

In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful

**Interdisciplinary Studies of** 9  
**Quran and Hadith (ISQH)**

**Vol.3, Issue.1 (Series 9), Summer 2025**

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152 Pages/ 1.000.000 RIS/ Printing House: Imam Sadiq University Publication

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چاپخانه: انتشارات دانشگاه امام صادق (علیه‌السلام) / ۱۵۲ صفحه / ۱۷۰۰۰/۰۰۰ ریال

نشانی: دانشگاه امام صادق (علیه‌السلام)، پل مدیریت، بزرگراه شهید چمران، تهران، ایران

کدپستی: ۱۴۶۵۹۴۳۶۸۱

مدیریت فنی: معاونت پژوهش و فناوری / تلفکس: ۰۲۱-۸۸۰۹۴۹۱۵

مدیریت علمی، تحریریه و چاپ: مرکز زبان / تلفکس: ۰۲۱-۸۸۰۹۴۹۲۳

تلفن: ۰۱-۸۸۰۹۴۰۰۱+ (شماره داخلی) ۷۴۷ (پاسخگویی: شنبه تا چهارشنبه / ۰۸:۰۰ الی ۱۷:۰۰)

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## **Aims and Scope of Interdisciplinary Studies of Quran and Hadith (ISQH)**

### **Aims:**

The Holy Quran and Sunna (the Prophet and Imams' Traditions) are two basic sources of Islam and *Imamiyyah* school and the centers of attention of Muslim scholars from ancient times to the present. According to the Quran, there is nothing in the universe but mentioned in the Book (Q 6:59). Also, the Traditions of Ahl al-Bayt (the Prophet and Imams) being rooted in the Revelation, contain invaluable issues in different realms, scientific or otherwise, that can shed light on most problems if duly considered.

Interdisciplinary studies have been ascribed a high standing in today's academic circles. The progressive trend of knowledge and sciences has made it incumbent upon researchers to go beyond their specialties for solving problems that have become more and more complicated; in other words, one needs to have recourse to other realms of knowledge to solve the problematic issues. Islamic studies and humanities could be classified under interdisciplinary studies in this respect.

The Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic has time and again emphasized the necessity of the Islamization of human and social sciences in his remarks. Imam Sadiq University, the academic center that arose after the Islamic revolution, with the mission of acting as an authority in the field of Islamic and human sciences, has assumed a fundamental role in producing Islamic-oriented humanities and has played its part in actualizing this task since its inception four decades ago. One can witness the outcome of this monumental task in ISU publications and dissertations. Hence, the necessity of publishing this output and its equivalents from other academic centers in the form of scholarly articles rendered in Arabic and English languages, a task which if fulfilled, will provide a synergistic effort leading to perfection. In regard to the existing high potential in ISU Language Center that enjoys the participation of a knowledgeable faculty equipped with the above-mentioned languages next to Islamic capacity especially in the fields of Quranic and Tradition Studies, jurisprudence and law,

philosophy and theology, the possibility of producing interdisciplinary works is high.

The ISU Language Center has aptly felt the necessity of undertaking the Initiative of launching an Unequaled Quarterly Journal, Interdisciplinary Studies of Quran & Hadith in Arabic and English that could mirror the above-mentioned capacity.

**Scope:**

The scope of our activity with the centrality of Quran and Hadith is as follows:

- Language, Culture and Communication studies in the Quran and Hadith
- Management studies in the Quran and Hadith
- Economics studies in the Quran and Hadith
- Education and Psychology studies in the Quran and Hadith
- Political studies in the Quran and Hadith
- Law studies in the Quran and Hadith

**Instructions for Authors**

**Manuscript Submission**

- Authors are requested to submit their papers electronically by using the Interdisciplinary Studies of Quran Hadith online submission and review web site <https://isqh.isu.ac.ir> . This site will guide authors stepwise through the submission process.
- Submissions should consist of original work that has not yet been published and/or is not under consideration elsewhere.
- The language of the journal is English. Non-native speakers should make every effort to consolidate on the language style, which should conform to the international English standards. Either British or American spelling may be used but it must be used consistently throughout the paper.
- The author's name, address, and affiliation should be included on a separate page and not given on the first page or elsewhere in the article to ensure anonymous evaluation.

- Corresponding author. Clearly indicate who will handle correspondence at all stages of refereeing and publication, also post-publication. Ensure that telephone numbers (with country and area code) are provided in addition to the e-mail address and the complete postal address. Contact details must be kept up to date by the corresponding author.

### **Article Structure**

Subdivision - numbered sections Divide your article into clearly defined and numbered sections. Subsections should be numbered 1.1 (then 1.1.1, 1.1.2, ...), 1.2, etc. (the abstract is not included in section numbering). Any subsection may be given a brief heading. Each heading should appear on its own separate line.

### **Formatting Guidelines**

Article pages including: abstracts, notes and reference lists, are to be typed 1.5 spaced with margins of 2.5 cm (1 inch) on all four sides. Use 12 pt font size in the main text, 10 pt in the footnotes, 15 pt for main titles and 13 pt for subtitles. Sheets should be numbered consecutively.

- The overall content of the article should **CLEARLY INCLUDE** the following features:
  - a. Abstract
  - b. Introduction
  - c. Review of related literature/Theoretical grounding
  - d. Research questions
  - e. (Research hypotheses)
  - f. Method
  - g. Results
  - h. Discussion and conclusions
  - i. References

**Abstract**

The abstract, placed at the very beginning of the article and ranging between 150 to 200 words, the abstract should state briefly the purpose of the research, the principal results and major conclusions.

**Word Limit**

Please ensure that your paper does not exceed 7500 words, including abstract, references and footnotes.

**Keywords**

Immediately after the abstract, provide a maximum of 5 keywords. Keywords should be italics.

**Introduction**

State the objectives of the work and provide an adequate background, avoiding a detailed literature survey or a summary of the results.

**Literature Review****Research Questions****Material and Methods**

Provide sufficient detail to allow the work to be replicated. Methods already published should be indicated by a reference: only relevant modifications should be described.

**Results**

Results should be clear and concise.

**Discussion**

This should explore the significance of the results of the work, not repeat them. A combined Results and Discussion section is often

appropriate. Avoid extensive citations and discussion of published literature.

### **Conclusions**

The main conclusions of the study should be presented in a short Conclusions section, which should not simply repeat earlier sections.

### **Appendices**

If there is more than one appendix, they should be identified as A, B, etc. Formulae and equations in appendices should be given separate numbering: Eq. (A.1), Eq. (A.2), etc.; in a subsequent appendix, Eq. (B.1) and so on. Similarly for tables and figures: Table A.1; Fig. A.1, etc.

### **References**

References should contain only cited works, but make sure that all cited works are indeed included. The works should be listed in alphabetical order at the end of the article and with single line space. Citations in the text should follow the referencing style used by the American Psychological Association (APA). You are referred to the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 7th Edition.

#### **Book: one author:**

Goldberg, A. (2006). *Constructions at work*. Oxford University Press.

#### **Book, two authors and more:**

Jarvis, S., & Pavlenko A. (2008). *Crosslinguistic influence in language cognition*. Routledge.

#### **Translated book:**

Freud, S. (1960). *Jokes and their relation to the unconscious*. (J. Strachey, Trans.). Routledge & K. Paul. (Original work published 1905).

**Edited book:**

Flowerdew, J., Brock, M., & Hsia, S. (Eds.). (1992). *Second language teacher education*. City Polytechnic of Hong Kong.

**Chapter in an edited book:**

Goldberg, A., & Casenhiser, D. (2008). Construction learning and second language acquisition. In P. Robinson & N. Ellis (Eds.), *Handbook of cognitive linguistics and second language acquisition* (pp. 197–215). Routledge.

**Article in a journal:**

Hammarberg, B. (2010). The languages of the multilingual. Some conceptual and terminological issues. *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, 48, 91–104.

**Article online:**

Tully, K., & Bolshakov, V. Y. (2010). Emotional enhancement of memory: How norepinephrine enables synaptic plasticity. *Molecular Brain*, 13 May. Retrieved from <http://www.molecularbrain.com/content/>.

Bakker, A. B., Hakanen, J. J., Demerouti, E., Xanthopoulou, D. (2007). Job resources boost work engagement, particularly when job demands are high. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 99(2), 274–284. doi:10.1037/0022-0663.99.2.274

**Magazines online:**

Miller, G. (2014, September 4). Cinematic cuts exploit how your brain edits what you see. *Wired*. Retrieved from <http://wired.com/>

Smith, A. (2007, June 12). Dying languages. *The Western Star*. Retrieved from <http://www.thewesternstar.com/>

**Blog:**

Palmer, P. (2001). Now I become myself. *Yes Magazine*, blog post, 31 May. Retrieved from <http://www.yesmagazine.org/issues/working-for-life/now-i-become-myself>

**E-books:**

Bolande, V. U. (1981). *On the psychology of humor*. Retrieved from: <http://www.uflib.ufl.edu/ufdc/UFDC.aspx?n=palmm&c=psa1&m=hd2J&i=45367>

**Conference proceedings:**

Souleles, N., & Pillar, C. (Eds.). (2014). Proceedings from the *First International Conference on the Use of iPads in Higher Education*. Paphos: Cyprus University of Technology.

**Doctoral dissertation:**

Churchwell, J. (2005). *Becoming an academic: Factors that influence a graduate student's identity commitment* (Doctoral dissertation). University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI.

Reachel, L. H. (2001). *Native languages and toponyms: Origins, meaning, and use* (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ProQuest dissertation and theses database. (Document ID 1964749161).

**Figure captions**

Ensure that each illustration has a caption. Supply captions separately, not attached to the figure. A caption should comprise a brief title (not on the figure itself) and a description of the illustration. Keep text in the illustrations themselves to a minimum but explain all symbols and abbreviations used.

**Tables**

Please submit tables as editable text and not as images. Tables can be placed next to the relevant text in the article. Number tables consecutively in accordance with their appearance in the text and place any table notes below the table body. Be sparing in the use of tables and ensure that the data presented in them do not duplicate results described

elsewhere in the article. Please avoid using vertical rules and shading in table cells.

### **Changes to authorship**

Authors are expected to consider carefully the list and order of authors before submitting their manuscript and provide the definitive list of authors at the time of the original submission. Any addition, deletion or rearrangement of author names in the authorship list should be made only before the manuscript has been submitted and only if approved by the journal Editor.

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The acceptance criteria for all papers are the quality and originality of the research and its significance to our readership. Upon submission, an e-mail message or letter from the Journal Management System will acknowledge manuscript receipt. All submitted manuscripts are evaluated by one of our editors within one month to determine suitability for review in IJALS. If accepted for external review, manuscripts are peer reviewed by two anonymous reviewers and the editor. Typically, one has broad general knowledge of the field, and one has expertise in the particular topic or methodology. Within six months, authors can expect to receive one of four decisions: (a) manuscript acceptance, (b) acceptance with revisions, (c) nonacceptance with an invitation for revision and resubmission for another round of review, or (d) rejection and recommendation for submission to a different publication. IJALS. Attempts to keep the review process as short as

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Authors are responsible for the accuracy of the manuscript content. They should also sign an agreement form confirming their contribution in writing the manuscript. Papers are only considered for publication once consent is given by all contributing authors.

#### **Conflict of Interest and Source of Funding**

Authors are required to disclose any possible conflict of interest. These include financial issues (for example patent, ownership, stock ownership, consultancies, speaker's fee). Author's conflict of interest (or information specifying the absence of conflicts of interest) will be published under a separate heading entitled 'Conflict of Interests'.

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The publisher and the editor of the journal take reasonable steps to identify and prevent the publication of papers where research misconduct has occurred, including plagiarism, under/over citation, and data falsification/fabrication, among others **at any stage even after the issuance of the 'acceptance letter'**. In no case shall the journal or its editor encourage such misconduct, or knowingly allow such misconduct to take place. In the event that the journal's publisher or editor is made aware of any allegation of research misconduct relating to a published article in the journal –the publisher or editor shall follow COPE's guidelines (or equivalent) in dealing with allegations.

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Articles may sometimes be accepted for publication but later rejected in the publication process, even in some cases after public posting in "Articles in Press" form, in which case all rights will revert to the author.

## **Imam Sadiq University Academic Journals Ethics Statement**

### **Introduction**

In regard to ISU approach to the production, publication, and updating of Islamic and human sciences, and providing answers for newly emerged demands of the revolution and Islamic government, and also in compliance with the national and international research ethics guidelines, such as those of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), and "Code of Practice for Research Ethics" ratified by the Research Assistance Branch of the Islamic Republic of Iran Ministry of Sciences, Research and Technology, ISU academic journals and publications are bound to observe the related professional code of conduct. Hence, the major duties of those involved, namely author(s), director, editor-in-chief, the editorial board, managing editor are briefly mentioned below.

### **Authors' Responsibilities**

1. Submitted manuscripts must be previously unpublished, domestically and internationally, in order to be approved for publication in ISU journals; they must be the original work of the author(s) and have exact sources and citations.

2. The final responsibility of the full content of the submitted manuscript is with the author. It is appropriate to report the results of the article completely and take sufficient care about them and about their analysis. The article must contain enough details and resources to permit other researchers to have access to similar data for further research.

3. Before submitting the article, any possible conflict of interest affecting the research results and research analysis or the selection of editor-in-chief and reviewers must be mentioned and the funders of the research must be named.

4. Respect must be paid to the confidential assessment, and the disclosure of the author(s)' identity to the reviewers and vice versa must

be avoided. In other words, the manuscript must avoid self- disclosing information to prevent reviewers from identifying the author(s).

5. Authorship information must be transparently and completely ensured and mentioned and non-contributors must be excluded.

6. Privacy, dignity, well-being and liberty of all those involved in the research must be preserved and supported and any threat posed to humans and other creatures must be declared.

7. The author must notify the journal officials of any error or inexactitude in time and set out to correcting them or withdrawing the whole manuscript.

8. The author(s) must clearly declare the originality of the work and its being free from plagiarism or being published previously.

#### **Instances of Unethical Behavior in Research and Publication:**

1. **Fabrication:** reporting unreal matters and providing fabricated data and results in the name of experimental and personal findings; unreal recording of events or replacing different research results.

2. **Falsification:** recording and presenting research results in a way that the details or the process of data collection are manipulated, or some data are removed or changed, or some minor results are exaggerated to conceal facts in order to lead the research results to special objectives or to make the provided results accepted unquestionably.

3. **Plagiarism:** appropriation of other writers' ideas and phrases, copying opinions, structural similarities in writing, borrowing ideas and findings of others without attribution or proper reference, or introducing them as original scientific research.

4. **Scientific hiring:** employing other people to carry out the research in place of the author(s) and after some manipulation passing it off as one's own.

5. **Unreal affiliation:** unreal affiliation of the author(s) to some organization or educational and research center which have not had any role in the fulfillment of the task.

6. **Duplicate submission:** an article or part of an article already published domestically or internationally or under review and publication.

7. **Overlapping publication:** publishing data or findings from previous articles with some alterations in another article under a new title.

### **Director's Responsibilities**

1. Pursuing free access to information given in the journal and extending its publication.
2. Monitoring and pursuing the affairs of the editorial board and the editor-in-chief.
3. Avoiding interference in the scientific review process.
4. Avoiding interference in the scientific decisions of the editorial board and the editor-in-chief.
5. Observing the material and intellectual rights of the authors, editor-in-chief, editorial board, reviewers, and executive members.
6. Final confirmation of the submitted material for publication from a legal point of view.

### **Editorial Board Responsibilities**

1. Preserving the freedom and authority of the editor-in-chief in executing its duties independently, such as acceptance or rejection of received manuscripts with the assistance of the editorial board and observing the scientific merits of the article including the preservation of material and intellectual rights, research originality and editors' and reviewers' opinions.
2. Attempting to promote and enforce regulations of ethics and soundness of research.
3. Receiving documentary evidence about the following conditions when accepting manuscripts from their authors.
  - a. Granting the rights of publishing the article in the university journal.
  - b. Declaring the possible conflicts of interest.
4. Selecting qualified reviewers by relying on their specialties, scientific and professional experience, and also respecting the well-reasoned requests of the author(s) for special reviewers.
5. Avoiding the disclosure of the information about the author(s) and reviewers and discussing its details with others.
6. Preventing any sort of conflict of interests in reviewing that could potentially affect the acceptance and publication of articles.
7. Accurate assessment of works charged with breaching the codes by reviewers or other channels, and if necessary, acting according to the pertinent rules.

## **Procedures of Dealing with Unethical Behavior in Publication and Research**

1. Notifying the journal's editorial board and sending letter to the corresponding author demanding clarification without any prejudgment.
2. Allocating suitable time for receiving response from the author(s) charged with unethical publication and research behavior, and pursuing definite violations till the end.
3. Referring the case to the editorial board in case of receiving unacceptable justifications from the author(s) for final decision as for the acceptance or rejection of the submitted manuscript.
4. Based on the final decision of the editorial board,
  - a. Sending written notification to the author and reminding him of the journal's policy, or asking for corrections and making apology on the next journal issue.
  - b. Sending warning to the corresponding author for rejecting any other work by the offender.
5. Issuing apologetic announcement in the next printed issue of the journal and including it in the online version for the retracted article.
6. Trying to continuously improve the quality and ensure the integrity of the journal's content and pay respect to its administration and all the involved people and audience.
7. Examining all received articles in due time.

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1. Assisting in the scientific quality and content analysis of the articles in order to improve its status.
2. Applying professional knowledge and expertise related to the subject domain of the journal and declaring the rejection of submitted manuscripts to the editor-in-chief when it does not conform with the shared interests, be it financial, organizational, personal, or due to shortage of time for reviewing.
3. Expressing expert and corrective opinions clearly, based on scientific evidence and sufficient reasoning in a definite time to the editor-in-chief and author(s), and avoiding partiality due to one's preferences, ethnicity, religious belief, professional inclination and otherwise in reviewing the submitted manuscripts.

4. Avoiding the appropriation of the received data, discussions, explanations and ideas in the process of reviewing and even the unpublished information of the author(s) for personal gain.

5. Respecting the confidentiality of the reviewing process and avoiding the appropriation of the received information, discussions, explanations and ideas in the process of reviewing, or utilizing the new data and concepts derived from the article for or against one's own or other people's research or for criticizing or discrediting the author(s).

6. Assisting the journal's editor-in-chief in providing a report on "unethical research and publication behavior "about the received manuscripts for review.

7. Informing the editor-in-chief in case of a delay in reviewing the manuscripts and requesting more time allocation or selecting another reviewer.

#### **Scientific- Research Journals' Office Management**

1. Establishing and announcing clearly one's publishing policies, especially in regard to the autonomy of the editor-in-chief in making decisions, publication ethics, safeguarding the intellectual property and copyright, conflict of interests, authors' duties, reviewers, editor-in-chief, editorial board, reviewing and decision making process, revision requests and complaints, preserving the scientific documents of the decision making process, preserving the authors' and reviewers' information , correcting or removing the accepted manuscripts, and solving disputes between the complainants and those accused of unethical research and publication behavior.

2. Monitoring and pursuing research complaints for the university's journals.

3. Assisting in ensuring the originality and soundness of the published articles in the university's journals.

**Interdisciplinary Studies of Quran and Hadith  
Vol.3, Issue.1 (Series 9), Summer 2025**

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Vol. 3, Issue. 1 (Series 9), Summer 2025, pp.1-18  
The Meaning of Sūrah: A Linguistic and Interreligious Approach

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### Abstract

The meaning of sūrah was an enigma for both early Quranic commentators and modern orientalist. Although many theories have been suggested, they are not generally convincing to scholars, and the question of its origin remains. This essay classifies and re-examines all those theories, critically evaluating them. Using materials and techniques from comparative Semitic linguistics, in addition to information from Abrahamic religions studies, the essay attempts to move beyond previous limitations. A special technique applied in this regard is using the context of Biblical chaptering in Syriac and Ethiopian Christian milieus to develop a model. This model could help explain the process by which sūrah emerged through a Syriac-to-Arabic borrowing. This argument enables us to confirm the suggestion that the word is derived from Syriac sūrayā and further received a semantic contamination from the Hebrew pārašāh.

**Keywords:** Quranic divisions, Biblical chapters, Kephalaia, Shūraya, Psalms, Syriac loanwords.

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Received: May 18, 2025

Revised: June 16, 2025

Accepted: July 10, 2025

Article type: Research Article

Publisher: Imam Sadiq University



[10.30497/ISQH.2025.248592.1056](https://doi.org/10.30497/ISQH.2025.248592.1056)

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How to cite: Pakatchi, A. (2025). The Meaning of Sūrah: A Linguistic and Interreligious Approach. *Interdisciplinary Studies of Quran & Hadith*, 3(1), 1-18. doi: 10.30497/isqh.2025.248592.1056

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## Introduction

*Sūrah* is the title used for any of the 114 divisions of the Holy Qur'an and is well-established in Islamic religious terminology. It also enjoys widespread usage in the common culture of Muslim communities. Due to the special and unique status of this term, some authors writing in European languages have preferred to use the original word *sūrah* rather than translating it as “chapter” or using equivalent terms. The word *sūrah* appears in the Holy Qur'an nine times in the singular form and once in the plural. For audiences—both contemporary and historical—the meaning of the term has been intuitively understood. It is recognized as one of the 114 parts of the Qur'an, and this understanding arises automatically. The fact that early exegetical literature contains no debate about the meaning of *sūrah* conveys a clear message: there was no doubt or ambiguity among early commentators regarding its significance.

However, beginning in the transitional period from the 2nd/8th to the 3rd/9th century, scholarly discussion on the term began to emerge, and the debate remained active for approximately a century and a half. After that, most references simply repeat the theories proposed during that earlier period, often with only minor revisions. More recently, alongside renewed interest in the structure of the Quranic text, the meaning of the word *sūrah* has once again become a subject of inquiry. In these modern debates, the automatic understanding of the term has been set aside, and scholars have recognized that clarifying the lexical value of *sūrah* may contribute to a deeper understanding of the Qur'an's structure and internal divisions. If a lexical and pre-terminological usage of the word could be identified in Quranic Arabic, it would resolve much of the ambiguity—but such usage has not been detected. Similarly, if the word *sūrah* or a cognate were found in Jewish or Christian terminology related to divisions of the Holy Bible, the issue would be clarified. In that case, it could be considered one of the religious terms borrowed from pre-Islamic Abrahamic traditions, as is the case with many other terms of Hebrew, Syriac, or Geez origin. However, efforts to establish such a precedent within Judeo-Christian contexts have not yet yielded satisfactory results.

Nevertheless, the answer must lie in one of two possibilities, as there is no third option for the development of a term. Any term in any language either emerges from a native lexeme through historical linguistic processes or is borrowed directly from another culture and language. Therefore, this research returns to examine both possibilities, evaluating the various scholarly suggestions and seeking a more evidence-based and justifiable solution. The central question of this study is to uncover the original meaning of *sūrah*.

In terms of methodology, this investigation employs comparative religious inquiry on one hand and Semitic linguistic analysis on the other, alongside the interpretive traditions of Quranic sciences.

### A. In Sake of Arabic Roots

As mentioned before, no debates were recorded regarding the origin of the word *sūrah* or its lexical meaning until the middle of the 2nd/8th century. In fact, it was in the transitional years from that century to the next that a struggle arose in this regard, centered in Iran and Iraq. The two sides of this struggle were Abū ‘Ubaida Ma‘mar ibn al-Muṭannā (d. 209/824), a scholar of Basra, and Abu-l-Haiṭam al-Rāzī (d. 226/841), a scholar of Ray, adjacent to the present capital of Iran, Tehran.

A characteristic common between the two figures was the fact that neither was Arab by origin, and both lived far from Hijaz, the sphere of revelation. Abū ‘Ubaida was a *mawlā* (adherent) of the Arabian tribe Taym (Ibn Qutaiba, 1960, p. 543), while Abu-l-Haiṭam was Iranian. Both were more engaged in theoretical deductions and speculative inductions in their scientific approach to the Arabic language in general and Quranic vocabulary in particular.

The exact dates of their theories are not recorded, but from Abū ‘Ubaida’s reference to the counter theory, it seems that Abu-l-Haiṭam’s theory was presented before the compilation of Abū ‘Ubaida’s work *Mağāzāt al-Qur’ān*.

### Abu-l-Haiṭam al-Rāzī’s Theory

What we know of Abu-l-Haiṭam’s theory is through a quotation by al-Azharī, who had reliable access to his teachings. According to al-Azharī, Abu-l-Haiṭam based his theory on the idea that the root of *sūrah*

is  $\sqrt{S'R}$ , with a hamza, in which the second consonant loosened to a semivowel—an occurrence traditionally called *tashīl al-hamza*. He believed that this loosening of the hamza occurred due to frequent usage, similar to the cases of *mal'ak* > *malak* and *nabī'* > *nabiyy* (al-Azharī, 2001, Vol. 8, p. 37).

According to this formulation, Abu-l-Haiṭam believed that the Quranic *sūrah* was called so because every *sūrah* is “a portion of the Qur'an.” He supported this idea by explaining that God revealed the Qur'an to the Prophet portion by portion and separated these portions. He also mentioned that God distinguished each *sūrah* from the ones before and after by a heading and an ending (al-Azharī, 2001, Vol. 8, p. 36).

There are three points in this theory that are subject to criticism. First, as with similar cases of hamza loosening in Quranic vocabulary, it would be expected that some reciters of the Qur'an would pronounce the hamza, but in fact, there are no traces of such recitation for any of the ten usages of the word in the Qur'an. Second, Abu-l-Haiṭam cited frequency of usage as the reason for dropping the hamza, stating:

“While its usage became frequent in conversations as well as in the divine book, the hamza was left out.”

However, there is no evidence of *sūrah* being used in this meaning in everyday Arab speech. As A.T. Welch noted, apart from etymology, the fact that the earliest usage of the word *sūrah* occurred in the Qur'an “is the most plausible assumption” (Welch, 1997, p. 885).

The third criticism concerns semantic context. Abu-l-Haiṭam rendered the origin to  $\sqrt{S'R}$  and considered it equivalent to  $\sqrt{FDL}$ , saying:

“من أسأرتُ سورة، أي أفضلت فضلاً  
“I left behind a remainder, i.e., I gave an excess.”

This equivalency is questionable because the exact value of *su'r* (سور) is not neutral—it has a pejorative meaning. It refers to the remainder of something consumed, especially food or drink, and is therefore not appropriate for Quranic *suwar*. Despite the fact that Abu-l-Haiṭam's theory is frequently repeated in exegetical and lexical sources, there has been no significant effort to address its deficiencies (see Ibn Qutaiba, 1978, p. 34; Ibn al-Anbārī, 1992, p. 6; al-Sam'ānī, 1997, Vol. 1, p. 58; Rāḡib al-Iṣfahānī, 1961, p. 248).

### Abū ‘Ubaida’s Theory

We are familiar with the work of Abū ‘Ubaida, titled *Mağāzāt al-Qur’ān*, which reflects his metaphorical thinking. Seeking the origin of *sūrah*, he proposed a metaphorical formulation, stating that the word *sūrah* means “a row of stones/bricks” in a building. He explained that just as each row is placed atop the previous one in a building, each *sūrah* in the Qur’an follows the previous one. He also pointed out a morphological difficulty: the normal plural form of *sūrah* (as a row of bricks) is *sūr*, while the plural used in the Qur’an (11:13) is *suwar* (Abū ‘Ubaida, 1955, Vol. 1, pp. 3–4).

Although Abū ‘Ubaida quoted Abu-l-Haiṭam’s theory as a second alternative, his tone suggests that his own theory was preferred. This is why later authors presented it as his definitive position (Ibn al-Ġawzī, 1984, Vol. 1, p. 50; al-Zabīdī, 1994, Vol. 6, p. 553).

Al-Azharī criticized this theory, referring to morphological rules and noting that the origin referring to rows of bricks requires the plural form *sūr*, while the Qur’an uses *suwar*, according to the consensus of all reciters (al-Azharī, 2001, Vol. 8, p. 36). It is worth mentioning that al-Ṭabarī claimed that *sūr* could be used as a plural for Quranic *suwar* according to regular templates (al-Ṭabarī, 1985, Vol. 1, p. 46), but this remains a syllogistic claim.

This theory was widely quoted by later scholars, sometimes with slight changes in wording but without essential revisions. These quotations began with Ibn al-A‘rābī (d. 231/846), Ibn Qutaiba (d. 276/889), and Ibn al-Anbārī (d. 328/940), who were prominent figures in Arabic studies (see Ibn al-A‘rābī, quoted in Ibn Sīda, 2000, Vol. 8, p. 608; Ibn Qutaiba, 1978, p. 34; Ibn al-Anbārī, 1992, p. 61). The theory continued to be repeated in exegetical and lexicographical resources through later centuries.

### Ibn al-A‘rābī’s Theory

Although Ibn al-A‘rābī quoted Abū ‘Ubaida’s formulation, it seems that his preferred choice was a third suggestion. He pointed out that *sūrah* in Arabic means “dignity, privilege, sublimity,” and believed that the Quranic *suwar* were named so because of their sacredness and dignity (al-Zabīdī, 1994, Vol. 6, p. 553).

Further, Ibn al-Anbārī, while quoting the three theories mentioned above, presented an additional one based on the same lexical background. He suggested that *sūrah* may be called so because of its greatness and completeness (Ibn al-Anbārī, 1992, p. 61). Although he considered this suggestion parallel to Ibn al-A‘rābī’s theory, it is more of a revision and extension.

### Further Theories

An extension of Abū ‘Ubaida’s theory is another metaphor based on the similarity between Quranic *sūrah* and a town wall (*sūr*, سُور). According to this formulation, the Quranic *sūrah* is called so because it surrounds content like a wall surrounds an area (al-Ṭabarī, 1985, Vol. 1, p. 46). This suggestion was repeated by Rāḡib al-Iṣfahānī and became widespread among later commentators and lexicographers (Rāḡib al-Iṣfahānī, 1961, p. 248).

After four centuries, we come to al-Suyūfī (d. 911/1505), in his comprehensive work on Quranic sciences, who attempted to quote earlier theories in full. Among the known theories, he added a formulation quoted from an unknown author, introduced with the phrase *qīla* (قِيلَ), meaning “it was said.” According to this theory, the word *sūrah* is derived from the verb *tasawwur* (تَسَوَّرَ), a Quranic lexeme meaning “to climb, to compose.” He explained that the Quranic *sūrah* is called so because the Qur’an is a composition of *suwar* (al-Suyūfī, 1967, Vol. 1, p. 186). This theory became the most widespread explanation for the origin of *sūrah* in the later centuries, eventually dominating earlier formulations.

Of course, the difficulties and incompatibilities in the earliest theories prompted scholars to seek better answers. However, these newer ones often appear more forced in their analysis and weaker in their arguments than the older ones. As an overview, one can state that the file remains open, and none of these theories are satisfactory enough to definitively resolve the challenge.

Finally, it is worth quoting the conclusion of Arthur Jeffery, who stated, “The Muslim authorities are quite ignorant of the origin of the word” (Jeffery, 1938, p. 181).

### B. In Sake of Judeo-Christian Roots

As shown by Arthur Jeffery, the first attempt to seek a non-Arabic origin for the term *sūrah* is that of Theodor Nöldeke in his well-known book, *Geschichte des Qorans* (1860). He used material prepared by Johannes Buxtorf, a famous Westphalian orientalist, master of rabbi, and professor of Hebrew language. Buxtorf, in his work *Lexicon Brevi Rabbinico-Philosophicum* (A brief lexicon for Rabbinic terms), originally published in Basel, registered the words שורה/שורה (*šūr, šūrah*) meaning “lines, rows” in a wide lexical usage. Gesenius mentioned this word referring to “a row of olives or vines” (Gesenius, 1955, p. 1004), and Nöldeke pointed out that in Hebrew vocabulary, it means any row of persons or objects (Nöldeke, 1909, Vol. 1, p. 31). After discussing the general lexical meaning, Buxtorf pointed out a special usage of the word as a technical term in the combination שורות הספר (*šūrōt ha-sēfer*), which means “lines of books,” according to Rabbinic terminology (Buxtorf, 1824, p. 565).

Returning to Nöldeke, he considered this Rabbinic term and suggested that the Quranic term *sūrah*, in its original application, could be analyzed as “a line in a heavenly book,” but he stated that this latter meaning is only traceable in recent Hebrew (Nöldeke, 1909). This implies that such usage may be influenced by Arabic, which does not help in tracing the etymology of a Quranic term. On the other hand, the older usages of the word are too far removed to be relevant to the Quranic *sūrah*.

Nevertheless, Nöldeke’s theory gained wide acceptance among Orientalists, as Jeffery (1938) lists several scholars who repeated and agreed with this suggestion. Of course, there were also scholars who opposed it, such as P. de Lagarde, who believed that there are serious difficulties with this theory (Jeffery, 1938, p. 181). Margoliouth also precisely stated that this theory “seems to violate a sound law” (Margoliouth, 1919, p. 538).

A second theory is that of P. de Lagarde (1889), who, using Buxtorf’s data and revising it, suggested that the origin of *sūrah* could be found in the Hebrew word שרה, which means *kanon* (Jeffery, 1938, p. 181). Jeffery criticized it due to the doubtful nature of the proposed origin and stated that “one cannot place much reliance on this derivation” (Jeffery, 1938).

As a third theory, Hirschfeld (1902) suggested that the word *sūrah* is a corrupted form of the Hebrew word סִדְרָה (*sidrāh*). He explained that it is a synonym of סֵדֶר (*seder*), which is a term for sections of the books in the Masoretic text of the Old Testament. Nöldeke cited this theory and said that it is a thinkable suggestion (Nöldeke, 1909, Vol. 1, p. 31). Jeffery (1938) criticized this theory because it is based on the hypothesis that *sidrāh* was misread as *sūrah* due to the resemblance between the Hebrew letters ד (dālet) and ו (vāv). It should be added that in Mandaic, the Mandaic word *sidrā* is used for chapters of the sacred book *Gnīzā Rabbā* (Drower & Macuch, 1963, pp. 318–319). Even for non-Muslims, it is unlikely that the written form of a Hebrew word would be the origin of a Quranic borrowing (Jeffery, 1938, pp. 181–182).

The fourth theory is that of Margoliouth, published in his article about the Qur’an in the *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics* (1919). He hesitantly proposed the origin to be the Syriac word ܫܒܪܬܐ (*sbartā*), meaning “preaching, Gospel, message.” He pointed to its use in the title of Mark: “the Holy Gospel, preaching (*sbartā*) of Mark” (Margoliouth, 1919, p. 539).

The title is: ܫܒܪܬܐ ܕܡܪܩܘܣ ܕܩܘܪܕܝܢܐ i.e., “The Holy Gospel, the annunciation of Mark the evangelist” (*Syriac New Testament*, title of the 2nd Gospel, p. 61).

The word ܫܒܪܬܐ is registered in Syriac lexicons with the meaning “tidings, good tidings, the Gospel” (Payne Smith, 1903, Vol. 2, p. 359; Brockelmann, 1895, p. 218). This word is derived from the verbal root ܫܒܪ (*SBR*), meaning “to hope, to trust, to confide, to expect” (Brockelmann, 1895; Payne Smith, 1903). It is evident that this application is more compatible with a sacred book as a whole and not its internal sections, as seen in its usage for the Gospel of Mark. Furthermore, there is no justification for dropping the phoneme /b/ without support from correspondence rules.

The fifth theory was suggested by Richard Bell (1926). In discussing some challenge (*tahaddī*) verses, he stated that the sense required for *sūrah* in this context is something like “revelation” or “scripture.” He assumed the root to be the Syriac word ܫܘܪܬܐ (*sūrtā*), meaning “writing, a portion of scripture.” He added that this word has two

variants with the same meaning: ܣܘܪܬܐ (*sūrtā*) and ܣܘܪܬܐ ܥ (*ṣūrtā*) (Bell, 1926, p. 52). Some years later, he introduced the form ܣܘܪܬܐ ܥ (*ṣūrtā*) as the main form and agreed that Arabic *sūrah* cannot be a normal Arabization of the word based on correspondence rules, although it is more compatible with the form ܣܘܪܬܐ (Bell, 1953, p. 52). These three words are not variants of one lexeme but are derived from different roots, and Bell adjusted the meanings to fit his theory.

The word ܣܘܪܬܐ (*sūrṭā*) means “line, lineament, tip, letter, character, written” (Brun, 1895, p. 419); “prick, wound; character, letter” (Costaz, 2002, p. 237), derived from the root √srṭ, meaning “to fall (skin), to delineate, to write” (Brun, 1895, p. 419); “to prick; to draw, to write, to trace” (Costaz, 2002, p. 237). Its Arabic cognate is *saṭara* (سَطَّرَ), which appears with metathesis. This root relates more to the physical act of writing and is not relevant to content. Furthermore, the existence of a cognate in Arabic weakens this suggestion as the origin.

The word ܣܘܪܬܐ ܥ (*ṣūrtā*) means “image, form, type, figure, picture, writing,” and is cognate with Arabic *ṣūrah* (صورة) and Hebrew *ṣūrah* (צורה) (Brun, 1895, p. 548; Costaz, 2002, p. 300), derived from the root √šwr, common to Syriac, Arabic, Hebrew, and South Arabian languages, meaning “to shape, to form, to design, to paint” (Maškūr, 1979, Vol. 1, p. 498; Zammit, 2002, p. 260). Where this word is used for writing, it refers to the shape of written characters, not content. Both meanings are far from the oral nature of the Qur’an, and neither word is compatible with correspondence rules to be the origin of Arabic *sūrah*. The form ܣܘܪܬܐ (*sūrtā*), which seems phonologically more compatible, is not a standard Syriac word recorded in classical dictionaries.

The sixth theory is that proposed by Jeffery (1938) himself, which refers to a Syriac origin. He suggested that *sūrah* is derived from the Syriac word ܣܘܪܐ (*sūrā*), which means “writing” and has a sense very similar to the English “lines” (Jeffery, 1938, p. 182; see also Costaz, 2002, p. 222). This suggestion may be criticized because of the Quranic context in which the term *sūrah* is applied. Its usage in verse 24:1, as well as in verses connected with the challenge (*taḥaddī*), is more relevant to the oral nature of the Qur’an than to the written.

As the seventh theory, we should refer to the recently suggested probability by Angelika Neuwirth (2006). She cautiously proposed that the word *sūrah* may be derived from the Syriac ܫܘܪܝܐ (*šūrayā*), meaning “beginning, opening” (Costaz, 2002, p. 382), which is also used for short psalms sung before the reading of scripture (Neuwirth, 2006, p. 167). Brun (1895) also mentions that the word ܫܘܪܝܐ has been used as a religious term for “liturgic anthems” (p. 699). The word is also connected with ܫܪܝܐ (*šrayā*), meaning “separation, breaking,” as well as a spectrum of related meanings (Brun, 1895, p. 699; Costaz, 2002, p. 382). According to correspondence rules, it is normal for Syriac /š/ to change to Arabic /s/. Therefore, this theory is the most relevant and justifiable, although Neuwirth modestly proposed it with prudential doubt and without detailed justification.

However, the effort to find a foreign origin for *sūrah* over more than a century has been disappointing. One century ago, Margoliouth (1919) considered *sūrah* an enigmatic name for the chapters of the Qur’an, “of which no satisfactory account has as yet been given” (p. 538). More recently, Neuwirth (2006) stated again that “the term *sūrah* is difficult to trace. None of these etymologies however is totally convincing” (p. 167).

### C. Similar Concepts in Judaism and Christianity

It is an evident fact that in three of the ten usages of the word *sūrah* in the Qur’an, the theme is a challenge to deniers (*taḥaddī*) (Qur’an 2:23; 10:38; 11:13). In all three verses, the context shows that they are addressed to the People of the Scripture (*Ahl al-Kitāb*), i.e., Jews and/or Christians. Apart from this point, it is not expected from pagan Arabs (*Ummiyyīn*) to bring expressions similar to the Qur’an, because it was not their practice over centuries, and they never had such enthusiasm for possessing a scripture.

The issue of challenge, as explained by Richard Bell, is based on the argument that if they do not accept the divine origin of the Qur’an, they are required to bring *suwar* or a *sūrah* like it (Bell, 1926, p. 51). Such an argument is meaningful when addressed to believers in previous scriptures. This is not the only point that can be understood from the challenge verses. An important point, to which Bell also referred, is the

fact that the Qur'an "must have been using a word which they understood in the sense in which it was meant to be understood" (Bell, 1926, pp. 51–52).

A result of this point is the fact that *sūrah* was not just a lexical word innovated by the Qur'an as a term that might hinder its proper understanding by the addressees. It is expected to be a religious term known to them beforehand and used in Jewish and/or Christian communities living in Arabia at the time. Thus, the term was borrowed by the Qur'an, as is the case with many other religious terms borrowed from other Abrahamic communities. Based on this argument, the preferred way to solve the enigma is to seek its origin in the religious terminology of the pre-Quranic Judeo-Christian context.

In Judaism, there are two kinds of divisions for scriptures considered as chapters. In antiquity, centuries before the appearance of Islam, the Hebrew scriptures were divided into chapters named *pārāšot*, the plural form of the term פְּרָשָׁה (*pārāšāh*). This term refers to a division in the Masoretic text of the *Tanakh*, the Hebrew Bible. The basis of this division was the distribution of the text into numerous parts for reading in weekly worship. Parallel to *pārāšot*, there was another division of the Old Testament created for ritual purposes and the triennial cycle of reading practiced by Palestinian Jews. These divisions were called *sedārīm*, and each was a *seder* (סֵדֶר). Semantically, *pārāšāh* means "exact statement," from the root √prš, meaning "to divide, to separate, to make distinct" (Gesenius, 1955, p. 831; Jastrow, 1903, Vol. 2, p. 1241). Regarding *seder*, it means "order, sequence," from the root √sdr, meaning "to arrange, to order" (Gesenius, 1955, p. 690). The main difference between the two systems of chaptering is that *pārāšot* is a thematic division, while *sedārīm* is only a quantitative division without special attention to themes. Compared to the Quranic division, it is *pārāšot* that shows more similarities to the Quranic *suwar*, while *sedārīm* is more relevant to quantitative partitions like *juz'* and *ḥizb*.

In the Christian sphere, dividing the Bible into thematic chapters began with the Byzantines. These chapters were called by the Greek word *kephalaia*, the plural form of *kephalaion* (κεφαλαῖον), which literally means "heading" (Liddell & Scott, 1996, p. 944). There are discussions about the time of the appearance of this chaptering, but it is not later

than the 5th century, a century before the rise of Islam. This division is thematic, and from a quantitative standpoint, there are no specific limits. Thus, a significant difference in chapter length can be observed. Chaptering into *kephalaia* was applied to both the Old and New Testaments. Among all the books included, the greatest variation in length is observed in Psalms. Psalm 117 is the shortest chapter in the Bible, while Psalm 119 is the longest.

Islamic sources also contain references to the application of *sūrah* as a term relating to pre-Islamic scriptures. A unique account from the first generations of Muslim scholars is a narration about the usage of *sūrah* for Psalms in early Islam and seemingly before that. It is a brief account narrated by Abū Šāliḥ from Ibn ‘Abbās, which says: “God revealed Psalms to David including 150 *suwar*, in Hebrew language” (al-‘Aynī, *‘Umda*, Vol. 16, p. 6).

Further, there is a narration from Qatāda (d. 118/736), the famous scholar of Basra and one of the prominent disciples of Ibn ‘Abbās, which says: “People narrated to us that the Psalms includes 150 *suwar*, which are all sermons and praises of God” (Ibn Ḥaḡar, 1959, Vol. 6, p. 455; al-Suyūṭī, 1967, Vol. 1, p. 230). This content is repeated by several later commentators and historians (Muqātil ibn Sulaymān, 2003, Vol. 2, p. 261; al-Mas‘ūdī, 1965, Vol. 1, p. 69; al-Zamaḡšarī, 1947, Vol. 1, p. 72). We know that the number of chapters is exactly 150 in the canonical Psalms of the Hebrew Old Testament. Later, it is worth mentioning that Ibn Ṭāwūs (d. 664/1266), the famous Shi’a author, when quoting some chapters of David’s Psalms, called them *suwar* (Ibn Ṭāwūs, 1950, pp. 49–53).

Returning to current Christian terminology, we should mention that the concept of *kephalaia* not only expanded among Christians of West Asia, Egypt, and Ethiopia, but also borrowed forms of it were in common use in their languages, including:

- Syriac: ܩܦܠܐܘܢ (*qefalē’on*) (Costaz, 2002, p. 326)
- Coptic: κεφαλαιον, κεφαλεον (*kefalaion, kefaleon*) (N.A., *Coptic Language*, pp. 47–48)
- Geez: ክፍለ ( *kəfl*), ክፍሌ ( *kufāle*) (Leslau, 1991, p. 276)

Regarding etymology, *kephalaion* is derived from the Greek word κεφαλή (*kefalē*), meaning “head” (Liddell & Scott, 1996, p. 945).

It is worth mentioning that, based on a reverse etymology in Geez, a triconsonantal verbal root  $\sqrt{\text{kfl}}$  emerged, meaning “to distribute, to divide, to separate, to distinguish...” (Leslau, 1991, p. 276). This reverse etymology reveals a semantic phenomenon in the milieu of the Geez language: a contamination of the meaning “to divide” with the meaning “heading,” as the origin of *kefalaion*. This phenomenon may be analyzed as the influence of the Jewish chaptering term *pārāšāh* on Christian *kephalaia*. In general, Judeo-Christian blending is common in Ethiopian culture.

Despite the widespread use of customized forms of the Greek word *kephalaion* in different Christian communities, there were also trends to interpret *kephalaion* as a local word. For example, among Sogdian Christians in Central Asia, the common equivalent was *parwārt* (Gharib, 1995, p. 292), cognate to Middle Persian *fragard* (Faravašī, 1967, p. 151). Also, with limited usage, the Coptic word  $\chi\omega\chi$  (*jōj*), meaning “head,” was used in the sense of “heading,” as an equivalent to *kephalaia* (Crum, 1939, p. 799). In the following lines, we will show that such an event may have occurred in Syriac-Arabic as well.

Although what we know about pre-Islamic Jewish and Christian communities in Arabia is very limited, a similar blending to that found in Geez seems to have occurred with the term *sūrah*. This blending is believed to have been initiated by Arabic-speaking Christians of the pre-Islamic era, based on a borrowing from Syriac. It is likely that *sūrah* was an Arabicized form of the Syriac word  $\text{ܫܘܪܝܐ}$  (*šūrayā*), meaning “beginning, opening” (Costaz, 2002, p. 382), which was proposed by A. Neuwirth as a probable origin, albeit with caution and without firm confidence (Neuwirth, 2006, p. 167).

What may support this probability is the fact that this Syriac word is etymologically related to  $\text{ܫܪܝܐ}$  (*šraya*), meaning “breaking, separation, untying” (Costaz, 2002, p. 382). Both words are derived from the verbal root  $\text{ܫܪ}$  (*šR*), meaning “to terminate, to loosen, to destroy, to abolish; to open, to dismiss” (Costaz, 2002, p. 381). Once again, we observe a blending of the meanings “to divide” and “beginning (> heading)” within a single triconsonantal root. While in Geez this blending occurred with a word of Greek origin, in Syro-Arabic *šūrayā/sūrah*, it occurred with a word of Syriac origin.

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### Conclusion

Regarding the lexical root of the Quranic *sūrah*, there is a wide range of scholarly controversy. While some scholars trace its origin to a pure Arabic root, others consider it a loanword derived from various languages and traditions. This survey re-examined those opinions from both a linguistic and lexicographical viewpoint, alongside a contextual analysis of its usage in the Holy Qur'an. Ultimately, we can conclude that the word *sūrah* is unlikely to have been a common Arabic word in daily use. Rather, it appears to have been a pre-Islamic religious term known among the People of the Scripture, and is therefore reasonably expected to be a loanword. According to the investigations presented in this survey, *sūrah* was a religious term circulated among Arabic-speaking Christians in the region. Its origin is most plausibly the Syriac word *šūrayā*, meaning "beginning, opening," which corresponds to the Christian Greek term *kephalaion*. However, it seems that this was not merely a straightforward borrowing. Instead, a semantic blending occurred between the meaning of "beginning" and that of "breaking, separation," both supported by the same triconsonantal root in Syriac. This secondary blended meaning appears to reflect the influence of Jewish terminology for scriptural divisions, particularly the term *pārāšot*.

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Vol. 3, Issue. 1 (Series 9), Summer 2025, pp.19-44

## Mother's Parenting in the Study of Quranic Exegesis with a Contextual Approach

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### Abstract

This study investigates the pivotal role of mothers in child-rearing through a contextual analysis of Quranic exegesis, with a specific focus on the interpretations of Ibn Ashur. Addressing contemporary concerns regarding the impact of diminished maternal presence on child development, the research aims to formulate a parenting model that aligns Islamic values with modern needs. The study analyzes three key Quranic passages—QS. Al-Qasas 13, QS. Al-Maidah 75, and QS. Al-Imran 36-37—to derive essential principles of maternal care. The findings indicate that a mother's primary responsibilities encompass three dimensions: instilling faith by introducing the child to God, teaching the Qur'an and Islamic laws, and cultivating morals and etiquette. Furthermore, the research emphasizes that successful parenting relies heavily on the mother's personality, characterized by patience, affection, honesty, and trust in Allah (tawakkul). The study also integrates these theological insights with psychological perspectives, including a comparison with the Montessori method, and addresses the necessity of shielding children from negative physical and cyber environments. Ultimately, this paper argues that the contextual application of Quranic narratives offers a comprehensive framework for developing a resilient, morally grounded generation.

**Keywords:** Islamic Parenting, Quranic Exegesis, Contextual Approach, Ibn Ashur, Maternal Role.

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Received: April 9, 2025

Revised: May 19, 2025

Accepted: June 10, 2025

Article type: Research Article

Publisher: Imam Sadiq University



 [10.30497/ISQH.2025.248493.1055](https://doi.org/10.30497/ISQH.2025.248493.1055)

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**How to cite:** Erwanto, D. and Fuadiyatin, N. Nuri (2025). Mother's Parenting in the Study of Quranic Exegesis with a Contextual Approach. *Interdisciplinary Studies of Quran & Hadith*, 3(1), 19-44. doi: 10.30497/isqh.2025.248493.1055

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## Introduction

Indeed, a mother has a vital responsibility to ensure that the next generation possesses a strong moral and intellectual foundation to face future difficulties. According to the Islamic perspective, children are a trust given by Allah to favored individuals; therefore, parents play a crucial role in helping them fulfill this trust. While humans belong to Allah, they are entrusted to the responsibility of their parents. Consequently, it is not surprising that family education plays a primary role in shaping children's behavior, from waking up to going back to sleep, underscoring the impact of the primary family environment on children (Goffar & Saeful, 2018).

Children generally have a stronger emotional and psychological bond with their mothers compared to their fathers. This ultimately leads to mothers being entrusted with the roles of caregiver, educator, and overseer of the child's growth from infancy to adulthood, while fathers often work outside the home. Therefore, if the mother works outside the home, she may pay less attention to the child (Muhammad, 2019). Social changes have greatly affected family life in Western and Eastern countries over the past 40 years, but regardless, a mother must still spend more time with her children than a father (Van Holland De Graaf et al., 2018).

In the last decade, science has discovered much about the emotional role a mother plays in her child's life. Researchers have found that emotional awareness and the mother's ability to handle feelings will determine all aspects of life. John Gottman, in his book *Raising an Emotionally Intelligent Child*, emphasizes that for a mother, emotional intelligence means being aware of her children's feelings and being able to empathize, soothe, and guide them. Children's emotional intelligence depends on the love and affection of their parents and on parenting practices (Joshi & Dutta, 2015).

In this case, mothers play an important role in educating the next generation to be healthy and broad-minded. Since every child has the potential to grow into a good leader for their country, having a quality next generation will certainly help and encourage national growth (Safitri et al., 2024). The goal of education is to help children develop into moral, social, kind, polite, respectful, and healthy individuals who

can think critically, succeed, have good habits, possess a tolerable personality, and be accepted in society. In addition to meeting physical needs (such as food and drink) and psychological needs (such as a sense of safety, comfort, love, and protection), parenting involves interacting with children and educating them about social norms so that they can live peacefully within their environment. In other words, in terms of character education, parenting also includes the parent-child interaction pattern (Rahmi & Yenita, 2018).

Edwards defines parenting as the relationship between parents and children aimed at educating, guiding, disciplining, and protecting them so that they can grow and adapt to social norms. Parenting is a set of attitudes expressed towards the child through the emotional environment created. All interactions between parents and children, including how they express attitudes, values, interests, beliefs, and behaviors while raising the child, are referred to as parenting styles. Children are influenced by these interactions, both directly and indirectly, to acquire the values and skills they will need in the future. Parents must have a strong understanding of parenting styles (Padjrin, 2016).

The phenomenon occurring nowadays is that many children are not fortunate enough to grow up with their mothers; some children have to be placed in daycare, cared for by babysitters, or entrusted to close family members. The lack of parental attention certainly causes a number of developmental problems for the child. Good parenting is defined as being sensitive to the child's needs, responding to the child's words, body language, or other signals, encouraging the child's interests, and being kind, attentive, and supportive. On the other hand, children who grow up with poor parenting tend to be rude and disobedient. Effective parenting fosters strong attachment bonds and a good self-concept in children. Problematic parenting is often caused by the parents' lack of mental readiness (Zierow, 2017).

Education is always considered the solution to every problem that occurs in community life (Annisa, 2021). Based on this phenomenon, the researcher conducted a study using the contextual approach of Ibn 'Ashur's exegesis, which provides a foundation for interpreting the verses of the Qur'an in a way that is relevant to the needs of the times,

thereby helping Muslim families to develop parenting patterns that align with Islamic values.

## **Parenting in Several Dimensions**

### **A. Parenting from an Islamic Perspective**

Parenting, or child-rearing, is the process of guiding, raising, and educating children to grow into independent, moral individuals who contribute to society (Hurlock, 2014). In Islam, parenting is not merely a worldly responsibility but also a form of trust from Allah. In Islam, parenting has several foundations. First is the principle of monotheism, which involves educating children to recognize Allah and follow His teachings, as derived from QS. Luqman: 13. Second is the principle of love and gentleness, as the Qur'an emphasizes the importance of affection in upbringing, derived from QS. Al-Isra: 24. Third is the principle of parental example; because children imitate their parents' behavior, Islam teaches that parents must be good role models, derived from QS. Al-Ahzab: 21. Fourth is the principle of responsibility and moral education, in which Islam obliges parents to educate their children in goodness and keep them away from evil, derived from QS. At-Tahrim: 6.

Islamic parenting is a child-rearing approach based on Islamic values, encompassing education in faith, worship, morals, and social aspects according to the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah (Ellyza, 2017). In Islam, parents have the primary responsibility of educating their children to grow into individuals who are faithful, have good morals, and are beneficial to society. According to Abdullah Nashih Ulwan in his book *Tarbiyatul Aulad fil Islam* (Education of Children in Islam), Islamic parenting encompasses five main aspects: first, Education of Faith (*Aqidah*) by instilling faith from an early age so that children have a strong relationship with Allah. Second, Moral Education (*Akhlak*) by guiding children to have noble character in accordance with the example of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Third, Intellectual Education by providing beneficial knowledge, both religious and worldly. Fourth, Psychological Education, which equips children with affection and builds a strong personality. Fifth, Social Education, which helps children to interact well within society by upholding Islamic values (Ulwan, 2007).

Parenting involves the role of parents, which has a significant influence on the psychological development of their children during the maturation process. Generally, in developing countries, the primary caregiver for infants and toddlers in households is the mother. A role is a set of behaviors expected from someone occupying a certain position or status in society. Roles are carried out based on the social status chosen by an individual. Experience plays a significant role in shaping the role of a mother. This period is referred to as a transitional phase. The conditions that influence experiences during the transition period are understanding, expectations, level of knowledge, environment, level of planning, as well as good physical and emotional conditions (Cimi et al., 2013).

Educating children is one of the primary duties of a mother; the process of educational upbringing in children has a level of success and achievement proportional to the extent of the mother's role in it (Al-Ghazali, 2025). A good mother is one who consistently fulfills her child's basic needs, including nutrition, not only physically but also for the brain and heart. This analogy illustrates the fulfillment of a child's brain nutrition through the education provided by their biological mother. Childhood is the golden period for a child's growth and development; the education they receive in their early years is a reflection of how they will grow up as adults (Chatib, 2010).

When physical health positively impacts the smoothness of activities, a healthy heart will bring about a happy life in this world and the hereafter. A heart adorned with faith radiates spiritual intelligence to children. A mother is a beauty; from her, all beauty is created. From the tiny, cute baby, to the colors that adorn the house, and the trinkets and jewelry for her husband. With her gentle hands, the mother moves her small fingers to compose writing, her melodious voice brings a sense of calm, and from her, the potential of a person begins to be developed (Ellyza, 2017). It cannot be denied that behind every person with great achievements, there is a mother who was the foundational pioneer during their childhood (Pasiak, 2012).

The best upbringing given by a mother has a significant impact on the continuity of her child's talent. A good mother will not impose her will on her child. She will prioritize her child's interests and talents, so the

skilled hands from the gentle cradle of the mother will be realized at that moment (Anggelista et al., 2024). The lack of a mother's role in fulfilling a child's basic needs certainly has a negative impact on the child. If the mother's role is unsuccessful, the child will experience growth and developmental disorders, and if the child experiences delays in growth and development, it will be difficult to detect. Conversely, if the mother's role is successful, the child can grow and develop according to their age (Werdiningsih & Astarani, 2012).

Etymologically, the word *al-umm* has four meanings: first, *al-aṣḥl* which means "source" or "origin" because the mother is the place where humans are born and her womb is the origin of human life. Second, *al-marji'* meaning "place of return" or "support" because the mother is the most comfortable place to lean on and complain to. Third, *al-jamā'ah* meaning "collection" or "group" because a mother's sacrifice for her child is very great (grouped; indicating many). Fourth, *ad-dīn* which means religion (guidance or teaching) (Al-Fairuzabadi, 1999). A mother is the first school for her children. All the attitudes and things taught to the child will indirectly become a role model in the child's daily life (al-Abrasyi, 1981). A mother is a symbol of sacrifice and a source that nurtures humans to grow into someone who possesses nobility and devotion to their Creator. In a piece of wisdom, it is mentioned that: "Mother is a spring of water that will never run dry, giving without asking for anything in return, a heart full of love, without her, the sweetness of life would be lost," and she is also interpreted as a place to return (Muhammad, 2021).

### **B. Parenting European Perspective**

One of the parenting methods from a European perspective that is quite famous and widely popular is the Montessori parenting method developed by Maria Montessori, an Italian doctor and educator. The Montessori method emphasizes the importance of giving children freedom within clear boundaries to develop independence, skills, and a sense of responsibility. Montessori Parenting has several key principles, namely: child independence, where children are given the opportunity to choose and make decisions themselves in a structured environment; the prepared environment, which is a learning space that supports exploration and independent learning; and the role of parents as

facilitators, not as rulers. In this approach, parents do not dictate but rather guide the child in the exploration process. Additionally, Montessori emphasizes the importance of experiential learning, where children learn through concrete activities, not just theory. The concept of Montessori Parenting aligns with Islamic values. Montessori teaches that children should be given freedom in guided exploration, in line with Islamic principles that value individual effort (Montessori, 1967). In Islam, the concept of parenting emphasizes the importance of education based on religious values, exemplary behavior, and affection. Meanwhile, the Montessori method emphasizes the development of children's independence, active exploration of the environment, and learning based on concrete experiences. Ibn 'Ashur, in his commentary, emphasizes the importance of education based on advice and historical values as a medium for character formation in children. The Montessori Parenting approach can be adopted in Islamic education as long as it remains in line with Qur'anic principles. Parents are allowed to adapt the Montessori method, but Islamic values must remain the main foundation in educating and guiding the child.

### **C. Parenting According to Ibn Ashur**

In *Tafsir al-Tahrir wa al-Tanwir*, Ibn 'Ashur explains that the verses about parenting in the Qur'an emphasize the role of the mother as the first school for the child. He interprets QS. Luqman verse 14 by emphasizing that mothers play a significant role in shaping a child's personality from the time of pregnancy to the period of breastfeeding, considering the immense physical and emotional sacrifices made by mothers. In QS. Al-Ahqaf verse 15, Ibn 'Ashur highlights that a mother's patience in raising her children is one of the most noble acts in the sight of Allah, as it involves extraordinary sacrifice. Additionally, in the interpretation of QS. An-Nisa verse 9, he emphasizes the importance of parental moral responsibility in educating children, so that they grow into a generation that is strong both spiritually and socially. Thus, according to Ibn 'Ashur, the role of mothers in parenting is not only biological but also involves continuous moral and religious education from an early age (Ibn 'Ashur, 1984, Vol. 21, pp. 98–99).

Aspect	Islamic Parenting	Montessori Parenting	Ibnu 'Ashur's Parenting View
<b>The Role of Parents</b>	Guide & moral example	Learning facilitator	Advisor & character builder
<b>Child Independence</b>	Balanced between rules & freedom	Given within limits	freedom certain Must be guided with wisdom
<b>Educational Methods</b>	Based on religious values & exemplary behavior	Based on exploration experience	on & Prioritizing advice & history
<b>Learning Environment</b>	Islamic house as the main place	An environment that supports exploration	An environment that shapes Islamic character

## A. Interpretation of the Qur'anic Verses

### 1. QS. Al-Qasas 13

*So We returned Moses to his mother, that she might be at peace and not grieve, and that she might know that the promise of Allah is true, but most people do not know.*

In this verse, the story is told of the mother of Prophet Moses who was afraid for her son who was about to be killed by Pharaoh. However, due to her submission and faith in her God for his safety, Allah returned her son to her. Here, God's promise truly came to pass, emphasized by the letter "kay" with its synonym, *lam ta'lil*, which means causality, to clearly state from the beginning that it is connected to an affirmative action, not a negative one. Meanwhile, the pronoun "*Akstaruhum la Ya'lamun*" refers back to the context of Pharaoh's people from the Children of Israel, indicating evidence for him that God's promise is true. That is, only she knew this, while most people did not know it. This is because they are divided between the polytheists and the believers. Their faith has long been in vain and they do not have scholars who can teach them the meaning of religion, thus their faith is close to disbelief (Ibn 'Ashur, 1984, Vol. 20, p. 86).

The purpose of the meaning of the Qur'anic verse here is: we must have faith in Allah and understand the importance of instilling belief in oneself, according to Ibn Ashur's theory of *maqasid al-Qur'an*, which

is True Belief and Learning/Teaching True Belief (*al-Is}la>h} al-I'tiqad wa Ta'li>m al-Aqd as-S{ohi>h*) (Ibn 'Ashur, 1984, Vol. 1, pp. 40–42).

**Contextualization of the verse:** This verse tells the story of the mother of Prophet Moses and her faith and trust in her God, so the context of applying this verse is: how a mother teaches her child to know their God and instills faith.

## 2. QS. Al-Maidah 75

*Al Masih, the son of Mary, was only a Messenger, and indeed, many Messengers had passed away before him. His mother was a woman of truth, and they both used to eat food. Observe how We explain to them (the People of the Book) the signs of Our power, then observe how they agree (by considering Our verses).*

In the teachings of Christ, it is the same regarding the mother of Prophet Jesus, which then refutes the Christian belief in the divinity of Christ and his mother, in the phrase: *Wa Ummuhu Shiddiqotun* being conjoined with the phrase *Ma al-Masih ibnu Maryam Illa Rosul*. The meaning in this context depicts her as a truthful woman. This is as emphasized by the author of *al-Kashshaf* when he said: "His mother is none other than a truthful woman." The word "siddiqah" (truthfulness) is an exaggerated form, meaning it is excessive in describing her as a truthful person, which signifies the truth of God's promise, which is the covenant of faith and the truth of human promises. Just as Prophet Ismail is depicted in the Qur'an as a truthful person (Maryam: 54), Prophet Yusuf is given the title "the truthful" because he fulfilled God's promise to avoid forbidden things even when the means were available. It has been mentioned that what is meant here is to describe her as someone who is very sincere in believing in the word of Allah, just as Abu Bakr was given the title "the truthful" because he was the first to believe in the Messenger of Allah, as stated in the word of Allah (QS. Az-Zumar: 33). Therefore, this word comes from the word "more." His statement makes it very clear that the Qur'an describes Maryam's character as someone who is honest, meaning she believes in the word of Allah (Ibn 'Ashur, 1984, Vol. 6, pp. 285–286). The mother of Prophet Jesus was someone who firmly adhered to God's commandments, so God granted her the son of a mighty prophet.

The purpose of the meaning of the Qur'anic verse here is: we must truly possess the trait of obedience to Allah as a reflection of our honesty as His servants, and how important it is to instill this noble trait within oneself, according to Ibn Ashur's theory of *maqasid al-Qur'an*, which emphasizes holding firmly to the laws of Allah (*at-Tasyri'*) and learning from the stories of the past that serve as examples (*Qishos wa Ahbar al-Umam as-Salifah*) (Ibn 'Ashur, 1984, Vol. 1, pp. 40–42).

**Contextualization of the verse:** This verse tells the story of the mother of Prophet Jesus about her obedience to her God, earning her the title of being honest in the Qur'an. Therefore, the context of applying this verse is: how a mother teaches her child about honesty, and how a mother teaches her child about Islamic law.

### 3. QS. Ali Imran 36-37

*So when the wife of 'Imran gave birth to her child, she said: "O my Lord, indeed I have given birth to a girl; and Allah knows best what she has given birth to; and the male is not like the female." Indeed, I have named her Maryam, and I seek refuge for her and her descendants in You from the accursed devil." # So her Lord accepted her with good acceptance and nurtured her with good nurture, and He made Zakariya her guardian. Every time Zakariya entered to see Maryam in the prayer niche, he found food beside her. Zakariya said: "O Maryam, where did you get this (food)?" Maryam replied: "This food is from Allah." Indeed, Allah provides sustenance to whom He wills without account.*

Imran's wife is Hannah binti Faqudha. Her husband passed away leaving her pregnant, so she vowed to dedicate her unborn child to devote herself to the Temple of Jerusalem. They usually did this when the newborn baby was male. The use of the word "freed" in this context is honorable, because when she is freed to serve in the Temple of Jerusalem, it is as if she is liberated from the shackles and captivity of this world and given the freedom to worship God. It is said that the wife of Imran, when she was pregnant, desired a male child and hoped that her wish would be granted by her God. But in the end, she gave birth to a female child, which is why it is said in the Qur'an: "*Rabbi inni nadartu laka ma fi batni muhrara,*" followed by the phrase "*Wallahu 'Alamu ma wadha'at,*" as a form of submission and contentment to her God. She firmly believed that anyone who entrusts their affairs to Allah should

not doubt His plans. The next sentence: "And I have named her Maryam," seems to indicate that she intended to name her after the best Prophetess among the Children of Israel, namely Maryam (Ibn 'Ashur, 1984, Vol. 3, p. 233).

Then her Lord accepted her with a good acceptance and nurtured her with good character. The meaning of "*Taqobbalaha*" is that He accepted her release to serve the Sanctuary in Jerusalem, which means that God appointed Mary to a position dedicated to Him due to the patience and contentment of her mother, something that was not allowed before. Then in the phrase: *bi Qobulin Hasanin*, she will become a special woman, which is a sign that a messenger will emerge from her who will annul many of the Torah's laws, because women are not obligated to worship in the *Masjid al-Haram*. Whereas the meaning of *Wa Anbataha Nabatan Hasanan* is that from her will grow good morals, meaning that she will shape righteous morals in others, in this case character and inner purity. Her education and youth are likened to the buds of a fresh plant, a metaphor. "*Nabata*" is the absolute object of "*Anbata*," which is the source of "*Nabata*." The word "*Anbata*" is used for emphasis (Ibn 'Ashur, 1984, Vol. 3, p. 235).

The purpose of the meaning of the Qur'anic verse here is: we must truly have good morals, and it is important to instill morals in a person. In the theory of *maqasid al-Qur'an* by Ibn Ashur, this is to adhere firmly to the Sharia of Allah (*Tadzhib al-Akhlak*) (Ibn 'Ashur, 1984, Vol. 1, pp. 40–42).

**Contextualization of the verse:** This verse tells the story of Imran's wife, the mother of Maryam, about her sincerity and submission to her Lord as a form of noble character. So the context of applying this verse is: how a mother teaches her child about morals and etiquette.

## **B. Contextualization of Quranic Verses**

Parenting behavior has two main dimensions: first, support; second, control. Examples of supportive parenting behaviors include patience, responsibility, affection, and others, while the control dimension refers to parenting behaviors aimed at regulating children's behavior, such as keeping them away from bad habits and negative impacts (Vanderfaeillie et al., 2012). It is no longer a secret that behind a great child, there is a great mother. A mother teaches her child from the womb

and continues to educate them during childhood about habits such as saying prayers before meals, introducing religion, and if Islam, about faith and its Creator. In this context, the contextualization of the interpretation of the Qur'anic verse about the role of a mother in educating a child includes: 1) The behavior of a mother, and 2) The use of language. Meanwhile, in the context of education that needs to be provided to the child during the teaching process, it includes: 1) Creed, 2) The Qur'an, 3) Rules, 4) Socialization (Parhan, 2020).

In the contextualization of the above verses: In QS. Al-Qasas 13, the actualization is the mother's education to the child regarding *Aqeedah* (Creed). Meanwhile, in QS. Al-Maidah 75, the actualization is the mother's education to her child regarding the Qur'an and Islamic Sharia. In QS. Al-Imran 36-37, the actualization is the mother's education to her child regarding Morals and Ethics. All of these children are shaped by maternal qualities that consist of love, patience, and good communication, among others, in the contextualization of the verses:

### **1. Forming a maternal personality**

#### **a. Patience with Children**

A child is certainly born without knowledge, sometimes making various mistakes that are considered less than pleasant by their parents. Therefore, in shaping the personality of a child—especially one with special needs—patience is very important. Through a patient attitude, it is hoped that the mother can understand or have a sense of affection, because it is clear how patience can have a significant impact on the child's development (Syifani, 2023). A study conducted by George S. Morrison notes that the concept of shaping children by parents according to the Qur'an consists of 11 points. Points 1 to 4 pertain to knowledge in the cognitive aspect (36.36%), points 5 to 6 pertain to practical skills in the psychomotor aspect (18.18%), while points 7 to 11 pertain to attitudes in the affective aspect (45.46%). This is because children are considered miniature adults, children as sinful, children as blank tablets, children as growing plants, children as property, and children as future investments (Morrison, 2016).

On the other hand, a child's social competence is influenced by the behavior of their parents towards them, especially a mother who often accompanies the child, demonstrating qualities such as patience,

honesty, discipline, responsibility, sincerity, and parental advice. A study conducted by McDowell and Parke shows that maternal involvement in all these behaviors will demonstrate the child's competence, both morally and otherwise. Therefore, the quality of the mother-child relationship is very close, with mothers having a greater impact on their children than fathers. Cross-country studies also show that various personality tendencies in a meta-analysis of 50 studies conducted in 18 countries by Khaleque and Rohner found that perceptions of children's behavioral tendencies significantly decrease with maternal acceptance; each related to seven personality tendencies, one of which is patience and emotional intelligence (Fagan et al., 2014). In another study by Lovejoy and colleagues in the field of parenting, the role of emotional regulation and its impact on children has begun to be considered, as the emotional volatility of parents provides strong evidence that deficits in emotional regulation are the most prominent predictors of adverse outcomes, such as maternal aggression towards their children (Cohen et al., 2008).

Therefore, shaping a mother's personality here involves training her patience towards her child. Based on many existing facts, the emotional stress of a mother and her parenting behavior in understanding children with irregular behavioral problems are common issues. This type of problem is often observed, as a mother tends to have a higher level of emotional stress, resulting in less warmth and flexibility in her interactions with her children (Assel et al., 2002).

#### **b. Good communication with the child**

The mother's caregiving system can be reflected in her representation, which includes her view of herself as a caregiver, both in general and for a specific child, and how she perceives that specific child needs and accepts her care. Therefore, this child can be happy to accept the mother as their companion, especially in how the mother communicates well with her child (Button et al., 2001). There are several things to consider in maintaining communication between mother and child:

*The first stage (imitation stage):* Parents need to realize that everything unintentionally heard or intentionally played for the child will naturally be imitated, whether the words have a good meaning or a bad meaning. Parents should set a good example in communication, striving to use

proper language when interacting with their children. In the theory of language use, there is a possibility that children will naturally remember words that have good and beautiful meanings, as well as words that have bad and ugly meanings, both in terms of sound and meaning.

*The second stage (the stage of understanding meaning):* Parents can implement learning that will increase the child's vocabulary. It can include introducing the names of objects around them, the differences between one word and another, and explaining words based on their similarities.

*The third stage (the stage of using words in communication):* Parents can play a role in the communication carried out by the child. If the child uses words that are not quite right, both in terms of sound and meaning, the parents can correct the mistakes made by the child. By informing the child of the position of their language errors while also providing the correct answer, the child can understand the proper use of words (Choirunnisa, 2020).

On the contrary, if not, it will have a negative impact on the child, because a mother's communication determines her child's condition. There is a study on the aspect of maternal parenting which states that communication will depend on mental conditions. In the theory of mind according to cross-sectional studies by Ruffman, Perner, and Parkin, a child feels like a victim of a mother's judgment if the child makes a mistake, which will have a negative impact on the child's emotional condition. This is because the mother's talk about mental conditions predicts individual differences, including: (a) the child's theory of mind performance, (b) the child's general language ability, (c) the child's own talk about mental conditions, and (d) other types of the mother's talk (Ruffman et al., 2006). Therefore, in many studies, it is mentioned that the bond between mother and child has a greater impact than the influence of cultural stereotypes, as long as the communication between mother and child has a good bond. After all, the relationship between child and parent, accompanied by a good bond—in this case, communication—cannot be denied, as communication determines the child's feelings (Friedlmeier & Trommsdorff, 2011).

## **2. Keeping Children Away from Bad Environments**

### **a. Real World Environment**

Every mother certainly desires her children to have good morals in accordance with religious teachings. However, reality often does not meet expectations, especially when mothers neglect supervising a child's daily habits, or worse, when a mother sets a poor example or encourages her children to break religious rules. Similarly, regarding school education, mothers should not neglect their duty to supervise or monitor whether their children are doing their work correctly. As a result, when children grow into teenagers without adequate supervision, they may develop a personality that leads them to act without considering the negative consequences or Islamic values. It is not uncommon for unsupervised children to engage in free mixing or drug use; often, issues like early dating arise due to a lack of parental supervision (Anabella et al., 2021).

External behavioral influences that negatively impact children's behavior must be quickly anticipated. For example, mothers must prevent children from being stingy, using harsh words, or behaving rudely. Parental protection involves keeping children away from "naughty" peers and informing children that they should feel ashamed when behaving badly (Nelson et al., 2006).

Research by Posada and colleagues using the Attachment Q-Set (AQS) to assess a mother's education about ideal child behavior found that conclusions were similar across seven Western and non-Western countries. These findings greatly overlapped with the concept of attachment theory regarding the phenomenon of a "secure base," where a child strongly desires to be close to their caregiver—typically the mother. This means that the child certainly does not want to be separated from their mother. Therefore, mothers should not distance the child but rather bring them closer to the outside environment securely (Mesman et al., 2016). Because if a mother cannot get along with the child, that child will be educated by the times.

#### **b. Cyber Environment**

The rapid advancement of technology is always accompanied by negative aspects, so a mother must optimize the positive impacts, such as providing educational applications, imparting understanding to the child, and guiding the child to use gadgets wisely. While technology has benefits, excessive use of gadgets by children can lead to several

negative effects, such as addiction, dependence, laziness in studying, unstable emotions, red eyes from radiation, a tendency to access inappropriate content, and wasted time. The mother must minimize these negative impacts by reducing usage, advising the child not to use devices for too long, and diverting them with enjoyable activities, thereby making an effort to approach the child so that they are closer to their parents than to their cellphones (Briliany et al., 2023).

The use of smartphones can also divert a child from their mother, whereas this interaction is actually very important for the child's cognitive, language, and emotional development. Recent observational research from Boston Medical Center shows that children who are already focused on games or applications like YouTube or TikTok on their smartphones have negative interactions with their families. The research findings indicate that smartphone use can lead to a rift between mother and child in terms of educational, psychological, biological, and social functions (Pratiwi & Alfiana, 2020).

Therefore, the mother's role is crucial in keeping the child away from excessive smartphone use. Various studies have shown different patterns related to parental behavior in accompanying children's smartphone use. If a mother accompanies, supervises, and selects content for her child, it can enhance the child's language, cognitive, and concentration skills. Conversely, parents who give their child a smartphone from the age of two without setting clear usage limits—often reasoning that it prevents the child from being fussy—risk causing addiction and behavioral issues regarding the child's mental health (Widyandari & Maharani, 2021).

### **3. A Mother's Teaching to Her Child**

A mother as an educator can instill good values in her child based on Islamic teachings so that the child can perform social functions in accordance with religious, legal, and moral norms, as well as noble character. Therefore, the role of the ideal mother is fundamental in Islamic teachings. The results of this research reveal the integration of Islam between the role of the ideal mother and the contextual interpretation of Qur'anic verses (Yakub et al., 2023). Mothering based on the Qur'an includes the following contextual approaches:

#### **a. Teaching the Qur'an**

A prevalent phenomenon today is that many Muslims, upon reaching adulthood, cannot read their own holy book, the Qur'an. In fact, learning the Qur'an should be done at an early age so that a child can develop all their potentials, including cognitive, social-emotional, and religious aspects (Shodiqin & Fatimah, 2023). Therefore, the role of the mother in teaching the Qur'an to children should begin as early as possible.

Women, as beings destined to be intermediaries in the birth of humans, are capable of conceiving, giving birth, nurturing potential humans, and teaching and educating them. Therefore, the duties of mothers are truly a heavy task. Even Allah Himself has determined that the nature of women includes the heavy task of educating their children. One of the roles of a mother is to teach her child the Qur'an, the divine holy book. Thus, as an ideal mother, it is not enough to just be able to conceive; a mother must also be of quality. Their children should not only have their physical needs met but also their spiritual needs, which are even more important (Susanti, 2022).

#### **b. Introducing God**

Islamic education as outlined in QS. Luqman 13-19 involves: Introducing the Creator, teaching religious knowledge, training and habituating prayer, training and habituating enjoining good and forbidding wrong, and training children not to be arrogant. This is encompassed in the bond between a servant and their God (Nurhadi et al., 2018).

Regarding children's education within the family, mothers play a crucial role. According to Sheikh Sofiudin bin Fadli Zain, one of the mother's roles is as an educator of monotheism, involving God in every activity performed by humans. Mothers have an important role in instilling religious values from an early age. These values will serve as a foundation for the child in fulfilling their roles as both an individual and a social being. One of the values that must be instilled from a young age is the teaching of Islam, which requires every Muslim to worship the Almighty God and believe in Him (Kusmawati & Surachman, 2021).

#### **c. Teaching Ethics**

When a child is born into a world where both parents are in a harmonious and amicable state, the child will grow up in a nurturing environment filled with tranquility and peace. This positive impact is

enveloped by ethical and civilized values. Therefore, it is essential for a mother to create an atmosphere of care for her children (Lubis & Harahap, 2021). Education in ethics and manners is about teaching practical habits, such as eating while reciting *Basmalah*, drinking while sitting, and so on.

The role of a mother in teaching a child occurs directly through nurturing, caring, and providing affection. This behavior is expected to be emulated by the child so that they develop a self-concept or good habits, including speaking well, being responsible, being honest, apologizing if making a mistake, having empathy for others, and comprehensively classifying events (Pangesti & Agussafutri, 2017).

Thus, valuable ethics are reflected in parenting practices that emphasize, for example, the encouragement to be polite, which in turn is reflected in moderate and humble behavior when interacting with others. Historically, achieving and maintaining social order among adults has been viewed as the primary responsibility of parents of young children. Children are taught to promise to respect their parents, while at the same time, parents have the primary responsibility to manage, teach, and discipline their children. These ethical values emphasize the importance of a mother's role in raising her children (Wu et al., 2002). Therefore, the task and responsibility of a mother in teaching her children are defined by the habits she practices. In this case, parents are the people children imitate and emulate. For example, a mother should provide the best example for her child through cleanliness, discipline, honesty, and speaking kindly. Therefore, the parents' attitude must reflect good behavior. Additionally, parental education influences the shaping of a child's personality and character; this is what is meant by teaching ethics to children (Annisa, 2020).

#### **d. Teaching Morals**

Moral education from a mother is absolutely necessary for all children. This moral education is so important that it will shape good character, resilience in facing trials, and the ability to live life (Erwanto, 2022). A study in America found that 90% of criminal cases are caused by the formation of bad behaviors such as irresponsibility, dishonesty, and poor interpersonal relationships. Additionally, other studies indicate this is due to emotional quotient factors (Munirah, 2014).

The function of applying moral values is, among other things, to improve the continuity of a child's social life in the future. As a form of moral behavior that will develop and be passed on to future generations, values such as respect, honor, self-discipline, responsibility, and kindness must be instilled in children. For a child to understand their behavior, they must also possess and comprehend the values of respect and responsibility. Additionally, to understand right from wrong, a conscience is needed as an internal control for the child's behavior. For instance, if a child does not yet understand good or bad deeds—such as when a friend falls and the child does not immediately help, or when a beggar needs food and the child lacks the initiative to give—this is where the mother's teaching role comes in (Bueraheng, 2023). Finally, interviews conducted to understand parenting behavior revealed two recurring and comprehensive parenting goals: (a) the importance of education for children and (b) the need for sharp awareness (*pendiente*) towards children in both physical and emotional realms (Ceballo et al., 2012).

### **Conclusion**

A mother has the primary responsibility of educating her child through childhood, adolescence, and adulthood, with an upbringing based on Islamic values, including the education of faith, worship, morals, and social aspects. In the Qur'an, it is narrated in QS. Al-Qasas 13 that the mother of Prophet Moses possessed the characteristic of *tawakkul* (trust) and knowing her God. In QS. Al-Maidah 75, the mother of Prophet Jesus is described as someone who steadfastly adhered to God's law and was recognized as a truthful person. In QS. Al-Imran 36-37, the mother of Mary is noted for her patience and contentment with her God. With these noble qualities, the Qur'an illustrates the role of a mother in educating her children.

Contextualization in the interpretation study includes: First, a mother must possess maternal qualities consisting of patience, affection, and good communication. Second, a mother should keep her child away from bad environments, whether in the real world or the virtual world. Third, a mother's teaching to her child includes introducing the child to God, teaching the Qur'an, and teaching morals and etiquette.

In his contextual theory, Ibn Ashur states that if there is a story in a Qur'anic verse, the wisdom and lessons in that verse must be applied in a different temporal context, as the pattern of that story will certainly be repeated in every era with different people, times, and places. Therefore, the contextual formulation of the verses suggests:

1. QS. Al-Qasas 13 implies that a mother's role should be to introduce her child to God (teaching faith).
2. QS. Al-Maidah 75 implies that a mother's role should be to teach Islamic teachings and the Qur'an to her child.
3. QS. Al-Imran 36-37 implies that a mother's role should be to teach morals and etiquette to her child.

From all three verses, it is implicitly stated that the mother's role in shaping her child is rooted in her own character and personality. Therefore, the mother must develop maternal qualities, including love, patience, and good communication. Only then, during the educational process, can she effectively guide the child and keep them safe from negative environments.

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**Vol. 3, Issue. 1 (Series 9), Summer 2025, pp.45-60**  
**The Quranic Moral Approach to the Problem of Evil**

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### **Abstract**

The problem of evil always confronts humanity with the question of why the world is marked by such vast hardship and adversity, and what proportion of human trials relate to happiness and pleasure. The present study, using a descriptive-analytical method, attempts to present the Quranic approach to the problem of evil by considering the nature of humanity and the world, the ultimate purposes of creation, and human eternal happiness, and by analyzing these components from the perspective of the Holy Quran. Accordingly, the nature of worldly life—which causes negligence, arrogance, and deception—along with the nature of humanity as a free and excessive-desiring being, leads people into epistemological errors and practical afflictions that result in the production of moral evil and eternal misery. In contrast, from the Quran's perspective, the problem of evil serves to nurture the soul and complete the human self, offering people an opportunity to return to their origin, acquire moral virtues, and move toward perfection and ultimate happiness. The Quran, by distinguishing between the ontological and epistemological factors of evil, attributes its causes to human beings, but justifies its wisdom on the basis of the most fundamental condition of the individual human being—eternal happiness—and a moral model.

**Keywords:** Evil in the Quran, Anthropology of the Quran, Ultimate Happiness, Human Defense, Divine Tests.

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Received: May 12, 2025


Revised: June 3, 2025

Accepted: July 11, 2025

Article type: Research Article

Publisher: Imam Sadiq University



 [10.30497/ISQH.2025.249355.1071](https://doi.org/10.30497/ISQH.2025.249355.1071)

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How to cite: Karimi, A. (2025). The Quranic Moral Approach to the Problem of Evil. *Interdisciplinary Studies of Quran & Hadith*, 3(1), 45-60. doi: [10.30497/isqh.2025.249355.1071](https://doi.org/10.30497/isqh.2025.249355.1071)

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## 1. Introduction

The problem of evil has always concerned humanity, raising profound ontological questions such as why evil exists. Monotheists have taken different paths in addressing evil, ranging from philosophers who deem it non-existent to those who view it as a major challenge to monotheism, each offering varied interpretations and justifications (Davis, 2010; Peterson et al., 1997; Taliaferro, 2003).

Suffering is a tangible and inseparable part of human life, and the belief in God is directly confronted with the theoretical and practical challenges posed by evil. Finding an answer to the problem of evil from the perspective of the Holy Qur'an, the divine scripture revealed for the guidance and salvation of humankind, can be highly appealing and worthy of study.

A review of the Holy Quran verses, however, reveals an important moral approach underlying the problem of evil. Understanding this approach means recognizing key components in the Quranic paradigm, in which the problem of evil is deeply tied to the nature of humanity, the nature of the world, and the ultimate goal of human happiness.

A close examination of the Qur'anic verses reveals that an important ethical orientation underlies the problem of evil, an orientation whose comprehension requires identifying several key components within the Qur'anic paradigm. Within this framework, the problem of evil is intimately tied to the nature of the human being, the nature of the world, and the ultimate purpose of creation, namely the attainment of human felicity.

## 2. Theoretical Framework

The historical discourse on moral evil and divine justice (theodicy) — the philosophical justification of God's justice despite the existence of suffering (Adams, 2014; Marina, 2024) — traces its roots to the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament. Narratives such as the Book of Job probe profound suffering, challenge simplistic notions of retributive justice, and highlight the enigmatic dimension of divine action (Marina, 2024). Early theological frameworks subsequently emerged to address this ethical and philosophical challenge. Augustine's free-will defense maintains that moral evil arises from humanity's misuse of free agency

and conceptualizes evil as a privation of good (Hick, n.d.; Marina, 2024). Conversely, the tradition of Irenaeus, later refined by John Hick, developed the soul-making theodicy, which proposes that suffering functions as an essential catalyst for spiritual growth and the cultivation of human virtues (Hick, n.d.; Marina, 2024). Leibniz advanced this philosophical trajectory by grounding divine justice in the perfection of "The best of all possible worlds," thereby emphasizing the eschatological fulfillment awaiting rational creatures (Adams, 2014; Rutherford, 2023). Contemporary scholarship continues to scrutinize the logical and evidential problems of evil, seeking a responsible and coherent response to this enduring challenge for Christian theology (Peterson, 1978).

Given the profound existential significance of the problem of evil for human life, and considering the central role of the Qur'an in confronting fundamental human questions, the necessity of this inquiry becomes evident. Despite this, no direct and comprehensive study has addressed the issue from a distinctly Qur'anic perspective. Karimi and Mazani (2016), in *Theological Research Quarterly*, examined Shi'i devotional approaches to the problem of evil. Serajzadeh (2021) analyzed manifestations of moral good and evil in Qur'anic discourse in the *Qur'an and Hadith Research Journal*. The absence of broader systematic research highlights the need for a more thorough investigation.

This article argues that, from the Qur'anic standpoint, a proper understanding of human nature and the nature of the world provides the foundation for interpreting, explaining, and situating the problem of evil. Moreover, uncovering the higher purposes of creation and attending to the realities of the afterlife shed light on the divine wisdom underlying the existence of evil. Adopting a descriptive-analytical method, the present study examines the nature and function of key factors associated with evil in the Qur'an, focusing on Qur'anic anthropology, Qur'anic cosmology, and the Qur'anic conception of human felicity. Through this approach, the study aims to articulate the Qur'an's ethical-pedagogical perspective on the issue.

### 3. Review of Literature

Given the profound existential significance of the problem of evil for human life, and considering the central role of the Qur'an in confronting fundamental human questions, the necessity of this inquiry becomes evident. Despite this, a direct and comprehensive study of the problem of evil from a distinctly Qur'anic *moral* approach remains underdeveloped.

While the problem of evil is a classic of Western philosophy and theology, Islamic scholarship has addressed it primarily within the context of anthropology, cosmology, and theodicy (specifically, the concept of Divine Justice, *`Adl*). The Mu'tazilite school, for instance, heavily emphasized Divine Justice, arguing that God only wills what is good and beneficial for creation, and that evil is either non-existent, necessary for a greater good, or a result of human freedom. The Ash'ari school, conversely, emphasized Divine Omnipotence, asserting that God is the creator of all actions, including human choice, and is not bound by human concepts of good or evil, though their concept of *Kasb* (acquisition) attempted to reconcile this with human responsibility.

The existing body of literature provides several entry points for the current study:

- **Philosophical and Theological Treatments:** Much of the existing Islamic discourse mirrors the foundational debates in Western theodicy, applying the concepts of free will and greater good (often linked to the soul-making or perfection argument). Key figures in Islamic philosophy, such as Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna) and Mullā Ṣadrā, addressed evil ontologically, often echoing the Augustinian tradition that evil is a privation (*`adam*) or non-being, arising from the inherent limitations of matter and finitude (*al-sharr al-adabi*). Mullā Ṣadrā, for example, grounds the existence of evil in the necessary movement of creation toward its final end, arguing that contrariety (*Tadādd*) is essential for the continuous effusion of divine grace (*Fayḍ*) and the actualization of potential being (Mullā Ṣadrā, 1981). Without this dynamism, material existence would cease.
- **Shi'i Devotional Approaches:** Karimi and Mazani (2016), in *Theological Research Quarterly*, examined Shi'i devotional

approaches to the problem of evil. This research typically focuses on the role of suffering in the lives of the infallible Imams (Ahl al-Bayt) as a model of piety, patience, and submission (*Sabr* and *Taslīm*). In this view, suffering is not merely a test, but a means of attaining the highest spiritual stations (*maqāmāt*) and a profound connection with God, thereby linking the problem of evil directly to the practical morality of the worshipper.

- Qur'anic Discourse on Good and Evil: Serajzadeh (2021) analyzed manifestations of moral good and evil in Qur'anic discourse in the *Qur'an and Hadith Research Journal*. This type of study provides a textual basis by isolating verses that describe human conflict, the nature of *Dunyā* (the world), and the consequences of moral choices, essential for understanding the Qur'an's direct voice on the matter.
- Anthropological and Eschatological Studies: A significant portion of Islamic scholarship focuses on Qur'anic Anthropology (the nature of man) and Eschatology (the afterlife and eternal happiness). Works on human nature often highlight the inherent tension within man: the *Rūh* (spirit) striving for perfection, and the *Nafs* (ego/self) inclined toward transgression (al-'Alaq, 6), which provides the foundation for the Qur'an's explanation of moral evil as an internal human product. Eschatological studies underscore the ultimate purpose of life—eternal felicity and Divine Pleasure (*Riḍwān*)—which serves as the ultimate justification for the transient hardships (*fitan*) of this world.

The existing literature confirms that the Qur'an addresses all the elements necessary for a theodicy—free will, the nature of the world, divine purpose, and ultimate destiny. However, the absence of broader systematic research that *synthesizes* these elements into a dedicated ethical-pedagogical framework is notable. This article argues that, from the Qur'anic standpoint, a proper understanding of human nature and the nature of the world provides the foundation for interpreting, explaining, and situating the problem of evil. Moreover, uncovering the higher purposes of creation and attending to the realities of the afterlife

shed light on the divine wisdom underlying the existence of evil, specifically as a mechanism for moral growth and the attainment of eternal happiness.

#### **4. Discussion**

Since evil occurs within material life and among humans, understanding humanity and the world helps clarify its nature.

Discussion: The Nature and Role of Phenomena Related to Evils from the Qur'an's Viewpoint

Since evil occurs within material life and among humans, understanding humanity and the world helps clarify its nature. Adopting a descriptive-analytical method, the present study examines the nature and function of key factors associated with evil in the Qur'an, focusing on Qur'anic anthropology, Qur'anic cosmology, and the Qur'anic conception of human felicity. Through this approach, the study aims to articulate the Qur'an's ethical-pedagogical perspective on the issue.

##### *4.1. Qur'anic Anthropology: The Causal-Human Components*

To address the problem of evil, the Qur'an focuses heavily on anthropological elements. Ignoring human nature and lacking insight into humanity's dimensions causes people to form unrealistic expectations and demands beyond or against their true capacities. The Qur'an identifies several causal-human components leading to evil:

##### *4.1.1. The Causal-Human Component: Free Will*

The first causal-human component of the problem of evil is human free will. According to the Quranic perspective, humans have free will in their actions (al-Kahf, 29: "The truth is from your Lord, so whoever wills, let him believe; and whoever wills, let him disbelieve"). Every command, judgment, and system of reward and punishment depends on this freedom. The Wise Commander considers the individual's ability and power when issuing commands (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1983).

For an action to be moral, there must be different options. The individual must be able to choose one, and, on acting, they are held accountable. Free will in the face of contradictory choices makes human actions moral or immoral. Moral evil, therefore, originates in the *misuse* of this divinely granted freedom, echoing the free-will defense.

##### *4.1.2. The Causal-Human Component: Inclination to Transgression*

Another causal-human component of evil, from the Qur'an's perspective, relates to a tendency within human nature: the inclination toward rebellion and transgression (al-‘Alaq, 6: "Nay, but man does indeed transgress"). Excessive human desires influence how people choose and act. Without proper control by deterrent forces (such as God-consciousness or the experience of hardship/evil), these desires lead to wider evils and conflicts. This inclination is linked to the unrestrained *Nafs* (self/ego).

#### 4.1.3. *The Causal-Human Component: Injustice and Ignorance*

Another aspect of human nature, according to the Qur'an, is that humans are unjust (*Zalūm*) and ignorant (*Jahūl*) (al-Aḥzāb, 62). Epistemological gaps sometimes mislead people about true happiness. In ignorance, they gather around false forms of happiness, causing injustice to themselves and others. Some commentators say the reason for human injustice and ignorance is the dominance of anger and lust. Epistemological filters, such as ignorance, can mislead people when they search for perfection. Wills influenced by anger, lust, and desire prevent humans from reaching the heights of perfection.

#### 4.1.4. *The Causal-Human Component: Conflict and Disagreement*

Another characteristic of human beings is pronounced conflict and disagreement. This can be seen as the logical sum of the previous three points. These conflicts fall into the category of moral evils in the philosophy of religion. They include many minor and major pains among humans.

Although the Qur'an attributes the roots of human conflict to the inherently acquisitive and self-seeking nature of human beings, it offers an ethical orientation in explaining the divine wisdom behind such tensions. These conflicts, according to the Qur'an, function as a means of preventing greater evils and widespread corruption, and thus constitute a form of divine grace toward humankind (al-Baqarah: 251; al-Ḥajj: 40). Moral evils emerge from the dynamics of human opposition and struggle. Yet, at the same time, this very process of mutual counteraction functions as a mechanism of moral preservation: while it may expose human beings to material hardship, it contributes to the endurance and vitality of their spiritual life.

The notion of conflict has also been of central importance in Islamic philosophy. Philosophers have argued that without contrariety, the continuous effusion of divine grace from the bountiful Source would not be possible; material existence would cease, and countless entities would remain in pure non-being (Mullā Ṣadrā, 1981; Muṭahharī, 1998; Shihāb al-Dīn Suhrawardī, 1996).

#### 4.2. *Qur'anic World-view: The Cosmological Components*

From a Quranic perspective, worldly life (Dunyā) has characteristics that may not align with human expectations. God consistently repeats these characteristics throughout the Divine Book and urges people not to be content with the apparent life of this world. The central components of worldly life in this paradigm are listed below:

##### 4.2.1. *Worldly Life is a Trial, Temptation, and Test*

Worldly life is a trial, temptation, and test (*Fitnah*) for everyone. The Holy Qur'an emphasizes in numerous verses that all human beings are tested. Such an approach is, on the one hand, in line with a general evaluation and assessment in the divine system of reward and punishment so that everyone is measured in this test and, in the Quranic term, the "Vile is separated from the good" (al-Anfāl, 37). The tests establish clear evidence based on human actions to be a manifest proof in the system of reckoning deeds.

Also, from the Quranic perspective, trials are one of the secrets of the return of negligent human beings to God and their establishment on the path of happiness and perfection. The possibility of some negligent people returning to their original human nature exists through trials (al-A'raf, 168; al-Rūm, 41).

It is important to note that, from the Quranic perspective, not only are calamities and problems considered a trial, but even apparent material blessings—referred to as the "Adornment of the worldly life"—are also a type of trial and test (Ṭāhā, 131). The test of the servant is sometimes by means of something he loves (testing gratitude), and sometimes by means of something he dislikes (testing patience) (Ṭurayḥī, 1996).

##### 4.2.2. *Worldly Life Leads to Negligence*

Worldly life has a nature that leads to negligence (*Ghaflah*) of the ultimate goal of human beings. This is referred to as "Play (*La'b*)" and "Diversion (*Lahw*)" in the Qur'an (al-An'ām, 32; al-Ḥadīd, 20). People

are warned that the intoxicating negligence of this world should not keep them from remembering God. Numerous verses emphasize that worldly life is accompanied by deception, delusion, and negligence, and human beings may suffer setbacks on their path to perfection, which may be caused by the ego's desires or Satan.

#### 4.2.3. *Worldly Life is Perishable and Fleeting*

Worldly life is perishable and fleeting. Qur'anic verses emphasize that everyone tastes death, and the life of this world is merely a deceptive enjoyment, and the final return is to God (Āli 'Imrān, 185; al-Anbīyā', 35). The perishability of the world is likened to the disappearance of vegetation after rain (al-Ḥadīd, 20).

Death—even if considered one of the evils by philosophers of religion—is a secret for living morally. The termination of this existence signifies the scarcity of the enjoyment of this world. Instead of focusing on the fleeting enjoyment of the world, one should look towards a lasting enjoyment that is with God (al-Nahl, 96). Attention to the perishability of the world and human beings, and the return to God, are emphasized in numerous Qur'anic verses as a moral approach and has been the focus of the Prophets and the Divine Saints. As Imam Ali (AS) stated, "And death is sufficient for you as an admonition..." (Mufīd, 1992).

#### 4.3. *The Purposes of Creation and Eternal Happiness*

Any statement about creation and its beings in the Quranic paradigm is influenced by factors related to the ultimate goals of creation. The Qur'an emphasizes that human creation is attributed to purposes and interests that return to the created being. The Qur'an, in the form of a rhetorical question, rejects the notion of purposeless creation, immediately pointing to the issue of the return of human beings to God (al-Mu'minūn, 15). Rather, the ultimate purpose of human creation is the true servitude and worship of God (*'Ibādah*) (al-Dhārīyāt, 56) and the return of all human beings to God.

Accordingly, the problem of evils, as trials and tribulations, manifests the extent of the individual's servitude and the degree of their worship. Souls that successfully emerge from these tests and reach the station of *Tazkīyah* (purification of the self) will rely on the seat of eternal success and salvation (al-A'lā, 14).

In fact, one of the significant insights of evil lies in this very point: that it can become a source of controlling human beings and of nurturing and perfecting human souls. This ensures their eternal happiness, an intellectual and permanent pleasure surpassing sensory pleasures.

The highest happiness from the Qur'an's perspective is Divine Pleasure (*Riḍwān*), which is considered superior to everything, even Paradise itself (al-Tawbah, 72). This perfection is understood as conformity and compatibility with the good specific to the rational soul: comprehending and perceiving the Absolute Good. This is while the critics of the problem of evil often confine happiness to sensory pleasures, neglecting the Hereafter as the inward and reality of human life (al-Rūm, 7).

#### *4.4 The Problem of Evil and the Qur'an's Moral-Educational Approach*

It is established that the cause of evils arises from the nature of the phenomena related to it, namely, the world and human beings. However, these evils are ultimately justifiable within a moral framework, which we call the wisdom of evils. By discovering the wisdom of the problem of evil, we achieve the Qur'an's moral approach to this issue.

In reality, the Qur'an distinguishes between the ontological and epistemological factors of the problem of evil. Ontologically, it attributes it to the nature and actions of human beings and the nature of the world. At the same time, it links the rationality and justification of this dilemma to the most fundamental condition of the individual human being: their eternal happiness.

The connection of the problem of evil with the moral development of human beings—especially the enhancement of the spirit of patience (*Sabr*), attention to the Origin and the Resurrection, and ultimately, the dependence of human ultimate salvation and happiness on it—is clearly observable in the following verses:

"And We will surely test you with something of fear and hunger and a loss of wealth and lives and fruits; and give glad tidings to the patient ones: those who, when a disaster strikes them, say, 'Indeed we belong to God, and indeed to Him we will return.' Those are the ones upon who

are blessings and mercy from their Lord and it is those who are the guided" (al-Baqarah, 155-157).

These verses raise the issue of testing and trial, relate it to the problem of evil, draw attention to a moral approach (patience and remembrance of return), and finally consider the guidance and ultimate happiness of human beings as the result of the preceding components.

The Qur'an mentions several moral fruits of evil, including:

- Patience (*Sabr*): Patience itself has multiple blessings, including God's love (Āli 'Imrān, 146), God's help (al-Baqarah, 153), and unending reward (al-Zumar, 10). The ultimate reward resulting from patience over evils is guidance.
- Self-Control or Piety (*Taqwā*): This is the heightened awareness of God resulting from the awareness of one's vulnerability during hardship, leading to moral restraint.
- Strong and Firm Resolve (*'Azīm*): Difficulties necessitate strengthening the will to adhere to moral principles despite adversity.

Asceticism (*Zuhd*) towards the world is another moral effect, defined by Imam Ali (AS) as: "That you do not grieve over what has escaped you and do not exult over what He has given you" (al-Ḥadīd, 22 and 23). Hardships turn the human heart away from the love of the fleeting world toward the greater good, which is the love and desire for the Creator.

The moral approach to the problem of evil also provides the possibility of establishing a system of value judgment regarding human behavior based on their performance in the face of momentous events, a system that would not be possible without such events (al-Kahf, 7).

The logical summation of the core Qur'anic propositions (human nature is excessive, the world is fleeting and a test, purpose of creation is worship, and the ultimate goal is eternal happiness) leads to the following conclusions about the wisdom of evil:

- A) The problem of evils is in the direction of the moral control of human beings and the regulation of their expansionist and excessive behaviors.
- B) The problem of evils is profoundly connected to human happiness, and the moral approach to evils necessitates a correct analysis of the ultimate goal of human beings.

C) This problem constitutes an important aspect of remembrance and admonition regarding the Origin, the ultimate goal of creation, and also the point of return for human beings.

D) Patience and endurance, which are outstanding moral virtues, are capable of flourishing and evaluation through pains, sorrows, and various trials. Without the existence of pains and sorrows, patience and endurance are meaningless, and the possibility of being adorned with this important moral quality is negated.

## 5. Findings and Conclusion

As seen, the problem of evil is profoundly connected to two related phenomena: human beings and the world. From a Quranic perspective, the world has a nature that leads to negligence and intoxication. This meaning is emphasized by the Quran with words such as "Deception," "Play," "Diversion," and "Falsehood." Also, from the point of view of Divine discourse, human beings want to tread a path free of obstacles and do not want anything to stop them on it. This is while such a will leads to conflicts and contradictions, which, although inherent to their nature, also aid in their moral perfection.

The Holy Quran, while confirming that the nature of the world is mixed with pain, sorrow, and trials, relates the occurrence of evils to human guidance, happiness, and perfection. Human trials, first and foremost, ensure that they are protected from many transgressions inherent to human nature. Secondly, conflicts and differences on Earth prevent major and uncontrollable corruption from occurring. Furthermore, these apparent evils become a means for human material and spiritual perfection, leading them to seek solutions to improve the current situation and thus create new advancements for them. The problem of death (as one of the evils from the perspective of philosophers of religion), while signifying the end of the material existence, is the beginning of a new and eternal life and a path for the reckoning of deeds. It is also simultaneously the final point and end to potential human transgression and rebellion. Attention to it can play an important role in preventing and correcting errors. For this reason, in Islamic texts, the remembrance of death is emphasized, and the educational effects of remembering death are considered significant and noteworthy.

The Quranic approach to justifying human trials and the "Problem of evil" is that these problems not only play a role in the path to human perfection and happiness, but also a decisive one. It is the collection of these hardships and calamities that, firstly, makes human beings aware of the ultimate truth and, secondly, of the perishability and corruption of this existence. Reaching a good (pure) life and eternal happiness is through Divine tests, which sometimes manifest in the context of various human calamities and trials. The spiritual and moral self-purification of human beings finds no meaning without these trials. It is in the context of the occurrence of evils that the Divine test appears, and the individual, based on how they take a stand against these events, can achieve levels of perfection and degrees of moral virtues.

The Holy Quran explicitly considers the wisdom of human evils and trials to be within a moral-educational approach, focusing on the cultivation of souls and the nurturing of human spirits. The ultimate goal of these trials is considered to be moral indicators such as: Enhancing the spirit of patience and certainty, strengthening human self-control, strengthening the will and firmness of human resolve, preventing major and irreparable corruptions, creating a system of value judgment based on the manner and results of human actions in the face of difficulties, recognizing those with better deeds and behavior, and a pious life that determines human eternal happiness with attention to the Origin and the Resurrection.

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Vol. 3, Issue. 1 (Series 9), Summer 2025, pp.61-86

## Analyzing Nahjul-Balagha's Strategies for Encouraging Involvement in Organizational Decision-Making through a Grounded Theory Approach

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### Abstract

The study aimed to explore the phenomenon of academic participation and strategies for its integration into academic decision-making, grounded in the management teachings of Nahjul-Balagha. The research sample consisted of academic experts in educational sciences, educational management, and organizational psychology, with 20 participants selected through purposive sampling guided by a theoretical approach. Data collection and analysis involved a library study, semi-structured interviews, and a three-stage coding process. The reliability and validity agreement coefficient for the findings was approximately 0.7, confirming the credibility of the research outcomes. A paradigmatic model was subsequently identified to enhance participation levels, with strategies for each component of the model derived from Imam Ali's directives in Nahjul-Balagha. Findings revealed that, according to Nahjul-Balagha, an individual engages genuinely in decision-making when they strive for their own growth and that of their colleagues by developing talents and capabilities in educational, cultural, research, and executive domains. This progression requires patience, voluntary effort, sincerity, gratitude, and a commitment to using these abilities with positive intent and benevolence aligned with the broader system's goals. Such participation manifests in the individual's physical, intellectual, and psychological dimensions.

**Keywords:** Nahj Al-Balagha, Organizational Participation, Decision-Making, Data-Based Approach.

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Received: March 25, 2025

Revised: April 14, 2025

Accepted: May 24, 2025

Article type: Research Article

Publisher: Imam Sadiq University



[10.30497/ISQH.2025.248992.1063](https://doi.org/10.30497/ISQH.2025.248992.1063)

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**How to cite:** Jovari, B. (2025). Analyzing Nahjul-Balagha's Strategies for Encouraging Involvement in Organizational Decision-Making through a Grounded Theory Approach. *Interdisciplinary Studies of Quran & Hadith*, 3(1), 61-86. doi: [10.30497/isqh.2025.248992.1063](https://doi.org/10.30497/isqh.2025.248992.1063)

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## Introduction

**Organizational engagement** is a key concept within Organizational Psychology, specifically explored through Positive Psychology, which defines it as the enhancement of positive states and the reduction of negative states among organizational members (Seligman et al., 2007; Wulf et al., 2017). While organizational engagement is widely recognized as a significant factor in management science (Jovari et al., 1399 SH), much of the research in Human Resource Management and positive organizational behavior has predominantly concentrated on related topics such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, well-being, quality of work life, and job motivation.

To delineate the difference between these concepts and organizational engagement: **Job satisfaction** refers to an individual's overall feelings and connection to their job. However, these feelings can fluctuate based on changing job conditions and do not necessarily translate into improved performance; someone satisfied with their job may not always be a highly productive or valuable asset to the organization.

**Organizational commitment**, on the other hand, is an obligation to the organization that can restrict individual freedom of action.

**Organizational well-being** reflects a multifaceted issue tied to creating a high-quality environment that fosters member health and welfare. The **quality of work life** pertains to an employee's subjective perception of the physical and psychological desirability of their work environment (Heidari et al., 1396 SH). **Motivation** drives individuals toward specific actions, yet while it closely overlaps with engagement, it is distinct. A motivated individual may lack the positivity, cognitive flexibility, or additional effort that define an engaged individual. Essentially, while all engaged individuals are motivated, not all motivated individuals are necessarily engaged (Jovari et al., 1398 SH).

Moreover, a notable trend in 21st-century management practices, which gained momentum in the mid-1990s, involves emphasizing **spirituality in the workplace**. Spirituality arises from human interaction with what they perceive as sacred, fostering inner growth that humanistic psychologists consider a primary and essential human need (Varess et al., 1388 SH, p. 136). Religion plays a significant role in shaping values and beliefs across societies and profoundly affects behaviors within

organizational settings (Sanobar & Arabloui Moghaddam, 1391 SH, p. 35). Religious beliefs encourage responsibility toward a divine duty, which often translates into ethical workplace behaviors and accountability in performing tasks accurately and punctually. In Islamic thought, work is viewed as an integrated aspect of life, oriented toward personal growth and spiritual transcendence.

Organizations aligned with spiritual principles contribute to increased self-esteem, hope, and organizational engagement among employees. This alignment inspires employees to devote their physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual resources to the organization, perceiving their work as a meaningful mission rather than a mere job. Such individuals develop stronger emotional and normative ties to their organizations, treat colleagues with respect and equity, and feel valued as thoughtful and rational beings. Consequently, they experience reduced stress and burnout while achieving greater satisfaction and higher performance outcomes (Sanobar & Arabloui Moghaddam, 1391 SH, p. 138).

In light of varying cultural perspectives and values influencing perceptions of life and work, management specialists grapple with the challenge of mitigating counterproductive thoughts and behaviors within organizations. Individual behavior stems from how people interpret circumstances based on their beliefs and values. Therefore, measuring organizational engagement depends significantly on **cultural context**. Since religion shapes numerous cultural, social, and ethical norms across all societal levels (Sanobar, 1391 SH, p. 36), religiosity emerges as a potential predictor of organizational engagement and vigor.

From a Human Resource Accounting viewpoint, employee disengagement results in squandering both tangible and intangible organizational capital, leading to considerable losses. The following are examples of related research conducted in this field:

- **Taherian et al. (2014)** examined the managerial and organizational factors affecting organizational engagement and its impact on scientific production, including leadership style, trust, positive thinking, self-disclosure, organizational justice, and work environment conditions.

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- **Arjmandinejad et al. (2016)** identified the lack of succession planning, inattention to structural and job development, and a flawed evaluation system as groundwork factors for organizational apathy and disengagement.
  - **Mohammadzadeh and Salehi (2016)** defined the dimensions of scientific engagement and dynamism in scientific centers as Scientific-Individual, Scientific-Team, Scientific-Organizational, and Scientific-Social.
  - **Ahanchian and Soleimani (2017)** characterized professionally engaged academic members as those having research-teaching commitments alongside positive ethical components (citing Emrollahi et al., 2014, and Luthans, 2007).
  - **Jovari et al. (2017)**, through grounded theory research, showed that securing the social well-being of academics is contingent upon ensuring the individual and organizational engagement of university members.
  - **Jovari et al. (2019)** investigated organizational barriers to engagement, introducing ineffective regulations and the neglect of university capabilities as factors aggravating organizational disengagement.
  - **Sonnenntag and Fritz (2008)** found that trait engagement, specific day workload, and recovery predict end-of-day work engagement, and that recovery in the family environment facilitates work functions.
  - **Plechano et al. (2013)** found that negative emotions and emotional instability have a negative relationship with engagement, while extraversion and openness to experience have a positive relationship. Anger was also shown to reduce engagement.
  - **Shirom et al. (2013)** demonstrated that an increase in the level of engagement is associated with a reduced risk of hyperlipidemia among employees.
  - **Night et al. (2017)** found that the impact coefficient of engagement was higher than the other two components influencing organizational commitment in international studies.

- **Doy (2017)** showed that engagement and vigor (an individual's feeling regarding importance, enthusiasm, inspiration, and challenge at work) have a direct and positive effect on organizational performance.

An extensive review of the available literature on Participation/Engagement reveals five main categories of studies:

1. **Conceptualization Studies:** Focus on defining the concept, often incorrectly equating it with enthusiasm or passion.
2. **Subordinate Organizational Studies:** Treat engagement only indirectly as a component of Job Involvement.
3. **Individual Psychology Focus:** Emphasize outcomes of participation/engagement on individual health, often neglecting organizational relevance.
4. **Sociological Comparative Studies:** Compare participation/engagement and social health across cities, stopping at statistical correlations without comprehensive evaluation.
5. **Obstacles and Consequences:** Explore participation/engagement through the lens of its challenges and resulting impacts.

### 1. Methodology

This research adopted a qualitative approach using the **Grounded Theory** method to gain insights into participants' internal perspectives through an **Emic Approach**. The objective was to develop a paradigmatic model explaining the foundations of academic engagement. Data were gathered through purposeful observations, library studies, and exploratory interviews, employing purposive and snowball sampling among 34 employees and managers from an educational-research institution. The participants had experience ranging from 7 to 30 years, and data collection continued until theoretical saturation was reached. Triangulation validated the data collection and analysis, while an **Idiographic Explanation**, incorporating religious insights from *Nahj al-Balagha*, was used to propose solutions for enhancing organizational engagement. The final model adhered to the systematic procedures of Grounded Theory, respecting ethical standards and ensuring participant confidentiality.

**Open coding** refers to the analytical process of assigning names to concepts, classifying them, and identifying their properties and dimensions through constant comparison (Strauss, 2008). This approach enables researchers to analyze concepts from multiple perspectives to gain a deeper understanding of their significance.

In this study, case observations and interviews were analyzed using the content analysis method. Through this process, conceptualization and categorization were carried out, leading to the identification of concepts and categories (a set of related concepts) based on similarities, conceptual relationships, and shared attributes among the open codes.

### **Causal Conditions**

**Causal conditions** are defined as the factors that serve as the primary drivers of the phenomenon under investigation (Strauss, 2008). The findings from the content analysis regarding perceptions of non-participation in participatory decision-making reveal three primary categories linked to causal conditions.

## **2. Results**

### **2.1. Causal Conditions: Perceived Injustice**

The first part of the findings explores the concept of **Perceived Injustice** within organizations, particularly in areas such as the enforcement of laws and regulations, changes in status, payments, and appointments. Perceived Injustice was reflected through the following patterns:

- **Emergence of Special Provisos:** Selective application of organizational policies based on timing or individuals.
- **Inappropriate Decision-Making Criteria:** Use of unsuitable ideological, political, or doctrinal factors.
- **Substitution of Power for Regulations:** Relationships and authority supplanting established rules and procedures.
- **Arbitrary Decision-Making:** Frequent changes to instructions with new appointments, biased employee selection, and factionalism-based decision-making.
- **Lack of Stakeholder Participation:** Implementation of regulations without involving experts, coupled with access to filtered information.

- **Ruler-Oriented Management Approach:** Prioritization of personal authority and interests over collective organizational goals.

Value-based solutions proposed to address Perceived Injustice, inspired by principles from *Nahj al-Balagha*, include fostering justice and fairness, adhering to meritocracy, encouraging participatory management, and ensuring transparency and accountability.

## 2.2. Axial Coding and the Core Phenomenon

At the **axial coding** stage, the model's core elements were identified:

**Causal Chain Outcomes:** The interplay between feelings of injustice, absence of meritocracy, non-participatory management, insufficient organizational transparency, and hierarchical leadership culminates in widespread distrust, which in turn diminishes overall organizational participation.

**Core Phenomenon:** The primary concern identified is **Non-Participation in Participatory Decision-Making**. This is characterized by:

- Lack of Individual and Organizational Engagement, stemming from:
  - Significant disparities in job roles, expertise, and salaries between faculty (managers) and other employees.
  - A pervasive sense of uncertainty and distrust regarding the organization's future.
  - The emergence of feelings of inferiority among employees and misplaced superiority among faculty members.
  - Neglect of ethical standards like honesty, respect for humanity, and courage in decision-making based on trust.

To address this core issue, value-based solutions derived from *Nahj al-Balagha* emphasize recognizing the interconnected roles of God, self-awareness, and others in organizational dynamics. They also advocate for cultivating positive thinking while minimizing harmful traits such as envy and stinginess.

## 2.3. Solutions Based on Piety-Centricity (*Taqwa-Mohvari*)

To address non-participation using a piety-centered approach rooted in **Taqwa** (God-consciousness), the following value-driven solutions are proposed:

- Emphasizing personal positive traits and constructive thought patterns.
- Cultivating humility, patience, and detachment from materialism.
- Encouraging optimistic perspectives and attitudes.
- Reflecting on the interconnected role of God, the self, and society in events to avoid traits like envy, stinginess, and narrow-mindedness.

#### **Piety as Social Capital**

Imam Ali (AS) highlights divine faith and piety (*Taqwa*) as both a responsibility and a form of social capital instrumental in achieving happiness. Wisdom 415 of *Nahj al-Balagha* underscores the requirement for divine piety among employees, characterized by honesty, truthfulness, transparency, and integrity (Etesami et al., p. 118).

#### **Justice-Centricity in Management**

Justice is identified as an essential trait in governance. Managers are tasked with safeguarding and enhancing just practices (Forouzandeh et al., p. 85).

- **Managerial Obligation:** One of the central obligations of managers is maintaining justice and equity. In *Letter 53* of *Nahj al-Balagha* addressed to Malik al-Ashtar, Imam Ali (AS) advises: “When faced with decisions involving God and the people versus yourself, your relatives, or others you may favor, uphold justice. Failure to do so equates to oppression.”
- **Preventing Tyranny:** *Hikmat* (Wisdom) 476 states: “Employ justice and avoid coercion, tyranny, and conflict; for coercion and pressure cause people to abandon their homelands, and tyranny and oppression lead people to the sword and revolt.”
- **Equity in Conduct:** In *Letter 27* to Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr, His Holiness states: “Do not differentiate even in a sidelong or direct glance, in pointing to them, or in greeting among them, so that the powerful do not covet your deviation, and the

afflicted (weak) do not despair of your justice” (Etesami et al., p. 119).

Adopting justice is considered the root source for preventing counter-productive organizational behaviors. Managerial justice establishes mutual trust and empathy, raising organizational commitment and participation.

**Organizational Vitality (*Nashat Sazmani*):** Imam Ali (AS) emphasizes in his recommendations to Malik al-Ashtar: “Then you must do deeds that earn you the good opinion of the citizens, for that good opinion removes much trouble from you. And verily, the most deserving person to have good opinion of you is the one whom you have tested well, and verily, the most deserving person to have bad opinion of you is the one whom you have tested badly” (*Letter 53*) (Forouzandeh et al., p. 84).

This is a management strategy for creating a positive mental image of the organization through the manager’s actions, which in turn fosters individual and organizational participation. This image creation demands self-cultivation, requiring Anthropology (*Insan-shenasi*) and Cosmology (*Jahan-shenasi*), and reinforcing the spirit of faith (*Iman*).

#### 2.4. The Foundations of Engagement in Islamic Thought

In the religion of Islam, **Faith (*Iman*)** is the most effective and important factor for human salvation, serving as the axis for all good and positive traits and attitudes.

Amir al-Mu’minin (AS), in his famous sermon (*Khutbah 110*), stated in the preamble: “Verily, the best thing with which people can draw nearer to God, the Glorified, is belief in God and His Messenger, and striving in the path of God.” In *Khutbah 156*, he further states: “Faith is the clearest of paths and the most luminous of lamps; with faith, one can reach righteous deeds, and with good deeds, one can attain faith; with faith, knowledge and science flourish” (Forouzandeh, p. 89). The master key to individual and organizational success is presented in this sermon.

Participation is an internal and attitudinal process related to the concept of **insight** concerning thought, knowledge, and awareness, based on inclination and action. The identified themes for insight include: **Theology** (*Khoda-shenasi*), **Cosmology** (*Jahan-shenasi*),

**Anthropology** (*Insan-shenasi*), **Theology of Religion** (*Dien-shenasi*), and **Demonology** (*Sheitan-shenasi*) (Khashaei et al., p. 28).

- **Theology (*Khoda-shenasi*):** Refers to knowing the attributes of God. In *Nahj al-Balaghah*, Creatorship (*Khaleqiyat*), Ownership (*Malekiyat*), Provider-of-Sustenance (*Razeqiyat*), Generous Provider (*Razzaqiyat*), and Oversight (*Nazaret*) are named as attributes of God. This theology provides the individual, in the lofty role of servitude to God, the insight to perform God's actions with the intention of drawing near to the Divine, without expecting rewards or material recompense, relying solely on spiritual rewards.
- **Cosmology (*Jahan-shenasi*):** This is the study of existence that pertains to the system of creation, comprised of the *Dunya* (this world) and *Akhirah* (the Hereafter). It also addresses the purposefulness of creation, Divine traditions (*Sunan*), and the relationship between the *Dunya* and *Akhirah*.
- **Anthropology (*Insan-shenasi*):** This is related to self-knowledge (*Ma'refat al-Nafs*) and encompasses topics such as the internal faculties of humans, intellect (*Aql*), base desires (*Hawa-ye Nafs*), as well as human responsibility and the influence and effect of human actions.

Adherence to the **Rights of People (*Haqq al-Nas*)** and the **Rights of God (*Haqq Allah*)** is effective in the mutual relationship between members of an organization. It also influences quality orientation, a greater sense of responsibility toward work, and viewing work as an act of worship.

Responsibility-taking at the personal level lays the groundwork for social responsibility. **Enjoining good (*Amr bil Ma'ruf*) and forbidding evil (*Nahy anil Munkar*)** is a perfect mirror of individuals' responsibility-taking, which must be interwoven with their personal and social lives.

The commitment to *Amr bil Ma'ruf* and *Nahy anil Munkar* is such that Imam Ali (AS) considered all the sermons, letters, and wisdoms in *Nahj al-Balaghah* to be a form of commanding good and forbidding evil. In the sermon he delivered after the Battle of Jamal, he considered *Amr bil Ma'ruf* and *Nahy anil Munkar* as two of God's attributes that neither

hasten death nor reduce sustenance (*Khutbah 156*) (Forouzandeh, p. 88).

### 2.5. Structural and Value-Based Strategies

The implementation of **meritocracy** (*Shayesteh-salari*), the dominance of organizational discipline, ensuring transparency in the organizational environment, continuous monitoring and control alongside meritocracy, expanding face-to-face communication, building mutual trust, granting appropriate, timely, and deserved rewards to employees, the acceptance and implementation of *Amr bil Ma'ruf* and *Nahy anil Munkar*, the execution of distributive, procedural, and interactional justice, and creating a spiritual setting for the growth and transcendence of employees—these structural and value-based solutions, alongside self-knowledge, positive thinking, theology, and knowledge acquisition, by changing the outlook on life and work as an act of worship in line with sublime Divine values, will foster the spirit of faith and individual participation.

Organizational participation is initially contingent upon establishing individual participation in individuals and their self-cultivation. Practical solutions for this include participating in group religious ceremonies, such as congregational prayers (*Namaz-e Jama'at*), processions, *Ziyarat Ashura*, *Yasin*, holding courses familiarizing staff with *Nahj al-Balaghah* and the Quran, and establishing religious think tanks. The level of knowledge and Islamic commitment of individuals is important.

The dominance of the spirit of *Amr bil Ma'ruf* and *Nahy anil Munkar*, with its profound impact on the empathy and alignment of employees and managers, leads to a brotherly view of organizational members.

### 2.6. Optimism and Positive Thinking

Imam Ali (AS), with the aim of reducing the pressure exerted on humans when facing calamities and incidents, emphasizes optimism, positive thinking, a positive outlook, and hope for a bright future.

Optimism means viewing things based on good assumptions (*Husn-e Zann*). The positively-minded person holds good assumptions toward God, toward people, and toward their religious brethren. They interpret hardships and problems as beneficial and in their best interest, resorting

to logical interpretation of matters with patience and reliance upon God. The faithful person is certain of the Divine wise planning.

**Considering Negative and Positive Events as Temporary:** Imam Ali (AS) states: “God will make you victorious over your enemies” (*Khutbah 12*). Therefore, if employees, whether at the managerial or staff level, interpret and justify events logically and by considering all causes, they will achieve inner peace and spare no effort in persistence and endurance to realize organizational goals.

A brotherly view in the organization, by removing the top-down perspectives and aligning individuals with the organization’s goals, creates a culture of participatory affection and spiritual participation in the work.

**Conditional Context (*Sharayet-e Zamineh*):** This indicates a set of special characteristics that point to a phenomenon; in other words, it is the location of events or incidents related to a phenomenon along a dimension in which reciprocal action for controlling, managing, and responding to the phenomenon takes place (Strauss, 2008).

Based on the research findings, the lack of practical commitment and adherence to religious beliefs concerning regulations and statutes, leadership style, and the individual and psychological characteristics of members constitute the three main areas contributing to non-participation in scientific-executive decision-making within this higher education center. The research results support previous studies (Chehrazi, 2015; Gholipour et al., 2007) and the statements of Imam Ali (AS), all of which emphasize preserving the value and dignity of every single member of the organization and establishing the necessary platform for their participation.

In this center, leadership and management positions are exclusively reserved for faculty members. Due to the significant gap in their academic and specialized levels, these members suffer from false superiority complexes. Conversely, employees, lacking self-belief and experiencing a large economic class disparity with faculty members, suffer from a false sense of weakness in presenting their specific expertise and skills. Given the stark difference between the nature of faculty work and the nature of executive tasks, the necessity for the scientific-executive cooperation of knowledgeable employees in many

of the center's meetings is evident. To achieve this, focusing on increasing the spiritual, scientific, and executive development of managers and employees, and enhancing communication and social interactions based on human-centricity rather than task-centricity, is essential.

Justice-orientation is the most crucial factor. Through the correct, timely, and universal enforcement of laws and regulations, the trust of the organization's members in the decisions made can be secured, which serves as the guarantor for the operationalization of these decisions. **Transparency** in any organization—achieved by publicly announcing the results of meetings, approvals, charters, and circulars—paves the way for increased member trust and participation. Updating the organization's real and virtual information centers will be instrumental in this regard. If the prevailing “I and you” mentality in this organization shifts to “us,” decision-making will move away from personal interests toward collective interests and in alignment with the organization's goals and vision.

Imam Ali (AS) not only understood the people of his time but also, in the fullest sense, was aware of the future of humanity. Through contemplation, this reality becomes apparent: his precious words are not confined by specific language or location, and these sayings remain valuable and value-affirming (Khashaei et al., 2016, p. 113).

### 3. Strategies and Consequences

The intended **strategies** within the Grounded Theory approach present solutions for confronting, addressing, and showing sensitivity toward the studied phenomenon. **Consequences** are the result of the action (implementation) and reaction to the conditions surrounding the phenomenon (Strauss, 2008). This study proposes three fundamental strategies to reach the desired state regarding the prevention and resolution of non-participation in participatory decision-making, which will be addressed in the discussion and conclusion section.

#### 3.1. Grounded Theory Coding Stages

- 3.1.1. **Axial Coding** refers to the series of procedures that link data together by connecting a category with its sub-categories. Thus, axial coding points to the process of shaping categories (main

and sub) using a paradigm (model, archetype, or template) to show the relationships between the causal conditions, the core phenomenon, contextual conditions, intervening conditions, strategies, and consequences.

- 3.1.2. **Selective Coding (Theory Generation Stage):** In this stage, the Grounded Theorist systematically selects the core category (around which all other categories revolve and which forms an overall structure) and writes the theory by connecting it to the other categories. This represents an abstract description of the process studied in the research (Mahboubzadeh et al., 2013).

At a superficial and holistic level, a reluctance among the members of these centers toward participation in organizational decision-making is apparent. However, by contemplating the following statements, it becomes clear that this reluctance is not entirely absolute and exists in a **potential state**. A more precise analysis reveals that even opponents of this mode of decision-making point to layers of a sense of responsibility and internal mental concern regarding organizational issues in their statements and phrases.

For example, this indicates the existence of an internal and potential sense of participation within them that requires effort to reach actuality. To realize this actuality, it is necessary to positivize the mutual negative mental image currently present in the organizational atmosphere. The solution for actualizing this feeling of participation lies within the phrases used by proponents of staff participation in organizational decisions.

### **3.2. Solutions: The Final Model**

The impact of adherence to ethical and religious foundations in the lives of these individuals, along with valuing human and ethical dignity, is evident. Based on this, the final schematic model presented for the non-participation in participatory decision-making in this higher education center in Tehran is as follows:

### **3.3. Validation of the Grounded Theory**

Various methods exist for validation within the Grounded Theory approach. In the present study, two methods were employed: **Participant Review (Member Checking)** and **Review by Experts**

who did not participate in the research. After receiving corrective feedback and necessary consultation with the guiding and advising professors, the required revisions were made, and the final model was presented.

#### **4. Discussion and Conclusion**

An organization is a collective entity composed of human beings, and ensuring the physical, psychological, and perceptual well-being of each individual within it guarantees the health of the organization itself. If, for any reason, the human agents within the organization lack sufficient motivation and willingness to work, be active, and cooperate in achieving organizational goals, the organization will inevitably deviate from the path of productivity by losing its primary and essential dynamism sooner or later (Danaeefard et al., 2010). The crucial and sensitive segment of organizational participation by employees is related to their mental and psychological perceptions and understandings of the work environment.

The mind is the place that turns Hell into Heaven and Heaven into Hell (Gholipour, 2012). Solutions offered for the reform of societies must be based on the beliefs and values accepted within that society. Similarly, in an Islamic society, reformative solutions must be presented in alignment with Islamic patterns and teachings. In various and diverse cultures, the mental conceptions, understanding, and perception of life and work differ across various societies and nations. Consequently, the indicators for measuring organizational participation will also vary.

An individual's behavior in different circumstances stems from their attitudes, which are shaped by their beliefs and values. Therefore, given that religion is a phenomenon that shapes many of the cultural, social, and ethical beliefs and values of people across all sectors of society (Sonobar, 2012, p. 36), religiosity can be considered a predictor of individuals' organizational zeal and participation.

It is self-evident that in Islamic countries, a firm belief in Divine justice, attention to human dignity, and respect for spiritual rewards play a more effective role in the organizational participation of employees. This crucial aspect creates a highly valuable foundation for organizational managers to enhance the quantitative and qualitative level of employee participation in organizational decision-making. The interactive

relationship based on ethical, human, and Islamic values between managers and employees plays a significant role in this process. These valuable interactions increase employees' self-belief and foster mutual interpersonal and organizational trust and credibility in their perception. Imam Ali (AS), being aware of the realities of the world during his lifetime, served as the ruler and leader of the Islamic society. With a profound sense of responsibility concerning ethics, asceticism (*zuhd*), and leadership in the political, social, and mystical systems, he left behind the solution and key to resolving all individual, social, and governmental problems. The research findings corroborate the statements of Imam Ali (AS) in *Nahj al-Balagha*, which emphasize practical commitment to religious obligations while simultaneously preserving the value and dignity of every single member of the organization and establishing the necessary platform for participation by the appointed administrators.

#### **Key Insights from *Nahj al-Balagha* on Participation**

**A) Participation in Guidance and Remembrance of God (*Sermon 193*)** Among the signs of the pious is that you see them as follows: Strong in their faith, gentle in nature, far-sighted, possessing faith full of certainty, eager in acquiring knowledge, patient with their learning, moderate in wealth, humble in worship, adorned in poverty, patient in hardship, seeking lawful earnings, joyous and energetic in the path of guidance, and abstaining from greed.

They perform good deeds while remaining fearful. They turn the day into night with gratitude, and the night into day with the remembrance of God. They sleep at night in a state of fear and wake up joyful and highly participatory—the fear is so they do not become heedless, and the joy is for the grace and mercy bestowed upon them.

**B) Abstaining from Worldly Joy (*Sermon 113*)** Regarding the prohibition of worldliness, Imam Ali (AS) states in *Sermon 113*: “Indeed, you are religious brethren to one another, yet nothing separates you except your corrupt inner selves and ugly intentions. You neither support each other, nor wish each other well, nor give to one another, nor show affection for one another. What is wrong with you that you become joyful upon acquiring a small portion of this world, yet you do not grieve over the much of the Hereafter that you lose?”

C) This final section completes the discussion and provides practical recommendations based on the religious-value model developed. I have edited the text for professional academic tone, clarity, and strict adherence to **APA 7th edition** citation style.

**C) The True Status of Joys in the Discourse of the Speaking Quran, Ali ibn Abi Talib (AS)**

Imam Ali (AS) wrote in a letter to Ibn Abbas, the governor of Egypt (*Letter 22*):

“Indeed, a person sometimes becomes pleased over something that he will never lose, and grieves over something that he will never attain. O Ibn Abbas, let your joy be for that which will benefit you in the Hereafter, and let your sorrow be for what you lose from it. Do not let the possessions you gain from this world make you rejoice, and do not lament over what of the world escapes you. Direct your efforts toward the world that comes after death.”

In another letter (*Letter 66*), he states:

“Man rejoices over something he will never lose and grieves over what he will never gain. Therefore, let not the best of things to you in this world be the attainment of pleasures or vengeance. Instead, let your goal be the extinguishing of falsehood and the revival of truth. Rejoice only in the provision you send forth for the Hereafter, and do not grieve for what you leave behind.”

In institutions of higher education, the complementary roles of employees and managers in decision-making should not be overlooked. Considering the dominant scientific and academic culture within such environments, staff members expect space for intellectual and professional maneuvering—yet this expectation often goes unmet. It is therefore appropriate for university managers to pay particular attention to the specialized, scholarly, and cultural nature of employees’ tasks and the university work environment. They must strive to adopt a **relationship-centered and transformational leadership style**—one that functions within academic regulations while focusing resolutely on improving employee satisfaction.

From the analysis of observations and interviews, it can be concluded that the simultaneous adherence of both employees and managers to the operationalization of religious and divine values and beliefs in

interpersonal and organizational relations constitutes the most significant factor in improving organizational participation and collaborative decision-making within higher education institutions.

The perspective and language of Imam Ali (AS) in describing leadership are Qur'anic in nature. He views management through attributes such as divine trust, sacred responsibility rather than privilege, and service rather than status. In fact, the leadership model of Imam Ali (AS) is based on the social capital of affection and knowledge.

From Imam Ali's standpoint, work that respects the boundaries of human and divine values is not only permissible but necessary—a form of worship. In such cases, the worker becomes beloved by God, as it is said: “Indeed, God loves the faithful and trustworthy craftsman” (Mashayekhi-Pour, 2011, p. 43).

Having organizational participation in work represents the highest level of positive and constructive occupational behavior. The emergence of such behavior requires a strong spiritual environment within the organization. In such an environment, employees work with love and devotion for their tasks and, without seeking any additional material reward, perform their duties diligently with divine intention.

In this type of setting, individuals see God as present and observing their actions in every moment of life and work. These people are likely to possess a high level of work conscience and act dynamically and collaboratively. For example, even when no one is supervising them, they adhere to regulations and devote their time and energy toward achieving maximum organizational effectiveness, solely to gain the pleasure of Almighty God.

When employees perceive their relationship with God as agency-based, they see themselves as agents and servants of God, of the organization, and of the people. Such employees strive harder to perform their tasks better and continually update their knowledge, information, and skills (Vares, p. 152). Employees who fulfill their duties in direct interaction with God focus more on spiritual rewards than on material incentives; therefore, they engage in self-driven and participatory behaviors beyond formal role expectations, viewing their true role as serving God's creation for divine satisfaction.

Organizational participation is the fruit of spirituality, and consequently, spirituality in the workplace should be elevated. Based on adherence to spiritual and religious values, the participative employee views work as a religious and devotional virtue intertwined with material and spiritual life. Such individuals, with faith and trust in God, are the most capable of resisting social, commercial, and occupational disruptions, uncertainties, and ambiguities.

The most critical factor in religious adherence lies in promoting the culture of **human dignity**—acknowledging humankind as the noblest of God's creations. Through such cultural cultivation and transformation in organizational members' attitudes, focusing actions on divine proximity, service to people for God's satisfaction, the sacred nature of work, and piety-centered activity, false comparisons and negative mutual perceptions between managers and employees gradually fade away.

Employees and managers begin to see themselves as servants in the path of serving God's creation, and by shifting their view of work toward worship, they no longer expect their rewards solely from the organization. Strengthened interpersonal closeness and informational transparency, together with accurate mutual understanding, eliminate suspicion and mistrust, leading to voluntary and wholehearted employee participation in organizational decision-making and policymaking.

When the organizational culture moves from "I" and "You" toward "We," decision-making becomes oriented away from personal interests and toward collective interests and shared organizational visions.

This research therefore investigated the reasons and underlying contexts of employees' non-participation in organizational decision-making processes and proposed a model grounded in pure religious values to guide managers of higher education institutions in preventing and remedying this counterproductive behavior.

### **5. Practical Recommendations**

Finally, the following practical recommendations are offered as potential solutions for fostering participatory decision-making and enhancing managerial and employee productivity:

1. **Increase Cultural and Religious Programs, Sessions, and Ceremonies.** Holding regular spiritual and cultural gatherings strengthens moral values and deepens employees' sense of belonging to the organizational environment.
2. **Greater Emphasis on Qur'anic and *Nahj al-Balāghah* Teachings.** These teachings should be integrated into the center's cultural programming and serve as guiding frameworks in developing ethics-based managerial and human-resource practices.
3. **Strengthen Managerial Attention to Employees' Livelihood and Economic Conditions.** Addressing welfare concerns enhances morale, loyalty, and alignment with organizational goals.
4. **Enhance Social Interaction and Communication between Employees and Managers.** Since feelings of inferiority may exist among staff, such relationships should intentionally be initiated by managers through trust-building and open dialogue.
5. **Form Human Resource Policy Councils with Employee Participation.** These councils should include senior and trusted employee representatives to ensure employees' voices are genuinely reflected in HR planning and implementation processes.
6. **Establish a Council for Evaluating Criticism and Suggestions.** This subcommittee within the Human Resources Council should collaborate with employees as liaisons in research, cultural, educational, and international affairs to implement adopted decisions effectively.
7. **Revise Payment and Reward Systems.** Incentives should be motivational, appropriate, and transparent. Public recognition of responsible employees with high organizational commitment can significantly boost self-esteem and, thereby, their comprehensive participation in decision-making processes.
8. **Create Platforms to Enhance Employees' Scientific and Operational Potential.** Offering opportunities for professional growth and engagement fosters greater managerial trust and a positive perception of employees' skills and capabilities.

9. **Hold Regular Question-and-Answer Sessions and Joint Brainstorming Meetings.** Such interactions between staff and management deepen mutual understanding and strengthen participatory culture.

**Improve the Quantity and Quality of Website News, Circulars, and Regulations.** Ensuring transparency eliminates negative perceptions and misinformation, thereby building trust.

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Vol. 3, Issue. 1 (Series 9), Summer 2025, pp.87-104

## Husayni Literature: Aspects and Prospects

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### Abstract

This study examines Husayni literature as a dynamic cornerstone of Shi'i Islamic classics centered on Imam al-Husayn and the Ashura event. It traces its evolution across historical periods, languages (Arabic, Persian, Urdu, Bengali, and English), and cultural contexts, including sympathetic non-Muslim contributions. Employing a literary-historical methodology, the study surveys primary sources such as hadiths, ziyarat texts, maqal narratives, and elegiac poetry, alongside secondary encyclopedic works and post-1979 publications (1357 SH/1979 CE), to delineate genres ranging from pre-Islamic prophecies to transnational receptions. Key findings reveal the uninterrupted continuity of Husayni literature, from divine origins (Quranic allusions and Imamic hadiths) and martyrdom accounts by Ashura survivors to modern elegies by figures such as Mir Anis and Mir Mosharraf Hossain. This literary tradition transcends religious boundaries through works by Hindu authors such as Premchand and Sarojini Naidu. The study highlights distinctive literary artistry (rajaz poetry, marsiyas), religious depth (ziyarat exegeses), and socio-political resonance in fostering Shi'i identity and ethical reflection. Finally, the paper advocates for the inclusion of Husayni literature in global anthologies and proposes a research agenda for digital archiving and comparative analyses with world martyrdom traditions.

**Keywords:** Husayni literature, Imam al-Husayn, Ashura, Shi'i Islamic classics, Maqal narratives.

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Received: April 20, 2025

Revised: May 7, 2025

Accepted: June 24, 2025

Article type: Research Article

Publisher: Imam Sadiq University



 [10.30497/ISQH.2025.249605.1080](https://doi.org/10.30497/ISQH.2025.249605.1080)

© The Author(s).

How to cite: FakhR-Rohani, M. (2025). Husayni Literature: Aspects and Prospects. *Interdisciplinary Studies of Quran & Hadith*, 3(1), 87-104. doi: [10.30497/isqh.2025.249605.1080](https://doi.org/10.30497/isqh.2025.249605.1080)

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## Introduction

Shi'i Islamic literature is credited with possessing a variety of classics. These are by no means limited to merely literary works, although the designation "classic" often directs readers toward that genre. As classics are, by definition, works that are "standard [and] exemplary" (Perry, 2012, p. 263), they claim a "universal meaning, to dealing with questions of general philosophical import" (Fleischmann & Newman, 1993, p. 216). Such works admit "a variety of interpretations while preserving an underlying essence" (Kermode, 1975, as cited in Fleischmann & Newman, 1993, p. 216). Classics do not simply return the reader to an obscure ancient world; rather, they foster an awareness of an uninterrupted relationship with a glorious past, awakening a sense of historical continuity and dignity (Beard & Henderson, 1995). In short, a classic stands "the test of time and outlasts changes" (Baldick, 2015, "classic"). They are works that are reread, rendering new lessons with each encounter (Calvino, 1981/1986).

This study argues that Husayni literature, as a cornerstone of Shi'i Islamic classics centered on Imam al-Husayn and the Ashura event (61 AH/680 CE), has evolved dynamically across historical periods, languages, and cultural contexts. It reveals a distinctive literary artistry, religious depth, and socio-political resonance within the Shi'i tradition and broader world literature. Consequently, this study seeks to answer the following research question: How has Husayni literature evolved across different historical periods and languages, and what are its distinctive dimensions within the broader context of world literature?

## Definitions and Scope

There are several seemingly synonymous terminologies that require clarificatory discrimination. Some experts may regard "Islamic literature" and "Muslim literature" as interchangeable; however, they are distinct. Muslim literature refers to any literature produced by Muslims, irrespective of content or theme. For example, the Arabic poems composed by the Iraqi poet Abu al-Tayyib al-Mutanabbi (915–965 CE/303–354 AH) in praise of contemporary rulers are instances of Muslim literature (Arberry, 1967). Likewise, many personal anecdotes regarding the manners of kings in the *Gulistan* by Sa'di (ca. 1209–1291

CE) have little relationship with purely Islamic teachings. In the same vein, Sa'di's elegy for the last Abbasid ruler, al-Musta'sim bi'Allah (1242–1258 CE), is not strictly "Islamic" literature, as the Abbasids are not regarded as religious figures in this context.

In contrast, Islamic literature encompasses two primary pillars: the Holy Quran and the *Ahl al-Bayt* (the Infallible descendants of the Prophet Muhammad). From this perspective, the various genres within the Holy Quran fall under Quranic literature. Scholars like Perry (2012) argue that classics engage with universal themes; this paper aligns with that concept by treating Husayni literature as a classic within the Shi'i tradition.

While some scholars, such as Salibi (1962), critique certain Orientalist works for Umayyad biases, this paper deliberately includes a sympathetic scope that embraces both Shi'i Muslim perspectives and non-Muslim literary contributions. Unlike Lammens (1927), who has been criticized for a dismissive tone, this study highlights sympathetic voices such as Premchand (Zaidi, 2022) and Sarojini Naidu. By expanding the discourse, this paper suggests that Husayni literature deserves recognition within global literary anthologies—a position not widely emphasized in prior scholarship.

### Historical Development

The *Ahl al-Bayt*-oriented portion of Islamic literature may be divided into several categories:

1. **Quranic References:** Verses pertaining to the Prophet's household, such as *Sura al-Kawthar*.
2. **Prophetic Hadiths:** Events such as *Ghadir Khumm*, highlighted in the Quran (5:67) and followed by abundant hadith literature.
3. **Tragic Narratives:** The episode of Ashura (61 AH/680 CE), for which there are exhaustive references.
4. **Hagiography and Eulogy:** Works produced in praise of the *Ahl al-Bayt* and their associates.

Viewed from this perspective, a work on the life of Umm Salamah (ca. 681 CE/62 AH) falls within the scope of Islamic literature due to her devotion to the Prophet's household. By the same token, the historical

works of non-Muslims who devoted their talents to this cause—such as the poems of Indian activist Sarojini Naidu—are included within the scope of Islamic literature due to their central themes.

### **Methodology**

This study surveys Husayni literature by including works related to Shii Islamic literature with a focus on Imam al-Husayn, spanning from early historical sources to contemporary texts, especially post-1979 (1357 SH/1979 CE) Islamic Revolution publications. The literature examined encompasses multiple languages including Arabic, Persian, Urdu, Bengali, and English, reflecting the transnational and interreligious scope of the subject matter. Sources consulted include primary hadith collections, historical accounts, ziyarat-texts, and secondary encyclopedic compilations and scholarly works. The paper adopts a literary-historical methodology aimed at tracing the evolution and multifaceted nature of Husayni literature while also offering evaluative insight into its literary and cultural significance."

The paper classifies itself as literary-historical with evaluative observations on Husayni literature's place in world literature contexts.

### **Various Genres and Forms of Husayni Literature**

Husayni literature makes a noteworthy branch of Islamic literature all because of its central figure, the third Infallible Imam al-Ḥusayn. Throughout history, Husayni literature has been a type of literature devoid of any interruption or any counter-movement. A comprehensive history of Husayni literature starts from the hadiths that pertain to the sublime status of his soul prior to his physical creation and graceful birth. According to a reliable hadith, the souls of the Infallible Ahl al-Bayt, including that of Imam al-Ḥusayn, were created long before the creation of Adam. According to Islamic sources, soon after Imam al-Ḥusayn was born, the Archangel Gabriel, accompanied by 1,000 angels, descended to the Prophet to congratulate him and convey the congratulations of Allah. There Gabriel informed the Prophet of the tragic martyrdom that would happen to Imam al-Ḥusayn (Majlisī, 1373 SH, pp. 477-78). From this account up to any literature in praise of Imam al-Husayn and connected with various aspects of the materials associated with him falls within the scope of Husayni literature.

There are several noteworthy considerations as per Husayni literature. In the first place, the original makers of this literature were Allah, the Prophet, and the Infallible Imams. Some portions of this literature belong to various pre-Islamic times, before the advent of Islam. This pertains to the moments when the Divine prophets Adam, Abraham, and Jesus Christ mourned the tragic martyrdom of Imam al-Ḥusayn.

The Islamic period of Husayni literature may receive further subdivisions. Some of these pieces of literature are Quranic, hence Divine, prophecies and indications. To adduce but one example, according to a piece of hadith quoted from the 11<sup>th</sup> Infallible Imam al-Ḥasan al-‘Askarī, the Quranic mysterious letter “Kāf” in the beginning of the Quranic sura Maryam (Mary) refers to Karbala.<sup>1</sup> (See Qarashi, 1387 Sh/ 2008 [1352 Sh/ 1973], s.v. KāfHā Yā‘AynṢād.)

In addition to the above-stated Quranic indication, there are several brief indications of the tragic episode of the Ashura Battle of Karbala in the speeches of the Prophet Muḥammad, Imam ‘Alī, and Imam al-Ḥasan. Apart from the Prophet’s frequent references to Imam al-Ḥusayn’s martyrdom (see, for instance, al-Amīnī, 1384 AH/1965 CE, pp. 34-145), there is an indication hinted by the first Infallible ‘Alī. It is thus: on the way back from the Battle of Ṣiffīn, Imam ‘Alī stopped in the region of Karbala for performing the dawn salat. After that, he picked up some soil, smelled it, and remarked that it was fragrant. Then he turned to his companions and indicated it was the same location that the Battle of Karbala would certainly take place. (Najmi, 2012, pp. 270-72)

A considerable portion of Husayni literature has come from Imam al-Ḥusayn, the pivotal figure of the event of Ashura. Within the vast and varied ocean of the hadiths so far quoted from the third Infallible Imam al-Ḥusayn, those that refer to the tragic event of Karbala make a considerable section, hence frequently quoted and anthologized in various collections. There are various types of Husayni literature. One type is concerned with his explications of certain Quranic fragments and verses. (See al-Ḥilū, 2009/ 1430 AH). Another type is concerned

<sup>1</sup> There is a hadith quoted from the 11<sup>th</sup> Infallible Imam al-Ḥasan al-‘Askarī (232-260 AH/ 846-874) on the authority of Sa’d b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Qummī (d. 300 AH/ 912) in that the letter Kāf alludes to [the tragic episode of] Karbala.

with his guidance and explications of Islamic creeds and doctrinal tenets. (For a reliable source in this regard, all compiled from authoritative sources, see Muhammadi Rayshahri, 2006/ 1385 Sh).

Martyrdom-oriented Husayni literature makes the much vaster portion of this glorious and ever-radiant branch of literature. This is because the greatest amount of literature so far produced has been under the influence of the tragic martyrdom fate that he correctly anticipated and willingly admitted and welcomed. It has been in effect of the matchless (and triumphant) martyrdom fate of Imam al-Ḥusayn and over 100 of his loyal companions that the Islamic religion has since survived. Some piece of this martyrdom-themed literature was created by Imam al-Ḥusayn and his companions who were martyred. The rest was produced the Ashura survivors, the eye-witnesses of the horrible crimes committed on the plain of Karbala. (Ashura is another designation of such survivor-created post-martyrdom literature.) Here mention must be made of the electrifying and disclosing talks of Hazrate (Hz.) Zaynab's talks at Kufah and Damascus that soon changed the Umayyad enemy's victory celebration into political scandal and shameful disgrace. (See, for example, Ḥikmatnīyā, 1988, pp. 77-80, and pp. 144-153)

A noteworthy class of Husayni literature is concerned with the ziyarat-texts issued in his favor (as well as in favor of his martyred companions). A pilgrimage-prayer, a ziyarat-text is a compact and insightful text that teaches the pilgrim basic and fundamental lessons about the character and career of the dignitary to whom the pilgrim has already paid a humble visit, all out of sincere devotion. The highest number of ziyarat-texts in favor of Imam al-Ḥusayn were issued by the Fifth Infallible Imam Muḥammad al-Bāqir (57-114 AH/ 677-733 [himself a survivor of the Ashura Battle of Karbala]) and the sixth Infallible Imam Ja'far al-Ṣādiq (83-148 AH/ 702-765).

All the Infallible Imams were zealous to revive and keep the memory of Imam al-Ḥusayn afresh throughout history. For this purpose, they always recommended Muslims to pay visits to the tomb of Imam al-Ḥusayn and encouraged them to produce elegies and mournful poems to this end. There were instances where a Shii Muslim composed a devotional piece (e.g., a short ziyarat-text composed by Ibrāhīm b. Abī

al-Bilād (d. 184 AH/ 800) in favor of Imam al-Ḥusayn, and approved by the seventh Infallible Imam Mūsā al-Kāẓim (128-183 AH/ 745-799). (See, Qummī, 1937/ 1316 Sh, p. 428)

Connected with the ziyarāt-literature, mention must be made of encouragement literature.<sup>2</sup> The Infallible Imams who came after Imam al-Ḥusayn encouraged people to seize every opportunity to pay pilgrimage, or at least pay a salaam, to Imam al-Ḥusayn. (See al-Iṣṭahbānāʿī, [1995/ 1416 AH] for a good collection of such encouragement indications.)

There is also a type of prohibition literature in relation to making pilgrimage to Imam al-Ḥusayn. There are hadiths that prohibit people from forsaking paying pilgrimage to the tomb of Imam al-Ḥusayn. An instance is the indication that Imam Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq made in that if a person does not pay pilgrimage to the tomb of Imam al-Ḥusayn on purpose throughout his life, he would deserve being thrown into the Hellfire, and in case he might be permitted to reside in the Divine paradise eternally and forever, rather he would be permitted to be only a guest of the Paradise dwellers. (Ibn Qūluwayh al-Qummī, 1356 AH/ 1937, p. 193; qtd. in Majlisī, 1386 Sh/ 2007, p. 216)

Mournful literature occupies the greatest portion of Ḥusayni literature. Martyrdom-themed narratives (in Arabic and Persian *maqṭal*) make the salient feature of typical Husayni literature. *Maqṭal* literature focuses on the tragic scenes of the martyrdom fate of any of the Ashura martyrs of the Battle of Karbala. At times, the concept receives extension to include the martyrdom-like demise of the Ashura survivors, e.g., Imam al-Ḥusayn’s little daughter, Ruqayyah bt. al-Ḥusayn, who died of intense grief and unbearable psychological pressure at the sight of her father’s severed head in Damascus.

Husayni literature, particularly those in the realm of the genre of *maqṭal*, focus on the details of the martyrdom fate of certain individuals. Most often, the *maqṭals* of the close relatives of Imam al-Ḥusayn are recounted. The martyrdom fate of others are reviewed briefly. Therefore, a great majority of the *maqṭal*-themed people are Imam al-

<sup>2</sup> This type of encouragement literature can be compared with advice literature that pertains to establishing and practicing favorable morals, e.g., the Quranic Sura Luqman [31] and Sura al-Ḥujurāt [49] are packed with advice literature.

Ḥusayn's younger, half-brother al-‘Abbās b. ‘Alī, his sons, ‘Alī al-Akbar and ‘Alī al-Aṣghar, and his nephew Qāsim b. al-Ḥasan.

There are various types of *maqtals* according to the recounters. The original recounter may be an Infallible personality, any of the Infallible Imams, whether any one present in the episode of Ashura or not. There were only two Infallible Imams who were present in Karbala, namely, the fourth Infallible Imam ‘Alī al-Sajjād (38-95 AH/ 658-714), and the fifth Infallible Imam Muḥammad al-Bāqir. Remarks of the rest of the Infallible Imams are likewise equally acceptable, simply due to their being infallible and veracious dignitaries.

In addition to the above, there are accounts or reports recounted by non-infallible but reliable personalities. These accounts concern those rendered by certain Ashura survivors or reporters, e.g., Ḥasan b. al-Ḥasan, also known as al-Ḥasan al-Muthannā (d. 85 AH/ 704), and his wife Fāṭimah bt. al-Ḥusayn (51-117 AH/ 671-735), both of them Ashura survivors.

As for the Ashura recounters, the confessions of certain war criminals are also reliable. Some of them were arrested, put on trial, and executed by al-Mukhtār b. Abū ‘Ubayd al-Thaqaṭī (1-76 AH/ 622-687). These accounts make various parts of the crimes the Umayyads committed on Ashura.

Regarding the literary genres used in the Husayni *maqtal* literature, most of them are in both prose and poetry. Although many productions are in prose, they do contain some poems, especially certain *rajazes* (battlefield spontaneous poems) composed by Ashura martyrs. In later literary works, some people retold greater portions of the whole events in the form of poems. Here mention must be made of the Shii Iraqī cleric and judge, Muḥammad Ṭāhir al-Samāwī (1292-1370 AH/ 1875-1850) who composed a long *urjūzah* (an Arabic didactic poem) in 1250 distiches (*bayts*) (equal to 2500 lines) *Majāli al-Luṭf bi’Arḍ al-Ṭaff* (1360 AH/ 1041), a book of versified history of the land of Karbala and the Ashura Battle occurred therein. In Iran, for sure Muḥtasham (1500-1588 AH/ 905-996) has been prominent for his famous 12-strophe (12-*band*) elegy. Although many poets have imitated or incorporated and appropriated his poems in their own works, he has since remained almost the number-one Husayni poet in Persian. In a like manner,

mention must be made of the Indian poet Mir Anis (1803-1874). Mir Anis devoted his literary talents to composing elegies (*marthīyahs/marsiyahs*) in memory of Imam al-Ḥusayn throughout his life and literary career. In effect of his religio-literary endeavors and sincere efforts, the literary genre of elegy (*marthīyah*) has been raised to the highest of all genres of the Urdu literature. (See T. Grahame Bailey, 1932, p. 61.)

Here it is timely to make a distinction between a source and a recounter. While a source is a document left or remained, e.g., an account, a report, a speech, a piece of hadith, a letter, and the like, a recounter or a reporter is oftentimes a person who gives a report of what he or she noticed of such an event. Hence, one must make a distinction between a first-hand or primary source or document in contrast to secondary sources. Likewise, a recounter may be highly authoritative in whose account or report experts have full confidence. Examples of such highly authoritative recounters are the Infallible Imams and the eyewitnesses and survivors of the Ashura Battle of Karbala.

Reliable and sound hadiths make the most authoritative sources of Husayni literature. As for the sources that pertain to Husayni literature, in general, and the Ashura episode, in specific, the most authoritative of them are the hadiths remained, with their chains of authorities all sound and trustworthy. Some sources are beyond doubt in terms of reliability. A medieval source is the book *Kāmil al-Ziyārāt* of Ja‘far b. Muḥammad b. Qūluwayh al-Qummī (d. 368 AH/ 978), a book largely devoted to Husayni hadiths. Although mostly concerned with the pilgrimage-prayers, i.e., ziyarāt-texts, issued in favor of Imam al-Ḥusayn, it is regarded as a highly reliable source. In addition, the *Biḥār al-Anwār* (110 vols.), compiled by the late Allama Muḥammad-Bāqir Majlisī (1037-1111 AH/ 1628-1699) contains a good and reliable collection of hadiths of Imam al-Ḥusayn. In recent years, particularly after the 1979 Islamic Revolution of Iran, great encyclopedic collections appeared, all concerned with the words and discourses of Imam al-Ḥusayn. The 16-volume *Dānishnāmih-yi Imam al-Ḥusayn* [The Imam al-Ḥusayn Encyclopedia] published under the guidance of the late Muḥammad Muḥammadī Rayshahrī (1325-1401 Sh/ 1946-

2022) is a prominent work. There have been several abridged versions and an English translation of one of its abridged editions, too.

Explications of the ziyarat-texts in favor of Imam al-Ḥusayni fall within the scope of Husayni literature. Throughout Islamic history, and particularly within recent two centuries, some scholars endeavored to try their hands at producing expert exegeses of the certain ziyarat-texts. The famous Ashura ziyarat-text has received several translations, with commentaries and exegetical explanations. The most famous of them is a seminal book the late Mirza Abū al-Faḍī Thaqafī Ṭihirānī (1273-1316 AH/ 1856-1898) wrote, entitled *Shafā' al-Ṣudūr fī Sharḥ Ziyārat al-‘Āshūr* (first published in Bombay, India, in 1310 AH/ 1892). There has appeared an English exposition and exegesis of the same ziyarat-text by Khalfan (2009-2013), too.

### **Transnational Reception**

Husayni literature takes in almost the highest number of Shii Islamic history books. Although the final sections of most Husayni history books turn into *maqals*, there are certain differences between *maqals* and Husayni history books. History books shed light on much broader aspects of the historic movement of Imam al-Ḥusayn, take into account certain socio-cultural aspects and backgrounds of the focal historical period, i.e., the period and circumstances that led to the events concerned. In contrast, *maqals*, i.e., martyrdom narratives, seldom take the reader back to far and wide historical backgrounds and the undercurrents of the events that finally emerged. They focus mainly on the events of Ashura, or any certain day when the martyrdom episode took place. While history books sound like mere academic and scientific studies of events, with little purpose to emotionally impress the reader, the *maqal* accounts focus on arousing the reader's sentiments so as to make the audience or reader shed tears and feel sympathetic with the martyred dignitary. While Husayni history books aim to give historical awareness, a *maqal*, in its Arab socio-religious context, is supposed to be read aloud for the audience to listen to it and to shed tears. For this purpose, there are more elegies and mournful poems in *maqals* than in history books.

A Husayni piece of work may be written by a non-Shii and/or a non-Muslim. Judged by its contents to be in favor of Imam al-Ḥusayn, the book, treatise, or paper, must be sympathetic to the plights and hardships Imam al-Ḥusayn and his camp suffered. It must be a relatively much later publication phenomenon.<sup>3</sup> Much later, in England the British historian Edward Gibbon (1737-1794) touched upon the Ashura Battle of Karbala in his history book. (See, Gibbon, vol. 2, pp. 250-251.)

Not every work that deals with the event of Ashura or Imam al-Ḥusayn deserves being regarded as a Husayni piece of scholarship or literature.<sup>4</sup> The main criterion for a non-Shii or non-Muslim work to be regarded as a work (includable in the outer circles) of Husayni literature is that the author must be sympathetic to the cause of Imam al-Ḥusayn. Merely making a reference to him or the Ashura episode of Karbala does not suffice. There are some notable works. Consider, for example, the British Orientalist Simon Ockley (1678-1720) who provides a synoptic and clear account of the Ashura Battle of Karbala in his book *The History of the Saracens* (2 vols., 1708-1718; 6<sup>th</sup> ed., 1857). In his interpretations, he finally takes sides with the second Umayyad ruler Yazīd (Ockley, 1857, pp. 413 and 419). Therefore, his book never deserves to be included within Husayni literature, although it may be taken as a non-Muslim's outsider reflections on the whole event of

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<sup>3</sup> In the time of the Umayyad ruler Yazīd (26-64 AH/ 647-683) at who order the massacre of Karbala took place, there was a Byzantine delegate to the court of Yazīd at Damascus. The first one, whose name is not mentioned in Shii Islamic sources, witnessed Yazīd's disrespectful treatment of the Ashura survivors and the severed heads of Imam al-Ḥusayn and the rest of the Ashura martyrs. When he expressed his deep indignation and bitter resentment, Yazīd ordered his swordsmen to kill him on the spot. The Byzantine empire of the time, Constantine IV (Flavius Constantinus, ca. 650-685) dispatched a second delegate to Damascus. The second Byzantine delegate sent back a short message to Constantine IV; in it, he gave a brief report of the Ashura Battle of Karbala. As Byzantine officials were supposed to be Christian, that report may be regarded as the first non-Muslim, and particularly Christian, martyrdom report of Imam al-Ḥusayn.

<sup>4</sup> Such works deserve to be regarded as anti-Husayni writings. On top of this category comes the poems Yazīd composed when he noticed the severed head of Imam al-Ḥusayn in his court at Damascus.

Karbala. Another instance can be found in the works of the Belgian Arabist and Orientalist, Henri Lammens (1862-1937). Despite his expertise in Arabic literature, he always took sides with the Umayyads, hence his article on Imam al-Ḥusayn in the first edition of *The Encyclopaedia of Islam* (1913-1936, vol. 3, 1927, p. 339) cannot be regarded as a work within the broader realm of Husayni literature. Lammens was severely criticized by other Christian scholars for his sarcastic tone and severely disgusting attitude toward the Prophet, on the one hand, and his excessive leaning towards the Umayyads, on the other hand. (See, Salibi [1962])

Husayni literature may receive some occasion-oriented subdivisions. Some works and ziyarat-texts concern the anniversary of his graceful and blessed birth. Others may concern his martyrdom anniversary, i.e., Ashura, and the fortieth day after his martyrdom, i.e., Arbaeen.

It is timely to make a remark concerning the ziyarat-texts in favor of Imam al-Ḥusayn. A great majority of the ziyarat-texts in his favor have been authored by Infallible Imams. Some of them were produced by certain companions of the Infallible Imams who succeeded Imam al-Ḥusayn. Since the time of the major occultation of the 12<sup>th</sup> Infallible Imam al-Mahdī, i.e., from 329 AH/ 940 onward, some leading scholars such as Sayyid b. Ṭāwūs al-Ḥillī (589-664 AH/ 1193-1265) composed some ziyarat-texts.

The famous Ashura ziyarat-text deserves special attention in wide array of Husayni literature. On top of all the ziyarat-texts comes the famous Ashura ziyarat-text whose chain of authorities reaches Allah. This is regarded as the special grace of Allah in favor of Imam al-Ḥusayn. It is the widely discussed ziyarat-text due mainly to have its original source in the Divine inspiration. It is well documented that the Prophet Muḥammad received it from Allah and then transferred it to his immediate successor, the first Infallible Imam ‘Alī. It has many implicatures in that Allah was the earliest mourner of Imam al-Ḥusayn, and that his unique sacrifice had received Divine appreciation much earlier than the Ashura Battle of Karbala take place. (For a good and recent study of the famous Ashura ziyarat-text, see Mahmoodi [1401 Sh/ 2022]).

Within the broad realm of Husayni literature, it deserves to mention that certain sympathetic works written by non-Muslims. Although these works are not expected to contain many and certain details, they are noteworthy for their sympathetic tone, positive attitudes, and historical considerations. In this category, one may find certain works of Premchand (1924, 1928). Premchand (original name, Dhanpat Rai Srivastava, 1880-1936) intended to set a ground for peaceful co-existence of Hindus and Muslims in the Indian Subcontinent, hence his dramatic play on Karbala. According to Nishat Zaidi's preface to her English translation of Premchand's masterpiece, the "play *Karbala* reveals how cultural translation can act as an efficacious tool in nation-building." (Zaidi, 2022, p. x). In the Indian independence movement, whenever the Indian youth needed political energy, the Hindu literary figure Sarojini Naidu recounted an account of Ashura and Karbala for them to revive the spirit of struggle in them.

Husayni literature has proved to be far beyond the man-created and conventional boundaries. There is no language restriction. Mir Mosharraf Hossain (1847-1912) produced his Bengali Husayni elegiac play, *Bishad-Sindhu* (1885), later on translated into English under the title of *The Ocean of Sorrow* by Fakrul Alam in 2016. Khalfan (2009-2013) produced his exegesis of the famous Ashura ziyar-at-text originally and basically in English. Husayni literature trespasses all boundaries. Many works on Husayni literature are available in other languages, both Islamicate and otherwise.

There is no author's-religion restriction, either. Premchand was a Hindu and produced his play *Karbala* first in Hindi in 1924 and then produced its revised version in Urdu in 1928. Likewise, Sarojini Naidu who was a Hindu figure composed some of her English poems on Imam al-Husayn.

Husayni literature deserves more serious and reflective attention on trans-national or hyper-religious levels. It is a pity, hence seriously deplorable and equally questionable, that and why Husayni literature has not been treated a distinct and respectable branch of world literature in such great works as *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*. In it, there is only a brief (and rather inadequate) reference to

both the genre of marsiya and Mir Anis in the entry devoted to Urdu literature. (Naim, 2012, p. 1498).

### **Conclusion**

Husayni literature is a dynamic type of Shii Islamic literature flowering in various types. Wherever there is a Shii Muslim community, one may expect to find some of form of Husayni literature. An originally Shii Islamic branch of literature, it has not been introduced in anthologies of world literature in English at it rightly deserves. Hence, the present work is meant to make just an introductory and overall account of it in English.

The paper finds that Husayni literature is a dynamic and enduring branch of Shii Islamic literature, deeply rooted in religious history and cultural memory revolving around Imam al-Husayn and the Ashura tragedy. It demonstrates how this literature transcends linguistic, religious, and national boundaries, encompassing works in languages such as Arabic, Persian, Urdu, Bengali, and English. The study confirms that Husayni literature occupies a unique place within the Islamic tradition, combining literary, historical, and devotional elements to preserve the memory of Imam al-Husayn across centuries. The thesis that Husayni literature is both a potent cultural force and a rich literary tradition is reaffirmed, with the paper highlighting its multifaceted nature: it includes hadiths, historical narratives, elegiac poetry, pilgrimage texts, and political-religious discourses. This literature not only informs religious identity but also fosters communal solidarity and ethical reflection among Shii Muslims and beyond. Despite its significance, the paper notes that Husayni literature remains underrepresented in global literary anthologies and scholarly discourse outside Islamic studies.

Concrete research agendas proposed include:

1. A comprehensive global cataloging and digital archiving of Husayni literary texts across languages and formats.
2. Interdisciplinary studies exploring the intersection of Husayni literature with history, theology, and political movements.
3. Comparative literary analyses between Husayni literature and other martyrdom or elegiac traditions worldwide.

4. Examination of the role of Husayni literature in contemporary diaspora identities and transnational religious movements.
5. Critical exploration of non-Shii interpretations and appropriations of Husayni themes in global literature.

### **Limitations of the Study**

The study acknowledges several limitations, including the challenges of accessing rare primary sources, the linguistic breadth complicating exhaustive surveys, and the relative scarcity of comprehensive secondary scholarship in languages accessible to all researchers. Additionally, the paper's evaluative remarks are constrained by the evolving nature of Husayni literature and its diverse expressions, which may vary across cultural contexts.

These findings collectively attest to the rich cultural, historical, and literary significance of Husayni literature while inviting further scholarly attention to expand understanding and appreciation of this vital tradition within and beyond Islamic literary studies.

### **Appendix**

#### *Abbreviations used in this study:*

AH: Islamic lunar calendar

b.: Arabic *ibn*, son of

bt.: Arabic *bint*, daughter of

ca.: Latin *circa*, about

comp.: compiler, compiled by

ed.: editor, edition, edited by

e.g.: Latin *exempli gratia*, for example

f.: from

H.z.: Persian f. Arabic *Hazrat*, a respectful title

i.e.: Latin *id est*, that is

qtd.: quoted

Sh: Islamic solar calendar

s.v.: Latin *sub verbo*, under the headword or title

trans.: translator, translation, translated by

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#### Acknowledgements

Mostafa Shahiditabar, Giancarlo Anello, Maryam Hikmatniya, Reza Bagheri Nevisi, Ali-Reza Panjwani, Sujan Mondal, Muhammad Reza Kazimi.





Vol. 3, Issue. 1 (Series 9), Summer 2025, pp.105-132

## Translation Quality Assessment of Women Subject Verses in Four English Translations of the Holy Koran Based on Garces-Berman Model

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### Abstract

It seems Islam has come to be the subject of criticism by some feminists by referencing to English translations of the Holy Quran. Most translators of the Holy Koran have been male, so they might translate women-subject verses inaccurately. The present research aims to compare translation accuracy of such verses between male and female translators. Employing a descriptive – analytical approach, four frequently quoted translations are selected: Yusuf Ali, Pickthall (males), Umm Muhammad and Laleh Bakhtiar (females). The translation accuracy of twenty-five women-subject verses were assessed based on Garces-Berman model. They were also evaluated according to Al-Mizan and Nemooneh exegesis. The findings revealed that male's translation of more verses differentiate from the exegesis books in comparison with female's translations. Additionally, the male translators utilized the highest number of accuracy-destructive strategies of the Garces-Berman model rather than female translators. The most frequently used strategies are Qualitative Impoverishment, Rationalization and Redundancy-Definition-Explanation. This research may help feminists have a more accurate rendering of women subject verses and compare translation accuracy of such verses between male and female translators. Secondly, translators may benefit from the research by avoiding the introduced accuracy-destructive strategies in their translation to develop their translation accuracy.

**Keywords:** Feminism, Misogyny, Translation Accuracy, Women in Quran, Male and Female Translators.

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Received: May 10, 2025


Revised: June 8, 2025

Accepted: July 14, 2025

Article type: Research Article

Publisher: Imam Sadiq University



 [10.30497/ISQH.2025.248810.1060](https://doi.org/10.30497/ISQH.2025.248810.1060)

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**How to cite:** Noori, S. and Eslamieh, R. (2025). Translation Quality Assessment of Women Subject Verses in Four English Translations of the Holy Koran Based on Garces-Berman Model. *Interdisciplinary Studies of Quran & Hadith*, 3(1), 105-132. doi: [10.30497/isqh.2025.248810.1060](https://doi.org/10.30497/isqh.2025.248810.1060)

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## 1. Introduction

How much religious translations affect the way others think of that religion? Especially when translation errors are evident. Recently, some western feminism activists have criticized Islam for having a misogynistic approach. It seems that these people are mostly non-Arabic speakers and study English translations of Islamic books, especially the Holy Quran. The problem is that these feminists are not aware of the quality of Quran translations.

The aim of the present study is to examine the accuracy of some English translations of some verses of the Holy Quran about women. They are verses in which words "نساء", "رجال", "امراه", "هن", "كن", "بنات", "بنات", "مونت", "مومنات", "زوج" and other words referring to women denotatively or connotatively. They outnumber hundreds of verses but only the verses which have been subject to the criticism by feminist, are selected. The accuracy of the translation of such verses was examined by a translation quality assessment model.

As a criticism stated: "The usual (and often absolute) view of Muslim culture (in the West) is that Muslim men are polygamous and abusive, and Muslim women are "veiled, chained and reclusive" (Hasan, 2012, p. 27). Islamic books, especially the Holy Quran, have been translated and interpreted mainly by men. Some men unconsciously desire to achieve a superior position to their opposite sex in order to have more dominance over them. This could be one of several factors that may reduce the accuracy of men's translations of the verses related to women. It seems fair that women should also step into the path of studying, translating, and interpreting the Holy Quran.

## 2 Research Questions

This study seeks to find appropriate answers to the following questions:

1. Which translations selected from among the male and female translators have been more successful and qualitative in conveying more corresponding meaning of the Quranic verses related to women based on the authentic exegesis and lexicons?

2. What is more corresponding English translation of verses on women in the Holy Quran based on the interpretations of Al-Mizan and Nemoneh?
3. What is the frequency percentage of Garces-Berman's strategies used in each of the translations?

### 3 Review of Related Literature

A review of the research literature shows that the issue of evaluating the quality of translations of the Holy Quran based on the Garces/Berman model has attracted the attention of researchers as follows:

The article "Adapting and evaluating the translations of the Holy Quran by Fooladvand and Elahi Qomshei based on the Garces pattern (Case Study: Surah Al-Mobarak Al-Qamar)" conducted by Azar Shab, Maleki, Asadollahi (2020) examines two Persian translations of the Holy Quran by Messrs. Elahi-Qamshe'i (as a freer translation) and Foladvand (as a more literal translation) based on the Garces model.

This study shows that the Garces model, especially at the semantic-lexical level, can be used to evaluate the translation of the Holy Quran. The freer the translation, the more deviations it has at the morphological-syntactic level. Since Foladvand interpreted his translation literally, he used more of the negative factors mentioned in the Garces model than Elahi-Qomshe'i.

Niazi & Hashemi (2019) in the article "A study of the efficiency of the syntactical – morphological level of Garces' Model in the assessment of Quran translation; A case study: Makarem Shirazi's translation of five surahs of the Quran" suggested that the Garces model needs to be revised, especially in terms of the negative and positive aspects of the strategies. Since some strategies, especially at the third level, are not applicable in the translation of the Holy Quran, new strategies were added to this model. Some strategies may differ in terms of their negativity and positivity based on the type of text, necessity, and the impact they have on the quality of the translation.

Like this article, verses from the Holy Quran were evaluated based on the Garces model (1994), but in the above articles, the aim is to examine translations at the morphological-syntactic level. The present

study is to examine the degree of correspondence of translations with authoritative commentaries at the semantic level.

The study "Boosting Carmen Valero Garces (1994) model through exploring contemporary English translations of Hedayat's Surrealistic Masterpiece" performed by Afrouz (2021) revealed that Bashiri translated *The Blind Owl* with greater fidelity to the source text; But Costello's translation has more degree of naturalness. Finally, Garces's model was strengthened by adding four more techniques.

Also, in our article translation is examined in terms of fidelity to the source text based on the Garces model, and completed by applying some modifications to the Garces model. Unlike above article, instead of a literary text, a religious text is examined.

By examining the article "Evaluation of Tahereh Saffarzadeh's translation techniques based on Antoine Berman's Text Distortion factors (A Case Study of Surah An-Nisa)" Afzali and Sanayi (2020) found that due to cultural and social differences, it is very difficult to be faithful to Berman's techniques in all cases. Finally, it was revealed that the translator had made all effort to translate the religious book, but in some cases the translation was done word by word.

In a study titled "Critique of the translation of the Quran by Tahereh Saffarzadeh and Hossein Ansarian based on the theory of morphological tendencies by Antoine Berman" (Case Study of Surah Al-Baqarah) conducted by Kakavandi, Masoumi & Yousefi (2022), it was found that Tahereh Saffarzadeh followed Berman's techniques more than Hossein Ansarian. It was concluded that Berman's model in evaluating the translation of the Holy Quran provided the best techniques for analyzing religious texts. Religious texts must be faithful to the original text so as not to cause misunderstandings and the translator must translate it with the least deviation.

Like the above researches, translations of Quran verses were examined based on the Berman model to determine the extent translators were faithful to the original text. In the present article, only the verses on women were studied in terms of their meaning matching the original text and authoritative commentaries.

Jaoudi (2022) in an article titled "Rethinking Gender in Translation" explained how feminists have contributed to translation studies by

introducing and employing some translation strategies that reflect the feminine voice in translation. Finally, two English translations of the Quran, namely Laleh Bakhtiar's book: *The Sublime Quran* (2009) and *The Quran: A Reformist Translation* (2007) by Edip Yuksel, were compared to each other.

Surah An-Nisa was studied and it was discovered that "these modern translations of the Holy Quran function as a new reading of the sacred texts in which egalitarian sexism prevails and supports God's universal message of love, compassion and peace" (Jaoudi, 2022, p. 7-8).

According to Aldeeb (2023), the article "Feminist Strategies in Quran Translations: A Comparative Study of the Sublime Quran (Lala Bakhtiar's Translation) and the Saheeh International (Umm Muhammad's Translation)" was studied to find out to what extent feminist translation strategies were used in the translations. Four verses of the Quran, which are mostly about women, were examined. The researcher's goal was to discover to what extent the translators translated feminine nouns and pronouns and masculine general nouns from Arabic to English correctly. The results showed that Bakhtiar used feminist translation strategies more than Umm Muhammad. It may roots in the society in which they lived. Umm Muhammad lived in Saudi Arabia and Bakhtiar in America.

The present article is also for the examination of Laleh Bakhtiar and Umm Muhammad's English translations of verses on the subject of women. In the above articles, the translations were examined based on the techniques introduced to reflect the voice of women in the translations, but in the present article, the translations were studied based on the strategies of the Berman and Garces model to determine.

## **4 Theoretical Grounding**

### **4.1 Garces and Berman's Integrated Assessment Model**

This study has presented an integrated model for the qualitative and quantitative evaluation of English translations of verses related to women in the Holy Quran. The presented model is a combination of Garces (1994) and Berman's models (1984). Berman's model can help in evaluating translation deviations from the source text. Some of Berman's model strategies, such as "embellishment", although they

cause deviations in translation, but have less effect on the transmission of meaning. Some of its strategies are also less applicable in the translation of the Holy Quran, such as “language confusion”. Therefore, only the factors that cause a reduction in translation accuracy (meaning) and are applicable in the translation of the Holy Quran were selected for the integrated model.

Garces’ model seems excellent for evaluating the translation of literary works in terms of adequacy and acceptability, but only some of its strategies are applicable in the translation of the Holy Quran for the accurate transmission of meaning, and only those strategies will be selected for the integrated model. Some strategies are similar in both models, so that they can be considered as one strategy, such as "redundancy versus simplicity" and "definition and explanation". Consequently, considering the large number of strategies presented in the Garces and Berman model and the limitations and delimitations of the present study, only those strategies that have a greater impact on translation accuracy and wider application in translating Quranic verses were selected for the integrated model. These strategies are:

#### 4.2 Of Berman Model:

**Qualitative Impoverishment:** It explains the fact that the words of the source text do not have an exact equivalent in the target text, either in terms of transmitting connotative and denotative meaning, and the image and concept of the source text are not transferred to the target text. In other words, qualitative impoverishment means: "replacing terms, phrases, and forms in the original translation with terms, phrases, and forms that lack their phonetic richness or, consequently, their semantic or symbolic richness" (Berman, 1984, p.291). Although, for example, translating "enormous" to "الكبير" may transfer the meaning but it fails conveying the image the word "enormous" makes in our mind.

**Quantitative Impoverishment:** It means the loss of words from the source text when translating into the target text. So the number of words in the source texts is greater than the number of words in the target text. "This refers to a lexical loss" (Berman, 1984, p.291). In this regard, the translator may use one word to translate several words in the source

text. Like translating "This apartment is beautiful, fascinating and awesome" to "هذه شقة جميلة".

**Rationalization:** In Arabic, grammar and structure play a fundamental role in the formation of meaning. Rationalization is the restructuring or reconfiguration of sentences, phrases, and words or changing parts of speech during translation, so that the structure in the target text sounds more natural and logical. "Rationalization recomposes sentences and the sequence of sentences, rearranging them according to a certain idea of discursive order" (Berman, 1984, p.288). Such as removing sentences, removing repeated words, replacing words in a sentence, changing punctuation marks, etc. Rationalization is considered a negative strategy where it has a negative effect on conveying the author's intention. Rationalization may seem mandatory in some cases due to the syntactic and grammatical differences in the source and target language systems. "ما أجمل هذه الشقة!" is rationalized if it is translated to "this is a beautiful apartment".

**Clarification:** Clarification seems to be an obvious principle for many translators and writers. Explanation is inevitable in translation, because every translation has some degree of explicitation. But this can mean two very different things: (1) Clarification can be the manifestation of a concept that is not obvious in the original text, and is hidden or suppressed (implication), [...] (2) The purpose of clarification is to make "obvious" what the original author did not want to be stated obviously. Moving from polysemy to monosemy is a method of clarification" (Berman, 1984, p.245). "نفس" means both "soul" and "person", but if it is translated to "person", this is clarification.

#### 4.3 Of Garces Model:

**Definition and Explanation:** Definition is the translation of words using a noun or adjective clause. Explanation in the translation text is to add information that is deemed necessary due to cultural differences between the source and target texts (Garces, 1994, p. 80-81). Although definition and explanation help the target reader to develop their understanding of the translated information in some cases, but additional explanation distracts the reader from the original text and limits the generalization of the meaning of the source text. Therefore,

these two strategies can have a positive or negative impact on the accuracy of translation. Definition like "ثبات" to "dispersed group". Explanation like "شعار سياسي" to "a short saying or catchphrase, often used by political groups".

**Cultural and pragmatical equivalence:** Some words have cultural connotations, such that they may be understood only in the cultural context of a text. As a result, if they are translated without considering the source culture, they will suffer from a decline in meaning, such as translating the Arabic Quranic word "هجرة" into the English common word "trip". Where the target language does not have the same culture as the source language, the translator should translate the word into the target language literally but provide an explanatory note inside or outside the text to help the reader understand the text. If the source text does not have the same cultural equivalent in the target language, changing the source text in translation seems unwise, so the use of cultural equivalence in this case has a negative impact on the accuracy of the translation.

**General versus Particular or vice versa:** This strategy is important in English translations of the Holy Quran because Arabic is a language of great detail. In Arabic there are many equivalents for every phenomenon, even very small ones. For example, there are several words for different types of "مطر" in Arabic language like "رشوش، غيث، ... و ظل" while in English there may be only one word to denote all types of rains, and that is the word "rain" itself. As a result, the translator must pay attention to the generality or particularity of Quranic words, otherwise, using them interchangeably will be a negative feature in the accuracy of the translation.

**Ambiguity:** Ambiguity arises when a word in the target text has multiple semantic connotations. "Ambiguity may be intentional or unintentional. Intentional ambiguity should, if possible, be preserved in the translation, [...] Unintentional ambiguity is usually explained in the translation, but the translator should avoid any possible misunderstanding" (Newmark, 1988, p. 206-207). The Holy Quran is free from any unintentional ambiguity due to lack of attention or etc. Each word in the Holy Quran has several different meanings, hence, there are many intentional ambiguities, and conveying these

ambiguities in the target text will be a positive feature and not conveying them will be a negative feature of an accurate translation. "نفس" means both "soul" and "person", but if it is translated to "person", this is also ambiguity.

**Literal Translation:** This concept means translating the sentences of the source text word by word, without paying attention to the semantic connotations of the words out of context. Garces believes that "literal translation" is a negative characteristic due to its poor connection with the target text, and when it is used excessively, the translation becomes progressively more complicated, and when it causes problems due to cultural differences, it should be avoided (Newmark, 1988, p. 81). "Literal translation is correct if it guarantees referential and pragmatical equivalence with the original text and should not be avoided" (Newmark, 1988, p. 68-69). "ایک نعبد و ایک نستعین" into "only you we worship and only you we ask" is a literal translation.

**Implicitation, Reduction and Omission:** If some parts of the source text are omitted in the translation or an explicit concept is translated implicitly in the target text, the meaning intended by the author will not be conveyed. But not all types of implicitation, reduction or omission cause harm to the transmission of meaning. This strategy is to express elements that are explicitly stated in the source text, implicitly or abstractly in the target text, or remove them completely, in order to harmonize with the grammar of the source text (Garces, 1994, p. 149). For example translating "للنساء نصیب مما اکتسبن" to "to women what they earn".

**Change due to Socio-Cultural Differences:** This is the process of making changes to the source text so that the translated text is as close as possible to the target culture, and easier to read and understand, so that it may be thought that this text is not a translation at all! Language is tied to culture. Although this helps the translation to be more acceptable and readable for its target readers, it is detrimental to the correct transmission of meaning. Therefore, it is considered one of the negative factors in accurate translation. Like rendering "حج" to "pilgrimage".

**Translator's Error:** It results from the translator's poor performance, both in terms of attention during translation and in terms of knowledge

of both the source and target languages and cultures. Translator's error is a negative parameter because it disrupts the correct transmission of meaning. This arises from the translator's misunderstanding and insufficient knowledge of the subject matter or the multiple linguistic systems of the source and target texts (Garces, 1994, p. 83). Translating "انها عجوزه" to "he is old" is translator's error.

**Redundancy against Simplicity:** This refers to adding phrases to the translation text without having an equivalent in the source text. This means that the translator translates simple sentences in the source text with more complex sentences in the target text accompanied by additional explanations (Garces, 1994, p. 82). This reduces the accuracy of the translation if it does not convey the meaning correctly. "ذالك ادنى" "ان يعرفن" to "this is much better for them that they will be known and called" is an example for redundancy.

By considering similar strategies mentioned-above as one strategy, the combined model is as follows:

**Table 1.** *Similar Strategies to the Berman and Garces Model for Evaluating Quranic Translations*

<b>Garces-Berman Integrated Model</b>
Redundancy vs. Simplicity / Definition and Explanation
Cultural and Pragmatical Equivalence / Changes Due to Socio-Cultural Differences
General vs. Particular or vice versa
Ambiguity
Literal Translation
Implication, Reduction and Omission / Quantitative Impoverishment
Translator's Error
Qualitative Impoverishment
Rationalization
Clarification

## 5 Method

First, four common translations of the Holy Quran into English, translated by male and female translators, were selected based on the top-searched English versions of the Holy Quran on the internet. They are: The Holy Quran: Text, Translation and Commentary (1934) by Yusuf Ali, The Meaning of the Glorious Quran (1930) by Pickthall, The

Saheeh International (1997) by Umm Muhammad, The Sublime Quran (1388) by Laleh Bakhtiar. Then twenty-five verses about women were extracted according to the main subject of the verses and the criticisms such verses have been faced with. There are many models for translations assessment but Garces (1994) and Berman model (1984) were selected because they have been selected for assessing translation quality of the Holy Quran in many articles. Secondly, they both evaluate the translation quality in terms of accuracy in transmission of meaning through translation. Then Berman and Garces models were merged with each other. These two models contains many strategies. But only some of them influence the accuracy of translation (in terms of meaning) and are applicable in the Holy Quran. Hence, only ten strategies were extracted thereof. They were integrated so as to complement each other and to overlap their deficiencies making a new and comprehensive model for translation quality assessment. By using reliable Quran exegesis books and Quranic dictionaries, the exact meaning of the same verses was extracted. There were many exegesis books and Quranic dictionaries. At last, the following books were selected because they were rather new and have been used as references for many research papers.

The translation of Tafsir al-Mizan by Allameh Tabatabaei, translated by Mohammad Baqer Mousavi Hamedani (2007), Tafsir Nemooneh by Ayatollah Makarem Shirazi (1974), the translation of Mufradat al-Afas Quran of Raghieb Isfahani translated by Gholamreza Khosravi Hosseini (2004), and Qamoos Quran by Ali Akbar Qurashi (2007), were used to extract the exact meaning of the mentioned verses. In first step, the translations were compared to the exact meaning of the verses extracted from the exegesis and Quranic dictionaries. Next, number of the verses which had different meaning were computed. In the second step, each component of the Garces-Berman integrated model was examined in the above translations to calculate their frequency. **Only strategies that had a negative impact on the accurate transmission of meaning in English were calculated**, and finally the sum of negative strategies used by each translator was calculated.

Finally, a comparison was made between the male and female translators in terms of their conformity with the aforementioned

exegetical and lexical books and the number of negative strategies used in their translations.

## 6 Results

Due to the limitations, only one verse from the 25 verses is presented in this section as an example. The remaining verses were examined in detail in my thesis under the same title.

### 6.1 Example:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَاتٍ وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا﴾ (سوره نساء/ ۱)

**Picthall:** O mankind! Be careful of your duty to your Lord Who created you from a single soul and from it created its mate and from them twain hath spread abroad a multitude of men and women. Be careful of your duty toward Allah in Whom ye claim (your rights) of one another, and toward the wombs (that bare you). Lo! Allah hath been a watcher over you.

**Yusuf Ali:** O mankind! reverence your Guardian-Lord, who created you from a single person, created, of like nature, His mate, and from them twain scattered (like seeds) countless men and women;- reverence Allah, through whom ye demand your mutual (rights), and (reverence) the wombs (That bore you): for Allah ever watches over you.

**Umm Muhammad:** 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. And fear Allah, through whom<sup>1</sup> you ask one another,<sup>2</sup> and the wombs.<sup>3</sup> Indeed Allah is ever,<sup>4</sup> over you, an Observer.<sup>5</sup>

Footnotes;

1. In whose name.
2. i.e., request favors and demand rights.
3. i.e., fear Allah in regard to relations of kinship
4. When used in conjunction with Allah's attributes, the word "ever" (occurring repeatedly throughout this sūrah and elsewhere, such as in Sūrah al-Aḥzāb) is quite inadequate in imparting the sense of continuation expressed by the word "kāna" in Arabic, which indicates "always was, is, and always will be."
5. Ever-present and taking account of everything.

**Bakhtiar:** O humanity! Be Godfearing of your Lord Who created you from a single soul and from it created its spouse and from them both disseminated many men and women. And be Godfearing of God through Whom you demand rights of one another and the wombs, the rights of blood relations. Truly, God had been watching over you.

## 5.2 Semantic Results

**Feministic Criticism:** According to this verse, God created Eve (as a woman) from the body of Adam (as a man). Hence, the Holy Quran considers women inferior to men, because they (women) were created from the flesh of men. There are hadiths that support the creation of woman "from a rib" like in Sahih Bukhari (Al-Bukhari, 1997, volume 4, hadith No. 548) and Sahih Muslim (Al-Hajjaji, 2007, volume 8, hadith No. 3467). Even V A Mohamad Ashrof (2024) wrote a book titled (Beyond the Rib: Reframing the Creation Story for Equality) to answer this question.

**Meaning of the Verse:** According to the translation of Mufradat al-Afaz Quran (Esfahani, 2004, volume 4, p. 381) and the translation of Qamoos Quran (Qarashi, 1991, volume 7, p. 93), "نفس" means the soul and essence and does not necessarily refer to Adam or humans. Also, according to the Mufradat al-Afas Quran (volume 2, p. 159) and the Qamoos Quran (volume 3, p. 185), "زوج" refers to a husband and wife, whether male or female, and does not refer solely to Eve or women. Although according to the translation of Tafsir al-Mizan (Tabatabaye, 1988, volume 4, p. 210) and Tafsir Nemooneh (Makarem Shirazi, 1974, volume 3, p. 244) in this verse, "نفس" refers to Adam and "زوج" refers to Eve, they have added that "خلق منها" does not mean that Eve was created from Adam's body, but rather that Eve is similar to Adam in creation and women are no different from men in creation and are all equal. In sum, "نفس" and "زوج" do not have a specific gender and "منها" has a general meaning and may also mean "from it". In sum, it cannot be concluded that Eve was created from Adam's body.

**Evaluation of the Accuracy of the Translation:** Pickthall, Umm Muhammad, and Bakhtiar are closer to the commentaries meaning because they used "soul" (soul in English means both person and spirit) for "نفس" and "mate, spouse" (spouse and mate in English refer to both

genders of a married couple), for "زوج" but Yusuf Ali used "person" (only means person) for "نفس", while "نفس" may also refer to "soul" (spirit). In addition, he used "his mate" (his in English is used for the masculine gender) to translate "زوجها", while the word "نفس" in this verse does not directly refer to the masculine gender. It is worth mentioning that Yusuf Ali translated "منها" as "of like nature", but "منها" has a more general meaning, and three other translators translated "منها" as "from it", which is a better equivalent because it has general meaning.

### 5.3 Theoretical Results

**It is worth noting that the strategies of the model may overlap in many cases so that several strategies can be designated simultaneously in one particular phrase.**

**Pickthall:** He did not use any of the model's strategy.

**Yusuf Ali:**

1. "نفس" also means "person, soul", but he translated it only as "person". This strategy is a general versus particular translation.
2. "منها" means "from it" and has a general meaning. Translating as "of like nature" is general versus particular strategy.
3. He has made a translation error in translating "منها" to "his", because "منها" has no gender.
4. "نفس" also means "person, soul", but he translated it only as "person". This is a qualitative impoverishment.
5. "منها" means "from it" and has a general meaning. Translating as "of like nature" is qualitative impoverishment.
6. He has used a qualitative impoverishment strategy in translating "زوج" to "his", because couples have no gender.
7. "منها" is a preposition + pronoun, but "of like nature" is a preposition + adjective + noun. This is a rationalization strategy.
8. "نفس" means both "soul" and "person", but he has translated it only as "person". This is clarification.
8. He has used clarification in translating "منها" to "his", because "منها" has no gender.
9. He has used clarification in translating "منها" to "of like nature", because "منها" has a more general meaning.

**Umm Muhammad:**

1. "وحده" means "single", not just "one", and this is implicitation.
2. "وحده" means "single", not just "one", and this is qualitative impoverishment.

**Bakhtiar:** He has not used any strategy of modal.

**Table 2.** *Strategies Used by Each Translator in Translating Verse 1 of Surah An-Nisa*

Translator	Pickthall	Yusuf Ali	Umm Muhammad	Bakhtiar
Strategies	He did not use any strategies in translation.	1- General versus Specific 2- General versus Specific 3- Translator's Error 4- Qualitative Weakening 5- Qualitative Weakening 6- Qualitative Weakening 7- Rationalization 8- Clarification 9- Clarification 10- Clarification	1- Implicitation 2- Qualitative Impoverishment	She did not use any strategies in translation.
Sum	0	10	2	0

## 6 Discussion and conclusions

### 6.1 Discussion of Semantic Aspects

By providing above mentioned data, the translations can be investigated to see whether the translators have rendered accurate translation of women-subject verses or not. Furthermore, feminists can benefit from this study to understand the translation quality of the women-subject verses in the Holy Quran. With calculating the frequency of the strategies of the translations, the reason for inaccurate translation may be revealed, so they can be avoided by other translators.

After examining the exact meaning of the mentioned verses based on the exegetical and lexical books and English translations of these verses, it was found that translation of 6 verses out of the 25 verses have different meaning from the aforementioned exegetical and lexical books. These verses are:

An-Nisa/1

An-Nisa/34 - Part One

Al-Baqarah/228

Al-Baqarah/282  
 Al-Baqarah/222 - Part One  
 Al-Zukhruf/18

**Table 3.** *Number of Verses Criticized due to Incorrect Translation*

	<b>Translation Different from the Aforementioned Quranic Exegetical and Lexical Books</b>	<b>Translation Consistent with the Aforementioned Quranic Exegetical and Lexical Books</b>
<b>Number of Verses Criticized (Out of 25 Verses)</b>	6	19
<b>Percent</b>	24%	76%

The above table indicates that translation of six verses out of twenty-five verses on the subject of women had different meaning from the Quranic commentaries and lexical books. Hence, feminists have criticized these verses based on wrong translations. The following section specifies how many verses each translator has translated differently from the commentaries and lexical books.

**Pickthall:**

Al-Baqarah/282  
 Al-Baqarah/222 - Part One  
 Al-Zukhruf/18

**Yusuf Ali:**

Al-Baqarah/228  
 An-Nisa'/34 - Part 1  
 Al-Baqarah/187  
 Al-Baqarah/222 - Part 1  
 Al-Zukhruf/18

**Umm Muhammad:**

Al-Baqarah/222 - Part 1

**Bakhtiar:**

Al-Baqarah/222 - Part 1  
 Al-Zukhruf/18

**Table 4.** *Number of Verses Translated Differently by Each Translator*

	Number of Verses Translated Differently	Percentage (Out of 25 Verses)
<b>Pickthall</b>	3	12%
<b>Yusuf Ali</b>	5	20%
<b>Umm Muhammad</b>	1	4%
<b>Bakhtiar</b>	2	8%

**Table 5.** *Number of Verses Translated Differently by Male and Female Translators*

	Number of Verses Translated Differently	Percentage (Out of 25 Verses)
<b>Male Translators</b>	3+5=8	32%
<b>Female Translators</b>	1+2=3	12%

By examining the above tables, it is clear that Yusuf Ali translated twenty percent of the selected verses in a different way from the aforementioned books. Hence, the feminists have criticized these verses based on inaccurate translations. Umm Muhammad had the lowest percentage of different meaning. Therefore, she has translated these verses more accurately than other translators according to the exegetical and lexical books. Table 3-5 also indicates that male translators translated a total of thirty-two percent of the verses with women's themes in a way that is different from the authentic exegetical books, but female translators provided a more faithful translation, as they have translated only twelve percent of the verses in a different manner. **"Different translation" means the translation conveys different meaning in comparison with the meaning provided by the mentioned exegetical and lexical books. "Accurate translation" means the translation conveys the same meaning the mentioned exegetical and lexical books explain.**

## 6.2 Discussion of Theoretical Aspects

The translation of the verses has been evaluated based on the Garces (1994) - Berman (1984) integrated model, and the frequency of each strategy employed by the translators in the translation of the twenty-

five verses has been calculated as follows. It should be noted that the use of these strategies will have a negative impact on the accuracy of the translation (in terms of transferring the same meaning as provided by the mentioned exegetical and lexical books) and its fidelity to the source text. As a result, the greater the number of strategies employed by each translator, the less accuracy and fidelity to the source text is expected to be in their translation.

**Table 6.** *Frequency of Strategies Used by Translators in the Verses Related to Women*

	Pickthall	Yusuf Ali	Um Mohammad	Bakhtiar
Redundancy vs. Simplicity / Definition and Explanation	31	49	39	29
Cultural and Pragmatical Equivalence / Change due to Socio-Cultural Differences	9	5	5	13
General vs. Particular or vice versa	21	23	24	19
Ambiguity	18	18	19	12
Literal Translation	3	2	2	5
Implication, Reduction and Omission / Quantitative Impoverishment	27	35	23	17
Translator's Error	12	10	3	11
Qualitative Impoverishment	79	82	60	63
Rationalization	40	52	30	27
Clarification	22	28	25	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>212</b>

**Table 7.** *Frequency of Strategies Used by Male and Female Translators in the Verses Related to Women*

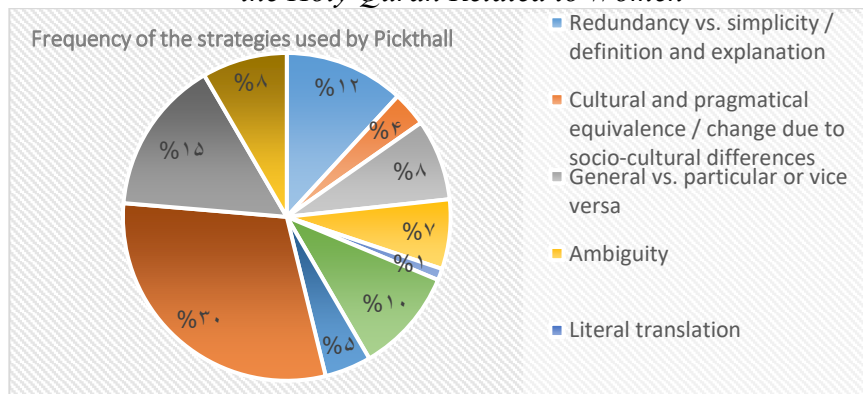
	Male Translators	Female Translators
Redundancy vs. Simplicity / Definition And Explanation	80=31+49	68=39+29
Cultural and Pragmatical Equivalence / Change due to Socio-Cultural Differences	14=9+5	18=5+13
General vs. Particular or vice versa	44=21+23	43=24+19
Ambiguity	36=18+18	31=19+12
Literal Translation	5=3+2	7=2+5
Implication, Reduction and Omission / Quantitative Impoverishment	62=27+35	40=23+17
Translator's Error	22=12+10	14=3+11
Qualitative Impoverishment	161=79+82	123=60+63
Rationalization	92=40+52	57=30+27
Clarification	50=22+28	41=25+16

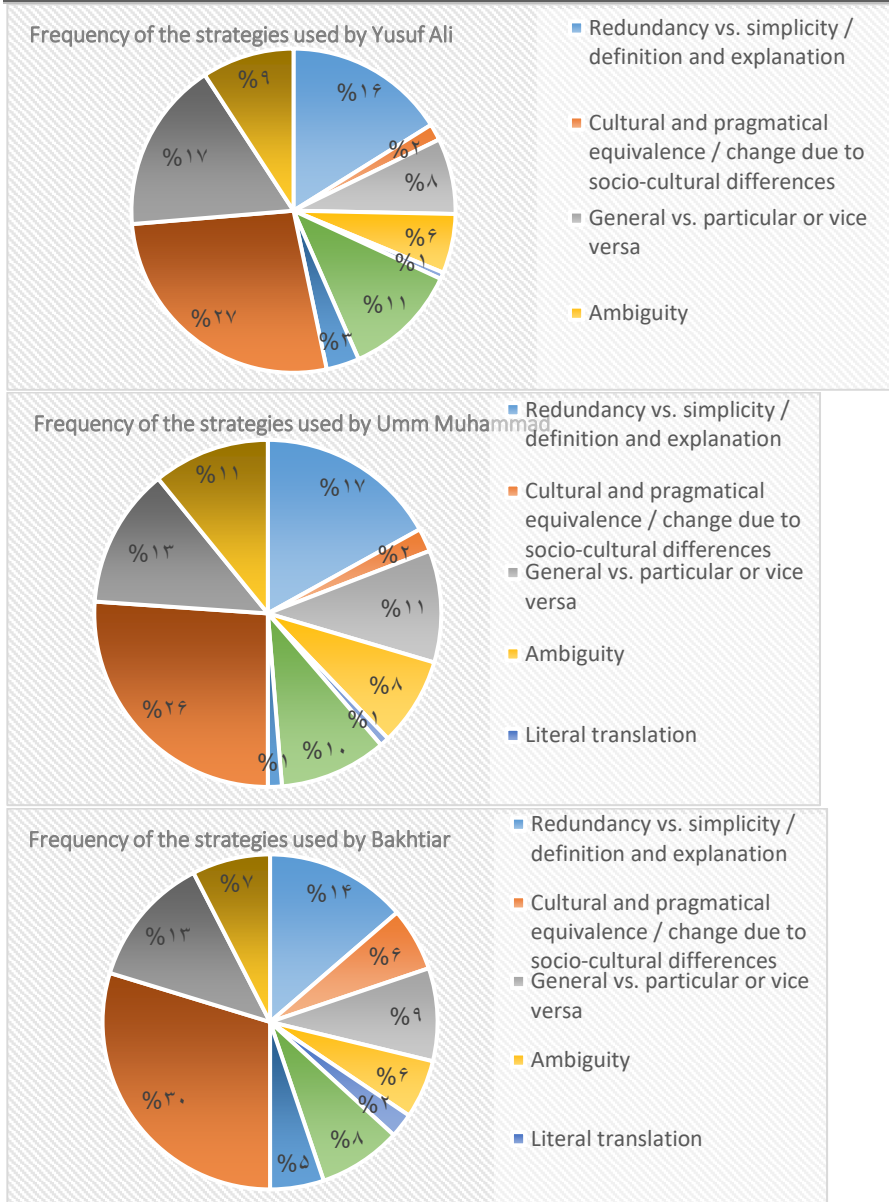
<b>Total</b>	۵۶۶=۲۶۲+۳۰۴	۴۴۲=۲۳۰+۲۱۲
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Based on the two tables above, Yusuf Ali used the most strategies of the Garces-Berman theory and Bakhtiar used the least in their translation. Since these strategies reduce the accuracy of the translation, it can be inferred that Yusuf Ali translated the selected verses more differently compared to other translators, and Bakhtiar has translated these verses more similarly (based on the exegetical and lexical books).

Considering the second table and the fact that male translators have used more strategies, it can be inferred that male translators have not translated the Holy Quran as accurately as female translators. Therefore, studying the versions of the Holy Quran translated by Bakhtiar and Umm Muhammad is more recommended to benefit from a more accurate translation of verses related to women rather than Yusuf Ali and Pickthall based on the exegesis and lexicons. Four pie charts, presented below, show the percentage of each strategy used by the translators compared to other strategies.

**Figure 1.** *Percentage of Strategies Used by Translators in Verses of the Holy Quran Related to Women*



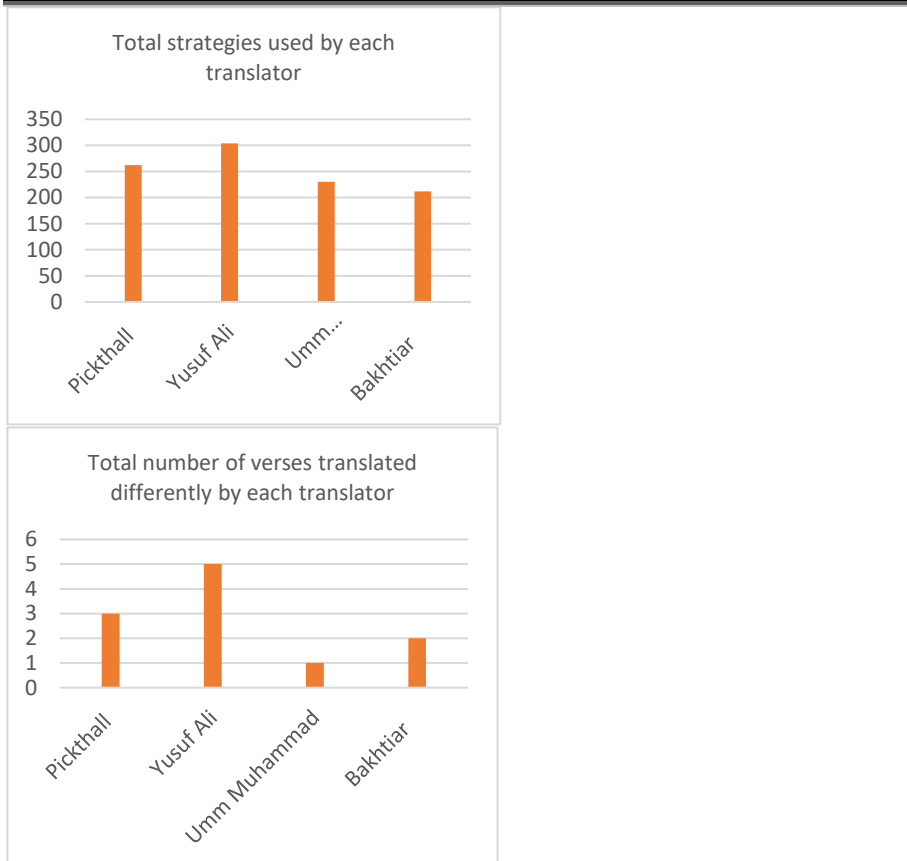


The charts show that *qualitative impoverishment* is the most frequently used strategy. *Rationalization* and *redundancy-definition-explanation* are the second and third most frequently used strategies. The *literal translation* strategy is the least frequent. *Cultural equivalence* and

*translator's error* are the next least frequently used strategies. *Qualitative impoverishment* means using an equivalent that does not convey all the explicit and implicit meanings of the source text. One reason why *qualitative impoverishment* is the most frequent is that it is a general strategy that encompasses other strategies. For example, if a translator makes a mistake in translation or translates a phrase literally that does not convey the implicit meaning, all can be considered *qualitative impoverishment*. Furthermore, if the translator provides an equivalent that fails to convey the ambiguity of the source text or has a more general or particular meaning than the source text, he used *qualitative impoverishment*. This also shows that one of the main factors that can reduce the level of accuracy of translation is using inaccurate equivalents.

Literal translation is the least frequent, which indicates that all the translators mentioned have done a more semantic translation instead of a literal translation. Since *qualitative impoverishment*, *rationalization*, and *redundancy-definition-explanation* are the most commonly used strategies, by studying the above diagrams, we can see that **if a translator consciously uses exact equivalents, shows himself faithful to the structure of the source text, and avoids redundancy and unnecessary explanation that lengthens the translation, it helps him to have more accurate translations.**

**Figure 2.** *Comparison between the Total Number of Strategies Used and the Total Number of Verses Translated Differently by Each Translator*



**Figure 3.** Comparison between the Total Number of Strategies Used and the Total Number of Verses Translated Differently by Male and Female Translators



The above graphs show that the more the translator uses the mentioned strategies, the more different translations appear. According to the above graphs, Yusuf Ali used the most strategies in his translation, and also provided more different translations from the aforementioned Quranic commentaries and dictionaries. Overall, male translators used more strategies than female translators and also translated five verses more than female translators in a different way from the commentaries and dictionaries.

The results of three studies that are in line with the results obtained from the present study are presented below:

Based on a study titled “English Translation of the Holy Quran by Women: The Challenge of “Gender Balance” in and Through Language”, four translations of the Holy Quran, including the translations of Umm Muhammad, Bakhtiar, Helminski, and Saffarzadeh, were evaluated for the use of feministic grammatical strategies to make women’s voices heard in the translation of the Holy

Quran. He concluded that Bakhtiar employed interesting strategies to address the challenge of “gender balance” and to overcome the patriarchal tone. By introducing the letter (f), Bakhtiar attempted to ensure that women’s voices to be heard in the target text and to compensate for some of the linguistic deficiencies regarding gender expression in Arabic and English. It seems that English translations of the Holy Quran by women, although relatively new, have made a beneficial impact in this regard by incorporating feminine elements and revealing new feminine perspectives (Hassen, 2011, p. 229).

In another article titled “A Comparative Study of the Quran English Translation by Abdullah Yusuf Ali and Muhammad Asad with a Focus on Vocabulary”, conducted by an assistant professor at a university in Saudi Arabia, it is noted at the end that “both translators failed to convey the exact meaning of the Holy Quran as a fluent text to the target text” (Mohammad, 2020, p. 279). Also, in the article “Feminist Strategies in Quran Translation: A Comparative Study of the Sublime Quran and the Saheeh International” which was conducted to evaluate translations based on feministic grammatical approaches, the researcher found that “Bakhtiar’s translation, published in the United States, used introduction, complementation and neutralization strategies to demonstrate feministic perspectives in the translation, while Umm Muhammad’s version, published in Saudi Arabia, is more dependent on traditional exegetical books and has a tone between a dominant masculine tone and a weak feminist tone” (Adleeb, 2023, p. 10).

### 6.3 Conclusions

Twenty-four percent of women-subject verses are criticized while they have translations different from the Quranic commentaries and lexicons. Therefore, feminists’ criticisms need to be revised because some of the translations do not correspond with the exegesis and dictionaries.

Yusuf Ali, then Pickthall, translated the most verses differently from the commentaries and lexicons, and Umm Muhammad, then Bakhtiar, had the lowest difference. The females translated the Quran more similar to the authentic Quranic commentaries and lexicons than the males.

Yusuf Ali, then Pickthall, used the most and Bakhtiar, then Umm Muhammad, the least number of the accuracy-destructive strategies. The females translated the Quran more accurate than the males.

*Qualitative impoverishment*, then *rationalization*, *redundancy-definition-explanation* are most used strategies. So if a translator provides qualified equivalents and avoids unnecessary addition and preserves the structure of the source text, s/he will provide a more accurate translation.

A proposed translation of a verse is provided: the remaining are mentioned in my thesis.

﴿الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَاتٍ﴾ (نساء/١)

Who created you from a single soul and, from it, created its mate. 1

1= No gender was specified here for soul and mate.

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## الدراسات البيئية في القرآن و الحديث (ISQH)

المجلد ٣، العدد ١ (المسلسل ٩)، الصيف ٢٠٢٥ / ١٤٤٧

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## الدراسات البينية في القرآن و الحديث (ISQH)

المجلد ٣، العدد ١ (المسلسل ٩)، الصيف ٢٠٢٥ / ١٤٤٧

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المطبوعة: منشورات جامعة الإمام الصادق (عليه السلام) / ١٥٢ صفحة / ١٠٠٠٠٠ ريال

العنوان: جامعة الإمام الصادق (ع) ، جسر مديريت، طريق الشهيد جمران السريع ، طهران ، إيران

الرمز البريدي: ١٤٦٥٩٤٣٦٨١

إدارة الشؤون التقنية والطباعة: نائب البحث والتكنولوجيا / تليفكس: ٢١-٨٨٠٩٤٩١٥

إدارة الشؤون العلمية والتحريرية: مركز اللغات / تليفكس: ٢١-٨٨٠٩٤٩٢٣

الهاتف: ٠١-٩٤٠٠١-٨٨٢١-٩٨٢١ (الرقم الداخلي) ٧٤٧ (الدوام: من السبت حتى الأربعاء / ٠٨:٠٠ صباحاً حتى ٠٤:٠٠ عصر)

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