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Marginalized Groups in the Qur'an: A Thematic Study of the Divine Perspective of Social Justice

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Abstract

This study examines the Qur'an's view of marginalized groups through a thematic interpretation approach (*tafsīr mawḍū'ī*). This study compiles and analyzes verses related to vulnerable groups, including people with low incomes, orphans, enslaved people, travelers, and the oppressed (*mustadh'afin*). This study not only traces their mention in the Qur'an but also examines the conceptual framework and practical instruments offered by divine revelation to ensure justice and social protection. In the current context, these verses are highly relevant in addressing various contemporary social issues, such as structural poverty, unequal access, and exploitation. Emphasis is placed on Qur'anic instruments of social justice such as zakat, the liberation of enslaved people, and legal protection for orphans. Thus, these findings confirm that the teachings of the Qur'an comprehensively integrate spiritual, ethical, and social dimensions in responding to the problems faced by marginalized groups throughout every era.

Keywords: Marginalized Groups; Qur'anic Empowerment; Strategies; Social Inclusion; Qur'anic Social Justice; Thematic Interpretation

الملخص

تتناول هذه الدراسة نظرة القرآن الكريم إلى الفئات المهمشة من خلال نهج التفسير الموضوعي (التفسير الموضوعي). وتجمع الدراسة وتحلل الآيات

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المتعلقة بالفئات الضعيفة مثل الفقراء والمساكين والأيتام والعبيد والمسافرين والمستضعفين. لا يقتصر هذا البحث على تتبع ذكرهم في القرآن، بل يتعمق في دراسة الإطار المفاهيمي والأدوات العملية التي يقدمها الوحي الإلهي لضمان العدالة والحماية الاجتماعية. في السياق المعاصر، تكتسب هذه الآيات أهمية كبيرة في معالجة مختلف القضايا الاجتماعية المعاصرة مثل الفقر الهيكلي، والتفاوت في الوصول إلى الخدمات، والاستغلال. تم التركيز على أدوات العدالة الاجتماعية القرآنية مثل الزكاة وتحرير العبيد والحماية القانونية للأيتام. وبالتالي، تؤكد هذه النتائج أن تعاليم القرآن تجمع بين الأبعاد الروحية والأخلاقية والاجتماعية بشكل شامل في الاستجابة لمشاكل الفئات المهمشة في كل عصر.

كلمات البحث: المهمشون; التفسير الموضوعي; العدالة الاجتماعية القرآنية; الإدماج الاجتماعي; استراتيجيات التمكين القرآني.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji pandangan al-Qur'an terhadap kelompok-kelompok terpinggirkan melalui pendekatan tafsir tematik (tafsir mawḍū'ī). Penelitian ini menghimpun dan menganalisis ayat-ayat yang berkaitan dengan kelompok rentan, termasuk fakir miskin, anak yatim, orang-orang yang diperbudak, musafir, dan kaum tertindas (mustadh’afin). Kajian ini tidak hanya menelusuri penyebutan mereka dalam al-Qur'an, tetapi juga mengkaji kerangka konseptual dan instrumen praktis yang ditawarkan oleh wahyu ilahi untuk menjamin keadilan dan perlindungan sosial. Dalam konteks saat ini, ayat-ayat ini sangat relevan dalam mengatasi berbagai permasalahan sosial kontemporer, seperti kemiskinan struktural, akses yang tidak merata, dan eksploitasi. Penekanan diberikan pada instrumen keadilan sosial al-Qur'an seperti zakat, pembebasan budak, dan perlindungan hukum bagi anak yatim. Dengan demikian, temuan-temuan ini menegaskan bahwa ajaran Al-Qur'an secara komprehensif mengintegrasikan dimensi spiritual, etika, dan sosial dalam menanggapi permasalahan yang dihadapi kelompok-kelompok terpinggirkan di setiap era.

Keywords: Kaum Marjinal; Strategi Pemberdayaan Qur‘an; Keadilan Sosial Qur‘an; Inklusi Sosial; Tafsir Tematik

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A. Introduction

The issue of social marginalization is becoming increasingly complex and urgently needs to be seriously examined, especially in the modern context marked by widening socioeconomic inequality. In various parts of the world, including Indonesia, marginalized groups such as the urban poor, street children, refugees, indigenous communities, female heads of households, people with disabilities, and religious and ethnic minorities continue to face various forms of structural injustice. They are excluded not only in their access to economic resources and education but also in their right to participate in political processes and public decision-making.[1]

This phenomenon is exacerbated by development policies that often do not favor vulnerable groups. The neoliberal development model, which prioritizes economic growth without considering social justice, has created a divide between the rich and the poor. This inequality is not only material but also symbolic and cultural: marginalized groups are often labeled as a burden on society, and their existence is obscured in official development narratives. This fosters a cycle of social exclusion that is difficult to break.[2]

This phenomenon is exacerbated by development policies that often fail to accommodate vulnerable groups. The neoliberal development model, which prioritizes economic growth without ensuring social justice, reinforces the divide between the rich and the poor. Inequality becomes both material and symbolic: marginalized communities are frequently labeled as a burden and rendered invisible within official development narratives, thus perpetuating cycles of social exclusion that are difficult to break.

The COVID-19 pandemic has further exposed these structural vulnerabilities. Many individuals from marginalized groups lost their livelihoods, lacked social protection, and faced limited access to health services. This condition illustrates that

[1] Fabiancha Embun Balqis, "Hak Sipil dan Politik Kaum Marginal: Upaya dan Perjuangan Kelompok Transpuan di Kota Pangkalpinang (Civil and Political Rights of the Marginal: The Efforts and Struggles of Transwomen Groups in Pangkalpinang City)," *Civil Officium: Journal of Empirical Studies on Social Science*, 1.1 (2021), 39–46 <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.53754/civilofficium>.

[2] Didik G Suharto and others, "Community Marginalization as the Effect of Public Policy in Democratic Governance Era," *Bisnis & Birokrasi Journal*, 25.3 (2018) <https://doi.org/10.20476/

jbb.v25i3.9967>.

marginalization is not merely an economic issue but a profound social justice concern with multidimensional impacts.[3]

Consequently, Islamic teachings, notably the Qur'an, must be revisited as a source of social ethics capable of responding substantively to contemporary injustices.[4] The Qur'an not only serves as hudā (guidance) for humanity but also articulates moral and structural obligations to protect the weak (*mustadh'afīn*) and ensure equitable justice, as reflected in verses on the poor, orphans, enslaved persons, and travelers. Justice, as emphasized in QS. An-Nahl 16:90 stands as an uncompromisable value in Islamic ethics.[5]

Nevertheless, existing scholarly works highlight a research gap. Studies by Fazlur Rahman, Abdullahi An-Na'im, and others analyze Islamic social ethics broadly. Yet, few specifically examine marginalized groups as distinct moral subjects recognized by the Qur'an with inherent value, rights, and social potential. Moreover, comprehensive thematic interpretations that systematically compile Qur'anic verses on marginalized groups remain limited, particularly within the Indonesian academic landscape. The gap also lies in the lack of integrative studies that connect Qur'anic injunctions directly with contemporary social justice frameworks and public policy discourse.

Through a thematic interpretation approach *(tafsīr mawḍū'ī*), this study analyzes Qur'anic verses concerning marginalized communities to synthesize their ethical, conceptual, and structural implications for modern social justice. Rather than offering technical solutions, this study highlights the Qur'an's foundational principles for fostering a just, inclusive, and dignified society. This imperative resonates strongly with the prophetic mission outlined in Surah Al-Ma'un.[6]

This study contributes to Qur'anic social ethics by systematizing divine injunctions for social inclusion and offering an integrative framework that connects Qur'anic values with contemporary social realities. This study aims to conduct a thematic analysis of Qur'anic verses related to marginalized groups and to identify the principles of social justice that the Qur'an offers for the protection and empowerment

[3] Isaac Iyinoluwa Olufadewa and others, "COVID-19 and the Economy: Job Loss and Economic Shutdown," *Medical Research Journal*, 6.2 (2021), 125–30 <https://doi.org/10.5603/MRJ.a2021.0019>.

[4] Ahmad Muhajir and Sadzid Tulic, "*Al*-Qur'an*'s* Solution in the Quarter Life Crisis Phase To Anxiety (Thematic Study of the Qur'an)," *QiST: Journal of Qur'an and Tafseer Studies*, 1.3 (2022), 248–63 <https://doi.org/10.23917/qist.v1i3.2686>.

[5] Hamdi Al-Haq and Ihwan Amalih, "Keadilan Sosial dalam *Al-Qur'an* (Tela'ah atas Penafsiran Buya Hamka dalam Tafsir Al-Azhãr)," *El-Waroqoh : Jurnal Ushuluddin dan Filsafat*, 5.2 (2021) <https://doi.org/10.28944/el-waroqoh.v5i2.315>.

[6] Dewi Nurdin, Achmad Abubakar, and Muhammad Irham, "Pendusta Agama dalam QS. Al-Ma'un," *PAPPASANG*, 5.2 (2023), 208–31 <https://doi.org/10.46870/jiat.v5i2.716>.

of vulnerable communities. Through this approach, the study seeks to construct a Qur’anic social-ethical framework that is not only normative but also relevant for addressing contemporary social challenges and applicable to the formulation of inclusive public policies. In line with these objectives, the study is guided by several central research questions: how the Qur’an conceptualizes marginalized groups within social and ethical dimensions; what values and instruments of social justice the Qur’an provides to ensure the protection and upliftment of vulnerable populations; and how these Qur’anic insights can be integrated into modern discourses on social justice and practical policy development. Thus, this study not only maps the Qur’anic conception of marginality but also explores its significance for building a just and civilized society.

B. Literature Review

1. The Concept of Marginalized Groups in Scientific Literature

a. Classical Literature

The concept of marginalized groups refers to social groups that are excluded from accessing resources, participating in politics, and achieving social and economic justice. In sociological literature, marginalized groups are often associated with those who experience structural powerlessness, whether due to poverty, racial, gender, or religious discrimination, or social status. Some groups that are often categorized as marginalized include the poor, orphans, people with disabilities, migrant workers, indigenous peoples, and refugees. This phenomenon of marginalization does not only occur in developing countries, but also in developed countries, because of unequal social systems.[7]

In the context of Islamic scholarship, marginalized groups are understood as those who experience economic, social, and political limitations and exclusion. This perspective is reinforced by approaches such as social *fiqh* and the *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, which prioritize the protection of life, intellect, lineage, and property. In Islam, responsibility toward marginalized groups is not merely a charitable endeavor but an integral part of faith and the social structure of the Muslim community.

Research by Aisyah & Nabila (2025) emphasizes the importance of a thematic interpretation approach in identifying vulnerable groups in the Qur‘an, It demonstrates that verses about the poor (*fuqarā'*), the needy (*masākīn*), orphans (*yātim*), and the oppressed (*mustaḍ'afīn*) not only describe their conditions but also call for concrete actions such as zakat, legal protection, and social solidarity. Thus,

[7] Anggi Fuja Sahyana and others, “Marginalization of Women’s Leadership in Politics and Government,” *Progress In Social Development*, 3.2 (2022), 63–74 <https://doi.org/10.30872/psd.v3i2.46>.

the concept of marginalized groups in Islamic literature has moral, spiritual, and structural dimensions simultaneously.[8]

There is also a social anthropology approach to *Islam* that examines marginality from the perspective of power relations within *Muslim* societies. For example, Sari Astuti's (2024) study reveals how certain religious practices can perpetuate marginalization, as seen in cases of gender inequality or the exclusion of minority communities. Therefore, literature on marginalized groups continues to evolve, not only to understand who they are but also how social and religious systems treat them.[9]

Globally, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and various international NGOs have also contributed significantly to the literature on the identification and empowerment of marginalized groups. These reports often emphasize the importance of social inclusion and political participation in eliminating marginalization. In this context, the contribution of Islamic studies to the global discourse on marginalization is significant, especially in demonstrating that Islamic teachings have a strong commitment to social justice.[10]

Studies on marginalized groups are crucial because they serve as indicators of social justice within a society. Their existence, left unprotected, highlights the system's failure to achieve collective well-being. Therefore, deepening research on marginalized groups is highly relevant, not only in an academic context but also in social policy advocacy and sustainable development.

The concept of marginalized groups in scientific literature cannot be understood independently of a broader understanding of social structures and power relations. In classical sociological theory, Karl Marx viewed marginalization as a logical consequence of the capitalist system, which places the means of production in the hands of a small economic elite. At the same time, the majority of society becomes the proletariat, who have only their labor to sell. As a result, social inequality becomes systemic, resulting in groups that are excluded from economic access and welfare. Meanwhile, Max Weber's perspective highlights the dimensions of status and power, where marginalization is not only caused by economic factors but also by the unequal distribution of prestige and social legitimacy. In Weber's view, marginalized

[8] Nabilah Rohadatul Aisyah, "Rekonstruksi Model Penelitian Tafsir : Metode dan Pendekatan Dalam Memahami Makna Al-Qur ' An," *Semiotika: Kajian Ilmu Al- Qur'an dan Tafsir*, 5.1 (2025) <http://jurnal.radenfatah.ac.id/index.php/jsq>.

[9] Sariatul Fikri, "The Islam dan Peran Politik Wanita: Diskursus Antara Marginalisasi dan Pengakuan," *El-Faqih : Jurnal Pemikiran dan Hukum Islam*, 10.2 (2024), 430–41 <https://doi.org/10.58401/faqih.v10i2.1458>.

[10] Srikanth Venkatesan and Mizan Ahmed, "Social Vulnerability Assessment Using a Statistical Approach and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Scheme," *Australian Journal of Civil Engineering*, 15.2 (2017), 103–8 <https://doi.org/10.1080/14488353.2017.1394153>.

people may have jobs, but they remain symbolically marginalized due to the low social recognition of their existence.

b. Contemporary Literature

In modern theory, Pierre Bourdieu introduced the concepts of habits, capital, and social arena, which explain how social structures create and perpetuate marginalization. According to him, those who lack economic, social, cultural, or symbolic capital will find it difficult to access resources and opportunities for social mobility. Marginalized people, therefore, are not merely economic victims, but also products of a symbolic system that devalues their existence. This perspective helps us understand why marginalization is often multidimensional and cannot be easily overcome with financial assistance alone.

Within the framework of Islamic scholarship, the concept of marginality is understood more broadly, encompassing not only a social condition but also a moral and spiritual test for society. The Qur‘an emphasizes the importance of paying attention to the *mustaḍ‘afīn* (the oppressed), which calls on believers to defend those who are oppressed on earth (QS. An-Nisa 4:75). This verse demonstrates that defending the marginalized is not an optional act, but a moral obligation integral to the mission of faith. The Prophet Muhammad himself set a concrete example through his empathetic attitude towards people with low incomes, orphans, and widows who had lost their social protection. In this context, the marginalized have a position of honor as parties who are entitled to justice, compassion, and priority in social policy.

Contemporary Islamic literature emphasizes that the treatment of marginalized groups must shift from a charitable approach to a transformative approach—social *fiqh* developed by thinkers such as KH. Ali Yafie, for example, emphasizes the importance of empowerment based on the values of *maqāṣid al-sharī‘a*. This means that the empowerment of marginalized groups aims to uphold the five fundamental principles of humanity: life, liberty, reason, equality, and property. This approach aligns with the spirit of *al-takāful al-ijtima‘i* (social solidarity), a pillar of Islamic society. Thus, the liberation of marginalized groups is not only an economic issue, but also part of the mission of social da'wah to uphold justice and humanity.

In addition, Islamic studies also link marginalization with issues of gender justice and religious minorities. Many contemporary Islamic anthropology studies show that exclusive religious practices can reinforce the marginalization of women or minority groups. Therefore, there has been a movement to reinterpret religious teachings in a more contextual and inclusive manner, as seen in progressive Islamic discourse and Islamic liberation theology. This movement aims to empower the oppressed as active agents of social change, rather than merely receiving aid.

At the global level, efforts to eradicate marginalization are now integral to the Sustainable Development Agenda, particularly in the first five goals, which emphasize poverty eradication, gender equality, inclusive education, and social

justice. The Islamic scientific perspective can contribute ethically and spiritually to these global efforts, as values such as justice (*al-'adl*), compassion (*raḥmah*), and common welfare (*maslahah 'ammah*) have long been the basic principles of Islamic civilization. Therefore, the development of literature on marginalized groups is becoming increasingly urgent, as it seeks to bring together modern social theory, Islamic teachings, and equitable public policy practices.

Studies on marginalized groups are not merely academic analyses, but also an ethical call for society to reexamine the social structures they have created. The existence of marginalized groups reflects the extent to which human values and justice are truly upheld. Therefore, scientific literature on marginalized groups serves as a social mirror that demands reflection, action, and transformation towards a more inclusive, just, and civilized society.

2. The Idea of Social Justice in the Islamic Perspective

Social justice is a fundamental principle in Islamic teachings that continues to be studied and analyzed from various perspectives. In classical Islamic literature, the concept of justice (*'adl*) is described as balance and putting everything in its proper place. In a social context, this means creating a system that ensures the rights of all parties, particularly those in vulnerable positions.[11]

Sulbi (2021) states that social justice is one of the primary themes addressed in the Qur'an. According to him, *Islam* has, from the outset, challenged economic inequality and oppressive systems by instilling values of equality, collective responsibility, and the redistribution of wealth. This is realized through instruments such as zakat, the prohibition of usury, and the encouragement to give to those in need.[12]

In a recent review, M. Taufik Rahman (2022) states that social justice in Islam encompasses not only economic rights but also respect for human dignity, access to education, legal protection, and freedom of religion. He proposes the maqāṣid al-sharī'ah approach as a framework for assessing public policy based on the principles of justice and benefit.[13]

Muhammad Adres's research (2022) suggests that social justice is a crucial requirement for building a civil society. In the Indonesian context, Qur'anic values must be contextualized in consideration of the reality of a multicultural and pluralistic society. This means that social justice in Islam cannot be interpreted normatively;

[11] Roro Fatihin, "Keadilan Sosial dalam Perspektif Al-Qur'an dan Pancasila," *Panangkaran: Jurnal Penelitian Agama dan Masyarakat*, 1.2 (2017), 293 <https://doi.org/10.14421/panangkaran.2017.0102-06>.

[12] Sulbi Sulbi, "Islam Kemodernan dan Keadilan Sosial dalam Pandangan Nurcholish Madjid," *Palita: Journal of Social Religion Research*, 6.1 (2021), 1–24 <https://doi.org/10.24256/pal.v6i1.1200>.

[13] M Taufiq Rahman, "Prinsip-Prinsip Keadilan Distributif dalam Pemikiran Sayyid Qutb," *Jurnal Iman dan Spiritualitas*, 2.2 (2022), 211–16 <https://doi.org/10.15575/jis.v2i2.17779>.

instead, it must be translated into legal and political systems that can respond to contemporary challenges.[14]

On the other hand, research by Indra Sholeh Husni (2020) reveals that gaps still exist in the implementation of social justice principles, particularly in the distribution of zakat and social assistance, which have not reached the most vulnerable groups evenly. This suggests that, although Islam has laid a strong foundation for social justice, its practical realization still faces numerous obstacles.[15]

Literature on social justice in *Islam* also emphasizes the importance of establishing synergy between religious teachings and equitable public policy systems. In this regard, academics encourage the integration of Qur'anic values into education curricula, legislation, and development programs, so that the principle of justice is not merely a spiritual doctrine, but a social reality.

Social justice in Islam is not merely an abstract concept, but a fundamental principle of life that must be embodied in all aspects of human existence. Islam places justice at the core of its social, economic, and political teachings. Social justice means that everyone gets their rights proportionally without oppression, discrimination, or inequality. In the Qur'an, Allah says: "Indeed, Allah commands you to be just and do good..." (QS. An-Nahl 16: 90). This verse is the basis that justice is a direct command from Allah, not a choice, and is the foundation for building a peaceful and prosperous society.

In Islam, social justice encompasses not only the distribution of wealth but also the equal treatment of every human being, regardless of their social, economic, racial, or religious status. The Prophet Muhammad emphasized that all human beings are equal before Allah, as he said: "There is no superiority of an Arab over a non-Arab, nor of a non-Arab over an Arab, except in piety." (HR. Ahmad). This principle rejects all forms of structural injustice that result in certain groups being marginalized or denied equal opportunities in social life.

In the practice of social life, Islam emphasizes three main instruments for realizing social justice. First, *zakat* is a means of redistributing wealth so that it does not only circulate among the rich (QS. Al-Hashr 59: 7). Second, the prohibition of usury and economic exploitation, because such practices only enrich a handful of people and weaken most people with low incomes. Third, encouragement to give alms and help others through waqf, *infaq*, and other social activities. These three

[14] Muhammad Adres Prawira Negara, "Keadilan Gender dan Hak-Hak Perempuan Dalam Islam," *Az-Zahra: Journal of Gender and Family Studies*, 2.2 (2022), 74–88 <https://doi.org/10.15575/azzahra.v2i2.

15840>.

[15] Indra Sholeh Husni, "Konsep Keadilan Ekonomi Islam dalam Sistem Ekonomi: Sebuah Kajian Konsepsional," *Islamic Economics Journal*, 6.1 (2020), 57 <https://doi.org/10.21111/iej.v6i1.4522>.

instruments are not only acts of worship, but also social instruments that aim to eliminate inequality and maintain mutual prosperity.

In the contemporary context, social justice is also linked to the principle of *maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah*, which are the main objectives of Islamic law to protect five essential things: religion (*ḥifẓ ad-dīn*), life (*ḥifẓ an-nafs*), intellect (*ḥifẓ al-‘aql*), lineage (*ḥifẓ an-nasl*), and property (ḥifẓ al-māl). If this principle is applied in public policy, then every policy must be oriented towards the public interest *(maslahah ‘ammah*) and avoid social harm (*mafsadah*). For example, education policy must guarantee equal access for all levels of society, including the poor and disadvantaged regions. Similarly, economic policy must promote equal employment opportunities and protection for vulnerable workers.

Social justice in Islam also has moral and spiritual dimensions. This means that justice cannot be upheld solely through laws or policies, but also through ethical awareness and the responsibility of everyone. When someone acts justly towards others, they are essentially performing worship to Allah. Conversely, injustice is a violation of *Allah's* mandate to humans as His vicegerents on earth. Therefore, building social justice means instilling the values of honesty, empathy, and social responsibility in society.

However, the reality in various *Muslim* countries, including Indonesia, shows that the implementation of social justice still faces many challenges. Economic inequality, unequal access to education, and legal practices that do not favor the weak are issues that need to be addressed. In this regard, *Muslim* scholars emphasize the importance of integrating Islamic values into modern social and governmental systems. This means that social justice must be the spirit behind public policy, not merely a moral slogan.

Additionally, education plays a significant role in instilling the value of social justice. Through Islamic education that emphasizes honesty, responsibility, and solidarity, the younger generation can be shaped into individuals who are sensitive to social injustice around them. Social justice must be understood not only as the interest of certain groups, but as a common need for the sake of a harmonious society.

The concept of social justice in Islam is a universal guide for creating a balanced, peaceful, and civilized society. Islam does not separate worship from social justice, as the two are complementary. Worship without social justice loses its social meaning, while justice without spiritual values loses its moral direction. Therefore, it is the duty of *Muslims* to strive for social justice in real life, from the family to the community, and in state policy, as a tangible manifestation of devotion to Allah and humanity.

C. Research Method

This study employs a descriptive qualitative method, supported by library research, focusing on Qur'anic textual analysis to explore the theme of marginalized groups. Methodologically, this study explicitly adopts the thematic interpretation framework (*tafsīr mawḍū‘ī*) developed by al-Farmawī, which requires the systematic collection of Qur'anic verses related to a specific theme, their organization according to thematic coherence, and a holistic interpretation that connects them into an integrated conceptual structure. In addition, the study utilizes al-Sya‘rāwī's reflective thematic approach, which emphasizes extracting the ethical, spiritual, and socio-humanitarian meanings of the verses in response to contemporary issues such as poverty, oppression, and social exclusion. Data were obtained through an extensive review of the Qur'an, classical and modern tafsir, including works by Ibn Kathir, al-Ṭabarī, al-Qurṭubī, al-Marāghī, and Quraish Shihab, as well as academic literature on Islamic social justice, *maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah*, and studies of marginalized groups.[16]

The analytical process proceeded through several integrated stages. First, the researchers identified all Qur'anic verses related to poverty, orphanhood, enslavement, displacement, and oppression, using thematic indexing and keyword tracing. Subsequently, the verses were classified as marginality and social instruments, including zakat, legal protection, and liberation. These classifications were then synthesized by comparing multiple exegetical opinions, integrating relevant interpretations, and mapping the conceptual patterns of Qur'anic social ethics. The final stage involved contextually interpreting the synthesized data, relating Qur'anic injunctions to contemporary social conditions, such as structural inequality, economic injustice, and the need for inclusive social policies.[17]

To ensure the validity and reliability of the textual interpretation, this study employed cross-verification methods. Intertextual validation was conducted by examining how the Qur'an explains itself (*al-Qur'ān yufassiru ba‘ḍuhu ba‘ḍan*). At the same time, reliability was strengthened by comparing interpretations across various classical and modern tafsir to avoid dependence on a single exegetical school. Conceptual consistency was maintained by ensuring alignment with the *maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah* framework, and contextual coherence was achieved by situating each verse within its socio-historical background and thematic structure. Through these

[16] Muhammad Rijal Fadli, "Memahami Desain Metode Penelitian Kualitatif," *HUMANIKA, Kajian Ilmiah Mata Kuliah Umum*, 21.1 (2021), 33–54 <https://doi.org/10.21831/hum.v21i1.38075>.

[17] Mahanum Mahanum, "Tinjauan Kepustakaan," *ALACRITY : Journal of Education*, 1.2 (2021), 1–12 <https://doi.org/10.52121/alacrity.v1i2.20>.

measures, the study establishes a methodologically rigorous exegetical approach that supports the reliability of its conclusions.[18]

D. Results and Discussion

1. Qur'anic Concepts of Marginality

This study found that the Qur'an explicitly and consistently shows great concern for marginalized groups in society. Verses addressing people with low incomes, orphans, enslaved people, travelers, and the oppressed (*mustaḍ'afīn*) do not appear solely in a spiritual context but also in the form of concrete social policies. For example, God details eight categories eligible to receive *zakat*, with the majority coming from marginalized groups, as follows:

> *"Zakah expenditures are only for the poor and for the needy and for those employed to collect [zakah] and for bringing hearts together [for Islam] and for freeing captives [or enslaved people] and for those in debt and for the cause of Allah and for the [stranded] traveler - an obligation [imposed] by Allah. And Allah is Knowing and Wise." (QS. Al-Tawba 9:60).*

This demonstrates that the *zakat* system in *Islam* is a highly relevant mechanism for wealth distribution, addressing economic inequality, especially in today's global reality, which reveals a widening wealth gap between the rich and the poor.[19]

2. Social Instruments of Justice

The increasingly complex phenomenon of poverty in the era of globalization shows that marginalization is not only an economic issue, but also a political, cultural, and structural one. Data from the World Bank and the Indonesian Central Statistics Agency (BPS) indicate that millions of people still live below the poverty line, particularly in rural areas and urban peripheries. In this context, Qur'anic social instruments such as zakat and *infak* need to be optimized to build an Islamic social security system capable of effectively reaching people with low incomes. This reinforces the position of Qur'anic verses as the theological and practical foundation for efforts to eradicate structural poverty.[20]

Allah SWT emphasizes the importance of distributing wealth to vulnerable groups as part of manifesting true faith (*QS. Al-Baqarah*: 177). Quraish Shihab's

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[18] Muannif Ridwan, Ahmad Syukri, and B Badarussyamsi, "Studi Analisis tentang Makna Pengetahuan dan Ilmu Pengetahuan Serta Jenis dan Sumbernya," *Jurnal Geuthèë: Penelitian Multidisiplin*, 4.1 (2021), 31 <https://doi.org/10.52626/jg.v4i1.96>.

[19] Shidqi Ahyani, "Zakat dan Upaya Penanggulangan Kemiskinan dalam Perspektif Alquran," *Jurnal Hukum Ekonomi Syariah*, 4.2 (2021), 215 <https://doi.org/10.30595/jhes.v4i2.11159>.

[20] Afrah Afifah and M. Yarham, "Peran Zakat dalam Mengentas Kemiskinan," *Filantropi : Jurnal Manajemen Zakat dan Wakaf*, 4.1 (2023), 42–59 <https://doi.org/10.22515/finalmazawa.v4i1.7625>.

interpretation affirms that this verse emphasizes the connection between religiosity and social concern. In a contemporary context, this challenges religious practices that are ritualistic but not socially oriented towards solutions. Reality shows that many religious activities are ceremonial in nature but have not fully addressed the root causes of marginalization. Therefore, this verse urges Muslims to reinterpret worship as a driving force for social action.

In another verse, He calls for the defense of oppressed groups and serves as a Qur‘anic foundation for social struggle and human rights (*QS. Al-Nisa* 4: 75). In the contemporary context, this can be interpreted as a call to fight for the rights of workers, poor farmers, indigenous communities, and victims of structural violence *Tafsierr al-Qurṭubī* interprets this verse as social *jihad*, which in practical terms can be realized through strengthening religious-based social movements that advocate for marginalized groups. *Islam*, with its spirit of justice, not only demands compassion for people experiencing poverty but also promotes a fair and equitable system.

Thematic verses such as fuqarā', *masākīn*, *yātīm*, and *mustaḍ'afīn* illustrate the importance of the role of communities and institutions in ensuring mutual prosperity. When unemployment rises and people's purchasing power weakens, the Qur‘anic approach encourages the formation of an economic ecosystem that favors the weak. This aligns with contemporary Islamic economic discourse, which emphasizes empowerment through productive endowments, sharia-compliant microfinance, and strengthening community-based economies. In the context of massive urbanization, marginalized communities are excluded from access to decent housing, clean water, and education. Qur‘anic solutions in this regard are not merely temporary assistance but aim to build structural foundations enabling them to rise and become self-reliant.

Qurán also describes giving to the poor and orphans sincerely for the sake of Allah alone (*QS. Al-Insan*: 8–9). This reflects the principle of sincerity in Islamic social philanthropy, which is relevant to the urgent need today to build an unconditional Solidarity Network. In many modern societies, social assistance is often transactional and political. This verse inspires a new paradigm in the management of religious social funds, focusing on sustainability and justice rather than mere temporary charity.

This study also reveals that one of the obstacles in empowering marginalized groups is the lack of integration between Qur‘anic teachings and the national social system. Many social policies are not based on the values of transcendental justice as taught in the Qur‘an. This results in an approach to poverty that is merely pragmatic and does not address the root causes, such as the distribution of power and access to resources. Thematic interpretation serves as a crucial bridge, ensuring that religious teachings form the foundation for social policy reform.

The growing phenomenon of marginalized communities in urban areas demonstrates the failure of an unjust development system. Gentrification, exploitation

of informal labor, and housing crises are real issues that can only be addressed through a Qur‘anic approach that emphasizes solidarity with the oppressed. This approach aligns with the prophetic mission of defending the weak and striving for a decent life for all humanity. The Qur‘an does not merely command assistance but challenges the systems that perpetuate oppression.

The verses containing the words *yātīm* and *masākīn* also show that Islam places social issues at a high level. Protection of orphans extends beyond financial assistance to include a legal system that guarantees inheritance rights, education, and the security of life. This is very relevant to the reality of street children or children of divorce whose rights are neglected in many Muslim countries.

3. Contemporary Application: From Charity to Empowerment

In modern scientific discourse, this study opens up a new space for integrating Qur'anic interpretation with a public policy approach. Interpretation no longer remains confined to the realm of normative academic study but serves as a conceptual foundation for the design of fair social systems and governance. Qur'anic social interpretation can serve as the foundation for a social security system rooted in spiritual values and public morality. Thus, this study proposes that interpretation is not merely an academic discipline but also a tool for social change. Compared to previous studies, such as Noor Aisha Abdul Rahman (2020), which emphasized the value of social transformation in contextual interpretation, this study adds an integrative dimension by linking various marginalized groups into a single narrative of Qur‘anic social justice. This study not only enriches theory but also provides a normative basis for the formulation of inclusive policies that prioritize vulnerable groups. In this regard, thematic interpretation serves as a crucial tool in bridging the gap between sacred texts and contemporary social contexts.

From the analysis of verses and a comparison of literature, it can be concluded that the Qur‘anic concern for marginalized groups is not merely symbolic, but also structural and operational. This means that the Qur‘an provides practical guidelines and social policies to ensure the welfare, dignity, and justice of groups that are often neglected by conventional social systems. Therefore, the thematic interpretive approach in this study successfully highlights the integration of spiritual values and social ethics in addressing cross-temporal humanitarian challenges. This further reinforces that the mission of the Qur‘an is to build an inclusive, egalitarian, and just society.

This study offers new insights into the field of Quranic exegesis and Islamic studies by positioning marginalized groups not merely as objects of pity but as essential subjects in social development based on Quranic values. The findings of this study open up broader avenues for discussion in developing an Islamic social system oriented toward distributive justice, empowerment, and solidarity across social

classes. Its implications extend beyond academic discourse to the formulation of inclusive and civilized policies at various levels, including local, national, and global.

E. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the Qur‘an has a significant concern for marginalized groups in various forms, such as the poor, orphans, enslaved people, travelers, and the oppressed, and offers a conceptual and operational framework to guarantee their rights and dignity. Through a thematic exegesis (*tafsīr mawḍū'ī*) approach, it becomes clear that the Qur‘an not only conveys spiritual messages but also lays the foundations for social justice that can be applied in the context of public policy and modern social systems.

The verses of the Qur‘an analyzed in this study reflect the principles of inclusiveness, social solidarity, wealth distribution, and legal protection for vulnerable groups. These messages are highly relevant to contemporary challenges, including structural poverty, economic inequality, systemic injustice, and social exclusion. By integrating Qur‘anic values into policy design and social practices, Muslims have a strong foundation for building a just, egalitarian, and civilized society.

This study concludes that thematic interpretation can be a practical approach in exploring the Qur‘an's response to social realities and in designing relevant religious solutions for modern life. This study also opens up opportunities for broader contributions to the development of social justice-based interpretation. It strengthens the argument that the Qur‘an is a book that not only guides spiritual life but also shapes a civilization that stands with the weak.

For future development, this study recommends further exploration of Qur‘anic verses related to other contemporary issues, such as women's rights, environmental crises, and digitalization of the economy from a justice perspective. Field studies that combine interpretation with empirical approaches are also essential to test the effectiveness of Qur‘anic values in real social practices.

This study reaffirms Islam’s universal commitment to social justice as a theological foundation for human dignity.

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Example in footnotes:

[1]Mircea Eliade (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, vol. 8 (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995), h. 18.

[2]Norman Daniel, *Islam and the West* (Oxford: One World Publications, l99l), h. 190.

[3]Syeikh Ja'far Subhānī, *Mafāhim Al-Qur'ān* (Beirut: Mu'assasah Al-Tarīkh Al-'Arabī, 2010)., Juz 5, h. 231.

[4]Syeikh Ja'far Subhānī, *Mafāhim Al-Qur'ān,* h. 8-9.

Example in bibliography:

Subhānī, Syeikh Ja'far. *Mafāhim Al-Qur'ān*. Beirut: Mu'assasah Al-Tarīkh Al-'Arabī, 2010.

Eliade, Mircea (ed.). *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, vol. 8. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995.

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Detail informations of the footnotes:

1. Holy book

Al-Qur'ân, Al-Baqarah/2: 185.

Perjanjian Baru, Mrk. 2: 18.

2. Qur'anic translation

[1]Departemen Agama RI, *al-Qur'an dan Terjemahannya* (Jakarta: Darus Sunnah, 2005), h. 55.

3. Book

[1]Muḥammad 'Ajjaj al-Khaṭib, *Uṣl al-Ḥadith: 'Ulumuh wa Muṣṭalaḥuh* (Beirut: Dâr al-Fikr, 1989), h. 57.

4. Translation Books

[1]Toshihiko Izutsu, *Relasi Tuhan dan Manusia: Pendekatan Semantik terhadap al-Qur'an*, terj. Agus Fahri Husein dkk (Yogyakarta: Tiara Wacana, 2003), h. 14.

5. Voluminous book

[1]Muḥammad al-Ṭâhir b. 'Ashur, *al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr*, Vol. 25 (Tunisia: Dâr al-Suḥûn, 2009), h. 76.

[1]Muḥammad b. Ismā'īl al-Bukharī, *al-Jami' al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, Vol. 2 (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, 1999), h. 77.

6. Article in book

[1]Sahiron Syamsuddin, "Metode Intratekstualitas Muhammad Shahrur dalam Penafsiran al-Qur'an" dalam Abdul Mustaqim dan Sahiron Syamsuddin (eds.), *Studi al-Qur'an Kontemporer: Wacana Baru Berbagai Metodologi Tafsir* (Yogyakarta: Tiara Wacana, 2002), h. 139.

7. Article in encyclopaedia

[1]M. Th. Houtsma, "Kufr" dalam A. J. Wensinck, at al. (ed.), *First Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Vol. 6 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1987), h. 244.

8. Article in journal

[1]Muhammad Adlin Sila, "The Festivity of *Maulid Nabi* in Cikoang, South Sulawesi: Between Remembering and Exaggerating the Spirit of Prophet", *Studia Islamika 8*, no. 3 (2001): h. 9.

9. Article in mass media

[1]Masdar F. Mas'udi, "Hubungan Agama dan Negara", *Kompas*, 7 Agustus 2002.

10. Article in Internet

[1]Muḥammad Shaḥrūr, "Reading the Religious Teks: a New Approach" dalam http://www.shahrour.org/25 Februari 2010/diakses 5 Juni 2010.

11. Thesis or dissertation

[1]Syahruddin Usman, "*Kinerja* Guru Penddikan Agama Islam pada SMAN dan SMKN Kota Makassar", *Disertasi* (Makassar: PPs UIN Alauddin, 2010), h. 200.

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