined its domain from the perspective of exegetes. In this study, a model was constructed to determine the degree of dependency of the understanding of the verses on the study of the culture of the Revelation era. The input is a verse, and the output is one of three modes for the verse: dependent on the culture, semi-dependent on the culture, and independent of the culture. Therefore, considering the aforementioned general and specific works, the innovation of this article becomes clear. Although there have been

good works on custom and jurisprudence, and custom and law, there has been no study to explain the scope of custom in understanding and interpreting the Qur'an from the viewpoint of scholars of Qur'anic studies.

3. Concepts and Terminology

3.1. Literal Meaning of ʿUrf

Several meanings have been proposed for the word *ʿurf* (custom) in Arabic, which can be divided into two main parts. One group of these meanings has a cognitive essence and is related to human understanding, such as a known and accepted matter, which is against *munkar* (al-Farāhīdī 1989, 2:121; Ibn Athīr 1988, 3:217; al-Jawharī 1997, 4:1401); what the human soul knows as good and is reassured by it (al-Azharī 2000, 2: 208; al-Jawharī 1997, 4:1401); and a praiseworthy and righteous deed (Ibn Manẓūr 1993, 9:239) whose goodness is known through intellect or religion (Rāghib Iṣfahānī 1992, 562).

Another group considers meanings that have defined *ʿurf* based on its external aspect rather than its relationship to humans and their understanding. In this group, *ʿurf* is defined as a form of prominence, such as a rooster's comb and a horse's mane (Ibn Durayd 1988, 2:766), and as the successive connection of hills and other high places (Ibn Athīr 1988, 3:217; al-Jawharī 1997, 4:1401). Some other meanings such as generosity and patience (Ibn Manẓūr 1993, 9:239) and confession (al-Jawharī 1997, 4:1401) are also mentioned in the sources. A closer look at these final definitions shows that they are related to the second kind of meaning proposed above.

In order to analyse the above points, we could say that *ʿurf* is an infinitive noun used to mean the objective form *maʿrūf*. The literal meaning of *ʿurf*, according to Ibn Fāris, is something that is known by the self and brings about peace and tranquillity. However, the terminological meaning of *ʿurf* is the people of custom (i.e., the wise). Moreover, a close examination of the different meanings of *ʿurf* in the above-mentioned sources reveals the common point among them. Wherever the word *ʿurf* is used, it implies a kind of grandeur and prominence that distinguishes the intended thing from other things (Tabataba'i 2011, 8:121), and this prominence and distinctiveness makes the thing known among people. However, the various meanings attributed to *ʿurf* are actually expressions

of what is known and an example of it. Accordingly, it can be said that the main elements and characteristics of the word *'urf* in terms of literal meaning are being known, repetition, connection, and prominence. An examination of the uses of the word *'urf* in the Qur'an also corroborates this stance.

The root ('-R-F) has been employed 69 times in the Qur'an within 63 verses in 26 *sūrah*s. The word *'urf* has been used once to mean *ma'rūf*, and the word *ma'rūf* and its derivations have been used 40 times in the Qur'an. However, the word *'urf* in its terminological meaning (i.e., the people of custom) has not been explicitly used in the Qur'an, though it is possible that terms such as *al-nās* or *al-qawm* sometimes imply such a meaning.

3.2. Terminological Meaning of ʿUrf

There have been given different definitions for the word *'urf* by Shiʿa and Sunni scholars of jurisprudence and principles of jurisprudence. These can be divided into three classes. The first two classes are the definitions derived from and appropriate to the literal meaning, while the third class entails the common usage of this word among jurisprudents.

a) The first group of definitions given for *'urf* by jurisprudents does not mention the source of *'urf*. One such definition reads: "*'Urf* is a familiar and known matter that is the result of the collective agreement to move based on it; that is, the conventionality of something – disregarding its source and reason – is the collective agreement over it. Therefore, any matter familiar and known to people is *'urf*, no matter if it is derived from a rational point that has led to the collective agreement or from external, cultural, or educational issues" (Baḥrānī 2007, 2:315). In this type, the mere commonality of something among people and their familiarity and accustomedness to it is taken to be sufficient to fulfil the meaning of *'urf*. This definition is congruent with the literal meaning of this term.

b) In the second class of definitions, the rational and innate sources of *'urf* have also been taken into account: "According to reason, *'urf* is something that is established in human souls and has been accepted by their disposition and Inward" (Jurjānī Sharīf 1989, 1:149). In this group of definitions, not every common matter that has derived

from any type of reason and disposition is deemed as *'urf*; rather, those common matters are taken as *'urf* that are derived from healthy reason and Inward. Of course, in this definition, the criterion for the healthfulness of reason and disposition is not mentioned and is naturally delegated to related sciences. Moreover, the establishment in souls due to vast presence and repetition in society along with the corroboration of human reason and disposition are deemed as the characteristics of *'urf*.

c) In the third class of definitions, *'urf* is taken to mean the people of custom and the wise, and this meaning has the highest frequency in jurisprudents' works. When jurisprudents use the word *'urf* in their works, they include the conduct of the wise in their definition. Accordingly, *'urf* is defined as the continuation of the conduct of the wise as they are the wise in that regard. Nā'īnī takes the general custom and the conduct of the wise as the same, and deems custom as a matter established in minds. He writes, "The method of the wise is to continue the wise conduct as they are the wise. Sometimes the method of the wise is described as *binā' 'urf*, which means the general custom. There is no doubt in the validity of the method of the wise and the acceptability of embarking upon it" (Nā'īnī 1997, 3:192).

Therefore, the terminological definition of *'urf* can be stated as the view and behaviour of the wise and the people of custom, which has been gradually accepted by them due to repetition and vast existence; this has formed the continuous, common path in the speech, behaviour, and established thoughts of the wise. *'Urf* can arise from rational, innate, scientific, or religious sources on the one hand, or from illusionary, imaginative, superstitious, or carnal sources on the other.

3.3. Literal Meaning of Tafsīr

Tafsīr is the infinitive form of the root (F-S-R). It literally means expression and explication (al-Farāhīdī 1989, 7:247), explanation (Ibn Durayd 1988, 2:718), unveiling what is veiled (al-Azharī 2000, 12:282), and presenting the rational meaning (Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī 1992, 636).

A group of philologists has taken *tafsīr* and *fasr* to mean the same, but some others such as Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī have differentiated the two. The latter group suggests that *tafsīr* is used when the speaker wants to express a rational meaning because *tafsīr* is from the verbal form, *taf'īl*,

and implies abundance. Thus, it implies the expression of rational issues in a stronger form and regards intellectual precision (Ibn 'Āshūr 1999, 1:9).

The word *tafsīr* (interpretation) has been used once in the Qur'an:

And no question do they bring to thee but We reveal to thee the truth and the best <u>explanation</u> (thereof)[1] (Q. 25:33).

The meaning of the word *tafsīr* in this verse is similar to its literal meaning which means expression and elucidation. Therefore, it can be said that the literal meaning of the word *tafsīr*, considering that it is in *taf'īl* form, is clear expression and elucidation of meaning.

3.4. Terminological Meaning of Tasfīr

Qur'anic exegetes and scholars of Qur'anic sciences have provided some definitions for the term *tafsīr*. Al-Zarkashī (1990, 2:285) has suggested the terminological meaning of this word among scholars as follows. *Tafsīr* is the discovery of the meanings of the Qur'an and expression of their intentions, whether this discovery of meaning and expression of intention is due to the difficulty of the wording or other problems or is based on the outward meaning of the verse or non-outward meaning. Moreover, *tafsīr* mostly regards the Qur'anic sentences rather than single words. Tabataba'i has said, "*Tafsīr* is the expression of the meaning of the Qur'anic verses and discovery of their intentions and conveyed meanings" (Tabataba'i 2011, 1:4). Taking into account the literal meaning of *tafsīr* and its *taf'īl* form, Ma'refat defines *tafsīr* of the Qur'an as the effort to uncover the meaning and to eliminate the hidden and difficult aspect of verses (Ma'refat 2008, 1:29). In this approach, the *tafsīr* is devoted to instances of verbal or semantic ambiguity in the verses that require more effort on the part of the exegete.

Based on the foregoing opinions, it can be said that the common point among most of these assertions about the quiddity of *tafsīr* is the expression of the true intention of God in the Qur'anic verses and *sūrah*s. In this study, *tafsīr* is taken in this meaning.

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1. وَ لَا يَأْتُونَكَ بِمَثَلٍ إِلَّا جِئْنَاكَ بِالْحَقِّ وَ أَحْسَنَ تَفْسِيراً (الفرقان/33)

4. The Validity of Custom in Understanding the Literal Meaning of the Verses

In a general classification, we can discuss two levels of meaning: (a) the level of literal meaning of Qur'anic words and expressions, and (b) the level of intended meanings and instances related to the true intention of God in expressing the Qur'anic verses.

With regard to the literal meaning and true intention, al-Ṣadr has suggested the imaginative indication that entails the existence of an expression and necessarily happens. Moreover, he talks about affirmative indication that does not necessarily exist in all conditions; rather, it exists at the time an expression is articulated by a cognizant articulator. He calls the true indication that intends to inform the true intention as the second affirmative indication that can be proved only in the true expression of a cognizant articulator who is not acting playfully (Islami 2008, 2:140). Accordingly, we first analyse the authoritativeness of custom at the level of understanding the literal meaning, and intention along with an examination of its evidence.

4.1. Evidences for the Validity

4.1.1. The Conduct of the Wise

One of the common elements in inducing points from texts is a reference to the general custom, i.e., the authoritativeness of customary manifestation (al-Ṣadr 2013, 6:48). Accordingly, al-Ṣadr believes that in understanding texts, anything that is used by the general custom to understand texts can be trusted. That is, the general custom is the authority and point of reference for the determination of the indication of the words (Ibid, 1:25). Relying on this principle, Imam Khomeini introduces custom as the reference point for the determination of the concepts of religious texts (Faiz Nasab 2005, 34).

Imam Khamene'i also believes that Qur'anic knowledge has different degrees, including the superficial knowledge that can be understood from the external appearance of the Qur'anic text and the sublime knowledge that is beyond the external appearance and can be understood only by special people (Khamenei 2010). From his viewpoint, the apparent meanings of the Qur'anic verses are understood based on customary understanding (general custom) (Khamene'i 2014, 29).

4.1.2. The Legislator's Way of Discourse Based on the Conversational Method of the Wise

Concerning this use of custom, Imam Khomeini (1990, 1:227-229) says, "There is no problem in taking custom as the criterion for the identification of all concepts because the Legislator is like the people of custom in His words and conversations, and He does not have a specific terminology or method in conveying expressions to His audience. Therefore, as custom is a key in identifying concepts, it is a key in connecting concepts and instances and recognition of instances as well."

4.1.3. The Qur'anic Discourse in Explicit Arabic and in the People's Native Language

Since the Qur'an was revealed in clear Arabic language, the Qur'anic expressions have the same meaning at the level of literal meaning as in general custom. Thus, the customary understanding can be used as a tool and a clue to understand the meaning of the expressions. Tabataba'i (2011, 1:9) believes that it is possible for everyone to understand the concepts of the Qur'an because the Qur'an was revealed in clear Arabic and is the most eloquent speech, the condition of which is to be free of any.

4.2.   The Extent of Validity

As custom is a criterion for understanding all concepts of the verses (Tabataba'i 2011, 1:9), it can be said that the formation of words and their meaning as well as the understanding of statements and words are among issues that are formed within the realm of custom and society. The Divine Legislator has also talked in the way common among the wise. Therefore, custom can be used to clarify the literal meaning of expressions in order to discover the divine intention.

   The basic level of the Qur'an, which is its expressions, literal meaning, and customary meaning, is the lowest semantic level that is related to the general custom and laypeople's understanding. However, the referents and facts inherent in the verses are related to the type of verses: the doctrinal, ethical, social, political, jurisprudential, legal, and scientific verses should be taken into account separately. In fact, the question is that if the concept intended to be expressed by the verse is related to a customary issue or is a concept related to something beyond the

customary layer, if it is the first type, the general custom can be used to understand it. However, if it is of the second type, a collection of Qur'anic knowledge about that issue along with reason, narrations, and definitive sciences are used to understand the truth of the verse.

5. The Validity of Custom in Understanding the Intended Meaning of the Verses

Another use that can be considered for custom is the validity and authoritativeness of custom in identifying the true intentions and instances of the Qur'anic expressions. Since the determination of the instances referred to by the verse is beyond the literal meaning and is within the realm of the true intention of the speaker, this discussion has an important and challenging role in specifying the station of custom in the Qur'an exegesis (*tafsīr*). In fact, it can be said that the main debate about the consideration or inconsideration of a role for custom in the interpretation of the Qur'an is related to this issue.

5.1. Reasons against the Role of Custom

5.1.1. Being beyond Customary Understanding

There are many concepts in the Qur'an that relate to existential, metaphysical, or scientific issues that are beyond and inaccessible to the tangible, simple, customary understanding. The conduct of the wise is also not based on customary understanding when it comes to explaining these issues, and the provision of customary interpretations of such verses leads to distortion of meaning and confusion of minds. Tabataba'i has an important view in this regard that is worth analysing. Distinguishing concepts and instances, he believes that the concepts and meanings of the Qur'anic words can be understood using general custom, but this cannot be applied to understanding the instances referred to by the verses. To understand the instances of the verses, reflection over the entirety of the verses is the solution (Tabataba'i 2011, 12:207). Relying on custom and habit to understand the meaning of the verses leads to misinterpretation in understanding the verses and identifying their intentions. Therefore, scholars do not suffice to the familiar instances in their minds to comprehend the meaning of the verses (Ibid, 1:11). From his point of view, the differences in understanding the Qur'an

are related to intentions and instances with which the general concept of the text is congruent. For him, the solution to this problem is to reflect on the verses themselves in order to understand the intention and the instance (Ibid, 3:78-90). He also believes that the customary understanding has no validity in this regard (Ibid, 11:25).

Imam Khomeini also believes that the verses that discuss ethics and theology cannot be understood through custom. He argues that relying on the outward appearance of the verses and narrations (*aḥādīth*) on epistemological and ethical matters is not allowed through customary methods, and disregarding this caution could even lead to disbelief and doctrinal corruption (Taqawi 1997, 1:205). As an example, Imam Khamene'i also considers the interpretation of the verses about the imamate of Abraham (Q. 2:124) to be outside the realm of customary understanding, because the meaning of Imamate refers to extrasensory matters that are beyond the understanding of ordinary people. He believes that the instance of Imamate in this verse does not mean leadership in religion and worldly life and such assertions that we make about Imamate; rather, it concerns a spiritual issue. The issue of Imām cannot be measured by such customary criteria (Khamene'i 2021).

5.1.2. The Presence of Special Terms in the Qur'an

Although the Qur'an applies the language of general custom in the realm of literal meaning, it adopts specific terms, specific legal facts, and specific customs in the realm of true instances and intentions. Therefore, the true instances and intentions of many verses that have this quality are not possible through the general customary understanding. Ma"refat (1997, 1:75-76) believes that in exegesis, it is necessary to have the knowledge of the Qur'anic terms that are inferred from the Qur'an itself, and the use of common textual rules is not sufficient. One of the issues that has a specific term in the distinctive Qur'anic custom is the word *taqwā*. From Imam Khamene'"s point of view, this word in the distinctive Islamic custom and Qur'anic culture means preserving and not losing the goal, not deviating from the path, and having the firm decision and intention to achieve the goal (Khamene'i 1999). He further elaborates that *jihād* is a diligent and persevering action in the distinctive Islamic customs (Khamene'i 2020).

5.2. The Extent of Custom's Validity

The concepts presented in the Qur'an can be divided into two main categories: concrete concepts and abstract concepts.

5.2.1. The Realm of Concrete Concepts

Concrete concepts are existential concepts that include declarative propositions that refer to external facts and realities. The declarative propositions are expressions whose truth/untruth is related to the real, external world rather than the intention of the articulator. In other words, these are propositions related to existence/non-existence. The existential concepts of the Qur'an that are related to the realities out of the human mind entail various types, with custom playing different roles for each of them, e.g., doctrinal verses, verses about scientific miracles of the Qur'an, social and cultural verses, ethical verses, verses related to nature and human, etc. The existential concepts of the Qur'an can be generally divided into two parts.

5.2.1.1. Concepts Perceptible through Custom

Some concepts and words mentioned in the Qur'an are related to the names of famous places or concrete things. They were common and frequently used words among the people who lived in the Revelation era. Examples include the names of some locations around Mecca and Medina (e.g., Yathrib, Mashʿar al-Ḥarām, Badr, Ḥunayn, Jamal, etc.), names of animals, birds, and insects (e.g., camel, cow, sheep, snake, honey bee, ant, horse, donkey, lion, fish, etc.), the names of prophets and past nations (e.g., Abraham, Ismāʿīl, Noah, Adam, Moses, Jesus, etc.), names of plants and fruit (e.g., grapes, fig, pomegranate, shrubs, green trees, garden, etc.), names of human organs and limbs (e.g., arm, leg, head, nose, eye, ear, finger, fingertip lines, hair, skin, bone, flesh, etc.), and emotional concepts that convey human's inner perceptions (e.g., love, enmity, dislike, goodness, lust, anger, etc.). Arabs who lived in the Revelation era knew both the meaning of these words and their external instances because these words were related to the lives of the people of Mecca and Medina.

The question here is whether custom can be used to understand the true intentions and instances of these verses. It can be said in response that firstly, although custom is a valid tool in explaining the meanings

and instances of such concepts and words, it cannot separately and individually help understand the meaning of a whole verse when such a word is located within the linguistic context of that verse. The only exception is when the verse is related to a meaning that is tangible for and perceptible by custom, a possibility for which no example is found in the incomplete induction of this study. Secondly, custom can help understand the original meaning of a word, but the customary understanding of the details and nature of these words is different from God's understanding of the truth, nature, and details of that thing.

5.2.1.2. Extrasensory Concepts Inaccessible for Custom

There is no doubt that many concepts of the Qur'an that talk about origin, resurrection, and unseen phenomena, such as God and His names and attributes, angels, Resurrection, and Heaven and Hell, are extrasensory knowledge that cannot be analysed and understood by the simple customary understanding, since they are inaccessible to the customary understanding. Therefore, as notable figures such Tabataba'i, Khomeini, and al-Ṣadr have suggested, custom cannot be used in understanding and interpreting the true intention of God and the facts and instances of these verses, but rather methods such as the interpretation of the Qur'an by the Qur'an as well as rational and narrative interpretations should be used to understand and interpret them.

5.2.2. The Realm of Abstract Concepts

Abstract concepts are concepts that have no external, real form, and the mind cannot attain them through external beings; rather, the practical intellect creates and validates these concepts based on its goals and effects (Tabataba'i 2008, 2:147). Non-declarative statements are expressions derived from will, premise, contract, and subjective consideration. They talk about do's and don'ts, so they cannot be true or false.

5.2.2.1. Abstract Concepts with Specific Qur'anic Terminology

Many Qur'anic verses have specific legal terminology (ḥaqīqah sharʿiyyah) that can be understood through reference to other verses and the Infallibles' narration. Although these concepts have also been common in Arabs' conversational customs, they have found new meanings, have witnessed changes in their characteristics, or have come to have extended/

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limited instances after entering into the Qur'anic text. Therefore, the customary understanding of them is not valid.

Abstract concepts are of various types, including doctrinal (e.g., *nabī, rasūl, imām, ummah, walī, īmān, Islām, kufr, shirk, nifāq, jāhiliyyah*), ethical (e.g., *ʿadl, fisq, fujūr, taʿaddī, ṭughyān, dhanb, ikhlāṣ, yaqīn, zuhd*), and jurisprudential (e.g., *ṣalāt, zakāt, ḥajj*). These are known as legal facts, i.e., expressions meant in a specific way by the Divine Legislator.

5.2.2.2. Abstract Concepts without Specific Qur'anic Terminology

The customary understanding of a word is valid unless God has assigned a special terminological meaning to it. From the viewpoint of Muḥaqqiq Ardabīlī, the customary meaning is the first choice in three situations: certainty of the lack of establishment of a *ḥaqīqah sharʿiyyah*, doubtfulness of the establishment of a *ḥaqīqah sharʿiyyah* at the revelation time, and doubtfulness that an expression has a *ḥaqīqah sharʿiyyah* in addition to its customary and literal meanings. The reason is that people define words based on their habits (Ardabīlī 1983, 8:403). In the view of some other jurists, custom may also be the criterion for identifying instances in such cases. Najafī (Ṣāḥib Jawāhir) writes, "The responsibility of a jurist is not to discuss the words that lack *ḥaqīqah sharʿiyyah*; actually, some people who are familiar with customary instances may even be more knowledgeable than the jurist in this field" (Najafī 2000, 29:409). He also states: "Leaving the determination of financial capability to custom is better than going into details, secondary points, and small nuances because they are not governed by rules due to differences in time and place" (ibid., 29:408).

Moreover, in order to arrive at the customary meaning under doubtful conditions, one can refer to the principle of conformity between literal and intended meaning. From the point of view of al-Ṣadr, the apparent intention of the articulator implies the conformity between imaginative and affirmative indications, because the apparent intention of the articulator is that he is generalizing a truth, and his true intention is the same as the literal meaning. This apparent meaning is authoritative, and its authoritativeness in this case is called *iṣālah al-ʿumūm* (Islami 2008, 2:305-307).

Accordingly, it seems that the validity and authoritativeness of custom in the identification of the true intention and instances of the Qur'anic expressions is somewhat distorted for the two following reasons: (1) Intangibility and inaccessibility of many Qur'anic points

for the customary understanding, and (2) the specific terms used in the Qur'an. The Qur'anic concepts is categorized into abstract and concrete concepts. In general, concrete concepts can be divided into those that are perceptible and those that are imperceptible by custom. In addition, abstract concepts can be divided into those that have specific Qur'anic terms (*ḥaqīqah shar'iyyah*) and those that do not have specific terms. The custom of the wise can act as evidence and have a clarifying role in the discovery of true intentions and instances of the Qur'an through an intellectual examination of the verses that have tangible concepts and the ones that do not have specific Qur'anic terms. Figure 1 illustrates the categories in which the customary understanding is valid.
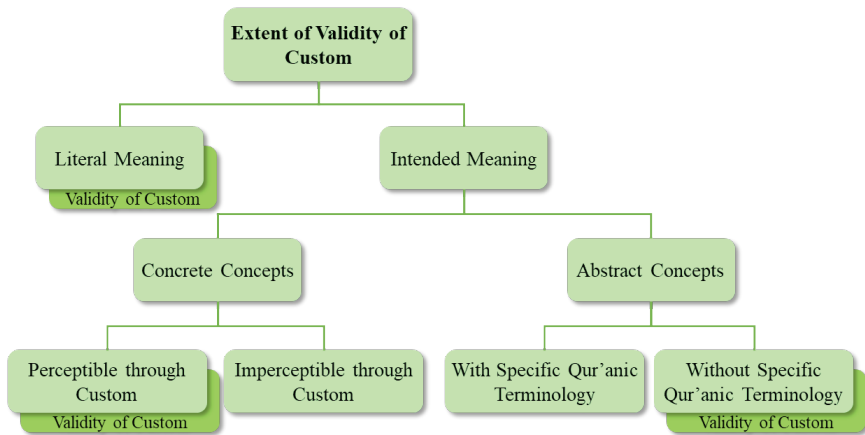
Figure 1. A summary illustration of the extent to which custom is valid in the understanding of the Qur'anic verses.

6. Conclusion

As a resource for understanding and interpretation, custom can be discussed at two different levels: the literal meaning of the Qur'anic verses and the true intentions and instances of the verses. In the view of some Qur'anic scholars, such as Imam Khamene'i, custom is valid in the realm of the literal meaning of all terms, and the scope of its validity includes all expressions. The authoritativeness of custom at the level of the intended meaning of the verses can be addressed in two areas: concrete and abstract concepts. The concrete concepts of the

Qur'an are likewise distinguished into two domains, i.e., perceptible and imperceptible by custom.

Custom can serve as a tool for understanding the concepts of the first category, while the second category involves extrasensory concepts far beyond the reach of custom, in which custom can play no role in understanding. Furthermore, abstract concepts can be classified into two groups, those with and those without specific Qur'anic terms (*ḥaqīqah sharʿiyyah*); that custom plays no role in the understanding of the first group, while it can be used as a resource and proof to help in the understanding of the second group.

Acknowledgements

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Emotion Detection from the Text of the Qur'an Using Advanced Roberta Deep Learning Net

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ABSTRACT: (Original Paper)

As data and context continue to expand, a vast amount of textual content, including books, blogs, and papers, is produced and distributed electronically. Analyzing such large amounts of content manually is a time-consuming task. Automatic detection of feelings and emotions in these texts is crucial, as it helps to identify the emotions conveyed by the author, understand the author's writing style, and determine the target audience for these texts. The Qur'an, regarded as the word of God and a divine miracle, serves as a comprehensive guide and a reflection of human life. Detecting emotions and feelings within the content of the Qur'an contributes to a deeper understanding of God's commandments. Recent

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advancements, particularly the application of transformer-based language models in natural language processing, have yielded state-of-the-art results that are challenging to surpass easily. In this paper, we propose a method to enhance the accuracy and generality of these models by incorporating syntactic features such as Parts of Speech (POS) and Dependency Parsing tags. Our approach aims to elevate the performance of emotion detection models, making them more robust and applicable across diverse contexts.

For model training and evaluation, we utilized the Isear dataset, a well-established and extensive dataset in this field. The results indicate that our proposed model achieves superior performance compared to existing models, achieving an accuracy of 77% on this dataset. Finally, we applied the newly proposed model to recognize the feelings and emotions conveyed in the Itani English translation of the Qur'an. The results revealed that joy has the most significant contribution to the emotional content of the Holy Qur'an.

1. Introduction

Emotions, defined as relatively brief responses to external or internal events perceived as significant (Martin 2009), pose a complex challenge in natural language processing (NLP). The task involves identifying underlying emotions expressed in textual data, an increasingly important area of research due to the massive volume of generated texts.

Automated emotion detection has diverse practical applications, spanning customer care, healthcare, religious education, and more. In customer service, employing decision support systems (Kratzwald et al. 2018) allows real-time analysis of customer messages, adjusting responses to address their needs promptly. This enhances understanding, satisfaction, and loyalty. For instance, if a customer expresses frustration, prompt response can prevent dissatisfaction and potential customer loss. Emotion recognition in text facilitates personalized and empathetic customer interactions, improving overall satisfaction and loyalty (Kusal et al. 2022).

Beyond customer service, emotion detection from text has applications in financial decision support systems, education, mental

health monitoring, and social media analysis. It aids in sentiment analysis related to investments, provides personalized support in education, detects early signs of mental health issues, and helps identify harmful behaviours in social media. In healthcare, emotion detection contributes to mental health diagnosis, patient well-being monitoring, and enhanced communication between patients and healthcare providers (Dhuheir et al. 2021).

Despite the complexity of human emotions and the nuances of language, recent advances in machine learning, especially transformer-based models like BERT, have achieved state-of-the-art results. These models, capable of capturing intricate word-context relationships, offer improved performance across various NLP applications.

We want to focus on emotion detection from the Qur'an's text. The Qur'an, revered as the holy book in Islam, holds a unique and central position in the lives of millions worldwide. Beyond its religious significance, the Qur'an encompasses a wealth of human experiences, emotions, and profound wisdom. Understanding the emotions expressed in its verses can provide a deeper insight into the human aspects of the divine message. The Qur'an, while delivering spiritual guidance, also delves into the various dimensions of human experience. It narrates stories of joy, sorrow, fear, anger, and repentance. Recognizing and understanding these emotions is crucial for the believers seeking a comprehensive understanding of the human condition as depicted in the divine revelations. Emotions serve as a powerful means of connecting with the spiritual teachings of the Qur'an on a personal level. Detecting and interpreting the emotional nuances in the verses allows individuals to relate to the scripture in a more profound way, fostering a personalized and heartfelt connection with the divine message. Emotion detection in the Qur'an aids scholars, students, and believers in interpreting the verses more comprehensively. It provides a nuanced understanding of the emotional states conveyed in different contexts, enriching the interpretation process. Reflecting on these emotions encourages a more profound engagement with the sacred text. Emotion detection can also have practical applications in pastoral care and counselling within Islamic communities. Identifying emotional themes in the Qur'anic verses enables religious leaders and counsellors to offer guidance and support that resonates with the emotional struggles and triumphs of individuals. The Qur'an addresses not only the spiritual realm but also the emotional well-being of individuals. By detecting and

understanding emotions within its verses, one can draw insights into promoting emotional resilience, finding solace, and seeking strength during challenging times. The Qur'an's universality extends across diverse cultures and languages. Emotion detection in its verses can aid in bridging cultural gaps by revealing common emotional threads that connect humanity. This inclusivity promotes a deeper appreciation of the Qur'an's relevance to people from various cultural backgrounds.

This paper focuses on combining Parts of Speech (POS) and Dependency Parsing tags as syntactical features with transformer-based models for emotion detection from text. A literature review, method proposal, and performance comparison with top models on the ISEAR dataset are presented. Our study underscores the significance of syntactical features in enhancing emotion detection accuracy. By showcasing their effectiveness in transformer-based language models, we aim to contribute to the development of more accurate and reliable systems for emotion detection from text. Finally, employing emotion detection techniques in the Qur'an serves as a gateway to unlocking profound insights into the human experience as portrayed in divine revelations. It enhances personal connection, aids interpretation, supports pastoral care, and contributes to the emotional well-being of believers. The Qur'an's timeless wisdom is not only a source of spiritual guidance but also a testament to the intricate tapestry of human emotions as recognized by the divine.

2. Literature Review

In a study by Polignano et al. (2019), a novel model was proposed, integrating Bi-LSTM, CNN deep neural networks, and self-attention mechanisms. Evaluation on three datasets involved varying word embeddings—Google word embeddings (GoogleEmb), GloVe (GloVeEmb), and FastText (FastTextEmb). The results demonstrated the superiority of the proposed model, particularly when utilizing FastText word embeddings, showcasing its effectiveness in emotion identification.

Adoma, Henry and Chen (2020) explored the use of pretrained language models, including BERT, RoBERTa, XLNet, and DistilBert, for emotion detection on the ISEAR dataset. Their findings revealed that RoBERTa outperformed the others, achieving a recognition accuracy of 0.7431. Precision, recall, and F1-score analyses further supported RoBERTa as an optimal choice for emotion detection on the

ISEAR dataset. In another investigation (Adoma et al. 2020), a two-stage architecture involving transformers and Bi-LSTM was employed for emotion detection on the ISEAR dataset. The initial stage included fine-tuning the BERT pre-trained model to extract vector transformations, followed by the second stage, where the extracted vectors were input into a BiLSTM-based classifier. The BiLSTM outperformed BERT, yielding an accuracy of 72.64%. Acheampong et al. (2021) focused on BERT, RoBERTa, and XLNet, conducting 5-fold cross-validation and selecting RoBERTa and XLNet with accuracy values of 0.736 and 0.711, respectively. They trained each model individually on the ISEAR dataset and created an ensemble model by averaging predictions, demonstrating superior performance with an F1-score of 0.75.

In a unique approach, Zanwar et al. (2022) proposed models leveraging transformer architectures in conjunction with Bidirectional Long Short-Term Memory networks, incorporating 435 psycholinguistic features. Their hybrid models, BERT+PsyLing and RoBERTa+PsyLing, surpassed standard transformer-based baseline models in text-based emotion detection. These studies collectively highlight the evolving landscape of emotion detection models, showcasing the impact of novel architectures, pretrained language models, and hybrid approaches in advancing the accuracy and efficacy of emotion identification in textual data.

In the following sections, we highlight certain endeavours related to emotions in the Qur'an. It is noteworthy that, as per our investigations, there has been no prior work utilizing artificial intelligence and machine learning systems based on our findings. This novelty underscores the distinctiveness of this paper. Saeedi (2010) considers emotion a negative factor in behaviour. They primarily focus on exploring proper ways to control and manage emotions using the Qur'an. Melli (2010) initially examines the meaning, concept, place, and dimensions of emotions from the perspectives of the Qur'an and psychology. They consider the four primary emotions of anger, joy, sadness, and fear, thereby providing definitions and examining their types, effects, and influencing factors. The thesis then introduces Qur'anic techniques for managing these four emotions. Karami et al. (2020) categorize emotions into positive and negative according to Piaget's theory. This paper analyses emotional management and techniques in both the Qur'an and Western psychology based on Piaget's theory. It further reviews Piaget's perspective in light of Qur'anic foundations for emotion control.

Zomorodi (2012) explores Qur'anic and Hadith-based solutions for emotional management. KavianiArani (2016) delves into "Feeling and Perception from the Qur'anic Perspective," categorizing feelings into external and internal types. Specifically, Kaviani examines the external type, encompassing the five senses, in the Qur'anic verses. Hoseini Mohammadabad et al. (2019) compare the role of emotions in ethical education, considering the approaches of "Dil mashghūlī" (engagement of the heart) and the ethical teachings of the Qur'an. They incorporate emotions alongside reason in ethical education, suggesting that emotions are not solely positive factors. Their work aims to establish a solution for training ethical emotions based on religious teachings.

3. Proposed Model

This paper introduces a two-part model for emotion detection, combining the power of RoBERTa, a pretrained language model, with the insights derived from syntactic features. The model consists of two primary sub-models, each handling distinct aspects of input data.

3.1. RoBERTa Pretrained Language Model

The first sub-model utilizes RoBERTa as the backbone, processing the main text as its input. RoBERTa, known for its robust language understanding capabilities, operates on the original text to extract rich contextual features.

3.2. Embedding Layer and BiLSTM with Syntactic Features

The second sub-model incorporates an embedding layer paired with either Parts of Speech (POS) or Dependency Parsing tags of the input text. This dual-channel approach involves sending the original text through RoBERTa and the syntactic information through an embedding layer. The syntactic input then passes through a Bidirectional Long Short-Term Memory (BiLSTM) network, enabling the extraction of intricate patterns from the syntactic features. The extracted features from both channels are concatenated to form a comprehensive feature representation.

3.3. Model Classification

The combined feature representation undergoes classification through a Dense layer, resulting in the categorization of the text into one of seven emotion classes. This two-part architecture is visually represented in Figure 1, illustrating the integration of RoBERTa with syntactic features processing through embedding and BiLSTM layers. The synergy between these components aims to enhance the model's ability to capture both contextual and syntactic nuances, leading to improved emotion detection performance.
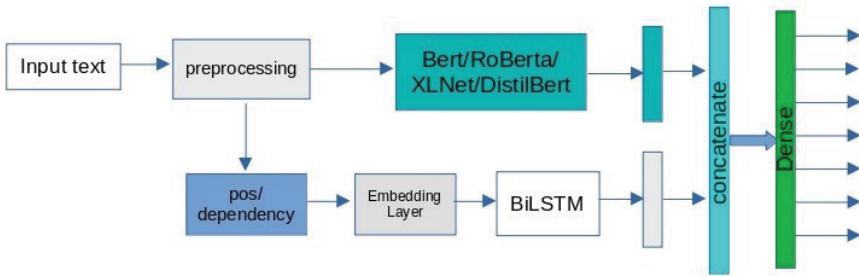
Figure 1. Proposed Model Architecture for Emotion Detection: The proposed model comprises two main components: (1) a pretrained RoBERTa language model processing the main text input and (2) an embedding layer and Bidirectional Long Short-Term Memory (BiLSTM) network handling Parts of Speech (POS) or Dependency Parsing tags of the input. The architecture integrates these two channels, leveraging RoBERTa's contextual understanding and the syntactic insights derived from POS or Dependency Parsing tags. The resulting feature representations are concatenated and fed into a Dense layer for accurate classification into seven emotion classes.

4. Experiments and Results

In this section, we delve into a comprehensive exploration of the experiments conducted and the subsequent analysis of results. The initial stage in any Natural Language Processing (NLP) task involves the preprocessing of input data. This process encompasses removing duplicates, punctuations, extra spaces, and converting all characters to lowercase. Additionally, contracted forms, such as "isn't", are transformed into their open forms (e.g., "is not"). The ISEAR dataset comprises 7,666

sentences across seven emotion classes: joy, sadness, anger, fear, disgust, shame, and guilt, labeled from 1 to 7. After preprocessing and duplicate removal, the dataset is reduced to 7,468 samples. The distribution of samples before and after preprocessing is detailed in Table 1.

While our discussion has primarily centred around broader emotions, it is essential to elaborate on specific chosen emotions. In this dedicated subsection, we provide an inventory of selected emotions, based on relevant sources, along with detailed explanations for each.

Table 1. ISEAR dataset characteristics

Class	Before preprocessing	After preprocessing
Joy	1094	1077
Fear	1095	1080
Anger	1096	1071
Sadness	1096	1068
Disgust	1096	1067
Shame	1096	1053
Guilt	1093	1052

4.1 Exploring Emotional Experiences for ISEAR Dataset

The ISEAR dataset encompasses emotional experiences in seven distinct categories:

- Joy is a positive emotional state characterized by feelings of happiness, satisfaction, and pleasure, often stemming from successful experiences. For instance, an individual might experience joy when receiving good news, meeting an old friend, or achieving a long-pursued goal (Fredrickson 2003).
- Fear is an emotional response to perceived threats or dangers, encompassing feelings of unease, apprehension, or anxiety. Fear can arise from real or anticipated threats to one's physical or mental well-being. For example, a person might feel fear when facing a dangerous situation or anticipating a challenging event like public speaking (LeDoux 2012).

- Anger is an emotional state characterized by feelings of hostility, dissatisfaction, and a strong desire for retaliation or expression of frustration. It can result from perceived injustices, personal boundary violations, or a sense of unfair treatment. For instance, a person might become angry when witnessing an act of injustice or when his opinions are ignored (Keltner & Lerner 2010).
- Sadness is an emotional state accompanied by feelings of unhappiness or sorrow. It often arises from experiences of loss, disappointment, or separation. Grief and sadness can be triggered by various events, such as the death of a loved one, the end of a relationship, or a personal failure (Rottenberg 2005).
- Disgust is an emotional reaction to something perceived as offensive, repulsive, or morally inappropriate. It involves feelings of aversion, nausea, or revulsion and can be triggered by unpleasant smells, tastes, sights, or behaviours that violate personal or cultural norms (Rozin et al. 2008).
- Shame is an emotional upheaval associated with feelings of embarrassment, guilt, or ethical failure. It arises from the belief that an individual has violated social norms, personal values, or ethical standards. Shame often involves a tendency to hide or withdraw from others (Tangney & Dearing 2002).
- Guilt is an emotional state marked by remorse for committing a wrong or transgression, often with a moral or ethical dimension. Guilt typically includes a desire for atonement or forgiveness. For example, a person might feel guilty after lying to a friend or failing to keep a promise (Baumeister et al. 1994).

While these emotions are distinct in the ISEAR dataset, they may overlap and intersect. Emotions are complex and multifaceted, often intertwining and influencing one another. For instance, an individual might experience a combination of anger and sadness in response to a specific event, or joy and guilt might coexist in situations involving conflicting ethical values. Additionally, emotions can be triggered by various stimuli, including events, situations, or thoughts. The ISEAR dataset provides additional context to understand the reported emotional experiences of participants.

In contrast to many emotion detection datasets sourced from social media, often limited to specific topics and applications, the ISEAR dataset captures emotional experiences across diverse individuals in various conditions and contexts. Close to 3,000 participants from

different cultural backgrounds contributed to this dataset, making it a rich source for training models and evaluating emotional detection techniques. Due to the substantial volume of data in this database, it has been employed in testing and validating the proposed model. The sample labelling of Qur'anic verses based on the emotions introduced in the ISEAR database is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Emotion Labelling of Qur'anic Verses Based on ISEAR Database Categories. The labelling type: 'T' indicates labelling used in training, and 'P' indicates predictions based on the proposed model.

No	Address of verse	Context	Emotion label	Type of the label
1	2251	A mention of the mercy of your lord towards his servant zechariah	joy	T
2	2272	The laborpains came upon her by the trunk of a palmtree she said I wish I had died before this and been completely forgotten	fear	T
3	2326	Have you seen him who denied our revelations and said I will be given wealth and children	anger	T
4	2308	But they were succeeded by generations who lost the prayers and followed their appetites they will meet perdition	sadness	T
5	2276	Then she came to her people carrying him they said o Mary you have done something terrible	disgust	T
6	2269	She said how can I have a son when no man has touched me and I was never unchaste	shame	T
7	2328	No indeed we will write what he says and will keep extending the agony for him	guilt	T
8	1	In the name of god the gracious the merciful	joy	P
9	6225	Say I take refuge with the lord of daybreak	fear	P
10	11	These are upon guidance from their lord these are the successful	joy	P
11	6219	And his wife the firewood carrier	anger	P
12	6200	So woe to those who pray	sadness	P

The subsequent stage involves converting the input to Parts of Speech (POS) or Dependency Parsing tags. For each sequence, all words are replaced with their respective POS or Dependency Parsing tags. The NLTK library (Bird et al. 2009) is utilized for POS tagging, while Dependency Parsing tags are extracted using spaCy (Boyd 2023). To facilitate the recognition of text by a deep learning model, RoBERTa tokenizer is applied to the main text for the first channel. The second channel employs a Keras embedding layer to convert text into dense vectors.

The maximum sequence length for all inputs is set to 201, and to ensure uniformity, sequences are padded to a length of 210. Labels are mapped from 1 to 7. The RoBERTa-base model from Hugging Face is selected as the pretrained model, featuring 124 million trainable parameters in 12 encoder layers with a hidden size of 768. The dataset is randomly shuffled, with 20% reserved for testing and 80% for training.

Training is completed in four epochs. In the first two epochs, the learning rate is set to 2e-5 with a decay of 1e-6, while the subsequent two epochs use a learning rate of 2e-7. Adam is employed as the optimizer, with an embedding layer dimension of 6, a batch size of 16, and 64 units in the BiLSTM layer. Model evaluation utilizes precision, recall, F1, and accuracy metrics. The classification report for the proposed model is presented in Tables 3 and 4.

To extend the application of the proposed model to detect emotions and feelings in the Qur'an, the Itani English translation is chosen. Verses from the Chapter on May (*Surat Maryam*) are manually labelled based on the emotion labels from the ISEAR dataset. This labelled dataset is then used to train and evaluate the model's effectiveness. Three models—RoBERTa, BERT, and XLNet—with higher accuracy on the ISEAR dataset are selected for emotion detection in the Holy Qur'an. Results are detailed in Tables 5-7, with comprehensive outcomes for all Qur'anic verses presented in Table 8.

Table 3. Classification report of RoBERTa with POS embedding.

Label	Precision	Recall	F1-score
Joy	0.88	0.93	0.90
Fear	0.88	0.84	086
Anger	0.64	0.68	0.66
Sadness	0.78	0.79	0.79
Disgust	0.69	0.69	0.69
Shame	0.70	0.61	0.65
Guilt	0.73	0.75	0.74
Accuracy			**0.76**

Table 4. Classification report of Roberta with Dependency Parsing embedding.

Label	Precision	Recall	F1-score
Joy	0.89	0.93	0.91
Fear	0.87	0.85	086
Anger	0.67	0.68	0.68
Sadness	0.76	0.81	0.78
Disgust	0.72	0.73	0.73
Shame	0.69	0.66	0.67
Guilt	0.75	0.70	0.72
Accuracy			**0.77**

Table 5. The results of the emotions detection on the Chapter on Mary with RoBERTa model.

Label	Precision	Recall	F1-score
Joy	0.73	0.88	0.80
Fear	0.36	0.31	0.33
Anger	0.10	0.07	0.08
Sadness	0.40	0.33	0.36
Disgust	0.11	0.10	0.11
Shame	0.20	0.25	0.22
Guilt	0.11	0.11	0.11
Accuracy			**0.46**

Table 6. The results of the emotions detection on the Chapter on Mary with BERT model.

Label	Precision	Recall	F1-score
Joy	0.69	1.00	0.81
Fear	0.27	0.33	0.30
Anger	0.30	0.19	0.23
Sadness	0.40	0.15	0.22
Disgust	0.11	0.07	0.08
Shame	0.00	0.00	0.00
Guilt	0.00	0.00	0.00
Accuracy			**0.43**

Table 7. The results of the emotions detection on the Chapter on Mary with XLNet model.

Label	Precision	Recall	F1-score
Joy	0.73	0.92	0.81
Fear	0.45	0.42	0.43
Anger	0.20	0.12	0.15
Sadness	0.60	0.27	0.37
Disgust	0.00	0.00	0.00
Shame	0.20	0.50	0.29
Guilt	0.00	0.00	0.00
Accuracy			**0.47**

Table 8. The number of verses in each of the seven labels of emotion (the total number of verses is 6,237)

Model	Joy	Fear	Anger	Sadness	Disgust	Shame	Guilt
RoBERTa	1585	875	1107	463	1123	268	833
BERT	1575	552	1524	566	1222	209	499
XLNet	1701	881	1629	413	978	245	389

In the Figures 2-4, the graph of the percentage of emotions of the Qur'an is shown based on the above models. In the following sections, we present the results categorized based on the Meccan and Medinan chapters (*sūrah*s). The classification of chapters into Meccan and Medinan is based on information obtained from the Shia Wiki website. Accordingly, the total number of verses in Medinan chapters is 1,623, while the total number of verses in Meccan chapters is 4,613. The obtained results are illustrated graphically in Figures 5 and 6, and the detailed statistics are provided in Table 9.
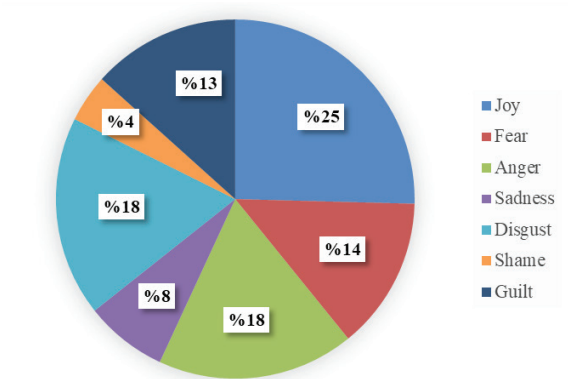
Figure 2. Emotion Detection from the text of the Qur'an with RoBERTa model.
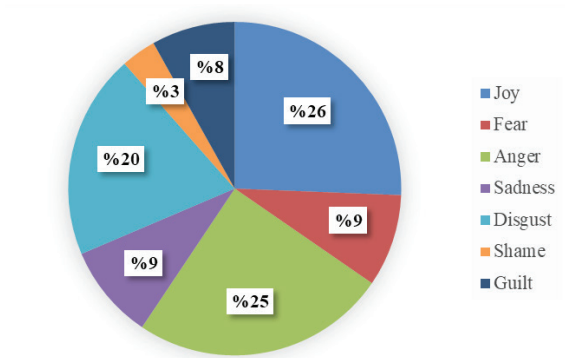
Figure 3. Emotion Detection from the text of the Qur'an with BERT model.
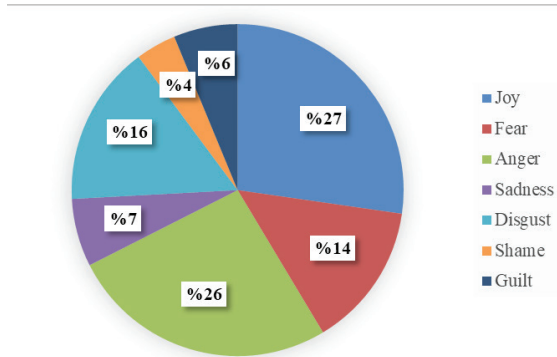
Figure 4. Emotion Detection from the text of the Qur'an with XLNet model.
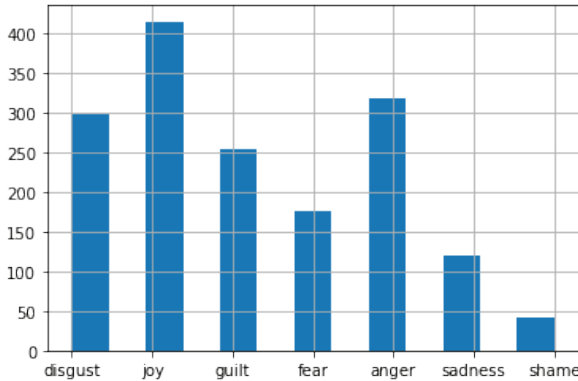
Figure 5. Distribution of Emotions in Medinan Chapters of the Qur'an.
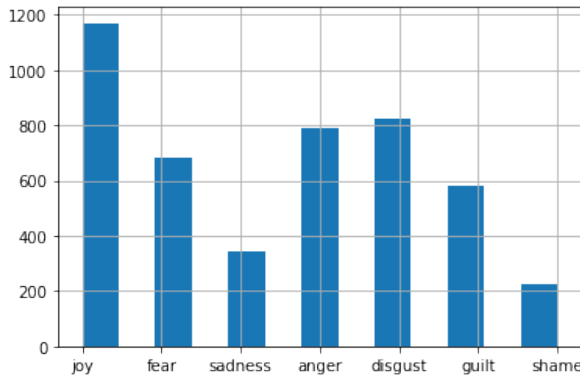
Figure 6. Distribution of Emotions in Meccan Chapters of the Qur'an.

Table 9. Emotion Distribution in Meccan and Medinan Chapters. This table reported the distribution of identified emotions in the verses of Meccan and Medinan Chapters of the Qur'an.

Chapters	Joy	Fear	Anger	Sadness	Disgust	Shame	Guilt	Total
Medinan	415 (25.57%)	176 (10.84%)	319 (19.65%)	119 (7.33%)	298 (18.36%)	42 (2.59%)	254 (15.65%)	1623
Meccan	1170 (25.36%)	681 (14.76%)	788 (17.08%)	344 (7.46%)	825 (17.88%)	226 (4.90%)	579 (12.55%)	4613

As evident from the graphical and tabular representations, despite variations in the number of verses for each emotion label, joy consistently dominates the emotional content of the Qur'anic verses.

5. Discussion

In this section, we conducted a comparative analysis between the results obtained from the proposed model and those from other transformer-based models using the ISEAR dataset. The comparison outcomes are detailed in Tables 10 and 11. Notably, since joy is the sole positive emotion in the ISEAR dataset, it consistently exhibits superior results in all models. Recognition of joy is facilitated by its straightforward and sincere expression, often devoid of sarcasm or irony. For the fear label, the RoBERTa-dep model demonstrates superior performance. The dataset's most challenging predictions pertain to

anger vs. disgust and shame vs. guilt. The data within these two pairs are closely aligned, posing difficulty even for human interpretation in certain cases. However, the inclusion of POS and Dependency Parsing tags has notably reduced the misclassification rate between these two classes. The best results are observed for the shame and guilt classes, with 0.74% accuracy for guilt in RoBERTa-POS and 0.67% for shame in RoBERTa-dep, representing the optimal outcomes among all available models.

Incorporating both POS and Dependency Parsing tags enhances the model compared to the RoBERT baseline on this dataset. RoBERTa-dep achieves the highest performance metrics, with 77% accuracy, and the highest precision, recall, and F1 scores among all models. RoBERTa-POS, with 76% accuracy and F1, ranks second in performance.

Furthermore, after evaluating the newly proposed model, we applied it to detect emotions in the text of the Qur'an. The results indicate that the models yield the most accurate outcomes for the joy label. Figure 7 illustrates a linear graph depicting the fluctuation of joy in the longest chapter (*sūrah*) of the Qur'an. Notably, verses 12 to 30 exhibit minimal joy as they predominantly describe the condition of hypocrites and disbelievers, whereas the surrounding verses, where joy peaks, elaborate on the qualities of the believers. The consistency of these results with the context of the Holy Qur'an is evident.

Table 10. Comparison of proposed model with other models on joy, fear, anger, and sadness labels.

Model	Joy			Fear			Anger			Sadness		
	P	R	F1	P	R	F1	P	R	F1	P	R	F1
Polignano (Polignano et al. 2019)	0.8	0.77	0.78	0.78	0.65	0.71	0.58	0.52	0.55	0.64	0.66	0.65
RoBERTa (Adoma, Henry & Chen 2020)	0.9	0.96	0.93	0.8	0.81	0.8	0.67	0.59	0.62	0.77	0.81	0.79
BERT-BiLSTM (Adoma et al. 2020)	0.89	0.94	0.92	0.89	0.84	0.86	0.56	0.74	0.64	0.85	0.73	0.78
(Acheampong et al. 2021)	0.93	0.92	0.93	0.7	0.84	0.76	0.74	0.69	0.71	0.85	0.8	0.82
RoBERTa-POS	0.88	0.93	0.90	0.88	0.84	**0.86**	0.64	0.68	0.66	0.78	0.79	0.79
RoBERTa-dep	0.89	0.93	0.91	0.87	**0.85**	**0.86**	0.67	0.68	0.68	0.76	**0.81**	0.78

Table 11. Comparison of proposed model with other models on disgust, shame, and guilt labels.

Model	Disgust			Shame			Guilt		
	P	R	F1	P	R	F1	P	R	F1
Polignano (Polignano et al. 2019)	0.60	0.74	0.66	0.48	0.56	0.52	0.56	0.57	0.57
RoBERTa (Adoma, Henry & Chen 2020)	0.76	0.69	0.73	0.66	0.62	0.65	0.62	0.76	0.68
BERT-BiLSTM (Adoma et al. 2020)	0.83	0.62	0.71	0.64	0.64	0.64	0.54	0.60	0.57
(Acheampong et al. 2021)	0.77	0.70	0.74	0.58	0.60	0.59	0.71	0.72	0.72
RoBERTa-POS	0.69	0.69	0.69	0.70	0.61	0.65	0.73	0.75	**0.74**
RoBERTa-dep	0.72	0.73	0.73	**0.69**	**0.66**	**0.67**	**0.75**	0.70	0.72
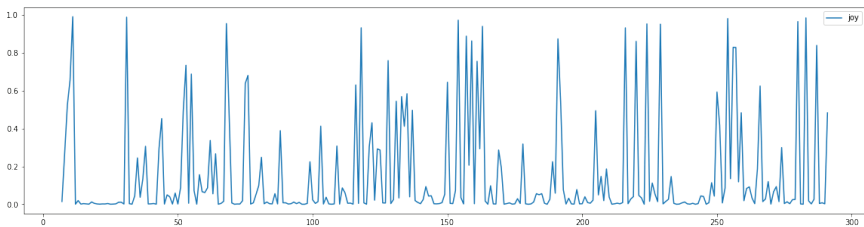
Figure 7. The linear diagram of the change of the joy label in the longest chapter of the Qur'an.

The comparative analysis reveals some interesting insights into the emotion detection models. Notably, the performance variation across different emotions is evident, with joy consistently outperforming other sentiments. The straightforward and sincere nature of joyous expressions contributes to its higher recognition accuracy compared to more nuanced emotions. The success of the RoBERTa-dep model in fear detection highlights the significance of syntactic features, specifically Dependency Parsing tags, in capturing subtle nuances associated with fear. This suggests that understanding the structural relationships

between words and phrases can enhance the model's ability to distinguish between emotions.

The notable improvement achieved by RoBERTa-dep, with the highest accuracy, precision, recall, and F1 scores, suggests the efficacy of combining Dependency Parsing tags with transformer-based models. This hybrid approach appears promising for enhancing emotion detection accuracy, particularly in datasets with closely related emotion categories.

The application of the proposed model to detect emotions in the Qur'an introduces a new dimension to the study. The alignment of results with the contextual themes of the Qur'anic verses, as illustrated in Figure 7, emphasizes the model's ability to capture and interpret emotions in a religious and spiritual context. This alignment with the scriptural context adds a layer of credibility to the model's interpretative capabilities, showcasing its potential utility in analysing texts with deeper cultural and spiritual significance.

In summary, the comprehensive evaluation of the proposed model on the ISEAR dataset, coupled with its application to the Qur'anic text, highlights its potential for nuanced emotion detection. The integration of syntactical features, especially POS and Dependency Parsing tags, proves valuable in refining emotion recognition across a spectrum of sentiments. These findings contribute to advancing the understanding and application of emotion detection models in diverse contexts, from psychological datasets to religious texts.

6. Conclusion

The primary objective of this paper was to advance the state-of-the-art in emotion detection models applied to textual data, with a subsequent application of these models to discern emotions within the Qur'anic verses. Among the various models considered, RoBERTa emerged as the most effective for this task. The incorporation of syntactic features, specifically Parts of Speech (POS) and Dependency Parsing tags, played a pivotal role in refining the models. Through this approach, we achieved significant enhancements, culminating in the development of a model with an impressive 77% accuracy on the dataset.

Furthermore, the augmentation of deep learning models with external features, such as syntactic information, serves to enhance their generalizability. While deep learning excels at automatic feature

extraction, its applicability is often closely tied to specific domains. The inclusion of external features mitigates this dependency, leading to increased accuracy and efficiency across diverse datasets.

The application of our proposed model to the English translation of the Qur'an yielded noteworthy and unexpected findings. In contrast to prevailing opinions characterizing the Qur'an as a sombre text, the results revealed that joy and happiness are predominant emotions expressed in its verses. Importantly, this conclusion was derived systematically and autonomously, devoid of human bias. These findings underscore the potential of advanced emotion detection models, not only for enhancing accuracy within specific domains but also for challenging preconceived notions and for fostering a nuanced understanding of complex texts like the Qur'an.

Acknowledgements

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A Comparative Study of the Literal and Symbolic Meaning of the Numbers in Qur'anic Verses about Creation

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ABSTRACT: Original Paper

The number words in the Qur'an are generally considered to have numerical meanings, while other meanings of these words have been reported under some verses (especially the verses on creation). There are diverse cultural-ritual symbols of the number words employed by the people living in different geographical regions of the world from past centuries to the present. The present research aims to conduct a comparative study of the non-numerical meanings of number words and their numbered objects in the Qur'an and different rituals and cultures, using the method of ritual-cultural symbology, in order to discover and analyse the relationship between the literal meanings of Qur'anic numbers and their symbolic meanings. According to the results of this research, it seems that the non-numerical meanings of number words in the verses of Creation are not metaphors, ironies, and parables, and they are possibly symbolic. Moreover, there is a close relationship between the ritual-cultural symbology and the literal meanings of numbers and their associations in the Creation Verses, so it can be suggested that there is a

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kind of language that all people can understand regardless of culture and geography.

1. Introduction

The issue of creation is one of the most important matters raised in the minds of human beings. The Qur'an has discussed the creation of various creatures in detail in numerous verses. In these verses, the nature and characteristics of the creation of human beings and the world have been described in a wide variety of ways.

The Qur'anic approach to the issue of creation also has certain distinctions, among which we can mention the existence of numerical and counting aspects of some creation-related statements, such as *nafs wāḥidah* (one soul), *sab' samāwāt* (seven heavens), *sittah ayyām* (six days), *thamāniyah azwāj* (eight pairs), and *ulī ajniḥah mathnā wa thulāth wa rubā'* (possessing wings, two, three or four pairs). Commentators have interpreted these terms in diverse ways, such as symbolic (non-numerical) analysis of the numbers (Mughniyyah, 2004, 1:78; Makarem Shirazi 1992, 1:167; al-Rāzī, 1999, 2:383).

Sometimes the historical and symbolic approach to the number is unproblematic and helpful in achieving the correct meaning of the verse, such as understanding the concept of abundance from the number seven, obviously with regard to its numbered object and the context of the verse, as many commentators have pointed out in certain verses. This is despite the fact that some symbolic meanings can also be regarded as examples of imposing meanings on the verses of the Qur'an. This shows the necessity of distinction between the correct and incorrect meanings of numbers, which sometimes imply counting and sometimes do not.

In Qur'anic studies, statistical approaches to numbers have often been of interest, whereas an independent source that methodically analyses the non-numerical meanings of numbers in the verses of Creation or other verses has not been found. The symbolic meanings of numbers and their coexisting terms in Qur'anic interpretations have been addressed only occasionally, thus requiring a more systematic study.

There have also been some studies of the Creation Verses by contemporary scholars, but none of them has investigated the

non-numerical meanings of the numbers with linguistic approaches, the examples of which are as follows:

- "Creation and termination: A semantic study of the Qur'anic worldview" by Shinya Makino (1998);
- "The secret of gradualness in creation" by Gholamreza Vatandoost (1998);
- "Number: The Language of Science" by Dantzig and Mazur (1982);
- "Al-ʿAdad fī'l-Lughat al-ʿArabiyyah" by Naʿīm Ḥumṣī (1946);
- "Numbers and Enumeration" by Andrew Rippin (2024).

In the present research, the Qur'anic uses of each number and its numbered object in the verses of creation were investigated in order to extract and examine their symbolic meanings. Then, these ritual-cultural symbols were analysed in terms of their consistency with their Qur'anic usages. The above approach is an attempt to answer the main question: "How is the relationship between the ritual-cultural symbols of numbers and their co-occurring words explained with the use of these words in the creation verses?"

2. Symbology

A symbol is a term, name, or image that may represent a familiar object in everyday life that nevertheless has special implicit meanings in addition to its obvious and usual meaning (Jung 2012). The symbol cannot be artificially created or invented for personal interpretation at will, since it extends beyond the human and reaches the global level (Cooper 1987).

The difference between a metaphor and a symbol is that there is no indication or proof to express the meaning in symbols. Being used in ordinary everyday language, symbols are different from parables, which are used in the form of anecdotes. The main distinction between a symbol and a metaphor is that symbols have broader meanings, allowing several symbolic meanings to be used for the same word.

From another point of view, symbols can be seen as parables or metaphors that have been around for a long time and have undergone some transformations and changes, and now, they do not necessarily have that initial metaphoric or allegorical clarity. In fact, in a way, some symbols can be considered a kind of fossilized metaphors and allegories.

Every civilization has special symbols for numbers. In most traditions and cultures, numbers have possessed sacredness, ominousness, and

special functions to the extent that their importance has not diminished to this day (Nooraghaei 2008, 13). This leads to the conclusion that numbers have long had symbolic and interpretable meanings (Robertson 2018, 332). For example, one and zero represent all numbers in Leibniz's system. In his view, if it is possible to present all mathematical and non-mathematical problems in a symbolic form (in the form of numbers and numerical codes), it is ultimately possible to build machines that can recognize truth or falsity (at least for mathematical propositions) (Dantzig and Mazur 1982, 120; Mitchell 2016, 86-91).

Although the use of symbolic language in Islamic texts, especially in the Qur'an, has always been a subject of controversy, at the level of vocabulary we see symbolic meanings that were part of the culture and common language of the people and were not unknown or mysterious. An example is the symbolic meaning of number seven, for which the symbolic concept of abundance has become famous among many commentators (Abū Ḥayyān 1999, 1: 219; Ibn Abī Ḥātim 1998, 1:75; al-Rāzī 1999, 25:128; Hosseini Shirazi 2003, 4:278; al-Modarresi 1998, 10:173; Sadeqi Tehrani 1986, 305; Taleghani 1983, 1:111; Makarem Shirazi 1992, 1:167).

Therefore, it is possible to study the use of symbolic meanings of numbers in the Qur'an comparatively, so that focusing on the Qur'anic applications, it can be determined whether numerical symbols are adopted in the Qur'an or not. In the present research, several cultural-ritual symbols were first extracted for each number and its numbered object. Then, focusing on the Qur'anic applications of these terms, the semantic relations between them were taken into consideration.

3. The Scope of the Study

Since the verb *khalaqa* (to create) and its derivatives is the most used verb in the creation verses, the numbers that have a semantic relationship with the verb *khalaqa* were regarded as the scope of this study. Table 1 shows the numbers used in the creation verses with the verb *khalaqa* (directly or effectively).

Table 1. The number words used in the creation verses with the verb khalaqa (directly or effectively).

	Number	Numbered object	Verse
1	*Wāḥidah* (one)	*Nafs* (Soul)	O mankind! fear your Guardian Lord, Who created you from a single person, created out of it his mate, and from them twain scattered) like seeds (countless men and women (Q. 4:1).
2	*Wāḥidah* (one)	*Nafs* (Soul)	It is He Who created you from a single person, and made his mate of like nature, in order that he might dwell with her (in love) (Q. 7:189).
3	*Wāḥidah* (one)	*Nafs* (Soul)	And your creation or your resurrection is in no wise but as an individual soul: for Allah is He Who hears and sees (all things) (Q. 31:28).
4	*Wāḥidah* (one)	*Nafs* (Soul)	He created you (all) from a single person (Q. 39:6).
5	*Mathnā* (Two by Two)	*Ajniḥah malā'ikah* (Wings of The Angels)	Praise be to Allah, Who created (out of nothing) the heavens and the earth, Who made the angels, messengers with wings,- two, or three, or four (pairs): He adds to Creation as He pleases (Q. 35:1).
6	*Thulāth* (Three by Three)	*Ajniḥah malā'ikah* (Wings of The Angels)	Praise be to Allah, Who created (out of nothing) the heavens and the earth, Who made the angels, messengers with wings, two, or three, or four (pairs) (Q. 35:1).
7	*Thalāth* (Three)	*Ẓulumāt* (Darkness)	In stages, one after another, in three veils of darkness (Q. 39:6).

	Number	Numbered object	Verse
8	*Rubāʿ* (Four by Four)	*Ajniḥah malāʾikah* (Wings of The Angels)	Praise be to Allah, Who created (out of nothing) the heavens and the earth, Who made the angels, messengers with wings - two, or three, or four (pairs) (Q. 35:1).
9	*Sittah* (Six)	*Ayyām* (Days)	Your Guardian-Lord is Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth in six days (Q. 7:54).
10	*Sittah* (Six)	*Ayyām* (Days)	Verily your Lord is Allah, who created the heavens and the earth in six days, and is firmly established on the throne (Q.10:3).
11	*Sittah* (Six)	*Ayyām* (Days)	He it is Who created the heavens and the earth in six Days (Q. 11:7).
12	*Sittah* (Six)	*Ayyām* (Days)	He Who created the heavens and the earth and all that is between, in six days (Q. 25:59).
13	*Sittah* (Six)	*Ayyām* (Days)	It is Allah Who has created the heavens and the earth, and all between them, in six Days (Q. 32:4).
14	*Sittah* (Six)	*Ayyām* (Days)	We created the heavens and the earth and all between them in Six Days (Q. 18:38).
15	*Sittah* (Six)	*Ayyām* (Days)	He it is Who created the heavens and the earth in Six Days (Q. 57:4).
16	*Sabʿ* (Seven)	*Ṭarāʾiq* (Ways)	And We have made, above you, seven tracts (Q. 23:17).
17	*Sabʿ* (Seven)	*Samāwāt* (Skys)	Allah is He Who created seven Firmaments (Q. 65:12).
18	*Sabʿ* (Seven)	*Samāwāt* (Skys)	He Who created the seven heavens one above another (Q. 67:3).

	Number	Numbered object	Verse
19	*Sabʿ* (Seven)	*Samāwāt* (Skys)	See ye not how Allah has created the seven heavens one above another (Q. 71:15).
20	*Thamāniyah* (Eight)	*Azwāj* (Pairs)	He sent down for you eight head of cattle in pairs: He makes you, in the wombs of your mothers (Q. 39:6).

4. Qur'anic and Symbolic Applications of Numbers

In this section, for each number in Table 1, the Qur'anic applications are examined with regard to literal meanings and ritual-cultural symbols.

4.1. Wāḥidah (One)

In addition to the numerical sense of one, *wāḥid* and *wāḥidah* in the Qur'an have other senses in several verses (Q. 36:29;[1] 37:19;[2] 54:50;[3] 4:102;[4] 69:14;[5] 25:32[6]), implying slightness and ease (Mughniyyah 2004, 7:507) suddenness and abruptness (Tabataba'i 1996, 19: 87). Additionally, *wāḥid* in certain verses indicates being of one kind and one species:

> For they said: What! a man! a Solitary one from among ourselves! shall we follow such a one?[7] (Q. 54:24).

> And remember ye said: O Moses! we cannot endure one kind of food[8] (Q.2:61).

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1. إِنْ كَانَتْ إِلَّا صَيْحَةً واحِدَةً (يس/29)

2. فَإِنَّما هِيَ زَجْرَةٌ واحِدَةٌ (الصافات/19)

3. وَ ما أَمْرُنا إِلَّا واحِدَةٌ كَلَمْحٍ بِالْبَصَر (القمر/50)

4. فَيَمِيلُونَ عَلَيْكُمْ مَيْلَةً واحِدَةً (النساء/102)

5. فَدُكَّتا دَكَّةً واحِدَةً (الحاقه/14)

6. لَوْ لا نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ الْقُرْآنُ جُمْلَةً واحِدَة (الفرقان/32)

7. فَقالُوا أَ بَشَراً مِنَّا واحِداً نَتَّبِعُه (القمر/24)

8. وَ إِذْقُلْتُمْ يا مُوسى لَنْ نَصْبِرَ عَلى طَعامٍ واحِد (البقرة/61)

In the first verse above, the Prophet's "being of the same species" (being of the human race) with other human beings is a source of question and problem for the unbelievers, and in the second verse, the fact that the food was of one type and not diverse was considered a reason for the Children of Israel's lack of patience.

The use of *wāḥidah* accompanied by *ummah* in verses like Q. 2:213[1] means that people did not have differences at the beginning of the formation of human societies. In other words, it can be said that *wāḥidah* in these verses refers to the sharing of people together. This commonality can exist in religion, ritual, customs, lifestyle, etc. In the verse Q. 13:4, it is mentioned about the sameness of vineyards, fields, and date trees in being watered with the same water:

> And in the earth are tracts (diverse though) neighbouring, and gardens of vines and fields sown with corn, and palm trees - growing out of single roots or otherwise: watered with the same water[2] (Q.13:4).

Therefore, *wāḥid* in this usage can also be interpreted as being common and not different. Therefore, *wāḥid* and *wāḥidah* in the Qur'an, in addition to the numerical meaning, also have other meanings such as slightness, ease, suddenness, abruptness, common, and of the same species and type. In addition, there are many uses of *wāḥid* for God in the Qur'an (see Figure 1).
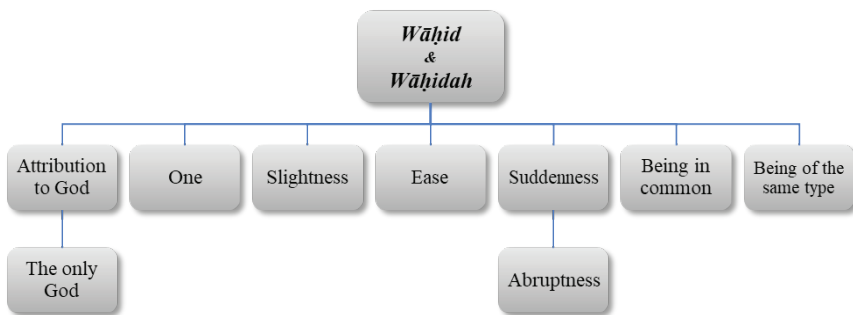
Figure 1. The applications of wāḥid and wāḥidah in the Qur'an.

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1. كانَ النَّاسُ أُمَّةً واحِدَةً (البقرة/213)

2. وَ فِي الْأَرْضِ قِطَعٌ مُتَجاوِراتٌ وَ جَنَّاتٌ مِنْ أَعْنابٍ وَ زَرْعٌ وَ نَخِيلٌ صِنْوانٌ وَ غَيْرُ صِنْوانٍ يُسْقى بِماءٍ واحِدٍ
(الرعد/4)

The symbols of the number one in different rituals and cultures include God, the universe of God, permanence, centrality, indivisibility, the driving force, the essence of everything, unity, mother, beginning, the creation of the primitive human and the standing human (Chevalier & Gheerbrant 2008, 5:638-643; Schimmel 2016, 54; Bruce-Mitford 2009, 23; Cooper 1987; Nooraghaei 2008, 29) (Figure 2).
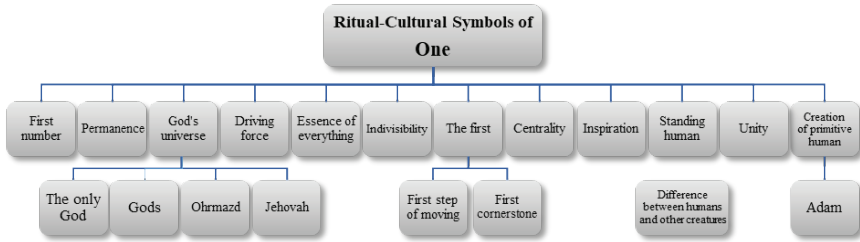

Figure 2. Ritual-cultural symbols of one.

4.2. Mathnā (Two by Two)

The use of *mathnā* (Two by Two) along with *thulāth* (Three by Three) and *rubāʿ* (Four by Four) in the form of *mʿdūlah* can be found in the verse (Q.35:1):

> Praise be to Allah, Who created (out of nothing) the heavens and the earth, Who made the angels, messengers with wings, two, or three, or four (pairs): He adds to Creation as He pleases[1] (Q. 35:1).

According to the context and various parts of the verse that speak of greatness, increase and development, and with reference to expression, "He increases in creation as He pleases," (Ḥaqqī Brusawī n.d., 7:314; al-Ālusī 1984, 11:338; Hosseini Shah Abdulazimi 1985, 11:9; Ibn ʿĀshūr 1999, 22:111), which the majority of commentators have taken to refer to the creation of angels and all other creatures, it is reasonable to consider the possible symbolic meaning of abundance for *mʿdūlah* numbers of *mathnā*, *thulāth*, and *rubāʿ* (Fakhari & Besharati 2019).

It should be noted that *mathnā*, *thulāth*, and *rubāʿ* in the verse Q. 4:3, to express the number of women with whom it is permissible to marry, has been interpreted by the majority of commentators as the number

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1. الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ فاطِرِ السَّماواتِ وَ الْأَرْضِ جاعِلِ الْمَلائِكَةِ رُسُلًا أُولِي أَجْنِحَةٍ مَثْنى وَ ثُلاثَ وَ رُباعَ يَزِيدُ فِي الْخَلْقِ

ما يَشاءُ (فاطر/1)

four, according to the jurisprudential approach of the context of the verse (unlike the context of the previous verse, which indicated creation) (Muqātil 2002, 1:357; al-Ṭūsī 2002, 3:107; al-Zamakhsharī 1979, 1:467; Sadeqi Tehrani 1986, 6:171; Tabataba'i 1996, 4:267).

In addition, several Hadiths also indicate the limitation of polygamy to the number of four. In addition, the plural nature of the verb and pronouns in the verse confirms the meaning of choice between two to four women. Therefore, these numbers were used in the same numerical meaning in the above verses, but in the first verse, which is one of the verses of creation, the concept of abundance is probable for them (Fakhari & Besharati 2019) (Figure 3).
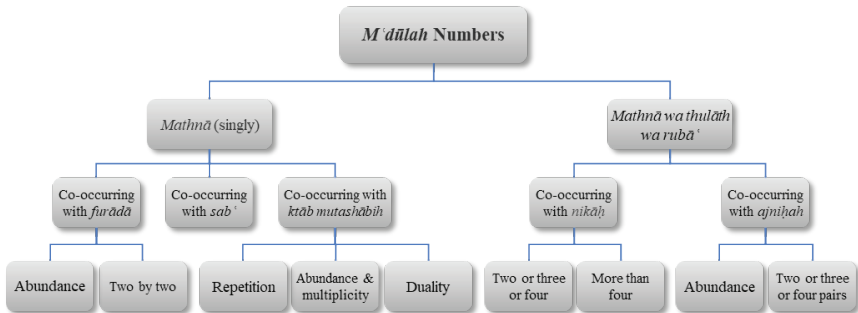
Figure 3. The numbers of m'dūlah in the Qur'an

The number two in different rituals and cultures is a symbol of division, duality, balance, plurality and diversity, femininity, being propitious, alternation, conflict, parallelism, and opposite poles (Shepherd 2014, 358; Levi-Strauss 1974, 161; Chevalier & Gheerbrant 2008, 257-261; Cooper 1987; Bruce-Mitford 2009, 24) (Figure 4).
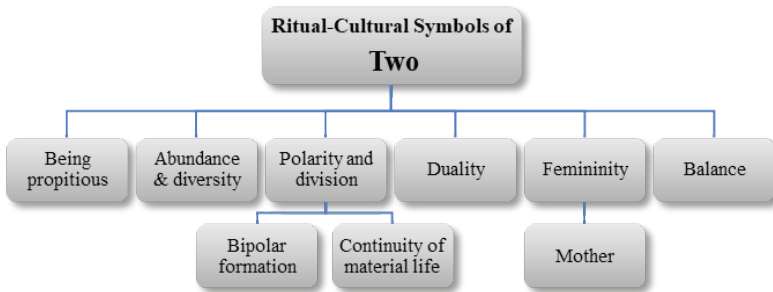
Figure 4. Ritual-cultural symbols of two.

4.3. Thalāth (Three)

Thalāth and *thalāthah* in the Qur'an, in addition to the numerical meaning, indicate the following symbolic meanings (Figure 5):

• Completeness and perfection:

Depart ye to a Shadow in three columns[1] (Q. 77:30).

If that is beyond your means, fast for three days. That is the expiation for the oaths ye have sworn[2] (Q. 5:89).

• The implicit meaning of holiness and mysteriousness:

He said, "My Lord, grant me a sign." He said, "Your sign is that you will not speak to people for three days except in gestures"[3] (Q. 3:41).

• Abundance (in the form of *m'dūlah* number, i.e., *thulāth*):

Who made the angels, messengers with wings, two, or three, or four (pairs)[4] (Q. 35:1).
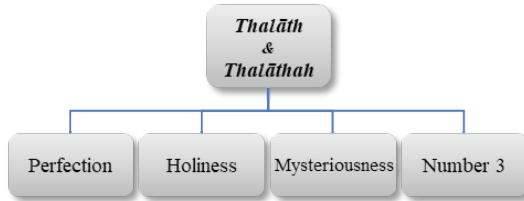
Figure 5. The applications of thalāth and thalāthah in the Qur'an.

The number three in different rituals and cultures is a symbol of perfection, holiness, abundance and growth, respect, and masculinity. In addition, the symbolic meaning of the Creator for the number three has appeared in the form of the idea of the Christian Trinity and the Hindu divine trinity (Lao-Tzu 1992, 42; Schimmel 2016, 73-76; Chevalier & Gheerbrant 2008, 3:663-672; Nooraghaei 2008, 39-41; Cooper 1987) (figure 6).

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١. انْطَلِقُوا إِلَى ظِلٍّ ذِي ثَلَاثِ شُعَبٍ (المرسلات/30)

٢. فَمَنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ ثَلَاثَةِ أَيَّامٍ ذَلِكَ كَفَّارَةُ أَيْمَانِكُمْ إِذَا حَلَفْتُمْ (المائدة/89)

٣. قَالَ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ لِي آيَةً، قَالَ آيَتُكَ أَلَّا تُكَلِّمَ النَّاسَ ثَلَاثَةَ أَيَّامٍ إِلَّا رَمْزًا (آل عمران/41)

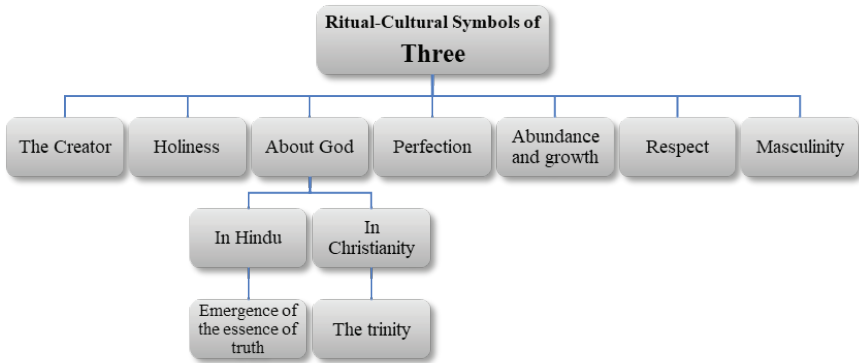٤. جَاعِلِ الْمَلَائِكَةِ رُسُلًا أُولِي أَجْنِحَةٍ مَثْنَى وَ ثُلَاثَ وَ رُبَاعَ (فاطر/1)

Figure 6. Ritual-cultural symbols of number three.

4.4. Rubāʿ (Four by Four)

The *mʿdūlah* number *rubāʿ* in the verses of creation was used in the phrase *mathnā wa thulāth wa rubāʿ* (Q. 4:3) which, as said earlier about *mathnā* and *thulāth*, symbolizes abundance.

In various rituals and cultures, the number four has been a symbol of square, tangibility, establishment, uniqueness, discipline, completeness, abundance, femininity, great power, holiness, and forbidden number (Dantzig and Mazur 1982, 54; Chevalier & Gheerbrant 2008, 2:550-560; Shepherd 2014, 358; Bruce-Mitford 2009, 26-28) (figure 7).
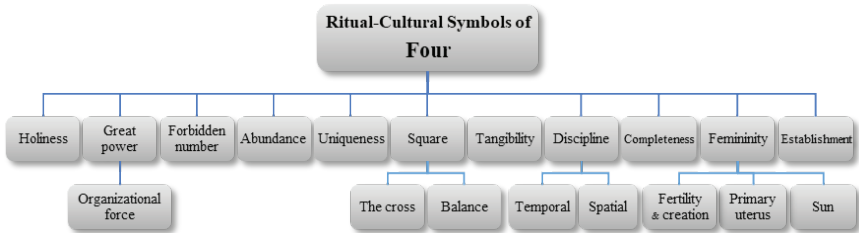
Figure 7. Ritual-cultural symbols of number four.

4.5. Sittah (Six)

Sittah, *sādis* and *sudus* regardless of their numbered objects and in their absolute form, have numerical meanings and play no symbolic role in the Qur'an.

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The number six has several symbolic meanings in various rituals and cultures, such as the creation of the world, felicity and misfortune, spiritual destiny, balance, harmony and unity of opposites, sin of the ancestors, fertility and wisdom, among which the most significant and well-known symbolic meaning is creation (Chevalier & Gheerbrant 2008, 4:55-59; Schimmel 2016, 137; Shepherd 2014, 359; Cooper 1987; Bruce-Mitford 2009, 30) (figure 8).
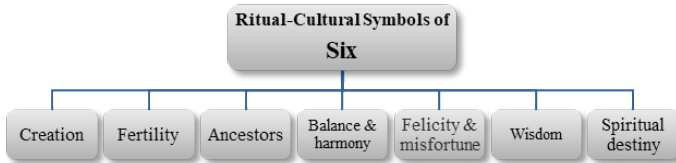

Figure 8. Ritual-cultural symbols of number six.

4.6. Sabʿ (Seven)

Sabʿ and its derivatives in the Qur'an, in addition to the numerical meaning, also indicate the symbolic meaning of increase and exaggeration (Figure 9):

> And if all the trees on earth were pens and the ocean (were ink), with seven oceans behind it to add to its (supply), yet would not the words of Allah be exhausted (in the writing): for Allah is Exalted in Power, full of Wisdom[1] (Q. 31:27).

> The parable of those who spend their substance in the way of Allah is that of a grain of corn: it groweth seven ears[2] (Q. 2:261).
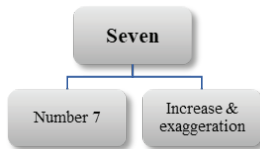
Figure 9. The applications of the number seven in the Qur'an.

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١. وَ لَوْ أَنَّ ما فِي الْأَرْضِ مِنْ شَجَرَةٍ أَقْلامٌ وَ الْبَحْرُ يَمُدُّهُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ سَبْعَةُ أَبْحُرٍ ما نَفِدَتْ كَلِماتُ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيم (لقمان/27)

٢. مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوالَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ حَبَّةٍ أَنْبَتَتْ سَبْعَ سَنابِلَ (البقرة/261)

Seven in different religions and cultures is a symbol of perfection, holiness, abundance, immortality, unity of materiality and spirituality, complexity, finality, and magic (Eliade 1996, 33; Chevalier & Gheerbrant 2008, 557-572; Bruce-Mitford 2009, 30; Cooper 1987) (Figure 10).
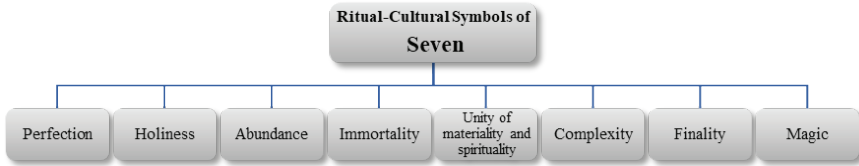

Figure 10. Ritual-cultural symbols of number seven.

4.7. Thamāniyyah (Eight)

Thamāniyyah, in the Qur'an, in addition to the numerical meaning, indicates the following symbolic meanings (Fakhari et. al. 2018) (Figure 11):

- Balance and lawfulness:

    (Take) eight (head of cattle) in (four) pairs: of sheep a pair, and of goats a pair… Of camels a pair, and oxen a pair[1] (Q. 6:143-144).

    And He sent down for you eight head of cattle in pairs[2] (Q. 39:6).

    The above verses refer to four pairs that have reached balance in the form of the number eight. In addition, pairing itself is a balanced relationship.

- Abundance:

    which He disposed against them for seven grueling nights and eight days, so that you could have seen the people lying about therein prostrate as if they were hollow trunks of palm trees[3] (Q. 69:7).

- Restarting (only if the use of *wāw thamāniyyah* is accepted in some verses):

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1. ثَمَانِيَةَ أَزْوَاج مِنَ الضَّأْنِ اثْنَيْنِ وَ مِنَ الْمَعْزِ اثْنَيْنِ ... وَ مِنَ الْإِبِلِ اثْنَيْنِ وَ مِنَ الْبَقَرِ اثْنَيْنِ (الانعام/143–144)

2. وَ أَنْزَلَ لَكُمْ مِنَ الْأَنْعَامِ ثَمَانِيَةَ أَزْوَاج (الزمر/6)

3. سَخَّرَها عَلَيْهِمْ سَبْعَ لَيالٍ وَ ثَمانِيَةَ أَيَّامٍ حُسُوماً فَتَرَى الْقَوْمَ فِيها صَرْعى كَأَنَّهُمْ أَعْجازُ نَخْلٍ خاوِيَةٍ (الحاقة/7)

(Some) say they were three, the dog being the fourth among them; (others) say they were five, the dog being the sixth - doubtfully guessing at the unknown; (yet others) say they were seven, the dog being the eighth[1] (Q. 18:22).
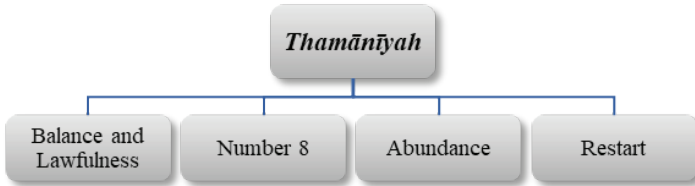
Figure 11. The applications of the number eight in the Qur'an.

The number eight in different rituals and cultures is a symbol of balance and lawfulness, holiness, abundance, and countlessness. In addition, the symbolic meaning of re-creation and restart in some rituals and cultures is in line with the use of *wāw thamāniyyah* in the Arabic language (Ali 1972, 15:39; Anonymous 1992, 1:214-215; Chevalier & Gheerbrant 2008, 5:546-549; Cooper 1987; Shepherd 2014, 259) (Figure 12).
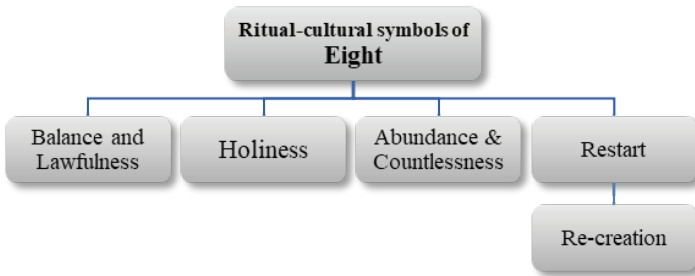
Figure 12. Ritual-cultural symbols of number eight.

5. *Qur'anic and Symbolic Applications of the Co-occurring Words of Numbers*

As mentioned earlier, the numbers one, two, three, four, six, seven and eight, were used in the creation verses in phrases such as *nafs wāḥidah*,

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1. سَيَقُولُونَ ثَلاثَةٌ رابِعُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ وَ يَقُولُونَ خَمْسَةٌ سادِسُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ رَجْماً بِالْغَيْبِ وَ يَقُولُونَ سَبْعَةٌ وَ ثامِنُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ

(الكهف/22)

ajniḥah mathnā wa thulāth wa rubāʿ, ẓulumāt thalāth, sittah ayyām, sabʿ samāwāt, and *thamānīyah azwāj* (Table 1). The examination of the numbered objects of these numbers, including *nafs, ajniḥah, ẓulumāt, ayyām, samāwāt, and azwāj* from the literal and symbological point of view has been discussed in this section.

5.1. Nafs

Nafs has been used in various meanings in the Qur'an (Figure 13), such as:

- The essence of God Almighty:
  He has inscribed for Himself (the rule of) Mercy[1] (Q. 6:12).

- Human:
  Allah does not put a task on a person beyond his ability[2] (Q. 2:286).

- Soul and the source of life:
  It is Allah that takes the souls (of men) at death[3] (Q. 39:42).

- The interior and consciousness:
  Thou knowest what is in my heart, Thou I know not what is in Thine[4] (Q. 5:116).

- The forces of good and evil in human beings, which lead to the commission of evil or the prevention of evil, and the happiness or misery of human beings are connected with these inner forces:
  The (human) soul is certainly prone to evil[5] (Q. 12:53).

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1. كَتَبَ عَلى نَفْسِهِ الرَّحْمَة (الانعام/12)

2. لا يُكَلِّفُ اللّهُ نَفْساً إلّا وُسْعَها (البقرة/286)

3. اللّهُ يَتَوَفَّى الْأَنْفُسَ حينَ مَوْتِها (الزمر/42)

4. تَعْلَمُ ما في نَفْسي وَ لا أَعْلَمُ ما في نَفْسِكَ (المائدة/116)
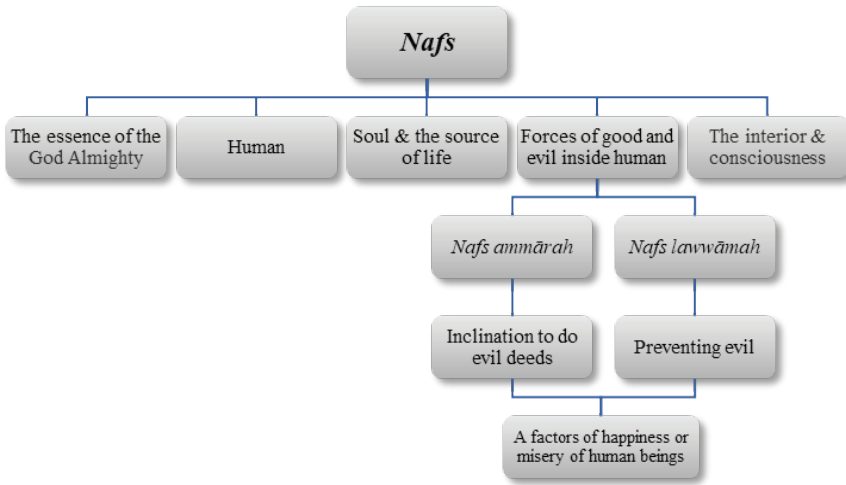
5. إنَّ النَّفْسَ لَأَمّارَةٌ بِالسُّوء (يوسف/53)

Figure 13. The applications of the word 'nafs' in the Qur'an.

In various religions and cultures, the *nafs* has been usually confused with the *rūḥ*, and in most cases, only the symbols of the *rūḥ* have been reported. Since we are seeking only the terminological analysis of *nafs* and not *rūḥ*, we might consider the possible symbol of *nafs* in Arabic culture, which Jawad Ali interpreted as a bird growing inside the human body (Ali 1972, 11:139-141) (Figure 14). Therefore, for the symbology of *nafs* the ritual-cultural symbols of bird should be studied.

Bird in different rituals and cultures is a symbol of connection with God and his kingdom, spirit, being a messenger, good luck, and cruelty. Bird has a permanent and unbreakable relationship with the concept of flight. Flight is also a symbol of bird, lightness, freedom from matter, freedom of mind (thinking), and dynamism (Jung 2012; Chevalier & Gheerbrant 2008, 2:57-60; Shepherd 2014, 199; Bruce-Mitford 2009, 71-72) (Figure 15).
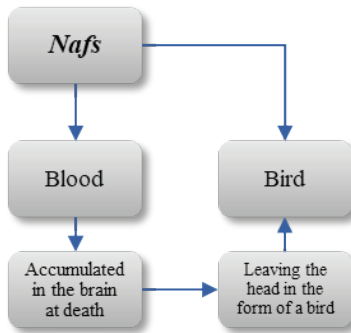
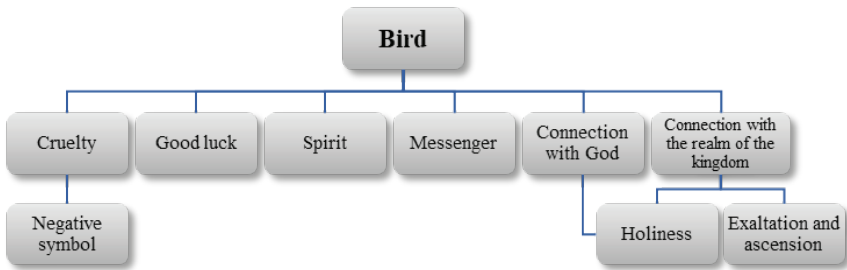**Figure 14.** Making nafs tangible with a bird as a symbol.

Figure 15. Ritual-cultural symbols of bird.

5.2. Ajniḥah

The Arabic root "J,N,Ḥ" and its derivatives in the Qur'an have various symbolic meanings (Figure 16):

- Inclination:

  But if the enemy incline towards peace, do thou (also) incline towards peace[1] (Q. 8:61).

- Means of humility:

  And, out of kindness, lower to them the wing of humility[2] (Q. 17:24).

- Means of shelter:

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1. وَإِنْ جَنَحُوا لِلسَّلْمِ فَاجْنَحْ لَهَا (الانفال/61)
2. وَ اخْفِضْ لَهُما جَناحَ الذُّلِّ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ (الاسراء/24)

And lower thy wing to the Believers who follow thee[1] (Q. 26:215).

- Means of ascension and exaltation:

There is not an animal (that lives) on the earth, nor a being that flies on its wings, but (forms part of) communities like you[2] (Q. 6:38).
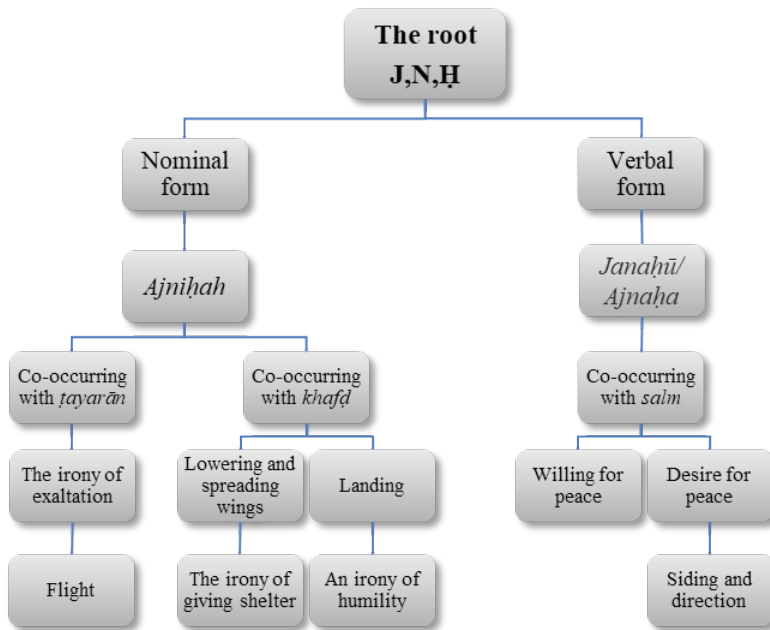

Figure 16. The root "J,N,Ḥ" and its derivatives in the Qur'an.

In various rituals and cultures, wing is a symbol of eternal power, connection with the upper world and exaltation and ascension, protection and peace, spiritual force or evil and negative forces (Champeaux & Sterckx 1966, 431; Chevalier & Gheerbrant 2008, 2: 57-60; Shepherd 2014, 199; Jung 2012) (Figure 17).

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1. وَ اخْفِضْ جَناحَكَ لِمَنِ اتَّبَعَكَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ (الشعراء/215)
2. وَما مِنْ دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَ لا طائِرٍ يَطِيرُ بِجَناحَيْهِ إِلاَّ أُمَمٌ أَمْثالُكُمْ (الانعام/38)
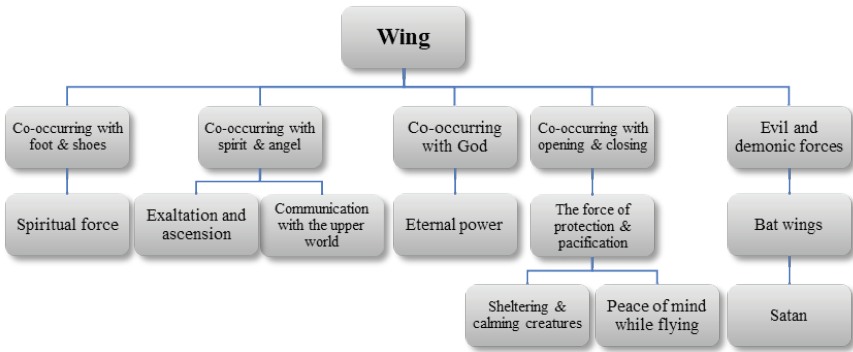
Figure 17. Ritual-cultural symbols of wing.

5.3. Ẓulumāt

In addition to the concept of darkness, the Qur'an employed the term *ẓulumāt* to refer to severe misguidance. God used light and the two verbs salvation and guidance in contrast to *ẓulumāt* and attributed them only to Himself (Figure 18).

> Allah is the Protector of those who have faith: from the depths of darkness He will lead them forth into light[1] (Q. 2:257).

> Say: Who is it that delivereth you from the dark recesses of land and sea[2] (Q. 6:63).

> Or, Who guides you through the depths of darkness on land and sea[3] (Q. 27:63).

In some cases, the knowledge of *ẓulumāt* and the creature existing in it is attributed exclusively to God:

> Not a leaf doth fall but with His knowledge: there is not a grain in the darkness (or depths) of the earth[4] (Q. 6:59).

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١. اللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يُخْرِجُهُمْ مِنَ الظُّلُماتِ إِلَى النُّورِ (البقرة/257)

٢. قُلْ مَنْ يُنَجِّيكُمْ مِنْ ظُلُماتِ الْبَرِّ وَ الْبَحْرِ (الانعام/63)

٣. أَمَّنْ يَهْدِيكُمْ فِي ظُلُماتِ الْبَرِّ وَ الْبَحْرِ (النمل/63)

٤. وَ ما تَسْقُطُ مِنْ وَرَقَةٍ إِلاَّ يَعْلَمُها وَ لا حَبَّةٍ فِي ظُلُماتِ الْأَرْضِ (الانعام/59)
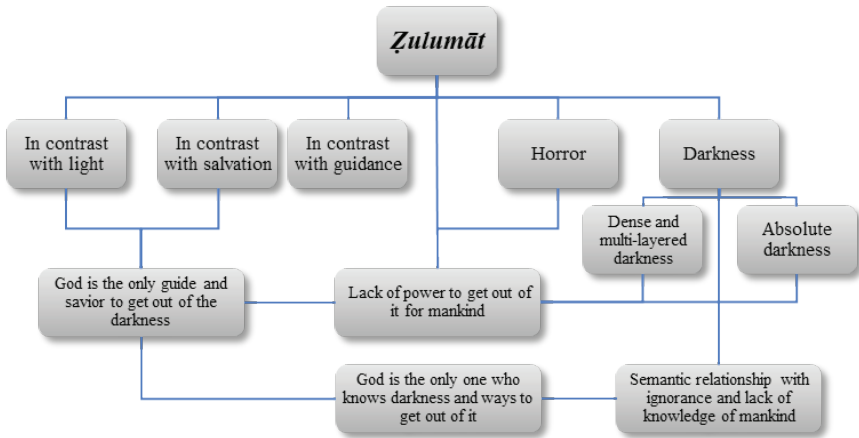
Figure 18. The applications of Ẓulumāt in the Qur'an

Blackness and darkness, in different rituals and cultures, symbolizes the formlessness, undifferentiated nature of the world before the creation, the embryonic stage of the world, the early instinctive world, birth, entering a new religion, life, growth, motherhood, fertility, and death (Servier 1964, 96; Chevalier & Gheerbrant 2008, 3:685-695; Cooper 1987) (Figure 19).
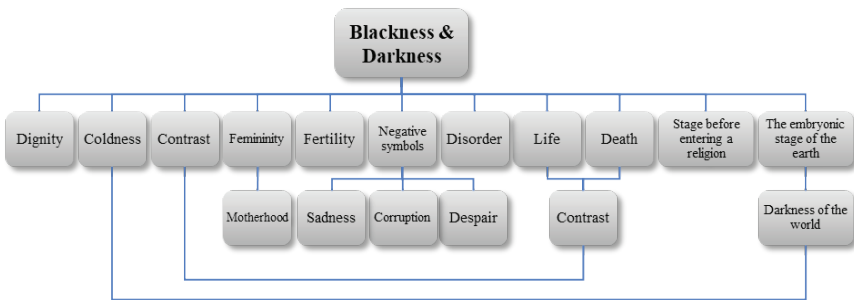

Figure 19. Ritual-cultural symbols of blackness and darkness.

5.4. *Ayyām*

Ayyām and its singular *yawm*, in the Qur'an in many cases, indicate the Day of Resurrection, which is accompanied by various words such as *yawm al-qīyāmah* (Day of Resurrection), *yawm al-dīn* (Day of the Religion), *yawm al-ākhir* (Final Day), *yawm ʿaẓīm* (Great Day), *yawm al-faṣl* (Day of Separation), *yawm al-waqt al-maʿlūm* (Day of Specific

Time), *yawm al-jam'* (Day of Gathering), and *yawm al-wa'īd* (Day of Promise). This word means the common day (sunrise to sunset) sometimes accompanies with some days of the week such as Friday and Saturday (Q. 62:9; 7:163) and certain days of Hajj and Ramadan (Q. 2:184; 22:28). In addition to the conventional meaning, it has also been used to mean duration or periods of time (Figure 20):

If a wound hath touched you, be sure a similar wound hath touched the others. Such days (of varying fortunes) We give to men and men by turns[1] (Q. 3:140).

Some commentators have interpreted this word as an ironic meaning of power and dominance (al-Maraghi n.d., 4:80; Mughniyyah 2004, 2:163; Fadlallah 1999, 6:284).
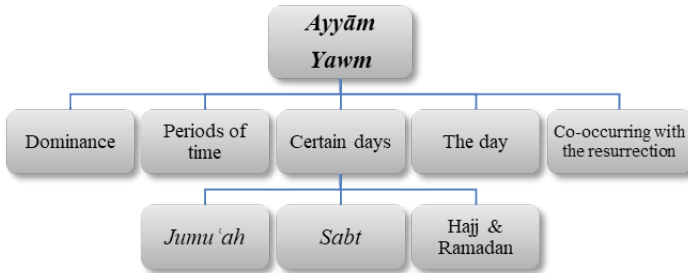

Figure 20. The applications of ayyām in the Qur'an.

Day is a symbol of time and periods of time, gradualness, God's rest, human movement and activity, the ascension of the soul, the hereafter, religious holidays and historical events (Léon-Dufour 1973, 2:833-834; Chevalier & Gheerbrant 2008, 3:388-390; Cooper 1987) (Figure 21).
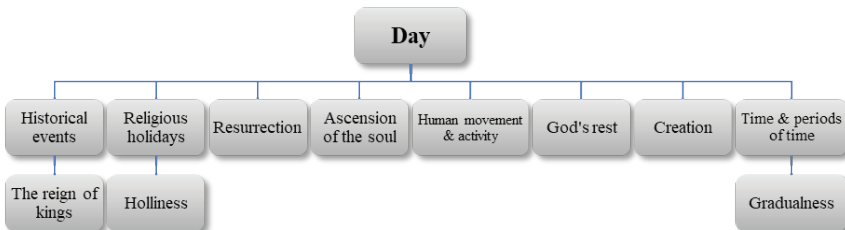

Figure 21. Ritual-cultural symbols of day.

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١. إِنْ يَمْسَسْكُمْ قَرْحٌ فَقَدْ مَسَّ الْقَوْمَ قَرْحٌ مِثْلُهُ وَ تِلْكَ الْأَيَّامُ نُداوِلُها بَيْنَ النَّاسِ (آل عمران/140)

5.5. *Samāwāt*

Samāwāt and its singular *samā'* occur in the Qur'an in several meanings, such as the atmosphere of the earth (Q. 30:48)[1], rain (Q. 71:11)[2], heavenly bodies or the space containing them (Q. 22:65;[3] 25:61[4]), the spiritual heaven (Q. 7:40)[5], and the collection of all the heavens (Q. 14:32),[6] which all indicate the concept of elevation and relative exaltation (Figure 22).
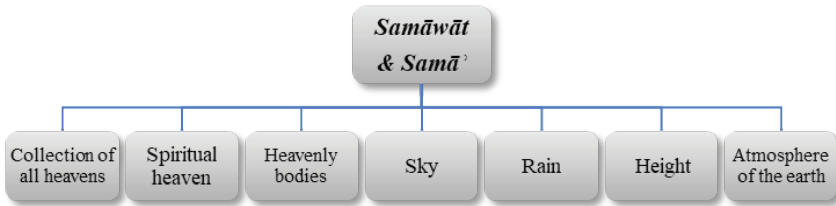
Figure 22. The applications of samāwāt and samā' in the Qur'an.

Sky in different religions and cultures, is a symbol of connection with the upper world, the unseen, the kingdom, power, sovereignty, supremacy, spirit, holiness, awe, human aspirations, boundlessness, height, heaven, the realm of happiness, the order of the world, God's sky, ability and wisdom (Harva 1959, 43; Eliade 1949, 46; Chevalier & Gheerbrant 2008, 1:187-197; Cooper 1987) (Figure 23).
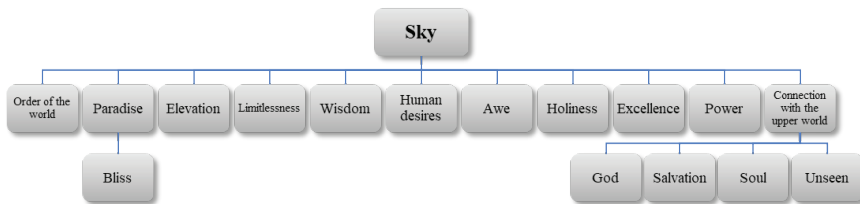
Figure 23. Ritual-cultural symbols of sky.

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١. اللَّهُ الَّذِى يُرْسِلُ الرِّيَاحَ فَتُثِيرُ سَحَابًا فَيَبْسُطُهُ فِى السَّمَاءِ كَيْفَ يَشَاءُ (الروم/48)

٢. يُرْسِلِ السَّمَاءَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِدْرَاراً (نوح/11)

٣. وَ يُمْسِكُ السَّمَاءَ أَنْ تَقَعَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ إِلاَّ بِإِذْنِهِ (الحج/65)

٤. تَبَارَكَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ فِي السَّمَاءِ بُرُوجاً وَ جَعَلَ فِيها سِراجاً وَ قَمَراً مُنِيراً (الفرقان/61)

٥. إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآياتِنا وَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا عَنْها لا نُفَتَّحُ لَهُمْ أَبْوابُ السَّماءِ (الاعراف/40)

٦. اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّماواتِ وَ الْأَرْضَ (ابراهيم/32)

5.6. *Azwāj*

The Qur'anic term *azwāj* and its singular *zawj* indicate, in addition to the common concept of a pair, the union of two objects, which, despite their differences, achieve balance and peace through their juxtaposition (Figure 24):

> And among His Signs is this, that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that ye may dwell in tranquillity with them[1] (Q. 30:21).
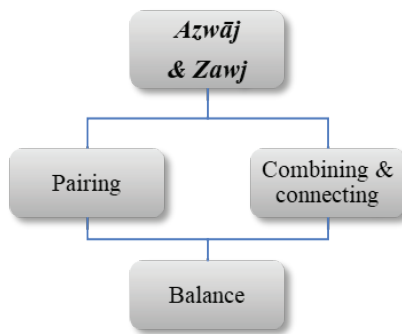
Figure 24. The applications of azwāj and zawj in the Qur'an.

Pair in different rituals and cultures is a symbol of polarity, division, double power, balance, stability, contrast, connection, and continuity of material life (Lévi-Strauss 1974, 161; Chevalier & Gheerbrant 2008, 3:268-269; Cooper 1987; Nooraghaei 2008, 35; Schimmel 2016, 68) (Figure 25).
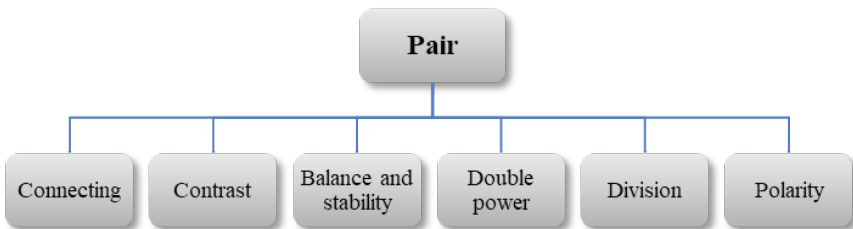
Figure 25. Ritual-cultural symbols of pair.

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1.   وَ مِنْ آياتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْواجاً لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْها (الروم/21)

6. *Alignment of Qur'anic Applications and Ritual-cultural Symbols of Numbers*

The relationship between the symbol and the Qur'anic use of number words and their co-occurring terms reveals multiple examples of similarity and proximity of different meanings.

Among the Qur'anic uses of *wāḥid* and *wāḥidah* is the concept of insignificance, which is associated with the symbol of the creation of the primitive human being, who is an example of a person (least human).

The Qur'anic uses of *nafs* indicate a kind of connection with the upper world. *Nafs* in Arab culture is the symbol of a bird and in various religions and cultures, the bird has symbolic meanings of connection with God and the Kingdom. The Qur'anic use of good and evil forces within the human being which is associated with conscience and his inward nature has a meaningful relationship with the symbols of good will and cruelty for the bird, since the source of acquiring virtues and committing vices are the forces within man.

The Qur'anic reference to abundance for *mathnā* resembles the ritual-cultural symbols of the number two, such as polarity, division, and femininity, which indicate increase or reproduction associated with the concept of repetition and abundance in *mathnā*.

In addition to their numerical meaning, *thalāth* and *thalāthah* in the Qur'an imply completeness and perfection as well as holiness, which in these meanings correspond to the ritual-cultural symbols of number three.

The notion of abundance for *rubā'* in Qur'anic application matches the ritual-cultural symbols of the number four. In addition, the symbolic meanings of femininity, mother, and sun, which inspire the concept of fertility and thus reproduction, may also have an indirect semantic relationship to this Qur'anic usage.

The term *janāḥ* appears in the Qur'an with *khafḍ* as a means of support and with *ṭayarān* as a means of ascent and descent. The symbols of the wing in various religions and cultures denoting the means of protection and peace, ascension and exaltation, and communication with the upper world are consistent with the symbols of *janāḥ*.

The Qur'anic term *ẓulumāt*, which means dark and frightening position, stands in opposition to knowledge, light, guidance, and salvation. Considering that all symbols of blackness and darkness originate from the formlessness and early darkness of the world before

creation, it is reasonable to assume a very close semantic relationship between these meanings and the Qur'anic use of *ẓulumāt*.

The Qur'anic uses of *sittah* are also consistent with the ritual-cultural symbols of the six in the concept of the creation of the universe.

The Qur'anic uses of *yawm* are compatible with ritual-cultural symbols of periods of time that inspire the concept of gradualness. In the Qur'an, this word is also associated with *al-qiyāmah*, which is in harmony with the ritual-cultural symbol of the Resurrection for *yawm*.

The Qur'anic uses of *samā'* and *samāwāt*, including the atmosphere, rain, celestial bodies, or the space containing them, the spiritual sky, and the collection of the heavens, all implying the concept of elevation and height, have a strong semantic relationship with the symbolic meaning of the sky, denoting height and connection with the upper world in various religions and cultures.

The Qur'anic use of *sab'* in the concept of abundance and exaggeration appears to be analogous to the ritual-cultural symbols of seven.

In parallel with its numerical meaning, *thamāniyyah* in the Qur'an carries the symbolic meanings of balance, harmony, and lawfulness, as well as increase and restart (under certain conditions), which may be viewed as analogous to the ritual-cultural symbols of eight.

The Qur'anic uses of *azwāj* confirm the meaning of pairing and connecting two objects to achieve balance, which is also consistent with the meanings derived from the symbols of *zawj* in various religions and cultures.

Consequently, in many cases, the Qur'anic application of number words and their co-occurring terms coincide with the symbols of these words in different religions and cultures, with some instances of a very strong semantic relationship between and among the aforementioned meanings.

7. Conclusion

As discussed above, the use of number words and their co-occurring terms in the verses of Creation appears to be compatible with the manifestations of these terms in various faiths and cultures, especially since there are certain instances that reveal an extremely close semantic connection between these connotations. The non-numerical meanings of number words in the Qur'an are not considered parables, as they were not used in the form of anecdotes. Considering that there are often

several non-numerical meanings for each number and its numbered object in the Qur'an, such a diversity of meanings is an indication that they should not be treated as metaphors and ironies, but as symbols. Thus, we can raise the possibility that the non-numerical meanings of numbers in the Qur'an represent symbols, and the alignment of these meanings with the symbolic meanings of numbers in different rituals and cultures cannot be attributed to chance. This can be a proof of the comprehensiveness and intelligibility of the Qur'anic language for all human beings, which needs to be taken into account in future research in the field of Qur'anic language.

Acknowledgements

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Sustainability of Social Systems Based on the Holy Qur'an: A Multi-Study Mixed-Methods Research

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ABSTRACT: Original Paper

Sustainability has been recognized as one of the greatest challenges facing social systems in the 21st century. Social systems should have the knowledge and the power to lead this transition and to induce the changes towards this new paradigm. In this regard, it is of crucial importance to achieve a correct and comprehensive understanding of the concept of sustainability and its key components. Although some successful studies have been reported, there is a lack of a local framework for investigating the sustainability of social systems in the context of the Islamic approach, as well as the use of a mixed methods approach to support an integrated and holistic conceptualization and implementation of sustainability. This paper aims to develop a conceptual framework for the sustainability of social systems based on the Holy Qur'an and assess its validation in universities, which was conducted in two studies, respectively. In the first study, after extracting the key themes from the Qur'an, the relationship between them was shown in the proposed framework consisting of foundations, principles, factors, and dimensions of sustainability. Then, in the second study, the cross-validation method was used. In this section,

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confirmatory factor analysis was carried out (N=61) to evaluate the fit, reliability, and validity of the framework.

Further, concurrently percentage agreement coefficient of semi-structured interviews (N=10) was used to analyze the internal validity of the framework. The results of both quantitative and qualitative studies confirmed the fit, reliability, and validity of the framework. The present research contributes to this literature by presenting a local framework for the concept of sustainability of social systems based on the Qur'an, in a holistic and inclusive perspective, using a mixed methods approach. This study can be a useful and effective initiator for studies and theoretical extensions in conceptualizing sustainability based on Qur'anic teachings, and also pave the way for the application of this knowledge in the functional-practical areas of social systems in Muslim societies.

KEYWORDS: Qur'an, sustainability, social system, university.

1. Introduction

Human beings are full of numerous and diverse social systems that have emerged to respond to the needs of society and to ensure its survival and development. The social system can be viewed as a network of cohesive relationships among individuals, groups, and institutions in human society that interact with each other in various ways to achieve a common goal. One of the most important and influential social systems in any society is the university (Shields 2019). As the primary institutions for human resource development, universities play a critical role in the sustainability of a society. Many scholars argue that universities have a moral obligation to be leaders in sustainability because their role in society is to educate intellectuals, leaders, and future makers (Lozano 2006; Wright & Horst 2013). In the twenty-first century, however, when increasing and complex environmental changes have dominated various social systems, sustainability has been identified as one of the greatest challenges for all social systems, especially universities (Rusinko 2010).

The concept of sustainability goes beyond the passive persistence of social systems. In this context, sustainability does not refer to ecology and the environment, but rather to the ability of a social system to adapt to its physical, social, economic, and intellectual environment. This perspective on sustainability is consistent with the work of Barnard and Van der Merwe (2016), and Fien, Maclean and Park (2009), who focus

on the capacity of social systems to adapt to a changing environment. Moreover, sustainability is not a single element, but a complex new paradigm that affects all areas and activities of social systems (Berzosa, Bernaldo & Fernández-Sanchez 2017). Furthermore, it is a situational matter and depends on the indigenous contingencies and requirements of social systems. With this consideration, it is necessary to achieve a comprehensive and complete knowledge of the multidimensional concept of sustainability and its different aspects, as well as the development of indigenous humanities in this regard. Accordingly, the study of sustainability from the perspective of the Qur'an, especially for social systems in Muslim societies, is proposed.

Muslims believe that this comprehensive holy book covers every aspect of human conduct and behaviour. The word sustainability is not found in its common meaning in the Qur'an, although by accepting the guiding authority of the Qur'an for all human beings, especially the Islamic society, the key themes of sustainability can be extracted from it.

So far, numerous studies have been conducted on the sustainability of various organizations and institutions, especially universities, but there are comparatively few research studies on sustainability based on the Qur'an. For a better understanding, the authors of this paper classified the results of the existing studies into three categories based on their commonalities. First, some studies have attempted to explain and clarify the meaning and concept of sustainability from an Islamic perspective (Barry 2015; Sarkawi, Abdullah & Dali 2016). Of course, most scholars have used the definition presented at the United Nations Conference in Stockholm (1972) to examine the concept of sustainability from the perspective of Islam and the Qur'an. In these studies, very few attempts have been made to achieve a deep understanding of sustainability and develop its conceptual and operational aspects based on Qur'anic teachings (Cincera et. al. 2018). Other researchers have paid special attention to the principles and basic elements of sustainability (Matali 2012; Abdullah & Harun 2018). However, due to the complexity of the concept of sustainability and, on the other hand, the comprehensiveness of the Qur'an, the principles and elements discussed have been considered to a very limited extent.

Finally, most researchers have analysed and explained sustainability with an Islamic approach from the perspective of one of the dimensions of sustainability in particular, among which more attention has been paid to the environmental and economic dimensions (Jusoff, Samah & Akmar 2011; Vincenti 2017; Irfan et al. 2020; Ghoniyah & Amilahaq

2020; Sonita, Miswardi & Nasfi 2021). Generally, these studies do not go beyond introducing the conventional dimensions of sustainability and have neglected its other fundamental components.

On the other hand, sustainability is a new concept and attention to it from the Islamic perspective does not have strong theoretical support. There are also methodological limitations in these studies, which have often examined sustainability using a descriptive-analytical approach and in some cases a qualitative approach (Hutchins used to a limited extent 2019). In addition, no study was found that used a mixed methods approach to examine this concept in depth and comprehensively. What is missing is a framework that takes into account not only all dimensions of sustainability, but also other important aspects of sustainability, and at the same time, the validity of this framework has been confirmed in practice. By developing and validating this framework, the authors of this manuscript aim to fill this gap. As a result, this study will make a valuable and significant contribution, both theoretically and practically, to the literature on sustainability, social systems, and especially to the development of Qur'anic studies.

Theoretically, the present research contributes to this literature by presenting a holistic and inclusive framework that presents crucial components of sustainability of social systems based on the Qur'an. The present research can be the beginning of a new path in systematizing the concept of sustainability based on Qur'anic teachings. In addition, this study has paved the way for the concept of Islamic sustainability to enter the literature of higher education management for the first time.

In practical terms, the findings guide the officials and planners of the academic system and the policy makers to provide the necessary measures for the sustainability of social systems and society in general by conceptualizing it according to each social system and taking the necessary measures according to the appropriate conditions. In addition, since the validation of the framework has been done in universities, based on this framework, a tool can be developed that provides the possibility of evaluating and checking the state of sustainability of national universities, and based on the results, the possibility of conceptual and practical development of the subject will be provided in the future. Therefore, it can be useful and effective to apply the obtained framework for planning and taking actions to ensure and guarantee sustainability in universities.

Thus, the main objectives of this paper are: (a) to extract the key themes of the sustainability of social systems from the perspective of

the Qur'an, (b) to demonstrate the relationship between the extracted themes in the form of a conceptual framework for the sustainability of social systems based on the Qur'an, and (c) to validate the proposed framework in universities as one of the key social systems of the society.

In this paper, after the introduction, the research methodology will be described, then the key components of sustainability of social systems based on the Holy Qur'an and the relationship between them will be detailed as a conceptual framework. Afterwards, the results of the proposed framework validation in both quantitative and qualitative methods will be highlighted. Finally, the conclusions and limitations of the study as well as some recommendations for future studies will be presented.

2. Methodology

A multi-study mixed-methods design was chosen for this research to allow for an in-depth exploration of the sustainability of social systems based on the Qur'an. This method can best address the complexity of the three research objectives as outlined in an earlier section of this paper. The overall research design is illustrated in Figure 1.
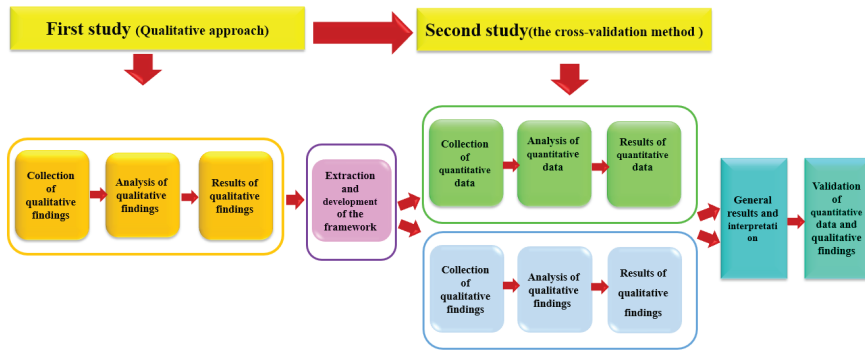

Figure 1. The Process of Multi-Study Mixed-Methods Study (Creswell & Clark 2017).

2.1. The First Study (Qualitative approach)

This is a qualitative study based on a case study strategy to analyse the new and still little analysed phenomenon of sustainability based on the Qur'an. The case study was conducted in all 114 *sūrah*s of the Qur'an.

In this study, using thematic analysis, after extracting the key themes of sustainability of social systems from the perspective of the Qur'an, the relationship between them was presented in a conceptual framework.

2.2. The Second Study (the Cross-Validation Method)

In this study, both quantitative and qualitative approaches were used concurrently to validate the findings of the first study. It was conducted in public universities in Iran. The informants of this research were specialized and experienced experts in the field of higher education and sustainability issues, as well as knowledgeable about religious and Qur'anic principles. Data were collected sequentially in two simultaneous phases. In the quantitative part, an online survey was used as the main tool for data collection. The scale was first sent to 20 people to test its validity and reliability. The results of item analysis and Cronbach's alpha showed that the research scale has good validity and reliability (Table 1).

Table 1. Validity and Reliability of the sustainability scale.

Components	Correlation	Alpha Coefficient
Foundations	0.50-0.87	0.91
Principles	0.54-0.82	0.89
Factors	0.60-0.86	0.84
Dimensions	0.56-0.87	0.90
Total	0.40-0.98	0.94

The scale was completed by 61 participants (61 out of 326), 10 of whom were interviewed simultaneously. Purposive sampling was used for this part of the study. In the qualitative part, data were collected through the semi-structured interviews, but also through some open-ended questions of the questionnaire. Equal weight was given to both the broad survey data and the selective in-depth interview data, and it was initially thought that both types of data would be collected simultaneously, as is common in triangulated mixed methods designs (Creswell & Plano Clark 2007).

In the quantitative section, which is a descriptive-correlational study, first and second order confirmatory factor analysis was used to test the factor structure of the framework of sustainability of social systems based on the Qur'an. This test was conducted using Smart PLS software. In addition, the interviews were analysed using the percentage agreement coefficient. Finally, the two datasets were merged by bringing the separate findings together through interpretation.

According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2007, 137), there are two techniques for merging the quantitative and qualitative data, which are transforming one type of data to make the qualitative and quantitative datasets comparable and then comparing the datasets, or comparing the data without transformation through discussion or a matrix. In this research, the latter method of merging qualitative and quantitative data – through a matrix – was adopted because some of the data collected were complementary rather than directly comparable.

3. *The Framework of Sustainability Based on the Qur'an*

After extracting the key components of sustainability of social systems, an attempt was made to show the logical relationship between them through a conceptual framework. It is worth mentioning that all these components are interactive and interrelated in the semantic network of the Qur'an. Therefore, the themes of each cycle are connected to each other with a dashed line, which represents a continuous and reciprocal interaction. However, in order to better understand their position in the context of sustainability, the authors have tried to interpret a logical connection between them.

Numerous verses of the Qur'an indicate that everything except Allah and what and/or who is connected to Him will perish (Q. 16:96; 20:73; 28:88). Therefore, in the Islamic perspective, sustainability in the universe belongs to Allah, and human beings will be sustainable only by connecting to this primary source of being and sustainability. According to Figure (2), the key concept of *riḍwān Allāh* as the ultimate goal of true sustainability will be achieved when human beings reach *ḥayāt ṭayyibah* as described in the Qur'an:

> Whoever works righteousness, man or woman, and has Faith, verily, to him will We give a new Life, a life that is good and pure

and We will bestow on such their reward according to the best of their actions[1] (Q. 16:97).

The meaning of *ḥayāt ṭayyibah* is a life in which all components and elements are pure and good according to the Qur'anic interpretation. Generally, according to the Qur'an, sustainability is a long-term process from the life (*dunyā*) to the afterlife (*ākhirah*) which can be realized in the context of *ḥayāt ṭayyibah and* to achieve divine satisfaction (*riḍwān Allāh)*. Hence, any social system that seeks sustainability must manifest goodness in all aspects of its members' cognitions, values, and behaviours. To achieve this, the creation and development of social systems must be based on fundamental and basic beliefs, which are called the foundations of sustainability.
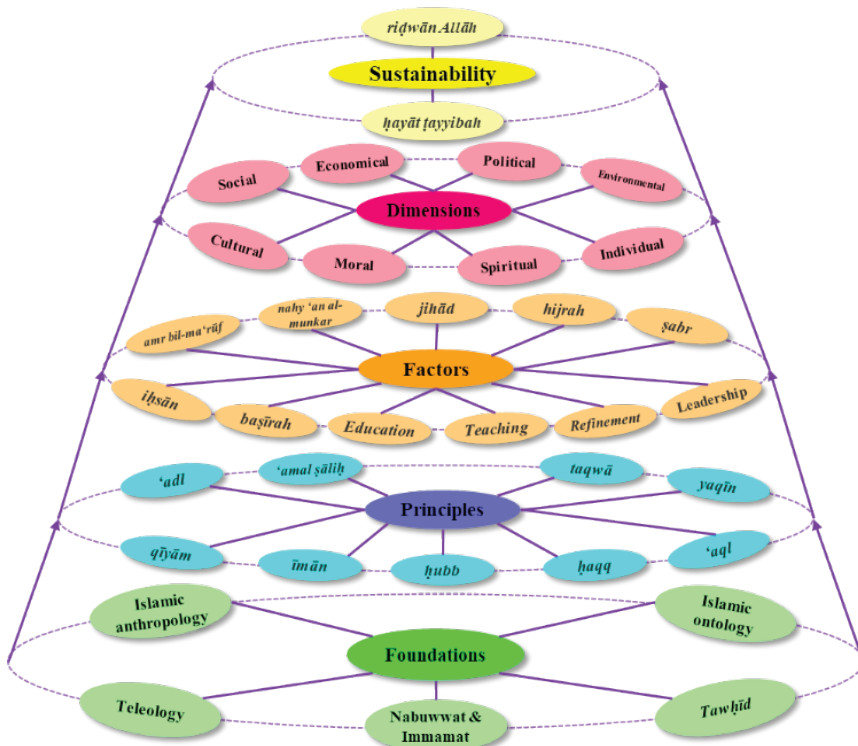

Figure 2. The conceptual framework for the sustainability of social systems based on the Qur'an.

1. مَنْ عَمِلَ صالِحاً مِنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثى وَ هُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهُ حَياةً طَيِّبَةً وَ لَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُمْ بِأَحْسَنِ ما كانُوا يَعْمَلُون (النحل/97)

3.1. The Foundations of Sustainability

Foundations refer to cardinal assumptions and approaches in the field of sustainability. According to the findings, Islamic monotheism (*tawḥīd*), Prophethood (*nabuwwah*) and Imāmah, teleology, Islamic ontology and Islamic anthropology are the foundations of the sustainability of social systems from the perspective of the Qur'an.

Tawḥīd, as the initial and essential foundation of sustainability, is the belief that Allah is One, without partners in His rule and action (*rubūbiyyah*), without equals in His essence and attributes (*asmāʾ wa ṣifāt*), and without rivals in His divinity and worship (*ulūhīyah/ʿibādah*) (Philips 1994). This basic foundation creates cohesion and solidarity among the members of society and keeps them away from division and discord (Makarem Shirazi 1995). Therefore, if the members of social systems accept the Islamic monotheistic worldview and make it the headline of all their thoughts and actions, cohesion and solidarity will be achieved as key necessities for sustainability within the realm of monotheism.

After monotheism, another key foundation is the acceptance of prophethood (*nubuwwah*) and Imamate (*imāmah*). Prophethood is such a central and essential concept for Islam that it is hard to find a Muslim thinker who has not spoken or written about it (Arif 2009). The Prophet and the Imām, as the leader and the messenger of God in the cultural context of each society, taking into account the existential capacities of that society, seek to have deep intellectual and behavioural influences for the construction of a good life. Accordingly, in any social system, Prophethood and Imamate can play a role as an important foundation for sustainability if the belief in Prophethood and Imamate and the necessity of their existence for the meaningful survival of human society is well established in the intellectual systems and the beliefs of its members. According to the Shiʿa approach, the education of the waiting generation should be considered. A justice-seeking generation that consciously and continuously strives to improve its current situation and create the crucial conditions for the emergence of the promised saviour (Imām Mahdī (PBUH)).

Teleology, another foundation of sustainability, refers to the fundamental belief that the universe is moving toward perfection, and for humankind, the end of this movement is the attainment of the perfect human being. The key point in teleology is the issue of resurrection. Resurrection means the return of human beings to their origin:

To Allah, We belong, and to Him is our return (Q. 2:156).

A return whose starting point is in this world. In this view, teleology keeps people away from despair and absurdity and gives them hope to find a divine purpose and meaning for their lives and to make the best use of all their capacities and abilities to build a good life.

The two other important foundations of sustainability are Islamic ontology and anthropology. According to the Qur'anic worldview, Allah purposefully created the universe. In addition, the human being was established as the caliph (*khalīfah*) of Allah on earth. However, in order to achieve this precious position (the caliph of God), it is essential to recognize abilities and accept responsibilities. Islamic anthropology focuses on the education of human beings who grow and achieve excellence in their individuality, and meanwhile, as the righteous servants of Allah, can properly fulfil their individual and social responsibilities.

3.2. The Principles of Sustainability

Principles of sustainability are the headline and practical guide for designing and implementing sustainability programs and guiding them in the desired direction in practice. In other words, the principles define and guide the quality and manner of sustainability measures taken from the aforementioned foundations.

'Aql is a central quality, characteristic, power, and capacity of reason and intellect in human beings. In Islamic teachings, *'aql* is the compelling force by which humans understand life as a trust as well as a gift, from which humans are obliged to use it as a capital to do righteousness by following the teachings of the scriptures (Dalhat 2015). Therefore, it is worth mentioning that the greater the sustainability of thought, the greater the sustainability of life is (Tabataba'i 1999).

Accordingly, through the proper use and development of their reason and intellect, the members of social systems can attain a correct knowledge of truth (*ḥaqq*) and create within themselves the spirit of truth seeking as another principle of sustainability. Of course, in addition to reason, God's love and affection (*ḥubb*) are so necessary to move toward the truth. The attainment of divine love, accompanied by reason and the spirit of truthfulness, will ignite the flames of faith (*īmān*) in the people's hearts. True faith (*īmān ḥaqīqī*) has to do with heartfelt conviction; a conviction that translates into action (Khan 1819). Such faith motivates individuals to rise up (*qīyām*) in defence of the truth that

their reason and heart affirm; people must become an upright *ummah* (the community of believers), determined to perform their individual and social duties in the best possible way to achieve the desired end, which is the 'good life' (*ḥayat ṭayyibah*).

At the forefront of all motives, what drives people to revolt more than anything else, is justice and equity (*'adl*). Justice in Islam is not practiced only on Muslims. Rather, it is practiced on every human being regardless of his or her faith or religion (Bhat, 2019). However, justice cannot be achieved except in the context of action, which according to the Qur'an is righteous action (*'amal ṣāliḥ*). Righteous action, in turn, leads to piety of the heart (*taqwā*). A person with *taqwā* desires to be in the good pleasures of Allah and to stay away from those things that would displease Allah, and he/she is careful not to go beyond the boundaries and limits set by Allah (Alabed 2017). After going through all these steps, certainty (*yaqīn*) is achieved. This important principle eliminates all doubts, fears, and worries and helps people to overcome all hardships and difficulties with true confidence and peace on the way to build a good life.

3.3. The Factors of Sustainability

Although the foundations and principles are the basic and underlying necessities of any plan and action for sustainability, these two have more cognitive-value aspects and for their objective realization, components are needed that go beyond cognitive boundaries and bring practical efforts. Sustainability factors are actions or deeds that, through special functions and effects (agents) that are based on the foundations and principles of sustainability, lead to the desired results and achievements in the path of sustainability of social systems.

According to the proposed framework, leadership is the initiator and director of other sustainability factors. Since leadership is an essential part of the people's daily lives, Islam has set the guidelines for this social process (Alabed 2017), and the Qur'an and Sunnah contain numerous teachings on how a leader should behave towards his followers and vice versa (Almoharby & Neal 2013). Leadership as an essential factor allows social systems to make the best use of all their material and spiritual resources and capital to achieve their desired goal. In this sense, it is necessary to create a comprehensive educational system that focuses on refinement, the elimination of moral vices, and the creation of moral and

behavioural virtues to ultimately educate people who grow according to the aforementioned foundations and principles. In addition to being a key factor for sustainability, education can include other factors. To put it more clearly, other factors of sustainability, in order to have a more desirable function and effect, must be institutionalized in individuals through the education system. Therefore, the leaders of social systems should consider the institutionalization of key factors such as insight (*baṣīrah*), benevolence (*iḥsān*), enjoining good (*amr bil-maʿrūf*), forbidding wrong (*nahy ʿan al-munkar*), *ihad*, emigration (*hijrah*), and patience (*ṣabr*).

3.4. The Dimensions of Sustainability

In the last cycle of the proposed framework, the objective and practical presentation of all foundations, principles, and factors of sustainability in various dimensions and practical-functional areas of social systems are considered. From the perspective of the Qur'an, the key dimensions of the sustainability of social systems are individual, spiritual, moral, cultural, social, economic, political, and environmental.

In the Qur'an, the individual and society are considered simultaneously, and Islam has been introduced as a social religion. However, it is the individual who is supposed to ultimately attain divine pleasure. Accordingly, the individual dimension of sustainability and attention to it is a priority. Based on the individual dimension of sustainability, human capabilities should grow and flourish in the individuality of each person in accordance with spirituality and morality. When the individuality of each member of the social system has such an opportunity to grow, flourish, and blossom, we can see the formation of a cultural system with the rule of the principles, spiritual, and moral values of Islam. Undoubtedly, due to the multidimensionality of human life, the footprints of the transcendent human being cannot be summarized only in the form of cultural patterns. Rather, the requirements of social coexistence, financial and economic areas, political and environmental issues are also important areas in which the results of the excellence of individuality can be observed. For the sustainability of social systems, therefore, the realization of a good life, and ultimately the attainment of the position of divine pleasure for all members of the system, the foundations, principles, and factors of sustainability must have an objective and practical manifestation in all

aspects of the individual, spiritual, moral, cultural, social, economic, political, and environmental life.

4. Validating the Framework of Sustainability Based on the Qur'an

4.1. Confirmatory Factor Analyses

A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted using SmartPLS software to establish the structural validity of the framework. As shown in Figure 3, the factor loading for each item exceeds 0.4. In addition, according to Figure 4, the t-values (shown in the relationship paths of the constructs) are all accepted and significant at 0.001.
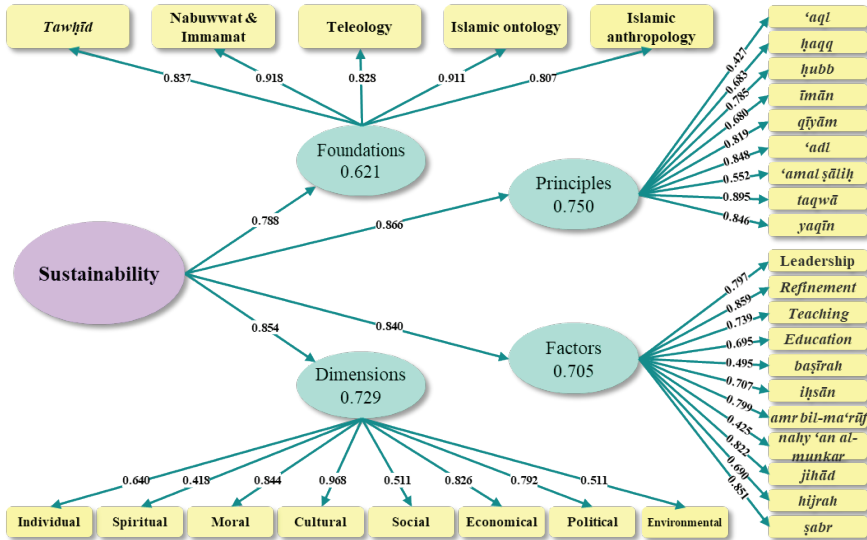
Figure 3. Confirmatory factor analysis model with standardized path coefficients and factor loads with SmartPLS.
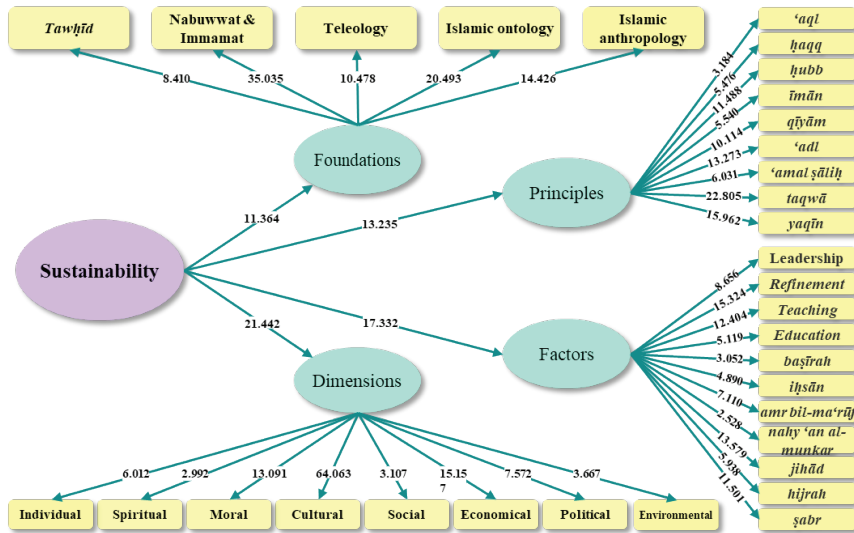
Figure 4. Confirmatory factor analysis model with t-value.

In addition, Table 2 shows that all composite reliability (CR) values are above 0.7, indicating internal consistency (Gefen, Straub & Boudreau 2000). All average variance extracted (AVE) are above 0.5, indicating convergent reliability (Chin 2010). Finally, the Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient values are all above 0.7, consistent with the suggestions of Rui Sarmento & Costa (2017).

Table 2. Reliability, validity, and internal consistency results for the CFA of the framework.

Factor	CR	AVE	Cronbach's alpha
Foundations	0.93	0.74	0.91
Principles	0.91	0.54	0.89
Factors	0.92	0.53	0.90
Dimensions	0.88	0.51	0.84
Total (sustainability based on the Qur'an)	0.95	0.70	0.94

Discriminant validity was assessed using Fornell and Larcker (Fornell & Larcker 1891) by comparing the square root of each AVE

in the diagonal with the correlation coefficients (off-diagonal) for each construct in the corresponding rows and columns. As shown in Table 3, this measurement model supports discriminant validity among the constructs.

Table 3. Discriminant validity.

	Foundations	Principles	Factors	Dimensions
Foundations	0.86			
Principles	0.64	0.74		
Factors	0.53	0.56	0.72	
Dimensions	0.57	0.68	0.62	0.71

4.2. Percentage Agreement Coefficient

Concurrent with the distribution and collection of the research scale, the percentage agreement coefficient was used to assess the content validity of the framework from the perspective of experts. Therefore, the validity of the framework was assessed by key informants based on seven criteria: relevance, usability, solidarity, comprehensiveness, perceptibility, innovation, and acceptability. The results of the percentage coefficients of the mentioned criteria are as follows: relevance (100%), usability (70%), solidarity (70%), acceptability (100%), comprehensiveness (100%), perceptibility (50%), and innovation (100%). In general, the results indicate the validity of the proposed framework.

Table 4. Joint display of quantitative and qualitative findings regarding the framework of sustainability of social systems based on the Qur'an.

Key components	Quantitative findings	Qualitative findings		
		Percentage agreement coefficient		Key informants' views
Foundations	Statistical significance	Relevance	100%	The necessity of monotheism Monotheism, prophethood, and resurrection as the foundations of the universe sustainability Prioritization of the foundations of sustainability
		Usability	70%	
		Solidarity	70%	
		Acceptability	100%	
Principles	Statistical significance	Comprehensiveness	100%	Selection of effective principles Paying attention to the important aspects of the issue of sustainability The importance of the mentioned themes and components in making the framework practical
Factors	Statistical significance			The importance of leadership Implementation of the framework through education

Key components	Quantitative findings	Qualitative findings		
		Percentage agreement coefficient		Key informants' views
Dimensions	Statistical significance	Perceptibility	50%	Paying attention not only to the reward of the Hereafter but also to the aspects of life in this world
		Innovation	100%	Paying attention to the fundamental issues of individual and social life
				Man, the main focus of the present discussion

5. Mixed Methods Findings

The degree, to which the proposed framework is valid, is discussed below using the results of quantitative and qualitative studies. A joint display of these findings is given in Table 4, which shows that the qualitative findings from the interviews confirm the results of the quantitative study. In general, it can be said that the validity of the research framework has been approved both quantitatively and qualitatively.

6. Discussion

Considering the importance and necessity of the issue of sustainability, on the one hand, and the belief in the completeness of the Qur'an as a complete source of various issues related to the requirements of *ḥayāt ṭayyibah*, on the other hand, the present research has attempted to establish the conceptual framework of sustainability of social systems based on the Qur'an.

According to the findings, the sustainability of social systems is realized in the context of *ḥayāt ṭayyibah* and the light of *riḍwān Allāh*. In the light of these interpretations, any social system that wants to be sustainable must demonstrate *ḥayāt ṭayyibah* in all its cognitive, value, and behavioural dimensions. In this regard, in the first and basic

step, it is necessary to develop the monotheistic spirit of Islam and its fundamental beliefs in the members. The monotheistic approach, which considers the Prophethood, the Imamate, and teleology as its fundamental principle, definitely presents a very different view of the universe and man. In the monotheistic view, the system of existence, from the beginning of creation to its end, is in continuous motion in the path of evolution and reaches its essence of existence, which is God. Humans, as an important part of this system, are on this path whether they like it or not and will one day have to answer for all their thoughts and actions.

The next step is to introduce and internalize a set of key principles that emerge from the above epistemic context. These principles are, in fact, rules and instructions that guide people on the difficult path of sustainability. The principles introduced are *ʿaql*, *ḥaqq*, *ḥubb*, *īmān*, *qīyām*, *ʿadl*, *ʿamal ṣāliḥ*, *taqwā*, and *yaqīn*. It is worth mentioning that all the components mentioned under the title of the principles of sustainability of social systems have interactive and mutual connections in the semantic network of the Qur'an. Although some of them, such as *īmān*, *taqwā*, and *yaqīn*, have been identified to some extent in terms of precedence and backwardness, in general, they are related to each other in an interactive cycle and have a mutual influence on each other.

Despite the key position and very significant role that the above principles play in the sustainability of social systems, they cannot guarantee sustainability. Although the principles mentioned are associated with a practical commitment, their cognitive-value aspects are generally bold. It is necessary to think about other measures for the objective presentation of the foundations and principles. In this regard, from a profound study of the Quran, components have been extracted under the title of sustainability factors. Due to their agency, these components go beyond intellectual and internal boundaries and require practical efforts. Leadership, Refinement, teaching, Education, *baṣīrah*, *iḥsān*, *amr bil-maʿrūf*, *nahy ʿan al-munkar*, *jihād*, *hijrah*, and *ṣabr* were identified as the main factors of sustainability.

The final stage of the sustainability framework considers the objective and practical expression of all the foundations, principles, and factors of sustainability in the various dimensions and functional areas of social systems. Based on the monotheistic worldview of the Qur'an, to achieve the sustainability of social systems and the realization of *ḥayāt ṭayyibah*, and ultimately the achievement of all its members to the position of *riḍwān Allāh*, it is necessary that the foundations, principles, and factors

of sustainability in all dimensions of personal, spiritual, moral, cultural, social, economic, political, and environmental life have an objective and practical manifestation.

7. Conclusion

Undoubtedly, the Qur'an, as the eternal guidance for humanity, does not express all the concepts, titles, and emerging issues of human life under the same name and title. However, it is divinely chosen and described as a way of life for human beings. Accordingly, new concepts and issues must be derived and explored from this sacred book. As one of these concepts, sustainability of social systems has been recognized as an inevitable challenge and necessity for social systems.

The purpose of this paper was to develop and validate a framework for the sustainability of social systems based on the Qur'an. Sustainability has been widely documented in the literature. However, very few studies have considered the Islamic aspect of it. The results showed the framework of sustainability of social systems based on the Qur'an, including foundations, principles, factors, and dimensions of sustainability. In addition, the validity of the research framework was confirmed quantitatively and qualitatively. The study makes theoretical and practical contributions by developing and validating a framework for sustainability of social systems based on the Qur'an. It provides a solid background on the issue of sustainability in the context of the Islamic perspective. It also outlines potential directions for future research to be explored in subsequent studies.

There are two major limitations to this study that should be addressed in future research. First, the study has a small sample size. In the future, researchers are motivated to evaluate and validate the framework in a larger sample size to enable generalization. Second, the context was limited to universities; more studies can be replicated to examine the model in different contexts. In general, the results of the present study should be seen as an input for future and more holistic studies. A future research agenda on sustainability in the context of the Qur'an and Islamic perspective could include an emphasis on the following issues:

- Identifying the factors that influence the unsustainability of social systems from the Qur'anic perspective,
- A comparative study of the concept of sustainability in the Islamic approach and the Western approach,

- Pathology of sustainability of higher education system in Muslim societies based on the proposed framework, and
- Capacity building for sustainability of social systems based on the teachings of the Qur'an.

Acknowledgements

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Evaluation of the Basis of Punishment for the Claimant to Prophethood (*Mutanabbī*) from the Perspective of the Qur'an

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ABSTRACT: Original Paper

The majority of Imāmiyyah jurists believe that anyone who falsely claims to be a prophet (*nabī*) should be sentenced to death. All people can carry out this punishment without needing the permission of the ruling authority. This is contrary to the sound teaching of the Qur'an, which indicates that the primary principle regarding human life is to preserve everyone's blood, and any violation of this principle requires valid justification. Given the importance of the issue, this article will look at the basis of this decree and criticize such a view based on the Qur'anic principles. Accepting the notion that the claimant to prophethood deserves to die (*mahdūr al-damm*), in the authors' opinion, contradicts the necessity of caution in this matter, as the evidence presented is not sufficient to prove the claim. Moreover, this assertion does not seem to be justified in the light of the verse 33 of *Sūrah al-Māʾidah*, which describes the verdict of corruption on earth (*al-ifsād fi'l-arḍ*). This is because the

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separate criminalization of corruption on earth from fighting against Allah (*al-muḥārabah*) cannot be inferred from the verse in question. Therefore, the punishment for such a person should be determined in the light of the rules and evidence of Shari'ah punishments, i.e., the Ruler of the Shari'ah should consider the appropriate punishment for him, taking into account the circumstances.

1. Introduction

For any culture, there can be obstacles that impede growth and progress. Religious culture is not exempt from this and may be hindered by issues that delay its journey towards perfection. One such issue is the presence of individuals who, for various reasons and purposes, present themselves as saviors of society and even claim to be sent by God Almighty. It is worth noting that these movements existed even in the early days of Islam, and in the late period of the Prophet's life, individuals such as Musaylimah Kadhdhāb and Sajāḥ bint Ḥārith ibn Suwayd, claimed prophethood from the corners of the Arabian Peninsula (Ibn Hishām 1996 2:349; Balādhurī 1996: 12:199).

It is evident that dealing decisively with such individuals is essential. However, this article aims to address the question of what punishment Islamic law has prescribed for them, taking into account the significance of preserving human lives and the need for utmost caution (*iḥtiyāṭ*) in such matters in the Qur'anic teachings. As it is well known among the Imāmiyyah jurists, should we disregard the fundamental principle of preserving life (*ḥaqn al-dimāʾ*) and execute those who falsely claim prophethood (*mutanabbī*), or do genuine religious sources propose alternative penalties for this matter? To achieve this objective, renowned basis will be critically analyzed, after discussing the principle and requirements of the fundamental rules derived from various verses and narrations (*aḥādīth*) on this matter.

It is worth mentioning that an article was written under the title "The Punishment for the Claimant to prophethood: From Evidence to Execution" (Afḍalī 2016: 34-94), in which the author accepted the implication of *hadith*s to prove execution. Although he believed that some of these narrations were flawed in terms of reference or implication,

he concluded that based on the totality of the bases, the claimant to prophethood should be sentenced to death. The author seems to have disregarded the many traditions that point to the need for caution regarding human life, which is a matter of questioning and reflection. In the next sections, we will discuss in detail the views of the jurists in this regard.

The present study is a library-based research conducted using a descriptive-analytical method. In this research, it has been tried to collect the necessary information from jurisprudential works and analyze it in a systematic way in accordance with the objectives of the discussion.

2. Lexical Review

All lexicographers have stated that the meaning of *mutanabbī* is a person who falsely claims prophethood (*nubuwwah*), like Musaylimah al-Kadhdhāb, who made such a claim (Ibn Manẓūr 1993: 1:163; al-Ḥimyarī 1999: 10:6276; al-Zabīdī 1993: 20:215). Anyway, the word *mutanabbī* is not used in common sense except to mean someone whose claim is false, says al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī (1991: 790), after making some points about the root of this word. For example, it is said that *tanabba'a Musaylimah* and in its diminutive form, it is said that *Musaylimah nubbayi'u* which refers to the fact that his claims are not from God Almighty.

3. Perspective of Jurists

Before mentioning the famous perspectives, it is appropriate to mention, as it results from the study in the legacy of written jurisprudence, the attitude of many ancient jurists in assuming question was not clear and they did not address the issue and they passed it silently. Searching the works of many predecessors, the author did not succeed in finding their approach to the problem. As an example, the opinion of Ibn Bābawayh (al-Ṣadūq al-Awwal), was not clear on the issue. He explained some punishments of certain crimes (*ḥadd*) under *Kitāb al-Ḥudūd* (Ibn Bābawayh n.d.: 143). Al-Shaykh al-Ṣadūq (1994: 427; 1997: 295) is another well-known scholar who did not raise the problem under discussion in his works, although he did give the judgment of many crimes that are subject to punishment. In al-Mufīd's jurisprudential works (1992: 773), no statement indicating his opinion on this issue can be found.

Apparently, al-Shaykh al-Ṭūsī, a prominent Imāmiyyah jurist in the 5th century AH, is the first jurist who expressed his point of view on the issue. However, his opinion is not clear in his two argumentative books, namely *Al-Khilāf* and *Al-Mabsūṭ*, and he expressed his opinion only in *Al-Nihāyah*, which is written in fatwa jurisprudence. He said, "Anyone who falsely claims to be a prophet, shedding his blood is permissible and killing him is obligatory" (al-Ṭūsī 1979: 730). Al-Muḥaqqiq al-Ḥillī (1987: 4:154; 1997: 1: 221), an eminent Shi'a jurist in the 7th century AH, also followed this famous opinion on the issue in his works, *Sharāyi' al-Islām* and *Al-Mukhtaṣar al-Nāfi'*. An examination of the works of al-'Allāmah al-Ḥillī (1999: 5:396; 1989: 2:179), a jurist of the 8th century AH, reveals that he also agrees with the famous perspective in his jurisprudential works.

It is worth noting that the words of some jurists are apparently or explicitly taken to mean that killing the claimant of prophethood is obligatory for any person who hears such a claim, and there is no need to ask the ruler of the Shari'ah (al-Fayḍ al-Kāshānī n.d.: 2:105; al-Fāḍil al-Hindī 1995: 10:546; Ṭabāṭabā'ī 1997: 16:57; Khomeini n.d.: 2:477; Mishkīnī 1997: 508). Al-Khoei (2001: 41:323) believes that whoever claims to be a prophet, it is obligatory for one of the Muslims to kill him if one has the means and no harm will come to him, without the need for permission from the ruler of the Shari'ah.

On the contrary, some jurists believe that the proof of Shari'ah punishments should be based on certainty and by the Shari'ah court, because assigning this dangerous matter to the people will inevitably lead to disruption of the community (Muntaẓirī n.d.: 2:528). On the other hand, considering such a matter permissible is not in accordance with the principle of caution (*iḥtiyāṭ*) (Mūsawī Ardabīlī 2006: 2:451).

4. *The Requirements of the Basic Qur'anic and Narrative Principles*

It seems that the use of Qur'anic passages and narrations (*aḥādīth*) indicates that the current principle and rule on the issue under discussion is the necessity of strict caution in taking human lives, and any deviation from this principle requires a definite reason. Slowing down and reflecting on religious teachings, especially the noble revelations, shows that in the logic of the Qur'an, human life and its protection are of great importance. God says in the verse Q. 5:32:

مَنْ قَتَلَ نَفْساً بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعاً وَ مَنْ أَحْيَاهَا فَكَأَنَّمَا أَحْيَا النَّاسَ جَمِيعاً (المائده/32)

… that if any one slew a person, unless it be for murder or for spreading mischief in the land, it would be as if he slew the whole people and if any one saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of the whole people …

As is clear from the above verse, the cruel killing of human beings is considered to be the taking of the lives of all human beings (Makārim Shīrāzī 1992: 4:1356, Rashīd Riḍā 1993: 6:349). It is worth noting that some of the leading commentators have stated that the use of such verses, the unlawful and cruel taking of human life, is actually a kind of war and struggle against God (Ṭabāṭabā'ī 1970: 5:315). Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (1999: 11:342) believes in the interpretation of the verse that what God means by comparing the killing of one person to the killing of all people is the honoring of human life and that such an act is a terrible deed that people should avoid. Another commentator believes that what can be deduced from the noble verse is that from the Islamic point of view, human beings possess inherent dignity, and any form of oppression against them is regarded as oppression towards humanity as a whole. This oppression is evident both in the individuals themselves and in all other human beings. Consequently, displaying love towards them equates to displaying kindness towards all of humanity. (Mughnīyah 2003: 3:47).

In another verse (Q. 17:33), God says:

وَلا تَقْتُلُوا النَّفْسَ الَّتِى حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلا بِالْحَقِّ … (الإسراء/33)

Nor take life, which Allah has made sacred, except for just cause …

What is understood from the verse is that this is a principle to preserve human life unless there is a permission from the Shariʿah and a valid intellectual reason. It will not be allowed to violate this principle in any way. In the narrations (aḥādiyyah) of Imāmiyyah, the importance of the issue of blood has been emphasized a lot. For example, it has been narrated from Imām Muḥammad al-Bāqir (ʿa) that he said, "The first thing that God will judge on the Day of Resurrection is the issue of bloods" (al-Barqī 1951: 1:106; al-Kulaynī 1986: 7:271; al-Ṣadūq 1985: 277). In another narration, Sulaymān ibn Khālid quotes from Imām al-Ṣādiq (ʿa) that God revealed to Prophet Moses (ʿa), thus: "Say to the leaders of the Children of Israel: 'Avoid killing a human being unjustly.

Whoever of you kills someone unjustly in the world, God will kill him a hundred thousand times in hell as he killed the victim'" (al-Barqī 1951, 1:1105; al-Ṣadūq 1985, 278).

5. *Arguments and Basis of the Jurists*

Most of the jurists, in order to prove their ruling to kill someone who claimed to be a prophet, have mainly cited three narrations below, as well as the alleged consensus (*ijmaʿ*) which will be examined later.

- The narration of Ibn Abī Yaʿfūr:

  Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā, from Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad, from ibn Faḍḍāl from Ḥammād ibn ʿUthmān from Ibn Abī Yaʿfūr, who said, "I said to Abū ʿAbdillāh (ʿa) that Bazīʿ thinks that he is a prophet. So, he said, 'If you heard that he said so, kill him.' The narrator said, "So, I sat in ambush for him several times, but I was not able to do that" (al-Kulaynī 1986: 7: 258; al-Ṭūsī 1986: 10:141).[1]

- The narration of Abī Baṣīr Yaḥyā ibn Abū al-Qāsim:

  ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥakam narrated from Abān al-Aḥmarī from Abī Baṣīr Yaḥyā ibn Abī al-Qāsim al-Asadī from Abī Jaʿfar (ʿa) that the Prophet (ṣ) said… "O people, there will be no prophet after me and no tradition after my tradition, so whoever makes such a claim after this, his claim and his heresy will be in Fire. Kill him and whoever follows such a person will be in the hell" (al-Ṣadūq 1992: 4:163).[2]

- The narration of Ibn Faḍḍāl:

  In the book *ʿUyūn al-Akhbār*, from Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Ṭāliqānī from Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Saʿīd from ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥassan ibn ʿAlī ibn Faḍḍāl from his father from al-Riḍā (ʿa), it is narrated that he said, "The Shariʿah of Muḥammad (ʿa) will not be abrogated until the Day of Judgment and there will be no prophet after him until the Day of Resurrection. Therefore, whoever claims

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1. ‏«مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ يَحْيَى عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ عَنِ ابْنِ فَضَّالٍ عَنْ حَمَّادِ بْنِ عُثْمَانَ عَنِ ابْنِ أَبِى يَعْفُورٍ قَالَ: قُلْتُ لِأَبِى عَبْدِاللَّهِ (ع): إِنَّ بَزِيعاً يَزْعُمُ أَنَّهُ نَبِيٌّ؛ فَقَالَ: إِنْ سَمِعْتَهُ يَقُولُ ذَلِكَ فَاقْتُلْهُ؛ قَالَ: فَجَلَسْتُ لَهُ غَيْرَ مَرَّةٍ فَلَمْ يُمْكِنِّى ذَلِكَ.»‏

2. ‏«رَوَى عَلِيُّ بْنُ الْحَكَمِ عَنْ أَبَانٍ الْأَحْمَرِىِّ عَنْ أَبِيبَصِيرٍ يَحْيَى بْنِ أَبِى الْقَاسِمِ الْأَسَدِىِّ عَنْ أَبِى جَعْفَرٍ (ع) ... قَالَ النَّبِيُّ (ص) ... أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّهُ لَا نَبِيَّ بَعْدِى وَ لَا سُنَّةَ بَعْدَ سُنَّتِى، فَمَنِ ادَّعَى ذَلِكَ فَدَعْوَاهُ وَ بِدْعَتُهُ فِى النَّارِ فَاقْتُلُوهُ وَ مَنِ اتَّبَعَهُ فَإِنَّهُ فِى النَّارِ.»‏

prophethood after him or brings a book after him, it is permissible to kill him for anyone who heard such a claim" (Ḥurr al-ʿĀmilī 1988: 28:338). [1]

5.1. Criticism of the Narrations

The first narration is faultless in terms of the chain of transmission (*sanad*) and all the narrators are Twelver Shiʿis who have been praised by the Imāmiyyah scholars, except for Ibn Faḍḍāl who belonged to the Faṭaḥiyyah sect who believed in the Imamate of ʿAbdullāh Afṭaḥ, the son of Imām Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq (ʿa), after his death. However, he has also been confirmed by experts and has been introduced as a dignified personality[2] (al-Ḥillī 1961: 37; Burūjirdī 1984: 2:245; al-Khoei n.d.: 6:150; Ḥāʾirī Māzandarānī 1995: 2:430). Even as al-Kashshī narrated, he acknowledged the Imamate of Imām al-Riḍā (ʿa) before his death (al-Kashshī 1983: 2:837; al-Najāshī 1986, 36). Therefore, there is no doubt in the authenticity of the narrative and the scholars of Imāmiyyah introduced it as authentic and authoritative (Majlisī al-Awwal 1985: 6:383; Majlisī al-Thānī 1985: 1:280; al-Khoei 2001: 41:322).

Nevertheless, there is a problem in the implication of the above narration, for it refers to a personal case and concerns a person named Bazīʿ. Therefore, as scholars have said, it is difficult to derive a general ruling from personal cases (Khomeini 1994: 2:404), because in such cases, it is possible that the Imām may have issued such a ruling considering the unrevealed aspects of the story (Khānsārī 1984: 7: 228; Arākī 1994: 1:339).

In the second narration, one of the narrators is Yaḥyā ibn Abī'l-Qāsim al-Asadī about whose character there is much controversy (al-Kashshī, 1983: 474). Some scholars such as al-Ṭūsī (2006: 346) and al-Ḥillī (1961: 264) considered him to be a follower of the Wāqifiyyah sect. However, some other scholars do not agree with this opinion. In any case, what is certain is that there is a disagreement about his character among Imāmiyyah scholars (Ḥāʾirī Māzandarānī 1995: 7:31)

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1. ‏«وَفِی عُيُونِ الْأَخْبَارِعَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ الطَّالَقَانِیِّ عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ سَعِيدٍ عَنْ عَلِیِّ بْنِ الْحَسَنِ بْنِ عَلِیِّ بْنِ فَضَّالٍ عَنْ أَبِيهِ عَنِ الرِّضَا(ع) فِی حَدِيثٍ قَالَ: وَ شَرِيعَةُ مُحَمَّدٍ(ص) لَاتُنْسَخُ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ، وَ لَا نَبِیَّ بَعْدَهُ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ؛ فَمَنِ ادَّعَى بَعْدَهُ نُبُوَّةً أَوْ أَتَى بَعْدَهُ بِكِتَابٍ فَدَمُهُ مُبَاحٌ لِكُلِّ مَنْ سَمِعَ مِنْهُ».‏

2. ‏«كان جليل القدر عظيم المنزلة زاهدا ورعا ثقة فی روايات».‏

In the chain of narrators of the third narration, there is Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Ṭāliqānī, whose status is unclear in terms of reliability, and there is no explicit confirmation about him (Ḥāʾirī Māzandarānī 1995: 7: 510). Therefore, some jurists have considered the narration to be unknown (*majhūl*) (Mūsawī Ardabīlī 2006: 2:451).

Apart from the discussion on the chain of narrators, there is also a problem with the implication of these narrations. Some jurists have argued against the generalization of these narrations because the different situations of the problem have not been examined separately in them. That is to say, if the claimant to prophethood makes such a claim with the knowledge that he is lying and with the intention of deceiving others, then such a case is judged differently than if such a claim is due to an intellectual doubt that arises within him, and he is completely free from any responsibility or fault. Particularly in a scenario where he does not directly assert his status as a prophet, but rather invites individuals to him and utters statements that imply prophethood and the establishment of religious law. (Mūsawī Ardabīlī 2006: 2:451). In response to the above-mentioned rational objection, arguing that the ruling is religious and insisting on narrative documentation will not be a solution, because a rational claim cannot be answered with narrative evidence, for it is rationally clear that the judgment of the one who claims prophethood out of knowledge and intention is different from the case that seems to be caused not by malice but by scholarly doubt. In such a situation, the intellectuals will agree that it is necessary to try to resolve his scholarly doubt through logic and reasoning (Muntaẓirī n.d.: 2:529).

Even if we disregard all the aforementioned issues, the justification for the murder penalty, which serves as a prominent illustration of significant concerns, requires a more compelling rationale that deviates from fundamental principles and sanctions the act of taking a life. In his work, Muḥaqqiq Ardabīlī (1982: 13:88) emphasizes the importance of recognizing the gravity of taking someone's life. The divine ruler has prioritized the preservation of human life due to the fundamental connection between a person's responsibilities, salvation, and their life. Consequently, God, who possesses tremendous wisdom, has mandated the preservation of life as an obligation. This is also confirmed by reason.

A number of jurists have included consensus (*ijmaʿ*) among their evidence on the issue. For example, Sabziwārī (1992: 28:33) believes in the fulfillment of the consensus of Imāmiyyah scholars regarding the necessity of killing the claimant of prophethood. It seems that it is not

acceptable to rely on consensus in this matter, because, as mentioned, a number of the predecessors are silent on this matter. So, how can one reach their point of view and claim consensus? Moreover, in view of the disagreement of some contemporary scholars, the claim of consensus cannot be sustained (Ṣāniʿī 2009: 151). With the existence of the above-mentioned traditions, the consensus is confronted with the injunction of having basis and loses its independent legitimacy. Although one may not accept the above reasoning, it can at least be said that it raises a kind of doubt in the matter, and in the presence of doubt, the verdict is subject to the rule of abandoning the sentence (*darʾ al-ḥadd*).

In Shiʿa and Sunni sources, a narration of the Prophet has been quoted repeatedly in various words that he said, "Stop punishing when in doubt"[1] (al-Ṣadūq 1992: 4:74). He also urged to avoid punishing the Muslims as much as you can. If you find a way out for the Muslim, then let him go. If the ruler (*ḥākim*) makes a mistake in forgiving, it is better for him than to make a mistake in punishing[2] (Bayhaqqī 2003: 8:413; al-Tirmidhī 1998, 3:85).

6. *Analyzing the Punishment of Mutanabbī Based on the Verse 33 of al-Māʾidah*

In Q. 5:33, God states:

إِنَّمَا جَزَاءُ الَّذِينَ يُحَارِبُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَيَسْعَوْنَ فِى الأَرْضِ فَسَادًا أَنْ يُقَتَّلُوا أَوْ يُصَلَّبُوا أَوْ تُقَطَّعَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَأَرْجُلُهُمْ مِنْ خِلَافٍ أَوْ يُنْفَوْا مِنَ الأَرْضِ ذَلِكَ لَهُمْ خِزْيٌ فِى الدُّنْيَا وَلَهُمْ فِى الآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ   (المائدة/33)

The punishment of those who wage war against Allah and His Messenger, and strive with might and main for mischief through the land is execution, or crucifixion, or the cutting off of hands and feet from opposite sides, or exile from the land: that is their disgrace in this world, and a heavy punishment is theirs in the Hereafter.

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1. «ادْرَءُوا الْحُدُودَ بِالشُّبُهَات.»

2. «ادْرَءُوا الْحُدُودَ عَنِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ، فَإِنْ وَجَدْتُمْ لِلْمُسْلِمِ مَخْرَجًا فَخَلُّوا سَبِيلَهُ، فَإِنَّ الْإِمَامَ أَنْ يُخْطِئَ فِى الْعَفْوِ خَيْرٌ لَهُ مِنْ أَنْ يُخْطِىءَ فِى الْعُقُوبَةِ»

A search in the Qur'anic verses indicates that derivatives of the root "F,S,D" were used at least 49 times in the Holy Qur'an. Lexicographers have taken the word *fasād* (corruption) to mean "contrary to right" (Ibn Manẓūr 1993: 5:128; al-Zabīdī 1993: 5:164). Al-Rāghib-al-Iṣfahānī (1991: 636) defined *fasād* in the sense of the object being out of moderation. Since this definition is comprehensive and can include all examples of corruption, it seems to be correct and consistent with the content of the Qur'anic verses. For example, in verses such as Q. 30:41,[1] Q. 28:83[2] and Q. 21:22,[3] although *fasād* can be interpreted as a particular kind of evil, and various examples can be given, the common meaning of all of them is the occurrence of something contrary to right and out of moderation.

Some scholars, referring to the verse Q. 5:33, have believed that *al-ifsād fī'l-arḍ* (corruption on earth) is a title other than *al-muḥārabah* (fighting against God). Qumī (1994: 409) believes that what is discussed in the verse is the occurrence of corruption, and *al-muḥārabah* is considered one of the examples of corruption on earth. Therefore, if corruption occurs, even if there is no fighting and no drawing of weapons, the punishments mentioned in the verse will be applied. In other words, this group of jurists are of the opinion that every person who corrupts on earth is subjected to the punishments mentioned in the verse, and the fighter [against God] will also be sentenced with the same punishment because he is among the examples of the corrupt on earth (Fāḍil Lankarānī 2001: 638). However, it seems that this interpretation of the verse cannot be accepted, as the majority of Shi'a and Sunni commentators and jurists have not agreed with this double criminalization (al-Ṭabarī 1985: 4:135; al-Ālūsī 1984: 5:119; al-Ṭabarsī 1987: 3: 291; Mūsawī Bujnūrdī 2006: 151). From the point of view of this group of scholars, the phrase *wa yasaʿūna fī'l-arḍi fasādan* is mentioned to convey the meaning of *al-muḥārib* (someone fighting against God). In other words, *wāw* in this phrase is of the interpretive type, so the phrase is actually the interpreter of the first phrase, *alladhīna yuḥāribūnāllāha wa rasūlahahū*. Thus, the verse criminalises only one behaviour. In other words, *al-muḥārabah* and *al-ifsād fī al-arḍ* are not two separate crimes, because the word *al-ladhīna* is a relative pronoun (*al-muṣūl*) and *yuḥāribūna Allaha wa rasūlahu* is its relative clause (*al-ṣilah*). The phrase *wa yasaʿūna fī'l-arḍi fasādan* is

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1. «ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِى الْبَرِّ وَ الْبَحْرِ بِما كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِى النَّاس» (الروم/41)

2. «تِلْكَ الدَّارُ الْآخِرَةُ نَجْعَلُهَا لِلَّذِينَ لَا يُرِيدُونَ عُلُوًّا فِى الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فَسَادًا ...» (القصص/83)

3. «لَوْ كَانَ فِيهِمَا آلِهَةٌ إِلَّا اللَّهُ لَفَسَدَتَا؟ فَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَرْشِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ» (الأنبياء/22)

</div>

connected to the relative clause with a coordinating conjunction *wāw*, so both phrases were used to convey only one fact (Imāmī Kāshānī 1993: 90).

As a further explanation, it should be said that according to the Arabic grammar, if God wanted to mention two crimes in the verse, it was necessary to repeat the relative pronoun *alladhīna* before the second phrase, *yasaʿūna fī'l-arḍi fasādan*. However, since the pronoun is not repeated, the duality of the crimes of *al-muḥārabah* and *al-ifsād fī'l-arḍ* cannot be accepted in this verse (Lankarānī 2001: 638). According to this point of view, al-Ṭūsī (1988: 6:504) means corruption in the land as fighting against God and making roads unsafe. He understands the meaning of the phrase *yasaʿūna fī'l-arḍi fasādan* to mean that a person pulls out a weapon and creates insecurity. Moreover, Ṭabāṭabā'ī (1970: 5:334) considers this phrase an interpretation of the phrase, *yuḥāribūnallāha wa rasūlahu,* and takes it to mean banditry and disrupting the security of society.

Thus, it can be concluded that the claimant of prophethood is not included in the punishments mentioned in the verse. However, it is necessary to prevent the arrogance of criminals by predicting deterrent punishments while exercising caution in this matter. This can be done by determining a punishment other than deprivation of life. Due to the extreme importance of preserving human life from the standpoint of the Shariʿa, one should not disregard prudence in deciding on the authorization of killing and behave contrary to caution.

7. Conclusion

The popular perception of evidence and basis regarding the punishment of a person who claims to be a prophet (*mutanabbī*) is to abandon the basic Qur'anic principle of preserving human life (*ḥaqn al-dimā'*). As a result, according to some hadiths and the alleged consensus, the majority of jurists believe that the claimant of the prophecy deserves to die (*mahdūr al-damm*).

The current study analyzed the jurists' basis based on the principle of caution in the matter of human life, recognizing the basic requirements of jurisprudential arguments derived from Qur'anic verses. In this context, three narrations (*aḥādīth*) have been identified as the main basis of the jurists. Examination of these three narrations shows that some of them are defective in terms of narrators (*sanad*) and others in terms

of meaning (*dirāyah*), so it can be concluded that such a severe sentence cannot be derived from such narrations. The author believes that even if the weaknesses of the narrations mentioned are ignored and all of them are accepted, the verdict of shedding human blood based on some narrations is against the principle of caution regarding human life.

Another renowned reason, i.e., the alleged consensus, is also insufficient according to the results of the research, since on the one hand, the attitude of many early Imāmiyyah jurists to the problem is not clear, so that at best it can be claimed that there is no contradiction on the issue. On the other hand, the presence of the aforementioned traditions causes the consensus to face the prohibition of having basis and loses its independent validity. Even if one does not accept the above reasoning, it can at least be said that it casts a kind of doubt on the issue, and with the presence of doubt, the verdict is subject to the rule of abandoning the sentence (*dar' al-ḥadd*).

Furthermore, to prove the argument of the jurists, it is not possible to consider the verdict of a claimant of prophecy as the punishment for corrupting on the land (*al-ifsād fī'l-arḍ*) mentioned in the 33rd verse of *Sūrah al-Mā'idah*, because as it was stated, corrupting on the land is not an independent and distinct issue from *al-muḥārabah.*

Acknowledgements

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Being Awake at Dawn: A Religious Austerity or a Hygienic Recommendation? (A Scrutiny Based on the Holy Qur'an, Traditional Persian Medicine, and Modern Medicine)

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ABSTRACT: Original Paper

Modern scientific studies have placed emphasis on the importance of the timing of wakefulness to maintain the body's healthy rhythm, including the physical, mental, and emotional aspects of a certain person. This importance has been indicated in the Holy Qur'an and the medical doctrine of Iran. Therefore, the purpose of this article is to briefly investigate our current understanding of wake-up time, and how it relates to the field of pathophysiology. The result shows that there is the special consideration to the time of sunrise from the Holy Qur'an and traditional Persian medicine (TPM) perspectives. In the Holy Qur'an,

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being awake at dawn is a practice preferred by only those are believers to praise God, and in TPM it is known as a hygienic recommendation, which can prevent chronic diseases, including exhaustion, powerlessness, chronic tension headache, laxation, and laziness. Hence, from both perspectives of spirituality and science, there are some similarities with regard to encouraging early rising.

1. Introduction

Living in tune with the nature's rhythms and cycles is highly recommended by both spirituality and science. It is reflected in many cultures' practices of rising early (Kumaran, Raghavendra and Manjunath 2012; Hynes 1887). Over generations, it has been a convention for Muslims to get up early in the morning in general and at dawn in particular. The Holy Qur'an (610 C.E.), emphasizes the importance of maintaining a pattern of light and darkness and describes dawn as a fixed time early in the morning (about one and a half hours before sunrise), which is the sacred time to rise. Hence, rising at dawn individuals are prescribed to engage in doing prayer including being thankful and asking for forgiveness (Q. 51:17-18). It has also been a prescribed discipline of TPM. This medical doctrine discourages sleeping during astronomical twilight as the time for rising (based on the Qur'an (al-Ṭabarī 2002: 397)) in order to prevent certain disorders to happen (ʿAqīlī 2006: 2: 92; Jurjānī 2006: 3:477). The descriptions from the Qur'an and TPM seem to be scientific. It has been observed that people who get up earlier in the morning adapt better to circadian rhythm. Balance of circadian rhythm can also boost the secretion of hormones in the body by improving endocrine and metabolic functions (Reiter, Rosales-Corral and Sharma 2020). According to an earlier study, compared with late risers, early risers showed higher ratio of lymphocytes and a lower numbers and ratio of granulocytes showing parasympathetic nerve dominance. Early risers showed higher levels of glucose and its related hormones than late risers, indicating sympathetic nerve dominance (Watanabe et al. 2013). The bases behind rising early in the morning can be believed to influence an individual's performance during the day. Previous researches have shown that timing of wakefulness correlated closely with

academic performance. Compared to those with the lowest academic performance, students with the highest performance had significantly earlier wake times (Eliasson, Lettieri and Eliasson 2010). Early morning awakening is acknowledged in compiled datas to improve significantly the performance related to verbal and spatial memory task requiring attention and concentration such as selective attention, phasic alertness, and vigilance including concentration and sustained attention (Kumaran, Raghavendra and Manjunath 2012).

With consideration to the fact that no studies have yet been made concerning the recommendations of the Qur'an and TPM on the beneficial effects of wakefulness at dawn, we have set out to find out whether the time of sunrise can be related with the physiological effects. Hence, the focus of this article is to investigate some perspectives of the Qur'an and TPM for the assessment of being awake in early morning as it relates to circadian rhythms of the sleep-wake cycle. It also touches on recent research on the beneficial effects of wakefulness in this time in the human body. The goal of this article is not to interpret Qur'anic verses and specific details of TPM to assess the time of the day; rather, it is to probe the key recommendations to consider when selecting a wake-up time and how keeping the body's healthy rhythm physically, emotionally, and mentally from the ordinance of God and the views, behaviors, and practices indicated in ancient literatures.

1.1. Ethical Considerations

This article has been approved by the Research Ethics Committees of the School of Medicine- Shiraz University of Medical Sciences (11-21969). The project was found to be in accordance with the ethical principles and the national norms and standards for conducting Medical Research in Iran.

2. Finding

2.1. Circadian Rhythm and the Physiology and Pathology

Circadian rhythm or the body's biological clock is the near-24-hour internal clock in the biochemical, physiological, or behavioral processes of living things, including humans (Reid 2019), which refers to physiological, behavioral, and molecular changes during approximately

one day. Circadian rhythm can be divided into two major parts: the central and the peripheral clock. The central clock, located at a tiny region of the brain in the anterior hypothalamus, the so-called suprachiasmatic nuclei (SCN) (Serin and Tek 2019), receives light as the most powerful time-keeping cue (Rivera and Huberman 2020) and regulates cycles of alertness and sleepiness by synchronizing with the environmental light/dark (zeitgebers) and social/activity cycles by daily adjustments in the timing of the rhythm (Reid 2019) by regulating both genetic and environmental factors such as body temperature, neuronal activity, hormonal signals (Logan and McClung 2019), social interactions, and feeding (Rivera and Huberman 2020). The second part is the peripheral clock, located at the various tissues through the body, playing a specific role in the physiological functions that include the cardiovascular, metabolic, endocrine, immune, and reproductive systems (Richards and Gumz 2012). Circadian rhythm has an underlying relationship with its cellular biology to understand the main physiology and pathology in diseases (Ken-Kwofie 2021; Sieck 2021). The deterioration of the circadian rhythm can cause many diseases including those of impaired glucose tolerance, diabetes, obesity, cancer progression, fatigue, and finally premature mortality (Serin and Tek 2019). Circadian rhythm disruptions are also strongly linked to the pathophysiology of certain psychiatric and neurodegenerative disorders such as higher risk of brain disorders (Logan and McClung 2019) and psychiatric disorders like depression, anxiety, and loss of concentration (Serin and Tek 2019).

2.2. Circadian Rhythm and Internal Body Organs

2.2.1. Brain Function

The pineal gland is a small, highly vascularized, and a secretory neuroendocrine organ in the brain. The main function of this gland is to receive and deliver information about the environmental light/dark cycle and, consequently synthesis and release melatonin periodically at night (Narváez-Rojas 2020). Melatonin is the primary hormone of pineal, which has an important role in the regulation of circadian synchronization involving many rhythmic physiological and biological regulations in the body, and also in sleep-wake cycle and sleep patterns, hormone secretion, cell protection, cardiovascular function, neuroprotection, and reproductive system, among other functions (Samanta 2020).

2.2.2. Heart Function

Endothelin-1 (ET-1) is a family of peptides, which shows various effects in different organs (Miyauchi and Sakai 2019). It stimulates the sympathetic nervous system (Agapitov and Haynes 2002). The mainly action of ET-1 is to increase vascular tone and blood pressure. Hence, ET-1 antagonists may have an influence on cardiovascular diseases as hypertension, systemic and pulmonary hypertension, chronic heart failure, cardiac hypertrophy, and also renal diseases and cerebral vasospasm (Miyauchi and Sakai 2019). ET-1 is one gene that has interplay of regulation with the molecular circadian clock. It acts as the strongest vasoconstrictor produced in the vasculature of the body (Douma, Barral and Gumz 2021).

2.2.3. Kidney Function

Cortisol is a steroidal hormone secreted from the adrenal glands located on top of the kidney and regulated by the main circadian oscillator in the SCN. The amount and frequency of the secretion of cortisol are mainly controlled by the circadian rhythm. Normally, cortisol level is at its peak in the morning then reduces slowly throughout the day (Thau, Gandhi and Sharma 2021). Cortisol has an important role in synchronizing the body circadian rhythms and its disruption can cause adrenal insufficiency, such as sleep disturbances (De Nys et al. 2022), impaired psychological well being (Van Wamelen, et al. 2020), increased mortality risk (Kjellbom et al. 2021), defects in bone turnover (Athimulam et al., 2020), worsening of cardiovascular risk factors, and poor health-related quality of life (Ortiz et al. 2022).

2.3. Early Rising and Mechanism of the Human Body

2.3.1. Neurobehavioral Parameters

Time of awakening has shown to influence higher brain functions. For example, early morning awakening is strongly associated with depressive illness. A review study based on published depression prevalence research in urban populations in European and US centres showed that later rising from sleep is significantly correlated with increased depression. The physiologic basis for this finding was the theory of "Depressiogenic Theory of Sleep", which posits that excessive REM sleep can cause depression. Given that the peak of REM propensity occurs in the

morning, it is likely associated with the time of sunrise, which is shortly after the nadir of the endogenous temperature rhythm. Thus, late sleepers will be at greater risk for depression, or for depressive symptoms such as fatigue or lack of energy, than early risers (Olders 2003). Another study eviewed antidepressant effects of light exposure of seasonal affective disorder (SAD) patients. SAD or winter depression is a particular seasonally recurrent mood disorder characterized by depression with onset recurrent in autumn or winter and spontaneous spring or summer remission. It is associated with hypersomnia, anergia, increased appetite, weight gain, and carbohydrate craving. To treat the SAD, the most common procedure of phototherapy is to expose the patient for 2 hours early in the morning, between 6:00 and 9:00 AM (Sartori and Poirrier 1996). In addition, a series of recent studies have identified that waking up early can affect a number of health-related behaviours on the ability to remember and focus attention. According to the study done in Brigham Young University in Utah, wakeup times in the morning had the strongest association with memory performance and top scores (Olders 2003). Similar results are in line with the observations made in the above-mentioned study, suggesting an improvement in both verbal and spatial memory task. An earlier study was concluded that waking up early in the morning influences the process of attention and can improve the ability to recall (Kumaran, Raghavendra and Manjunath 2012). The others showed better performance in the cognitive memory, vigilance tasks, auditory memory, visual reaction tests, vigilance, and alertness during early morning hours (Olders 2003).

2.3.2. Cardiovascular Events

A review of three studies carried out shows that the occurrence of acute myocardial infarction represents a diurnal variation, with the highest number of events in the morning. According to them, adverse cardiovascular events (CVE) are increasingly more intense in the early morning hours, especially between 6:00 and 10:00 or 12:00 am (Hirsch et al. 2011; Viola, et al. 2015). An early study showed that the risk of having heart attack increased by almost in the early morning relative to the time of sunrise (Jozsef et al. 2009). Another study which compared early and late morning hours on brachial endothelial function and long-term cardiovascular events in healthy subjects found that flow-mediated dilation is blunted in early compared to late morning post-waking hours, and independently predicts long-term adverse cardiovascular

events in healthy subjects with no apparent heart disease (Hirsch et al. 2011).

2.3.3. Endocrinology

Cortisol has been reported to influence metabolic, immune, muscle, and brain functions (Kelsall, Iqbal and Newell-Price 2020). According to the finding of an analysis, bright light exposure on peak cortisol levels in the early morning hours can acutely influence the human adrenal glands (Jung et al. 2010), more specifically resulting to adrenal insufficiency or congenital adrenal hyperplasia (Chan and Debono 2010).

2.3.4. Autonomic Nervous System

There is also evidence that early rising can modify the autonomic nervous system by decrease levels of glucose via adequate duration of sleep. According to the result of research, compared with individuals who get up later, early risers have lower numbers and ratio of granulocytes and a higher ratio of lymphocytes showing parasympathetic nerve dominance. Early risers also showed higher levels of glucose and its related hormones than late risers, indicating sympathetic nerve dominance (Watanabe et al. 2013).

2.4. Qur'anic Perspective on Early Rising

The Sun is virtually the most important celestial phenomena in the Holy Qur'an so far as to be sweared by it:

"By the Sun, And his (glorious) splendor" (Q. 91:1).[1]

The Qur'an has great interest in some times of the day, including dawn time, reflecting that awakening of the human in this time is acknowledged to have a particular influence in human life and it is also believed to be good for his/her insight (Q. 20:130). There are several equivalents for the word "dawn" in the Qur'an such as *saḥar* (Q. 54:34),[2]

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١. «وَٱلشَّمْسِ وَضُحَىٰهَا» (الشمس/1)

٢. «إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ حَاصِبًا إِلَّا آلَ لُوطٍ نَجَّيْنَاهُمْ بِسَحَرٍ» (القمر/34)

fajr (Q. 89:1;[1] 97:5[2]), *ṭulūʿ al-shams* (Q. 20:130;[3] 50:39[4]), *ṣubḥ* (Q. 74:34;[5] 81:18[6]), *ghuduww* (Q. 24:36),[7] *ghadāt* (Q. 6:52),[8] *bukrah* (Q. 76:25),[9] and *ibkār* (Q. 3:41).[10] The Qur'an has clear instructions for believers about wake-up time in the morning:

> "Therefore be patient with what they say, and celebrate (constantly) the praises of the Lord, before the rising of the sun, and before its setting; yea, celebrate them for part of the hours of the night, and at the sides of the day: that thou mayest have (spiritual) joy" (Q. 20:130).4

> "Bear, then, with patience, all that they say, and celebrate the praises of thy Lord, before the rising of the sun and before (its) setting" (Q. 50:39).5

> "Patiently, then, persevere: for the promise of Allah is true: and ask forgiveness for thy fault, and celebrate the praises of thy Lord in the evening and in the morning" (Q. 40:55).[11]

In some Qur'anic verses such as the following, the dawn is considered one of the times for the forgiveness of God (Allah):

> "They were in the habit of sleeping but little by night, and in the hours of early dawn, they (were found) praying for forgiveness" (Q. 51:17-18).[12]

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1.   «وَالْفَجْرِ» (الفجر/1)

2.   «سَلَامٌ هِيَ حَتَّى مَطْلَعِ الْفَجْرِ» (القدر/5)

3.   «فَاصْبِرْ عَلى ما يَقُولُونَ وَ سَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ قَبْلَ طُلُوعِ الشَّمْسِ وَ قَبْلَ غُرُوبِها» (طه/130)

4.   «فَاصْبِرْ عَلى ما يَقُولُونَ وَ سَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ قَبْلَ طُلُوعِ الشَّمْسِ وَ قَبْلَ الْغُرُوبِ» (ق/39)

5.   «وَ الصُّبْحِ إِذا أَسْفَرَ» (المدثر/34)

6.   «وَ الصُّبْحِ إِذا تَنَفَّسَ» (التكوير/18)

7.   «... يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ فِيها بِالْغُدُوِّ وَ الْآصالِ» (النور/36)

8.   «وَ لا تَطْرُدِ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْغَداةِ وَ الْعَشِيِّ» (الانعام/52)

9.   «وَاذْكُرِ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا» (الانسان/25)

10. «... وَاذْكُرْ رَبَّكَ كَثِيراً وَ سَبِّحْ بِالْعَشِيِّ وَ الْإِبْكارِ» (آل عمران/41)

11. «فَاصْبِرْ إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ وَ اسْتَغْفِرْ لِذَنْبِكَ وَ سَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ بِالْعَشِيِّ وَ الْإِبْكارِ» (غافر/55)

12. «كانُوا قَلِيلاً مِنَ اللَّيْلِ ما يَهْجَعُونَ وَ بِالْأَسْحارِ هُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ» (الذاريات/17−18)

"(Namely), those who say: our Lord! We have indeed believed: forgive us, then, our sins, and save us from the agony of the fire. Those who show patience, firmness and self-control; who are true (in word and deed); who worship devoutly; who spend (in the way of Allah); and who pray for forgiveness in the early hours of the morning" (Q. 3:16-17).[1]

In some verses, believers are described who pray before sunrise:

"And do thou (O reader) bring thy Lord to remembrance in thy (very) soul, with humility and in reverence, without loudness in words, in the mornings and evenings; and be not thou of those who are unheedful" (Q. 7:205).[2]

"Establish regular prayers- at the sun's decline till the darkness of the night, and the Morning Prayer and reading: for the prayer and reading in the morning carry their testimony" (Q. 17:78).[3]

2.5. TPM Perspective on Early Rising

TPM is a medical doctrine, which is mainly grounded in six essential principles, the so-called *sittah ḍarūriyyah*. These core hygienic tenets are *al-ahwiyyah* (environmental conditions), *al-aṭʿamah wa'l-ashrabah* (water and food), *al-ḥarikah wa'l-sukūn al-jismānī* (exercise and repose), *al-ḥarikah wa'l-sukūn al-nafsānī* (spiritual moods), *al-nawm wa al-yaqẓah* (sleep and wakefulness), and *al-iḥtibās wa'l-istifrāgh* (retention and evacuations) (Haly Abbas 1968; Avicenna 2005, 1:31,113,217; Rhazes 2001). Within them, one of the most significant items is about adequate rest. There are certain rules of satisfactory sleeping and awakening in TPM for the whole times as well as during dawns (Rhazes 2001) (Haly Abbas 1968; al-Akhawynī Bukhārī 1992). In the TPM literatures, the duration of astronomical twilight is called *bayn al-ṭulūʿayn* (the distance between the beginning of twilight and sunrise) (Nāṣir al-Ḥukamā 2003). This is about one and a half hours before the sun comes up, depending

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1. «الَّذينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنا إِنَّنا آمَنَّا فَاغْفِرْ لَنا ذُنُوبَنا وَ قِنا عَذابَ النَّارِ الصَّابِرينَ وَ الصَّادِقينَ وَ الْقانِتينَ وَ الْمُنْفِقينَ وَ الْمُسْتَغْفِرينَ بِالْأَسْحارِ» (آل عمران/16–17)

2. «وَ اذْكُرْ رَبَّكَ في نَفْسِكَ تَضَرُّعاً وَ خيفَةً وَ دُونَ الْجَهْرِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ بِالْغُدُوِّ وَ الْآصالِ وَ لا تَكُنْ مِنَ الْغافِلينَ» (الاعراف/205)

3. «أَقِمِ الصَّلاةَ لِدُلُوكِ الشَّمْسِ إِلى غَسَقِ اللَّيْلِ وَ قُرْآنَ الْفَجْرِ إِنَّ قُرْآنَ الْفَجْرِ كانَ مَشْهُوداً» (الإسراء/78)

on location and the time of the year. In the Qur'anic ordinances, as mentioned, this indicates the beginning time of the Morning Prayer and praise of the Lord as well (Q. 17:78). There are also some reports about the importance of dawn in the viewpoints of TPM sages in the context of TPM (al-Balkhī 2005). According to them, together with all things living in this world, humankind had better not sleep before the sunrise (Nāṣir al-Ḥukamā 2003; al-Balkhī 2005). In TPM perspective, it is clear that dawn is a healthy time of the day (al-Ṭabarī 2002, 21, 397).

2.5.1. Prohibition of Sleep in TPM

There are three times that have been cited in TPM literatures to prohibit sleeping in a day:

- *'Aylūlah* is an equivalent word to dawn. This will be explained later.
- *Faylūlah* appears to be similar to the "dusk" moment. The word *faylūlah* is derived from the Arabic word *faylūlah*, which means fatality ('Aqīlī 2006: 2:92). *Faylūlah* may indicate severe results from neurological disorders. In Persian medical literatures, this part of the day has been described as a cause of psycholepsy (Alikhan 1889; 'Aqīlī 2006: 2:92; Arzānī n.d.: 342; Shams al-dīn 2008: 1:151; al-Balkhī 2005: 442).
- *Haylūlah* is the "sunsetting". This time has been defined as a "natural bar" or "barrier" between doing prayer and sleeping, during which there is an observable modification following phenomenal agents. According to Iranian sages, falling asleep within it can cause amnesia (Shams al-dīn 2008: 1:151; Alikhan 1889: 126; Arzānī n.d.: 342; 'Aqīlī 2006: 2:92).

2.5.2. The Concept of ʿAylūlah

In TPM culture, some awakening times are encouraged based on the Qur'anic verses and recommendations of God (al-Ṭabarī 2002: 397). Thus, many Muslims get up early in the morning, particularly, before dawn. As Allah has described the people who wake up early tend to praise and engage in prayer, as indicated in this verse of the Qur'an:

"They were in the habit of sleeping but little by night, and in the hours of early dawn, they (were found) praying for forgiveness" (Q. 51:17-18).[1]

There are some witnesses in TPM showing sleeping in dawn, especially on an empty stomach (Alikhan 1889: 126; Jurjānī 2002: 49; Jurjānī 1966: 232; Arzānī n.d.; Jurjānī 2006: 3:477), are very unhealthy, and can cause chronic diseases (Shams al-dīn 2008: 1:151; ʿAqīlī 2006: 2:92; Ibn Ilyās Shīrāzī n.d.). TPM sages believe that morning sleep not only has deleterious effects on the body; it can also influence the human soul (al-Balkhī 2005: 180, 443).

According to one quotation by Abū Zayd al-Balkhī (d. 934 C.E.) in *Maṣāliḥ al-Abdān waʾl-Anfus*, sleeping in the morning debilitates the body in addition to the spirit. It also can bring about a change in complexion (al-Balkhī 2005: 443).

As stated in *Dhakhīrah Khārazmshāhī*, Sayyed Ismāʿīl Jurjānī (d. 1136 C.E.), one of the most prominent pioneers of TPM,, believes that morning sleep may weaken the fleshly strength. He says that sleeping before the sun goes up can put the body at risk for exhaustion and powerlessness. The other consequence that is cited in *Dhakhīrah Khārazmshāhī* is cooling the human body. He believes that this is the time, during which the human body gives off heat. According to Jurjānī, emaciation is another bodily condition linked to being in a state of sleep at dawn. It may also cause the loss of flesh so as to become very thin and to waste away physically (Jurjānī 2006: 3:477).

Another quotation narrated by Nāṣir al-Ḥukamā (19th century C.E.) in *Ḥifẓ Ṣiḥḥat* tells of harmful effects of falling asleep at dawn. He has focused on the link between sleep at dawn and mental illnesses that weaken the physical nerves. Nāṣir al-Ḥukamā emphasizes the importance of getting up this time to protect against psychiatric disorders including neurasthenia and chronic tension headache. He also states that morning awakening inhibits the laxation caused by coldness (Nāṣir al-Ḥukamā 2003: 1:176).

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1. ‏«كانُوا قَليلاً مِنَ اللَّيْلِ ما يَهْجَعُونَ وَ بِالْأَسْحارِ هُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ» (الذاريات/17−18)‏

3. Discussion

The importance of early rising has been described in many well-known and popular proverbs such as:

- "The early bird catches the worm" (English)
- "Morgenstund' hat Gold im Mund" (German)
- "早起きは三文の徳" (Japanese)
- "باكِرْ تَسْعَدْ" (Arabic)
- "سحرخیز باش تا کامروا شوی" (Persian)
- "Chi dorme non piglia pesci" (Italian)
- "Al que madruga, Dios lo ayuda" (Mexican)
- "A quien madruga, Dios le ayuda" (Spanish)
- "Tko rano rani, dvije sreće grabi" (Croatian)
- "Kto rano wstaje, temu Pan Bóg daje" (Polish)

Yet other oft-quoted saying are: "Rise with the lark and with the lark to bed" (*Nicholas Breton*), "Early to bed, and early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise" (*Benjamin Franklin*), and a habit of early rising is distinctly conducive to health, happiness, usefulness, and longevity (Hynes 1887). Again, we read of it in religious and spiritual traditions, and it has been practised in many cultures throughout the ages. Interestingly, the Holy Qur'an, the central religious text of Islam, advocates being awake at dawn primarily because it was a practice preferred by only those who are believers (Q. 7:205; 17:78). It has also been a prescribed discipline of TPM as a medical doctrine of Iran ('Aqīlī 2006: 2:92; Jurjānī 2006: 3:477).

TPM discusses the beneficial effects of early rising and emphasizes the importance of maintaining a pattern of wakefulness in this time (Rhazes 2001: 23:365; Haly Abbas 1968: 1:598; al-Akhawynī Bukhārī 1992: 178). According to basic principles of TPM, which is grounded in the concept of four humors *Sawdā'* (black bile= cold and dry temperament), *Ṣafrā'* (yellow bile= hot and dry temperament), *Balgham* (phlegm= cold and wet temperament), and *Dam* (blood= hot and wet temperament; Avicenna 2005: 1:217), sleep and wakefulness as one of the six essential principles, induces a dual quality in the body. Sleep includes coldness and wetness, and wakefulness hotness and wetness components. The longer the sleep, the colder it gets (Avicenna 2005, 1:217). According to this medical doctrine, due to domination of phlegm (Ibn al-Nafīs 1872, 26), the air concentration (Rhazes 2001: 15:422) and decrease in human body temperature *(ḥarārah gharīzī)* at the beginning of the day

and a state of complete coldness (Gīlānī 2008: 95), sleep can be harmful to health at this time (Shams al-dīn 2008: 1:151; ʿAqīlī 2006: 2:92; Ibn Ilyās Shīrāzī n.d.: 65).

From the perspectives of both the Qur'an and TPM and a scrutiny of the result of modern science, there are some similarities with regard to encouraging early rising (Table 1). Scientific reports reveal that early rising has a profound effect on the biological, physical, and mental powers of the human body. Researches have shown that waking up in the morning acutely improves both verbal and spatial memory performance (Olders 2003), influences the process of attention and the ability to recall (Kumaran, Raghavendra and Manjunath 2012), enhances alertness and vigilance (Sartori and Poirrier 1996), improves adrenal gland function (Jung et al. 2010; Chan and Debono 2010) and cardiovascular system (Hirsch et al. 2011; Viola, et al. 2015; Jozsef et al. 2009), and also modifies autonomic nervous system (Watanabe et al. 2013). Also, a research into the body temperature circadian rhythm has shown that daily time of minimum temperature parallels sunrise times (Coiffard et al., 2021), which can result in neurologic dysfunction, metabolic disorders, and poses a threat to life (Gomez 2014).

Table 1. Some evidence-based studies on the influences of early rising which could be associated with TPM reports.

Traditional name of disease	Equal conventional name of disease	Result of the studies
sustī (Jurjānī 2006: 3:477)	Weakness of the fleshly strength	Fatigue/ lack of energy (Olders 2003)
sardī (Jurjānī 2006: 3:477)	coolness of the human body	--
takāthur (Jurjānī 2006: 3:477)	exhaustion	Fatigue/ lack of energy (Olders 2003)
nātawānī (Jurjānī 2006: 3:477)	powerlessness	Fatigue/ lack of energy (Olders 2003)
khushkī (Jurjānī 2006: 3:477)	emaciation/ wasting physically	--
ḍaʿf-e aʿṣāb (Nāṣir al-Ḥukamā 2003: 1:176)	Weakness of the physical nerves/ neurasthenia	depression (Olders 2003; Sartori and Poirrier 1996)
ḍaʿf-e badan (Nāṣir al-Ḥukamā 2003: 1:176)	giving off of power	Fatigue/ lack of energy (Olders 2003)
sangīnī-e sar (Nāṣir al-Ḥukamā 2003: 1:176)	chronic tension headache	--
kāhilī (Nāṣir al-Ḥukamā 2003: 1:176)	laxation	ability to remember/ focus attention/ memory performance (Olders 2003; Kumaran, Raghavendra and Manjunath 2012)
tanbalī (Nāṣir al-Ḥukamā 2003: 1:176)	laziness	--

4. Conclusion

The article discusses the findings pertaining to the significance of being awake during the early hours of the morning, as seen through the lens of the Holy Qur'an and TPM. It explores the spiritual and physical dimensions that underscore the importance of this practice. The promotion of waking up early, as advocated in the Holy Qur'an and TPM, is substantiated by the perspective of health psychology. This phenomenon is closely associated with the discipline of pathophysiology and has been found to have beneficial impacts on neurobehavioral parameters, cardiovascular events, endocrinology, and the autonomic nervous system. Therefore, the act of awakening around the period of sunrise is a commonly observed practice among the general population, particularly among individuals who experience deficiencies in physical, mental, and social well-being.

Acknowledgments

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When plagiarism becomes evident post-publication, we may correct, retract, or otherwise amend the original publication depending on the degree of plagiarism, context within the published article and its impact on the overall integrity of the published study.

Notes for Authors

- The Journal of Interdisciplinary Qur'anic Studies welcomes scholarly articles that solve specific new issues and contain innovative research results, on all aspects of Qur'anic studies associated with different fields of science and humanities.
- Manuscripts should be typed in English by using MS Word.
- The abstract should not exceed 350 words.
- Submissions should be sent online in the web site: https://iqs.sbu.ac.ir.
- Submissions should be between 5,000 and 8,000 words in length, not including the references.
- Articles that the editor judge to have merit will be sent anonymously to two referees, and authors may be asked for changes and adjustments in the light of the referees' reports.
- The editorial board reserves the right to make reasonable modifications in wording.
- Please include the author's name and affiliation, as they should appear in the printed text.
- Please note that not more than two papers per calendar year, per author and co-author can be submitted to the journal.
- Acknowledgement should be at the end of paper but preceding the references.
- All tables, illustrations, figures, maps, and photographs should be titled, numbered consecutively, and cited in the text, e.g., (fig. 1). Authors are responsible for obtaining copyright for all artworks taken from other sources.
- Authors should follow the journal style thoroughly.

Referencing System

- The referencing system used by JIQS is the Harvard style of referencing. Harvard style referencing is an author/date method. Sources are cited within the body of your assignment by giving the name of the author(s) followed by the date of publication. All other details about the publication are given in the list of references or bibliography at the end.
- Citations which are used with direct quotations or are referring to a particular part of a source, should include the page number in your citation, e.g., (Smith 2017: 42).
- If the author(s) name appears in the text as part of the body of the assignment, then the year will follow in round brackets, e.g., According to Smith (2017: 42).
- If more than one of your citations has the same author and year of publication, then you should distinguish between them by using a lower– case letter following the year, e.g., (Smith 2017a) & (Smith 2017b).
- Some authors have the same surname and works published in the same year. If this is the case, use their initial to distinguish between them, e.g., (Williams, A. 2009) & (Williams, J. 2009).
- In some instances, you may need to cite more than one piece of work for an idea. If this occurs, you should separate the references with a semicolon and cite them in chronological order, e.g., (Jones 2014; Smith 2017).
- When citing in-text, include the name of up to three authors. If there are more than three authors for the work you are citing, then use the name of the first author followed by "et al.", e.g., (Taylor et al. 2015).
- If the year of publication is not given, then use the name of the author followed by "n.d.", e.g., (Wells n.d.).
- Secondary Referencing: This is when you reference one author who is referring to the work of another and the primary source is not available. Secondary referencing should be avoided where possible. You must make it clear to your readers which author you have read whilst giving details of an original term by using "cited in", e.g., (Ecott 2002, cited in Wilson 2009) or (Cannon 1989, cited in Wilson 2009: 269). In the reference list, you should give details of the item you looked at. Looking at the above examples, you would reference Wilson (2009) in your reference list.

- Use the following order to give details of references in the reference list:
- Author's surname, author's first name, year of publication, name of the work, publisher, place of publication.
- In the table below, you can see examples of references to different types of sources. Please ensure that the references are produced in the same style as the following table.

BOOKS		
Single Author	**(Al-Zamakhsharī 1986)**	
	Al-Zamakhsharī, M., 1986, *Al-Kashshāf ʿan Ḥaqāʾiq Ghawāmiḍ al-Tanzīl*, Dār al-Kitāb al-ʿArabī, Beirut.	
Two or Three Authors	**(Laudon & Laudon 2003)** **(Coveney, Ganster & King 2003)**	
	Laudon, K.C. & Laudon, J.P., 2003, *Essentials of management information systems: Managing the digital firm*, Prentice Hall, Upper Saddle River.	
	Coveney, M., Ganster, S. & King, D., 2003, *The strategy gap: Leveraging technology to execute winning strategies*, Wiley, Hoboken.	
More than Three Authors	**(Jones et al. 1999: 34)** **Jones et al. (1999: 34) suggested that …**	
	Jones, P., Smith, A., Hudson, T., Etherton, J., Connelly, W. .& Gardener, J., 1999, *Business management for the new era*, Wyland Publishing, Adelaide.	
Book Editor	**(ed. Shaw 2003)** **Shaw (ed. 2003: 87) indicates that …**	
	Shaw, M.J. (ed.), 2003, *Ebusiness management: Integration of Web technologies with business models*, Kluwer Academic, London.	
Second, further or revised editions	Dyson, Geoffrey H.G., 1977, *The mechanics of athletics*, 7th edn., Homes and Meier, New York.	
	Cohen, Jacob, 1977, *Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences*, rev. edn., Academic Press, New York.	
Translated works	Bakhtin, M., 1984, *Rabelais and his world*, transl. H. Iswolsky, Indiana University Press, Bloomington.	
No date can be established	**(Lansdown n.d.).**	
	Lansdown, M., n.d., *Bridging courses*, Central Queensland University, Rockhampton.	

JOURNALS	
Single author	**(Rohani Mashhadi 2018)**
	Rohani Mashhadi, Farzaneh, 2018, "The Analogy between Jesus and Adam Based on the Analysis of Key Concepts in the System of Human Creation Verses", *Qur'anic Sciences and Tradition*, 51(1), pp. 67-87.
Two or three authors	**(Lamb & Kling 2003)** **(Darzi, Pakatchi, & Faramarz Gharamaleki 2017)**
	Lamb, R. & Kling, R., 2003, "Reconceptualizing users as social actors in information systems research", *MIS Quarterly*, 27(2), p. 197.
	Darzi, G., Pakatchi, A. & Faramarz Gharamaleki, A., 2017, "The Methodological Necessities of Quranic Interdisciplinary Studies", *Qur'an and Hadith Studies*, 10(1), pp. 35-71. doi: 10.30497/quran.2017.1888
More than three authors	**(Lips et al. 2020)**
	Lips, C., Ritterhoff, T., Weber, A., Janowska M.K., Mustroph, M., Sommer T., Klevit, R.E., 2020, "Who with whom: functional coordination of E2 enzymes by RING E3 ligases during poly-ubiquitylation", *The EMBO Journal*, 39(22).
No volume or issue number	**(Sprague & Shameen 1999)**
	Sprague, J. & Shameen, A, 1999, "Boosting growth, courting disasters?", *Asiaweek*, 31 July, pp. 50–51.
Journal articles and book chapters from books of readings	Kuebler, S.A., 2004, "OSHA's enforcement strategy", Occupational Health & Safety 73(12), 12–3, in I. Eddington (ed.), 2005, *MGT 8015 Corporate occupational health and safety: Selected readings*, University of Southern Queensland, Toowoomba.

OTHER REFERENCES	
Conference paper	**(Fitzsimmons 2005)**
	Fitzsimmons, D., 2005, "Who chooses who belongs: Tactics and strategies and migrant literature", *the AULLA & FILLM Conference*, James Cook University, Cairns, 15–19th July.
Theses and Reports	**(Rouse 2002)**
	Rouse, A.C., 2002, "Information technology outsourcing revisited: success factors and risks", PhD thesis, Dept. of Information Systems, University of Melbourne.
Encyclopedias	**(Karlof 2002)**
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Document on the web	**(Arch & Letourneau 2002) (Greenpeace n.d.)**
	Arch, A. & Letourneau, C., 2002, "Auxiliary Benefits of Accessible Web Design", in *W3C Web Accessibility initiative*, viewed 26 February 2004, from http://www.w3.org/WAI/ bcase/benefits.html. Greenpeace, n.d., "The future is GE free", viewed 28 September 2005, from http://www.greenpeace.org.au/ge/ farming/canola.html.

Transliteration System

ء	'	خ	kh	ش	sh	غ	gh	ن	n
ب	b	د	d	ص	ṣ	ف	f	ه	h
ت	t	ذ	dh	ض	ḍ	ق	q	و	w
ث	th	ر	r	ط	ṭ	ک	k	ى	y
ج	j	ز	z	ظ	ẓ	ل	l	ة	h
ح	ḥ	س	s	ع	'	م	m		

Short Vowels	
ـَ	a
ـُ	u
ـِ	i

Long Vowels	
ا/آ	ā
ـُ و	ū
ـِ ى	ī

Diphthongs	
ـَ و	aw
ـَ ى	ay
ـِّ	iyy
ـُّ	uww

Persian Letters	
پ	p
چ	ch
ژ	zh
گ	g

Shahid Beheshti
University

Contemprorary
Thoughts Press