



Vasectomy from a Qur'anic Contextual Perspective: Between Regulating Progeny and Terminating Reproduction

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Abstract

This article examines vasectomy as a contemporary reproductive issue from the Qur'anic perspective, particularly in relation to the tension between birth regulation and reproductive termination. The study is significant because vasectomy is often understood dichotomously: either as a prohibited act due to its association with permanent sterilisation, or as a value-neutral medical procedure. Although the Qur'an does not explicitly mention vasectomy, it provides an ethical framework through verses concerning the protection of offspring, family responsibility, the prohibition of rejecting children for economic reasons, spousal consultation, human nature, and public welfare. This study employs qualitative library research using a thematic Qur'anic interpretation approach (tafsir mauḍū'ī) and contextual analysis. The primary data consist of selected Qur'anic verses, including QS al-Nisā'/4: 9, QS al-Baqarah/2: 233, QS al-An'ām/6: 151, QS al-Nahl/16: 72, QS al-Rūm/30:21 and 30, and QS al-Nisā'/4:119. The findings show that vasectomy should not be equated with castration, as it does not remove male sexual function; however, it cannot be regarded as a value-free procedure because it directly affects reproductive capacity. Vasectomy becomes problematic when it is intended as permanent reproductive termination, carried out unilaterally, or motivated by the rejection of children. Conversely, it may be considered a form of responsible birth regulation when undertaken by a couple who already have children, through mutual consultation, for health-related reasons, and for the welfare of the family. The article concludes that a Qur'anic contextualisation of vasectomy requires a balanced consideration of ḥifẓ al-nasl, ḥifẓ al-nafs, spousal consent, medical counselling, and family responsibility.

Keywords: Qur'an; Thematic Interpretation; Male Contraception; Reproductive Ethics.

INTRODUCTION

The dynamics of modern life have placed issues of reproduction, population, and family resilience at the forefront of contemporary socio-religious discourse. Uncontrolled population growth is often associated with an increasing social, economic, educational, health and burden on the quality of family life.¹ In this context, the Family Planning (KB) programme serves as one

¹Arinda Puspita Sari et al., "Analisis Masalah Kependudukan Di Indonesia," *Journal of Economic Education* 2, no. 1 (2023): 29–37, <https://doi.org/10.22437/jeec.v2i1.23180>.

of the instruments for birth regulation, aimed at helping married couples plan the number of children, the spacing between births, and their economic and psychological readiness in building a family.² However, contraceptive practices in society still tend to place the greatest biological and medical burden on women, whether through the pill, injections, implants or intrauterine devices.³ This imbalance demonstrates that the issue of birth control is not merely a matter of technical medical concerns, but also relates to the fairness of roles, family responsibilities and reproductive ethics in modern society.⁴

One method of contraception that involves male responsibility is vasectomy. Medically speaking, a vasectomy is a form of male contraception carried out by cutting, tying off or blocking the *vas deferens* so that sperm do not exit with the semen during ejaculation.⁵ This procedure is not the same as castration, as a vasectomy does not remove the testicles, does not halt the production of the hormone testosterone, and does not eliminate male sexual function. Consequently, the main issue with vasectomy does not lie in the loss of masculinity or sexual function, but rather in its long-term reproductive consequences; indeed, in many cases it is regarded as a permanent method of contraception.⁶ Therefore, any discussion of vasectomy requires a careful distinction between its medical, ethical, and religious-normative aspects to avoid oversimplification of the law or social misunderstandings.⁷

Within Muslim communities, vasectomy often presents a dilemma between the need for family planning and the principles of Sharia law, which emphasise the importance of preserving the lineage. On the one hand, vasectomy can be understood as a rational endeavour by a married couple to safeguard their health, manage the family's burden, and ensure the quality of child-rearing. On the other hand, vasectomy may also be called into question if it is understood as a permanent cessation of procreation, a rejection of the reproductive trust, or a unilateral decision that disregards the partner's consent. This is where vasectomy becomes a matter of *ijtihad*: it cannot be assessed solely through the abstract categories of *halal* and *haram*, but must be situated within the context of intention, purpose, family circumstances, the presence of children, medical risks, and its impact on the principles of the protection of the lineage (*hifz al-nasl*)⁸ and the protection of life (*hifz al-nafs*).⁹

The Qur'an does not explicitly mention vasectomy because this medical procedure was not known at the time of revelation. However, the absence of an explicit term does not mean that the Qur'an lacks a framework of values for assessing this issue. The Qur'an sets out general principles regarding procreation, the family, parental responsibilities, the prohibition against killing children out of fear of poverty, the natural order of creation, and the relationship between husband and wife, which is founded on love and mutual consultation. Consequently, an examination of vasectomy from the perspective of the Qur'an must shift from a search for literal terms to a reading of values, from explicit texts to normative principles, and from formal law to contextual ethical considerations. Such an approach is essential to ensure that the Qur'an

²World Health Organization, *Vasectomy, dalam Family Planning: A Global Handbook for Providers* (Geneva: WHO, 2018).

³Siti Musdah Mulia, *Islam Menggugat Poligami*, 1 ed. (Jakarta: Gramedia, 2004); Nasaruddin Umar, *Argumen Kesetaraan Gender dalam al-Qur'an* (, 1999), hlm. 88–102., 1st ed. (Jakarta: Paramadina, n.d.).

⁴Sari et al., "Analisis Masalah Kependudukan Di Indonesia."

⁵Hery Setiawan, *Terminologi Medis*, 1st ed. (Sleman: Deepublish Publisher, 2024).

⁶Benny Wantouw dan Lydia Tendean, "Pengaruh vasektomi terhadap fungsi seksual pria," *media.neliti*, n.d., 496–502.

⁷Mashudi, "Program Vasektomi (Mop)," *Jurnal IQTISAD* 4, no. 2 (2017): 49–72.

⁸Jasser Auda, **Maqasid al-Shariah as a Philosophy of Islamic Law: A Systems Approach** (London: IIIT, 2008).

⁹Muh Nasrul Hanasir, "Penggunaan Kontrasepsi Vasektomi Dalam Pandangan Hukum Islam," *QADAUNA: Jurnal Ilmiah Mahasiswa Hukum Keluarga Islam* 1 (2020): 60–71.

remains a source of guidance in addressing modern medical issues without forcing the text to provide ahistorical answers to contemporary concerns.

One relevant verse in considering the issue of vasectomy is QS al-Nisā'/4: 9, which emphasises the importance of moral concern for the vulnerable generations left behind. This verse does not speak directly about contraception, but conveys a message regarding the family's responsibility to safeguard the continuity and quality of life of future generations. In the context of vasectomy, this verse can be interpreted as an ethical foundation that reproductive decisions must not be taken lightly. Birth control may be considered if it is aimed at safeguarding the quality of future generations, family health, and parenting responsibilities. However, the same principle also sets a limit: the decision to cease reproductive capacity must not be based on an absolute rejection of children, an excessive fear of financial hardship, or an attitude of shirking family responsibilities.¹⁰

The principle of family responsibility is also evident in Surah al-Baqarah/2: 233, which regulates breastfeeding, maintenance, parental capacity, the prohibition against mutual harm between father and mother, and the importance of consent and consultation in matters concerning children. This verse demonstrates that reproduction in the Qur'an is not viewed merely as a biological process, but as a trust that entails moral, social and economic consequences. Therefore, decisions regarding vasectomy cannot be understood solely as a man's individual right over his own body, but also as a family decision concerning the couple, their children and the continuity of the household. The principles of *tarāḍin* and *tasyāwur* in this verse form an important basis for the notion that reproductive decisions must arise from mutual consent, not coercion by one party.¹¹

Religious debates in Indonesia demonstrate that the ruling on vasectomy is not always interpreted in a static manner. The fatwa issued by the Indonesian Ulema Council at the Fourth National Meeting of the Fatwa Commission in Cipasung in 2012 continues to regard vasectomy as a fundamentally problematic procedure if it results in permanent infertility. However, this fatwa allows for its permissibility under certain conditions, including that it must not contravene Islamic law, must not result in permanent infertility, must allow for reversal, and must not cause harm. This shift indicates that advances in medical science and social considerations have influenced the way ulama assess issues of reproductive health. Therefore, a Qur'anic study of vasectomy must take into account the interplay between the text, *maqāṣid*, medical developments, and the social realities of the Muslim community.¹²

Previous studies on vasectomy have shown varying trends. Mashudi discusses vasectomy as part of the Male Surgical Methods programme in family planning, particularly in terms of its implementation and its role as a form of male contraception. Hanasir examines vasectomy from the perspective of Islamic law and demonstrates that this issue concerns not only the medical procedure, but also the intention, consequences, and the status of sterilisation in relation to the continuity of the lineage. Siti Rochmah, more specifically, compares vasectomy and tubectomy from a medical perspective and in terms of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, making it relevant to examine the relationship between permanent contraception, the protection of the lineage, and the welfare of the family. Dian Ibnu Wahid discusses vasectomy as a method of male contraception, but his study has not specifically developed a thematic interpretative framework for the Qur'an. From a medical perspective, Wantouw and Tendean, as well as Wicaksono Pantjoro, Duarsa, and Sugianto, reinforce the explanation that vasectomy is not synonymous with the loss of male sexual function. Meanwhile, Seth et al. discuss *vasovasostomy* as a post-

¹⁰Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Qur'an, "Qur'an Kemenag"; Ad-Dimasyqī, "Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Azīm."

¹¹The Committee for the Authentication of the Qur'anic Text, "Ministry of Religious Affairs Qur'an"; Ad-Dimasyqī, "Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Azīm."

¹²"<https://mui.or.id/baca/berita/ini-bunyi-lengkap-fatwa-vasektomi-hasil-ijtima-ulama-ke-iv-di-pesantren-cipasung-2012>," n.d.

vasectomy reversal procedure; however, the possibility of recanalisation cannot be understood as an absolute guarantee of the return of fertility.¹³

This gap highlights the need for a new interpretation of vasectomy through the *maudū'i* and contextual approaches. The *maudū'i* approach allows verses scattered across various surahs to be compiled based on themes of lineage, family, fitrah, compassion, consultation, responsibility and the public good. Meanwhile, the contextual approach allows these verses to be read in relation to modern reproductive health issues, particularly where medical procedures may alter a person's reproductive capacity. Thus, contextualising vasectomy from a Qur'anic perspective does not aim to force a textual legitimisation, but rather to establish an ethical framework for assessing when vasectomy becomes problematic and when it may be considered part of family planning.¹⁴

The novelty of this article lies in its attempt to frame vasectomy as a Qur'anic-contextual issue, rather than merely a medical or fiqh issue. This article places vasectomy into two analytical categories: firstly, vasectomy as a means of terminating the lineage that contradicts the principle of *hifz al-nasl* if performed permanently, unilaterally, without medical grounds, or due to a rejection of children; secondly, vasectomy as a form of birth control that may be considered if performed by a couple who already have children, through mutual consultation, on health grounds, and for the welfare of the family. Within these categories, the assessment of vasectomy is not absolute and devoid of context, yet it is not divorced from the fundamental values of the Qur'an.

Based on the above, this article aims to examine the contextualisation of vasectomy from a Qur'anic perspective by analysing verses relating to the protection of offspring, family responsibility, the prohibition against rejecting a child for economic reasons, the natural order of creation, and the greater good. This article argues that vasectomy should not be equated with castration, nor can it be understood as a value-neutral act. From the Qur'anic perspective, vasectomy must be assessed on a case-by-case basis, striking a balance between health, the presence of children, spousal consent, family responsibilities, and sharia objectives. Thus, this article is expected to contribute to the development of thematic exegesis on contemporary reproductive health issues, whilst offering a proportionate ethical framework for Muslim communities in understanding vasectomy.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative, literature-based research design with a thematic-contextual approach to the Qur'an. A qualitative design was chosen because this article does not treat vasectomy as a clinical variable but interprets it as a contemporary reproductive issue requiring textual, ethical and contextual analysis. The literature-based model enables this study to examine primary and secondary sources relating to Qur'anic exegesis, Islamic legal thought, reproductive ethics, and medical discourse on vasectomy. A thematic approach, or *tafsir maudū'i*, was employed by compiling and analysing Qur'anic verses that are conceptually

¹³ Mashudi, "Program Vasektomi (Mop)"; Hanasir, "Penggunaan Kontrasepsi Vasektomi Dalam Pandangan Hukum Islam"; Siti Rochmah, "Penggunaan Vasektomi dan Tubektomi Perspektif Medis dan Maqāsid al-Sharī'ah," *tesis Magister, Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Ampel Surabaya*, 2018; Dian Ibnu Wahid, *Vasektomi (membikin anak tanpa harus menghasilkan anak)* (Jogjakarta: Dian Pustaka, 2008); Wantouw dan Tendean, "Pengaruh vasektomi terhadap fungsi seksual pria"; Marshal Harvy Wicaksono Pantjoro, Gede Wirya Kusuma Duarsa, dan Ronald Sugianto, "Sexual Outcome of Vasectomized Patients: A Systematic Review," *Archivio Italiano di Urologia e Andrologia* 97, no. 2 (2025): 1–5, <https://doi.org/10.4081/aiua.2025.13644>; Ishith Seth, "Vasovasostomy: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis Comparing Macroscopic, Microsurgical, and Robot-Assisted Microsurgical Techniques," *Andrology* 12, no. 4 (2023): 740–67, <https://doi.org/10.1111/andr.13543>.

¹⁴ Abd. Muin Salim, Mardan Mardan, dan Achmad Abu Bakar, *Metodologi Penelitian Tafsir Maudhu'i*, 1 ed. (Jakarta: Pustaka Arif, 2012).

relevant to progeny, family responsibilities, reproductive protection, human nature, and the public interest.¹⁵

The primary data for this article consists of Qur'anic verses relating to the protection of offspring and family responsibilities, particularly Sūrah al-Nisā'/4: 9, Surah al-Baqarah/2: 233, Surah al-An'ām/6: 151, Surah al-Naḥl/16: 72, Surah al-Rūm/30: 21 and 30, Surah al-Nisā'/4: 34, and Surah al-Nisā'/4: 119. These verses are not presented as explicit evidence regarding vasectomy, as the Qur'an does not mention the term directly. Rather, these verses serve as a normative-ethical foundation for evaluating vasectomy as a contemporary reproductive practice. Classical and modern exegetical works were utilised to clarify the meaning of the verses, particularly those relating to *ḥifẓ al-nasl*, the welfare of the family, consultation between husband and wife, the prohibition of harm, and the preservation of Allah's creation.¹⁶

Secondary data was obtained from fiqh literature, religious fatwas, medical literature, and contemporary studies on family planning and male contraception. Fatwas issued by religious institutions, particularly the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), were used to analyse the legal dynamics of vasectomy, particularly the distinction between permanent sterilisation and medical procedures that still allow for recanalisation. Medical literature was used to explain the technical characteristics of vasectomy, its distinction from castration, its reproductive consequences, and the possibility of restoring the reproductive tract. The use of these interdisciplinary sources was necessary because vasectomy cannot be assessed solely as a textual issue, but also concerns medical facts, family ethics, and socio-religious realities.¹⁷

Data were collected through documentation and textual analysis. The process involved identifying relevant Qur'anic verses, classifying them into conceptual categories, examining their interpretations in selected exegetical works, and then comparing these with legal and medical discussions on vasectomy. The data were subsequently analysed using descriptive-analytical methods and content analysis. Descriptive analysis was used to explain the meaning of the verses under study and the medical definition of vasectomy, whilst content analysis was used to identify Qur'anic values that could form the basis for ethical considerations regarding vasectomy. The analytical process moves from text to context and back to text: first, by identifying the Qur'an's normative principles; second, by contextualising these principles within the contemporary issue of male contraception.

To ensure the validity of the analysis, this study employs source triangulation by comparing verses from the Qur'an, interpretations by Islamic scholars, perspectives on Islamic law, fatwa documents and medical literature. This article does not aim to issue a formal legal fatwa, but rather to establish a Qur'anic ethical framework for understanding vasectomy in a contextual manner. Consequently, the analysis is directed towards identifying the circumstances in which vasectomy becomes problematic as a form of permanent contraception, and those in which it can be understood as part of responsible family planning. Through this method, the article seeks to offer a balanced Qur'anic interpretation that takes into account *ḥifẓ al-nasl*, *ḥifẓ al-nafs*, spousal consent, medical necessity, and the welfare of the family.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data were collected through documentation and textual analysis. The process involved identifying relevant Qur'anic verses, classifying them into conceptual categories, examining their

¹⁵ Salim, Mardan, and Bakar.

¹⁶ Muḥammad bin Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-Bayān 'an Ta'wīl Āy al-Qur'ān*, ed. oleh Tahqīq: Aḥmad Muḥammad Shākir, 1st ed. (Beirut: Dār al-Ma'rifah, n.d.).

¹⁷ Hanasir, "Penggunaan Kontrasepsi Vasektomi Dalam Pandangan Hukum Islam"; Mashudi, "Program Vasektomi (Mop)."

interpretations in selected exegetical works, and then comparing these with legal and medical discussions on vasectomy. The data were subsequently analysed using descriptive-analytical methods and content analysis. Descriptive analysis was used to explain the meaning of the verses under study and the medical definition of vasectomy, whilst content analysis was used to identify Qur'anic values that could form the basis for ethical considerations regarding vasectomy. The analytical process moves from text to context and back to text: first, by identifying the Qur'an's normative principles; second, by contextualising these principles within the contemporary issue of male contraception.

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Vasectomy as a Contemporary Reproductive Issue

Vasectomy is one of the contemporary reproductive issues that brings together medical, family and religious dimensions. Medically speaking, vasectomy is a method of male contraception carried out by cutting, tying or blocking the *vas deferens*, the duct that carries sperm from the testicles to the ejaculatory duct. Once this duct is blocked, sperm no longer exit with the seminal fluid, thus preventing fertilisation. Consequently, the primary focus of a vasectomy is not the male sexual organs as a whole, but rather the reproductive tract that links sperm production to the process of fertilisation. Therefore, a vasectomy is not synonymous with castration. Castration involves the removal or deactivation of testicular function, whereas a vasectomy does not remove the testicles, does not halt the production of the hormone testosterone, and does not eliminate a man's sexual capacity.¹⁸

Distinguishing between a vasectomy and castration is important because much of the social resistance to vasectomy often stems from the assumption that the procedure removes a man's masculinity. From a medical perspective, this assumption is incorrect. Men who undergo a vasectomy can still experience erections, ejaculation and sexual activity normally; it is simply that the semen expelled no longer contains sperm capable of fertilising an egg. Consequently, the main issue with vasectomy is not the loss of sexual function, but rather its reproductive implications. It is these implications that necessitate a careful assessment of vasectomy from a Qur'anic perspective, as they relate directly to the ability to have children, the continuity of generations, and family responsibilities.

A vasectomy also differs from temporary methods of contraception. Contraceptives such as the pill, injections, condoms, or intrauterine devices can still be discontinued at any time, whilst a vasectomy is generally understood to be a permanent form of contraception with long-term effects. Whilst there is a possibility of recanalisation or the reconnection of the *vas deferens*, this cannot be regarded as a guarantee that fertility will return to its original state. The success of recanalisation is influenced by various factors, such as the time elapsed since the vasectomy, the condition of the reproductive tract, sperm quality, the couple's age, and the wife's reproductive health. Therefore, from an ethical perspective, a vasectomy must still be treated as

¹⁸ Mashudi, "Program Vasektomi (Mop)."

a long-term reproductive decision requiring counselling, careful consideration, and informed consent.¹⁹

From a socio-familial perspective, vasectomy can be seen as a form of male involvement in the responsibility of family planning. In many family planning practices, women more often bear the burden of contraception, both biologically and psychologically. The use of the pill, hormonal injections, implants or intrauterine devices indicates that women's bodies are often the primary site of contraceptive intervention. Consequently, vasectomy can be understood as an alternative that demonstrates male participation in family planning. However, this male involvement must not be interpreted as a forced shifting of the burden from women to men. The ethical value lies not merely in the fact that a man is willing to undergo a vasectomy, but in whether that decision arises from mutual discussion, consent, medical considerations, and the family's best interests.

In this context, vasectomy is an issue that cannot be judged simplistically. If a vasectomy is performed solely because of a man's individual desire to avoid having children, to shirk his responsibilities as a father, or to make a unilateral decision without his wife's consent, then such an action has the potential to conflict with the family values set out in the Qur'an. However, if a vasectomy is performed by a couple who already have children, face serious health risks should the wife become pregnant again, have received adequate medical explanation, and have reached a decision through mutual consultation, then the procedure can be interpreted as part of an effort to safeguard the family. It is at this point that a contextual approach becomes crucial: a vasectomy should not be understood solely in terms of the medical procedure itself, but in terms of its purpose, the decision-making process, its consequences, and its alignment with the values of the Qur'an.

Critically, vasectomy demonstrates that modern reproductive issues cannot always be addressed through rigid legal categories. In certain circumstances, vasectomy can be a form of family responsibility, particularly if intended to protect the couple's health and ensure the quality of child-rearing. In other circumstances, vasectomy can become a problematic act if it serves as a means of absolute cessation of procreation or a rejection of the reproductive trust. Therefore, an interpretation of the Qur'an regarding vasectomy must avoid two extremes: the first extreme is to declare all forms of vasectomy haram without considering the medical and family context; the second extreme is to permit vasectomy entirely as an individual right without considering the value of *hifz al-nasl*, consultation between partners, and the welfare of the family.

Qur'anic Verses as an Ethical Framework for Vasectomy

The Qur'an does not discuss vasectomy in terms of technical medical terminology, but it provides ethical principles that can be used to assess reproductive decisions. The first principle is evident in Surah al-Nisā'/4:9, which emphasises the importance of caring for the welfare of the vulnerable. This verse addresses a person's concern for descendants left behind in a vulnerable state, and then commands piety towards Allah and truthful speech. In its original context, this verse relates to the protection of heirs' rights and a warning against leaving behind a vulnerable generation. Ethically, however, this verse can be extended to encompass the principle of parental and familial responsibility for the well-being of future generations.²⁰

In al-Ṭabarī's interpretation, QS al-Nisā'/4: 9 conveys the message that one should treat children and future generations as one would wish one's own descendants to be treated. This verse contains a dimension of moral empathy: one must not merely consider present decisions,

¹⁹ Dkk Ernawati, *Kupas Tuntas Ginekologi dan Infertilitas*, ed. oleh Tetty Rina Aritonang (Malang: Penerbit Rena Cipta Mandiri, 2023).

²⁰ Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Qur'an, "Qur'an Kemenag."

but must also take into account their consequences for future generations. Ibn Kathīr also emphasises that the phrase *dhurriyyah di'āfan* indicates that descendants are vulnerable and in need of protection. Thus, this verse establishes that families are not only responsible for bringing children into the world, but also for ensuring that children live in decent conditions, are protected, and receive adequate care.²¹

In relation to vasectomy, QS al-Nisā'/4: 9 can be interpreted from two perspectives. On the one hand, this verse can serve as an ethical basis for family planning provided that the couple genuinely consider the quality of life for the child and the family's capacity to fulfil their parenting responsibilities. In other words, Islam does not preclude family planning provided its focus is on responsibility, not the rejection of offspring. On the other hand, this verse also places restrictions on the decision to undergo a vasectomy to ensure it is not carried out recklessly, particularly if the procedure eliminates the possibility of having children without a compelling reason. As a vasectomy affects a man's reproductive capacity, it must be approached with due care regarding the continuity of future generations.

The second principle is evident in Surah al-Baqarah/2:233, which governs breastfeeding, maintenance, parental capacity, the prohibition against causing harm to one another, and consultation between father and mother. This verse states that a mother shall breastfeed her child for a full two years for those who wish to complete the breastfeeding period, whilst the father is obliged to provide for the child's maintenance and clothing in a proper manner. This verse also emphasises that no one is burdened beyond their means and prohibits the father and mother from causing harm to one another because of the child. Furthermore, this verse allows for weaning before two years, provided it is done based on mutual consent and consultation between both parents.²²

This verse is significant when discussing vasectomy as it demonstrates that decisions regarding children and reproduction are not individual in nature, but relational. The child exists within a shared sphere of responsibility between father and mother. Therefore, the decision to undergo a vasectomy must not be understood merely as a man's decision regarding his own body, as its implications affect his wife's reproductive future, the family, and the possibility of having children. The principles of *tarāḍin* and *tasyāwur* in Surah al-Baqarah/2: 233 form the basis for the view that reproductive decisions must be taken through mutual consent and consultation. If even the weaning of a child requires joint consideration, then a decision with far-reaching implications for the ability to have children certainly requires even more thorough consultation.

Critically, Surah al-Baqarah/2: 233 also establishes that a vasectomy must not cause harm to either party. If a vasectomy is performed unilaterally by the husband without his wife's consent, then that decision has the potential to undermine the principle of *lā tuḍārra wālidatun bi waladiahā wa lā mawlūdun lahū bi waladiah* that is, the prohibition against causing mutual harm between father and mother over matters concerning their child. The wife may suffer emotional distress if she still wishes to have children, whilst the husband may also experience regret if the decision is made without sufficient understanding of the long-term consequences. Thus, the teachings of the Qur'an do not merely address the permissibility or otherwise of an action, but also how that decision is reached and whether it fosters justice within the family.

The third principle is evident in Surah al-An'ām/6: 151, which forbids killing a child out of fear of poverty. This verse affirms that Allah provides for both parents and children. Textually, this verse addresses the prohibition against killing a child, but ethically, it also corrects misguided reproductive motivations namely, an excessive fear of poverty leading to the rejection of having children. In the context of vasectomy, this verse does not automatically reject

²¹ Muhammad ibn Jarir al-Tabari, *Jami' al-Bayān 'an Ta'wīl Āy al-Qur'ān*.

²² Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Qur'an, "Qur'an Kemenag"; Ad-Dimasyqī, "Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Azīm."

all forms of birth control, but it sets a theological boundary: the decision to undergo a vasectomy must not be based on the belief that a child is merely an economic burden or a threat to the family's provision.²³

Distinguishing between motivations is crucial. Family planning for reasons of health, readiness to care for children, or the family's welfare differs from rejecting children out of fear of poverty. The former can be interpreted as an act of responsible stewardship, whilst the latter has the potential to conflict with the values of *tawakal* (trust in God) and the trust placed in one's descendants. Thus, Surah al-An'ām/6: 151 establishes the principle that economic reasons must not be used as an absolute basis for refusing to have children, although Islam still allows scope for responsible family planning. This is where the distinction lies between *tanzīm al-nasl* and *qaṭ' al-nasl*: the former regulates childbirth responsibly, whilst the latter severs the lineage entirely.

The fourth principle can be linked to QS al-Nahl/16: 72 and QS al-Rūm/30: 21, which position the family, spouses, children and affection as part of the signs of Allah's power. QS al-Nahl/16: 72 states that Allah created spouses from among humankind and, from those spouses, created children and grandchildren. This verse indicates that offspring are a blessing and part of the order of human life. Meanwhile, QS al-Rūm/30: 21 emphasises that the relationship between husband and wife is built upon *sakinah*, *mawaddah* and *raḥmah*. These two verses provide the basis that the decision to undergo a vasectomy must not be separated from the values of compassion, openness and responsibility within family life.²⁴

In this context, a vasectomy performed unilaterally runs counter to the spirit of *raḥmah*. *Raḥmah* demands consideration for one's partner, respect for the family's reproductive aspirations, and a willingness to consult on decisions with significant implications. If a husband undergoes a vasectomy without his wife's consent, he is not merely making a medical decision but is also altering the family's reproductive trajectory without the involvement of the party directly affected. Conversely, if a vasectomy is decided upon jointly to safeguard the wife's health or to prevent greater harm, then such a decision can be understood as an expression of love and responsibility, rather than a rejection of parenthood.

The fifth principle relates to Surah al-Nisā'/4: 119, which is often cited as the basis for discussions regarding the prohibition on altering Allah's creation. This verse refers to the devil's deceit that drives humans to alter Allah's creation.²⁵ In fiqh discourse, this verse is frequently used to judge actions that permanently alter bodily functions without a justifiable reason. However, the application of this verse to vasectomy must be approached with caution. Not all medical interventions on the body can be deemed a reprehensible alteration of God's creation, as many medical procedures are in fact intended to heal, prevent harm, or preserve life. Therefore, what needs to be assessed is not merely the existence of an intervention on the body, but the purpose, consequences, and the associated benefits and harms.²⁶

Through the framework of these verses, the Qur'an provides a balanced ethical foundation. Surah al-Nisā'/4: 9 emphasises the protection of future generations; Surah al-Baqarah/2:233 emphasises responsibility, capability, consultation, and the prohibition against causing mutual harm; Surah al-An'ām/6: 151 sets limits on rejecting children on economic

²³ The Qur'an Mushaf Authentication Committee, "Ministry of Religious Affairs Qur'an"; Abū 'Abdullāh Muḥammad bin Aḥmad bin Abī Bakr bin Farrah al-Khazrajī al-Anṣārī Syamsuddīn Al-Qurṭubī, "al-Jāmi' al-Aḥkām al-Qur'ān – Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī," in *1-20

²⁴ The Committee for the Authentication of the Qur'anic Text, "Qur'an of the Ministry of Religious Affairs"; M. Quraish Shihab, "Tafsir al-Misbah," in 1, 2nd ed. (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2002).

²⁵ Al-Qurṭubī, "al-Jāmi' al-Aḥkām al-Qur'ān – Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī"; Abū Ḥāmid Al-Gazālī, **Al-Mustaṣfā min 'Ilm al-Uṣūl**, ed. by Muḥammad 'Abd al-Salām 'Abd al-Shāfi, 1st ed. (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1993).

²⁶ Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Qur'an, "Qur'an Kemenag"; Al-Qurṭubī, "al-Jāmi' al-Aḥkām al-Qur'ān – Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī."

grounds; Surah al-Nahl/16: 72 and Surah al-Rūm/30: 21 regard children and the family as blessings to be cherished with love; whilst Surah al-Nisā'/4: 119 warns against arbitrarily altering the purpose of Allah's creation without a valid reason.²⁷ Thus, the Qur'an does not issue a technical ruling on vasectomy, but provides ethical parameters for assessing it contextually.

Vasectomy: Between Family Planning and Sterilisation

Contextualising vasectomy from the Qur'anic perspective requires distinguishing between family planning and the termination of procreation. This distinction is important because vasectomy is often understood solely as permanent sterilisation, whereas its motives, conditions and consequences may vary. Within Islamic discourse, birth regulation is acceptable within certain limits provided it aims to safeguard health, considers the family's capacity, and does not absolutely reject procreation. Conversely, the permanent cessation of procreation without justifiable grounds contradicts the principle of *ḥifẓ al-nasl* the protection of the continuity of the lineage which is one of the fundamental objectives of Sharia.²⁸

As a method of family planning, a vasectomy may be considered if performed by a couple who already have children and face specific circumstances in which a subsequent pregnancy could potentially cause harm. For example, the wife faces serious health risks if she becomes pregnant again, female contraceptive methods cause severe side effects, or the family has reached a number of children deemed sufficient and wishes to prioritise the quality of parenting. In such circumstances, a vasectomy is not intended as a rejection of children, but rather as an effort to manage family responsibilities. Its aim is not to sever the blessing of parenthood, but to safeguard a broader public interest: the wife's health, family stability, and the quality of life of existing children.

However, as a means of preventing procreation, a vasectomy becomes problematic if performed with the aim of permanently rejecting children, evading responsibility as a father, or following a '*childfree*' lifestyle without reasons that are justifiable under Islamic law. In such circumstances, a vasectomy no longer serves as a form of family planning but instead becomes an attitude of absolutely closing the door to procreation. Such an attitude runs counter to the values of the Qur'an, which regards offspring as a trust and a blessing. Whilst offspring should not be understood merely as a biological imperative, an absolute refusal to have children without a valid reason is also inconsistent with the Qur'an's orientation regarding the family, the continuity of generations, and reproductive responsibility.

This distinction also helps to interpret religious fatwas on vasectomy in a more balanced manner. The MUI fatwa issued at the Fourth National Meeting of the Fatwa Commission's Ulama (Ijtima' Ulama Komisi Fatwa se-Indonesia IV) in Cipasung in 2012 states that vasectomy is, in principle, haram if it results in permanent infertility. However, the fatwa allows for certain exceptions under specific conditions, including that it must not be intended to contravene Islamic law, must not result in permanent infertility, must be reversible, and must not cause harm. These conditions demonstrate that the legal assessment of vasectomy cannot be separated from the nature of the procedure, its purpose, its consequences, and the possibility of restoring reproductive function.²⁹

Nevertheless, the possibility of reversal must not be used as a justification for treating vasectomy as a routine form of contraception. Medically speaking, reversal is indeed possible, but it does not always guarantee the restoration of fertility. Consequently, prospective recipients

²⁷ Abū al-Qāsim al-Ḥusain bin Muḥammad ar-Rāgib al-Aṣḥānī, *al-Mufradāt fī Garīb Al-Qur'ān*, 1 ed. (Beirut - Damascus: Dārul-Qalam - ad-Dārusy-Syāmiyyah, 1412).

²⁸ Ibrāhīm bin Mūsā bin Muḥammad al-Lakhmī al-Garnāṭī Al-Syāṭibī, "Al-Muwāfaqāt," in 1-7, ed. oleh Abū 'Ubaidah Masyhūr bin Ḥasan Ālu Sulaimān, 1 ed. (t.t.: Dār Ibn 'Affān, 1997).

²⁹ 'https://mui.or.id/baca/berita/ini-bunyi-lengkap-fatwa-vasektomi-hasil-ijtima-ulama-ke-iv-di-pesantren-cipasung-2012'.

must still understand that vasectomy is a major decision with long-term consequences. At this point, the Qur'anic principle of prudence regarding one's offspring becomes relevant. Any decision affecting reproductive continuity must not be taken solely on the basis of short-term practical considerations, social pressure, economic inducements, or unilateral desire. It must be based on sufficient knowledge, medical counselling, spousal consent, and consideration of the greater good.

In the Indonesian context, vasectomy is generally not positioned as a completely unrestricted individual freedom, but is subject to family considerations, spousal consent, counselling, and the maturity of the decision. Some family planning service guidelines position vasectomy as an option for couples who already have children, have considered their desired family size, and have chosen it voluntarily. This framework indicates that vasectomy in Indonesia is more closely aligned with birth regulation after a family has established its lineage, rather than with the rejection of offspring from the outset. This is in line with the Qur'anic principle that reproductive decisions must consider responsibility towards the family and future generations.³⁰

Analytically, the crucial point in assessing a vasectomy is not merely whether the *vas deferens* is severed or ligated, but rather why the procedure is carried out and how the decision is reached. The same procedure can carry different ethical implications in different contexts. A vasectomy performed to safeguard the wife's health after the couple has had children differs from one performed to reject any possibility of having children. A vasectomy decided upon through mutual consultation differs from one carried out in secret. A vasectomy preceded by medical counselling differs from one undertaken due to economic or social pressure. Consequently, a contextual approach is necessary to avoid overly narrow legal generalisations.

From the perspective of the Qur'an, the distinction between family planning and the termination of a pregnancy must be guided by the principle of *maslahat*. *Maslahat* must not be understood subjectively as whatever an individual deems comfortable but must be weighed against the values of *Sharia*: the preservation of religion, life, reason, lineage and property. In the context of vasectomy, the two most relevant *maqāṣid* are *ḥifẓ al-nasl* and *ḥifẓ al-nafs*. *Ḥifẓ al-nasl* serves as a reminder that reproductive capacity and the continuity of the lineage must not be severed without a valid reason, whilst *ḥifẓ al-nafs* allows for consideration where a subsequent pregnancy would endanger the health or safety of the couple. It is the balance between these two *maqāṣid* that forms the basis for the contextualisation of vasectomy from the perspective of the Qur'an.³¹

Qur'anic Contextualisation: Ethical Conditions for Permissibility and Limits of Prohibition

Based on the framework of the verses and the analysis above, a vasectomy cannot be understood as an entirely value-neutral act. It touches upon the realms of the body, reproduction, family, lineage, and moral responsibility. Therefore, the Qur'anic contextualisation of the vasectomy must formulate the ethical conditions for its permissibility and the limits of its prohibition. This formulation is not a formal fatwa, but rather an ethical framework derived from the principles of the Qur'an and relevant to decision-making within Muslim families.

The first condition is that a vasectomy may only be considered if the couple already have children. This condition is important because the Qur'an regards offspring as a blessing and an integral part of the continuity of the family. A vasectomy performed before having children, without a very strong medical reason, risks amounting to an absolute severing of the family line. Under such circumstances, the procedure runs counter to the spirit of *ḥifẓ al-nasl*. Conversely, if

³⁰ M. Muhyiddin, 'The MUI Fatwa on Vasectomy: Scholars' Responses and Changes to the Fatwa', *Jurnal Ahkam Walisongo* 14, no. 1 (2014).

³¹ Al-Syātibī, "Al-Muwāfaqāt."

the couple already have children and face compelling reasons not to have more, a vasectomy may be interpreted as family planning rather than a rejection of having children.

The second condition is that the decision to undergo a vasectomy must be made through consultation and with the consent of both partners. This principle is rooted in QS al-Baqarah/2: 233, which emphasises consent and consultation in matters concerning children. A vasectomy must not be a unilateral decision by the husband, as its impact affects the reproductive future of the wife and the family. A unilateral decision can damage trust, cause emotional harm, and run counter to the value of *rahmah* within the household. Conversely, mutual consultation makes vasectomy a family decision born of openness, reciprocity and shared responsibility.

The third condition is that a vasectomy must be based on clear reasons of public interest. Such reasons may include health risks to the wife should she become pregnant again, the adverse effects of other contraceptive methods on a woman's body, family circumstances that necessitate serious family planning, or the need to maintain the quality of child-rearing. Without strong reasons of public interest, a vasectomy can easily become a purely practical measure that disregards the value of procreation. From the perspective of the Qur'an, the public interest must relate to the protection of life, family and progeny, not merely individual comfort.

The fourth requirement is that prospective recipients must receive adequate medical counselling. Counselling is essential to ensure that the decision to undergo a vasectomy is made consciously, voluntarily, and based on accurate information. Prospective recipients must understand how a vasectomy works, its long-term nature, possible side effects, the need for post-operative check-ups, and the limitations of recanalisation. From an Islamic ethical perspective, adequate knowledge forms part of one's responsibility, as decisions made without such knowledge may lead to regret and harm to the family.

As for the limits of the prohibition on vasectomy, these can be formulated under several conditions. Firstly, a vasectomy is prohibited if it is intended to permanently prevent procreation without a justifiable reason. Secondly, a vasectomy becomes problematic if it is performed before the couple has had a child and there is no urgent medical need. Thirdly, a vasectomy cannot be justified if it is based on an absolute fear of financial hardship or the assumption that children are merely an economic burden. Fourthly, a vasectomy contradicts family values if it is carried out unilaterally, without the partner's consent, or by concealing the decision from the wife. Fifthly, a vasectomy becomes unethical if it is carried out due to external pressure—whether economic pressure, specific programmes, or family pressure—thereby eliminating the element of consent.

Within these limits and conditions, this article emphasises that contextualising vasectomy from the perspective of the Qur'an does not result in a single ruling that disregards specific circumstances. The Qur'an provides an ethical framework that demands a balance between the protection of offspring and the protection of life, between reproductive responsibility and the welfare of the family, between bodily rights and the rights of one's partner, and between freedom of decision-making and the trust placed in one regarding one's offspring. Therefore, a vasectomy may be rejected if it results in the absolute termination of the lineage, but may be considered if it constitutes a responsible effort at family planning.

In summary, vasectomy from the Qur'anic perspective is a matter of contextual *ijtihād*. It cannot be equated with castration, nor should it be understood as a neutral act devoid of religious values. Assessment of the procedure must shift from its medical form to its ethical purpose; from individual action to family responsibility; from abstract law to the context of benefits and harms. With this approach, the Qur'an is not forced to speak technically about vasectomy, but is used as a source of values to assess modern reproductive practices proportionately.

CONCLUSION

This study affirms that, from the Qur'anic perspective, vasectomy is a contemporary reproductive issue of an *ijtihādī* and contextual nature. The Qur'an does not explicitly mention vasectomy, but it provides a framework of values that can be used to assess it through verses concerning the protection of offspring, family responsibilities, the prohibition against rejecting children for economic reasons, consultation between husband and wife, the natural order of creation, and the public interest. Therefore, vasectomy cannot be assessed merely as a medical procedure, but must be understood as a reproductive decision relating to *ḥifẓ al-nasl*, *ḥifẓ al-nafs*, the rights of the couple, and the future of the family.

Conceptually, this article finds that vasectomy lies between two ethical possibilities. Firstly, vasectomy becomes problematic if understood as the permanent cessation of procreation, carried out before having children without strong medical grounds, based on a rejection of children, an absolute fear of provision, or performed unilaterally without the spouse's consent. In this context, a vasectomy contradicts the spirit of the Qur'an, which regards offspring as a trust, a blessing, and an integral part of the family's continuity. Secondly, a vasectomy may be considered a form of family planning if performed by a couple who already have children, decided upon through mutual consultation, based on health reasons or the family's best interests, and preceded by adequate medical counselling. In this context, a vasectomy is not intended to reject having children, but to safeguard life, health and the quality of family responsibility.

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