Qur'anic Verses on Adoption

Syaripudin Latif[1], Sukiati[2], Fatimah[3]

Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara

A R T I C L E I N F O	ABSTRACT
	This study aims to examine the concept of adoption in the Qur'an through a maudhu'ī (thematic) tafsir approach in order to obtain a comprehensive and systematic understanding. The method used is qualitative research with the type of library research. Primary data is derived from Qur'anic verses related to adoption, nasab, and child rearing, while secondary data is obtained from classical and contemporary tafsir books as well as relevant scientific literature. The stages of the research include inventory and grouping of verses according to themes, analysis of the context of the verses by paying attention to the asbāb al-nuzūl and the views of the mufasir, as well as drawing thematic conclusions. The results of the study show that the Qur'an does not justify the practice of adoption that equates adopted children with biological children in terms of nasab and legal status, as affirmed in Surah al-Ahzab verses 4–5. However, the Qur'an strongly emphasizes the importance of childcare and protection as a form of social responsibility, while maintaining the clarity of children's identity. Thus, the concept of adoption in the Qur'an is oriented towards parenting without violating the principles of Islamic law.

Corresponding Author:
Syaripudin Latif
Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara
Jl. Willem Iskandar, Pasar V, Medan Estate, Kec. Percut Sei Tuan, Kabupaten Deli Serdang, Sumatera Utara. 20371
syaripudinlatif99@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of adoption in the Qur'an emerged as a response to the pre-Islamic Arab social tradition that practiced tabanni, which is the adoption of children accompanied by the equalization of status with biological children, including in terms of nasab, inheritance rights, and family relationships. This practice was later corrected by the Qur'an through a number of verses that affirmed the importance of maintaining the clarity of lineage as a fundamental principle in Islamic family law (Shihab, 2002: 274).

The tafsir maudhu'i approach allows for a thematic and comprehensive study of the verses on adoption, especially by linking Surah al-Ahzab verses 4–5 with other verses that speak of nasab, justice, and social responsibility towards children. Through this approach, it appears that the Qur'an does not reject child custody, but rather rejects the elimination of the biological identity of adopted children (Zuhaili, 2011: 45).

A central phenomenon that can be drawn is the shift in the concept of adoption from social legitimacy to sharia-based protection of children's rights. The Qur'an emphasizes that love and responsibility for children can be realized through parenting (kafalah) without having to change the nasab and its legal consequences (Qardhawi, 2007: 198). Thus, the verses on adoption reflect the balance between human values and the strictness of Islamic law.

In this study, it is understood as an approach to Islamic data analysis based on a data set of broad, diverse, and interconnected texts, especially verses of the Qur'an, books of tafsir, and Islamic legal literature related to the theme of adoption. This approach does not focus on technological aspects

alone, but on the systematic and thematic use of large-scale textual data to obtain comprehensive patterns of meaning.

In the context of maudhu'i interpretation, big data includes all verses of the Qur'an that are directly or indirectly related to adoption, such as verses about tabannī, nasab, inheritance, guardianship, and child care. The data was then expanded with the interpretations of classical and contemporary mufasir, such as al-Ṭabari, Ibn Kathir, al-Qurṭubi, and modern mufasir, thus forming a complementary interpretive data set (Shihab, 2002: 276).

Big data analysis is carried out through the stages of text data collection, thematic classification, meaning mapping, and drawing relationships between concepts. From this process, it was found that the dominant pattern was that the Qur'an consistently rejected the abolition of the fate of adopted children, but simultaneously affirmed the moral and social obligation to protect and nurture children in need (Zuhaili, 2011: 47). This pattern shows the continuity of the normative message of the Qur'an that balances human values and legal firmness (Qardhawi, 2007: 201). Thus, big data analysis strengthens the findings of the maudhu'i interpretation that the concept of adoption in the Qur'an is not just a normative prohibition, but a holistic ethical-legal construction, based on the protection of children's rights and clarity of identity.

Academic studies of adoption in the Qur'an face a number of conceptual and methodological problems. One of the main problems is the gap in understanding between the concept of modern adoption and the concept of tabannī which is criticized by the Qur'an. In contemporary practice, adoption is often interpreted as the full adoption of a child, including a change in identity and legal status, while the Qur'an expressly rejects the abolition of the birth of an adopted child, as stated in the word of Allah: "And He did not make your adopted children your biological children" (Q.S. al-Ahzab [33]: 4). This difference has given rise to an academic debate regarding the limits of adoption that are justified by sharia.

The next problem lies in the tendency of partial studies of the verses of adoption. Some of the research focuses only on Q.S. al-Ahzab verses 4–5 without linking it to other verses that emphasize justice, child protection, and the social responsibility of Muslims. In fact, the Qur'an also emphasizes the importance of safeguarding the rights of orphans and the weak, as Allah says: "So do not act arbitrarily towards orphans" (Q.S. ad-Duha [93]: 9). The incompleteness of this approach has the potential to give birth to a rigid understanding that does not reflect the value of rahmatan lil 'alamin.

Methodologically, academic problems also arise from the lack of optimal use of maudhu'i interpretation as an integrative approach. Without thematic grouping of verses and analysis of the context of the descent of the verses, the meaning of adoption in the Qur'an is often understood as a normative prohibition, not as an ethical and legal system that balances the clarity of the nasab and affection for the child. The Qur'an itself commands that adopted children should still be attributed to their biological father as a form of justice, "Call them by the names of their fathers; that is more just in the sight of Allah" (Q.S. al-Ahzab [33]: 5). Thus, academic problems in the study of verses about adoption require a comprehensive and religious interpretation approach to maudhu'i, so that the legal value and human value in the Qur'an can be understood proportionately and contextually.

Many studies on adoption in the Qur'an have been conducted, especially those that focus on the interpretation of Q.S. al-Ahzab verses 4–5 as the basis for prohibiting the practice of tabanni that equates adopted children with biological children. However, much of the research is still partial and normative, focusing on aspects of legal prohibition without integrating other verses that speak of childcare, orphan protection, justice, and the social responsibility of Muslims. In addition, the approach of maudhu'i interpretation is often used in a limited way, not to mention comprehensive thematic mapping and systematic analysis of the relationships between verses. As a result, the concept of adoption in the Qur'an is often understood narrowly as a legal restriction, rather than as an ethical and social construction that balances the clarity of the nasab and the value of compassion. This gap shows the need for more holistic thematic research to bring about a complete and contextual understanding.

This research specifically aims to identify and classify the verses of the Qur'an that are directly or indirectly related to the adoption of a single theme through the approach of tafsir maudhu'i. In addition, this study aims to analyze the meaning of adoption based on the context of the descent of verses and the views of the mufasir, in order to explain the boundary between the prohibited practice of

tabanni and the concept of childcare (kafālah) recommended in Islam. Another goal is to formulate a conceptual construction of adoption in the perspective of the Qur'an that integrates the principles of clarity of nasab, legal justice, and human values, so that the results of the research can make an academic contribution and practical relevance to the development of contemporary Islamic family law studies.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Concept of Adoption (Tabanni) in the Qur'an

This study focuses on the understanding of adoption in the Qur'an, especially the concept of tabanni that developed in pre-Islamic Arab societies. The Qur'an emphasizes that the adoption of a child must not change the destiny and legal status of the adopted child as a biological child. Therefore, this theory discusses the limitations of adoption that are prohibited and permissible in Islam, emphasizing the difference between administrative adoption of a child and the custody of a child without the removal of biological identity.

Tafsir Maudhu'i as an Approach to Verse Analysis

This point examines the interpretation of maudhu'i as a methodological approach in understanding the verses of adoption thematically and comprehensively. The interpretation of maudhu'i requires the collection of all relevant verses, grouping by theme, and analyzing the relationship between the meanings between the verses. Through this approach, the Qur'an's message about adoption is understood in its entirety, not partially, and takes into account the social context and goals of the sharia.

The Principle of Nasab and Child Upbringing (Kafālah) in Islam

This theoretical study highlights the principle of clarity of nasab as the foundation of Islamic family law, while at the same time emphasizing the importance of child care and protection as a human value. Islam places kafalah as a form of social responsibility that is encouraged, without having to equate the status of foster children with biological children. Thus, this theory explains the balance between legal firmness and the value of compassion in the concept of adoption according to the Qur'an.

METHOD

This research is a qualitative research with a descriptive-analytical approach. Qualitative research is used because the object of study is in the form of religious texts that require a deep understanding of the meaning and context of the verses. The approach used is maudhu'i (thematic) interpretation, which is a method of interpreting the Qur'an by collecting and analyzing verses related to one specific theme, in this case adoption. The primary data sources in this study are Qur'anic verses that are directly or indirectly related to adoption, such as verses about tabanni, nasab, childcare, and orphan protection. The secondary data sources include classical and contemporary tafsir books, such as Tafsir al-Ṭabari, Ibn Kathir, al-Qurṭubi, Tafsir al-Mishbah, as well as books, scientific journals, and Islamic legal literature relevant to the research theme.

Data collection is carried out through library research, by tracing, inventorying, and classifying Qur'anic verses and interpretive literature related to adoption. The data that has been collected is then selected based on the relevance of the theme for further analysis. Data analysis was carried out by following the steps of maudhu'i interpretation, namely: (1) determining the research theme; (2) compile

all relevant verses; (3) examine the context of the verse through the analysis of the asbab al-nuzul and the reasonableness of the verse; (4) analyzing the views of the mufasir; and (5) conclude the concept of adoption in the perspective of the Qur'an thematically and comprehensively. Conclusions are drawn inductively, namely by formulating generalizations based on the results of the analysis of verses and the interpretation of the mufasir, so that a complete picture of the concept of adoption is obtained from the perspective of the Qur'an.

RESULT AND DISSCUSSION

Prohibition of Equating Adopted Children with Natural Children

Q.S. al-Ahzab [33]: 4–5

مَا جَعَلَ ٱللَّهُ لِرَجُلٍ مِّن قَلْبَيْنِ فِى جَوْفِهِۦ ۚ وَمَا جَعَلَ أَزْوَٰجَكُمُ ٱلَّٰٓـِٔى تُظَٰهِرُونَ مِنْهُنَّ أُمَّهَٰتِكُمْ ۚ وَمَا جَعَلَ أَدْعِيَآءَكُمْ أَبْنَآءَكُمْ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ قَوْلُكُم بِأَفْوَٰهِكُمْ ۖ وَٱللَّهُ يَقُولُ ٱلْحَقَّ وَهُوَ يَهْدِى ٱلسَّبِيلَ

(33:4)

ٱدْعُوهُمْ لِءَابَآئِهِمْ هُوَ أَقْسَطُ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ فَإِن لَّمْ تَعْلَمُوٓا۟ ءَابَآءَهُمْ فَإِخْوَٰنُكُمْ فِى ٱلدِّينِ وَمَوَٰلِيكُمْ ۚ وَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ فِيمَآ أَخْطَأْتُم بِهِۦ وَلَٰكِن مَّا تَعَمَّدَتْ قُلُوبُكُمْ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا

(33:5)

Translation:

"And Allah did not make your adopted children your biological children. Such is only a word in your mouth. And Allah speaks the truth and He shows the right way. Call them by the names of their fathers; that is more just in the sight of Allah. If you do not know their fathers, then call them your brothers and sisters. And there is no sin for you for what you have wronged him, but for what your heart has purposed. God is All-Merciful, All-Merciful.

The author analyzes, this verse emphasizes that the practice of tabanni that equates adopted children with biological children is prohibited. From the perspective of the interpretation of maudhu'i, this prohibition does not stand alone, but is related to the principle of justice of the law of nasab and the protection of children's rights. Thematic analysis shows that the upbringing of adopted children is still permissible (kafalah), but their biological identity must be respected. The author considers that this prohibition is a form of Islamic social correction to the practices of pre-Islamic Arab society, while emphasizing that the protection of children and clarity of nasab are ethical and legal principles that are in line.

Child Care (Kafalah) and Orphan Protection

Q.S. ad-Duha [93]: 9

فَأَمَّا ٱلْيَتِيمَ فَلَا تَقْهَرْ

Translation:
"So do not be arbitrary towards orphans."

This verse emphasizes the importance of the protection of orphans, which is relevant to the practice of adoption in the form of kafalah. With the tafsir of maudhu'i, this verse is attributed to Q.S. al-Ahzab [33]: 4–5, so that it can be seen that Islam regulates the upbringing of children as a whole: the child who is cared for must receive protection, affection, and basic rights, but the status of his nasab does not change. The author considers that this paragraph shows that childcare is a social and moral responsibility, which is balanced between the rights of children and the obligations of parents/caregivers.

The Principle of Clarity of Nasab and Legal Justice

Q.S. al-Baqarah [2]: 233

وَٱلۡوَٰلِدَٰتُ يُرۡضِعۡنَ أَوۡلَٰدَهُنَّ حَوۡلَيۡنِ كَامِلَيۡنِ لِمَنۡ أَرَادَ أَن يُتِمَّ ٱلرَّضَاعَةَ ۚ وَعَلَى ٱلۡمَوۡلُودِ لَهُۥ رِزۡقُهُنَّ وَكِسۡوَتُهُنَّ بِٱلۡمَعۡرُوفِ

Translation:

"And mothers should breastfeed their children for two full years for those who want to complete breastfeeding. And it is the duty of the father to feed and clothe the mother according to what is appropriate."

This verse shows that the Qur'an emphasizes the responsibility of raising children (the provision of rights, education, and protection) in a fair manner. The author associates this principle with kafalah, so that adopted children continue to receive protection and social rights without erasing their biological identity. The maudhu'i interpretation emphasizes the connection of this verse with the principle of nasab (Q.S. al-Ahzab [33]: 4–5) and the protection of orphans (Q.S. ad-Duha [93]: 9), thus forming the concept of integrative Islamic adoption. The author considers that this thematic approach emphasizes that law, morals, and social responsibility in Islam are inseparable when regulating childcare.

The author concludes that the Qur'an builds on a holistic concept of adoption, incorporating:
- Moral Responsibility (Social Responsibility),
- Legal justice (nasab and children's rights),
- Humanitarian values (compassion and protection).

Prohibition of Equating Adopted Children with Natural Children

Based on the results of the research, Q.S. al-Ahzab [33]: 4–5 affirms the prohibition of equating adopted children with biological children (tabannī). From the perspective of maudhu'i interpretation, this verse is studied not separately, but thematically with other relevant verses on child care and orphan protection (Shihab, 2002: 274). The maudhu'i interpretation emphasizes the collection of verses related to a single theme, in this case the adoption to display a complete and comprehensive meaning. The prohibition of equating adopted children with biological children is associated with the principle of justice of the law of nasab and the rights of the child, so the practice of kafālah is still allowed, but the biological identity of the child must be respected (Zuhaili, 2011: 45).

This ban shows a balance between law and ethics. From a social point of view, this corrects the practice of pre-Islamic societies that sometimes erase the identity of adopted children. In terms of morality, children still have the right to nurture, protection, and affection. The maudhu'i interpretation helps to emphasize that the prohibition of nasab is not just a normative law, but part of the Islamic social and ethical structure.

Child Care (Kafalah) and Orphan Protection

Verse Q.S. ad-Duha [93]:9 emphasizes that orphans must be protected and should not be mistreated. With the tafsir maudhu'i, this verse is associated with the verse about nasab (Q.S. al-Ahzab [33]: 4–5) thus forming a major theme: the protection of children in Islam. This thematic interpretation shows that childcare (kafalah) emphasizes moral and social responsibilities, including the fulfillment of children's basic rights such as food, education, and affection (Qardhawi, 2007: 198).

Parenting in the context of kafalah emphasizes the principles of social and moral justice. Children who are cared for receive legal and social protection, but their status does not change. This is relevant to the modern concept of adoption, but the Qur'an emphasizes that Islamic parenting is different: the identity of the child remains clear and his rights are protected. The maudhu'i interpretation allows the researcher to relate the verses holistically, so that the Qur'an's message about adoption is seen as a unity of legal, moral, and social principles.

Integration of Nasab Law and Children's Rights

Verse Q.S. al-Baqarah [2]: 233 emphasizes the responsibility of parents towards children, including the provision of food, clothing, and the right to care. The maudhu'i interpretation integrates this verse with the verse on the prohibition of tabanni and the protection of orphans, forming one major theme: adoption in Islam as an overarching legal and moral responsibility (Shihab, 2002: 276).

With a thematic approach, it can be seen that the Qur'an emphasizes that adoption is not just a legal formality. Adopted children still receive protection, affection, and education, but their biological identity is respected. It affirms the principle of balance between legal justice, social ethics, and moral responsibility, in accordance with the theory of maudhu'i interpretation which emphasizes thematic analysis of verses to gain a thorough understanding (Zuhaili, 2011: 47–49).

The Relevance of Maudhu'i Tafsir Theory with Research Results

Tafsir maudhu'i emphasizes theme-based analysis and the integration of related verses to comprehensively understand the context of meaning. In this study, the maudhu'i approach makes it easier for researchers to:

1. Linking the prohibition of equating adopted children with biological children (Q.S. al-Ahzab [33]: 4–5) with the principles of parenting (kafalah) and the protection of orphans (Q.S. ad-Duha [93]: 9).
2. Showing the relationship between parental responsibility towards children (Q.S. al-Baqarah [2]: 233) and the rights of children in care.
3. It presents the conclusion that the concept of Islamic adoption is holistic, combining nasab law, moral ethics, and social responsibility.

This approach differs from partial verse-by-verse interpretation, because it allows research to display a complete unity of meaning (Qardhawi, 2007: 198–201).

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research with the approach of tafsir maudhu'i, it can be concluded that the Qur'an expressly prohibits the practice of tabannī, i.e. equating adopted children with biological children, as explained in Q.S. al-Ahzab [33]: 4–5. This prohibition aims to maintain the justice of the law of nasab and maintain the biological identity of the child, without eliminating the obligation of responsible and compassionate parenting. On the other hand, the Qur'an still emphasizes the

importance of childcare (kafālah) and the protection of orphans, as reflected in Q.S. ad-Duha [93]: 9 and Q.S. al-Baqarah [2]: 233, which affirm the right of children to protection, affection, and fulfillment of basic needs without erasing their origins.

Through the approach of maudhu'i tafsir, the verses on the prohibition of tabannī, the principle of kafālah, and the protection of orphans can be understood thematically and integratively as a single meaning. This shows that the concept of adoption in the perspective of the Qur'an is not only formal-legal, but also loaded with the values of social justice, moral responsibility, and the protection of children's rights as a whole. Theoretically and practically, the concept of Islamic adoption emphasizes the balance between respect for the nasab, fulfillment of children's rights, and social responsibility, making it relevant to be applied in childcare practices in modern society.

REFERENCES

Al-Qur'an. (n.d.). *Al-Qur'an al-Karim*.

Al-Tabari, M. J. (1999). *Jami' al-bayan fi tafsir al-Qur'an*. Dar al-Fikr.

Ibn Kathir. (1997). *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'azim*. Dar al-Fikr.

Qardhawi, Y. (2007). *Fiqh al-mu'amalat al-islamiyyah*. Dar al-Shuruq.

Shihab, M. Q. (2002). *Tafsir al-Mishbah: Pesan, kesan, dan keserasian al-Qur'an*. Lentera Hati.

Zuhaili, W. (2011). *Al-fiqh al-islami wa adillatuh*. Dar al-Fikr.