



***Nisā`* Diction as the Concept of Women's Domestic Social Piety in al-Qur'an**

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ENGLISH ABSTRACT

This library research analyzes the word Nisā` in al-Qur'an, which describes the women's domestic roles and standards of social piety in Islamic view. It uses the philosophical-hermeneutical approach and social piety theory to analyze the data. This research results in three main findings: First, social piety in Islam manifests responsibility as God's caliphs on earth. Second, one of social piety description in Islam is by the use of word Nisā` repeatedly in different verses and surahs of al-Qur'an. The last, Nisā` diction to describe the social piety concept, according to al-Qur'an, places women in the domestic dimension to show women's participation as God's caliphs on earth in building the ideal social order. This research contributes to the gender studies overlooked by previous researchers, as the concept of Nisā` in al-Qur'an was ignored.

Keywords: *Nisā`, Women, Social Piety, Domestic Roles*

INDONESIAN ABSTRACT

Penelitian ini mengkaji lafadz Nisa' dalam al-Quran, yang menggambarkan peran-peran domestik yang dan standar perilaku kesalehan sosial bagi kaum perempuan dalam pandangan Islam. Jenis penelitian ini adalah penelitian pustaka. Pendekatan yang dilakukan adalah filosofis-hermeneutis. Teori yang digunakan menganalisa data adalah teori kesalehan sosial. Penelitian ini menemukan tiga hal utama; pertama, kesalehan sosial dalam Islam merupakan manifestasi dari tanggung jawab sebagai khalifah Tuhan di muka bumi. Kedua, kesalehan sosial dalam Islam salah satunya tergambar dari lafadz Nisa' yang berulang kali digunakan al-Quran dalam ayat dan surah berbeda-beda. Ketiga, pilihan diksi Nisa' untuk menggambarkan konsep kesalehan sosial menurut al-Quran menempatkan perempuan pada satu dimensi partikular, yaitu domestik. Dengan menampilkan kesalehan sosial di lingkungan domestik, perempuan turut serta menjadi khalifah Tuhan di muka bumi untuk membangun tatanan masyarakat ideal. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada kajian gender yang selama ini luput diperhatikan para peneliti terdahulu, karena mengabaikan konsep Nisa' dalam al-Quran.

Kata kunci: *Nisa', Perempuan, Kesalehan Sosial, Peran-Fungsi Domestik*

Introduction

Modern human life is increasingly experiencing moral decadence. Violence, for example, marks the loss of human wisdom to live in a more civilized, cultured, and humane way. In the World Health Organization (WHO) report entitled Global Status Report on the Prevention of Violence against Children in 2020. The statistics are surprising, telling that around 1 billion children experience physical violence, sexual violence, psychological violence, injury, become disabled, and die (Newswire, 2020).

In addition, WHO also released the data of violences against women worldwide. WHO Director-General, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, said, "*Violence against women is endemic in every country and culture, causing harm to millions of women and their families, and exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic.*" It means that 1 in 3 women in the world experience violence (Saptoyo, 202).

The moral decadence of humankind occurs in relationships among individuals, men versus women, parents versus children, and among countries. Human ambition for power drives conflict, both military and economical. International Monetary Foundation (IMF), for instance, calculates the number of losses caused by the trade war between America and China in 2019 which reached USD 700 billion (Agustiyanti, 2019).

This economic war is even more than the 7-year loss of the Syrian war, which reached USD 400 billion. The amount was released after 50 Syrian, and international experts met at the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) event in Lebanon 2018. (Firmansyah, 2018). While the loss from Yemen War from 2015 to 2019 was calculated to reach USD 50 billion (Tempo, 2019).

Besides, Saudi Arabia also losted due to attacks of two Saudi Aramco oil facilities by 20 drones and several cruise missiles. They usually produced 6.8 million barrels, and suddenly decaed by less than 1 million barrels per day. The world's oil supply was disrupted by up to 5%. At the same time, the price per barrel in normal conditions is USD 66 (Al-Rasyid, 2019).

Wars in various lines of life stem from moral decadence. Humans become immoral when their cultural aspects decline. It begins with data manipulation and analysis and is individualistic, exclusively seeing and assessing each individual's other beliefs, values, and moral tendencies. From here, the first culture war was waged (Hunter & Wolfe, 2006). This cultural war generates physical, military, and political economy wars. Iherue

Sunda Onyema said the impact and effects of moral decadence could include socio-political, economic, and even religious. (Onyema, 2011).

This broken social order in various dimensions, marked by violences against children and women, and also political, economic, and military wars, is not in line with the ideas and ideals of Islam. The prophet Muhammad explained that his primary mission was to organize the morals of humankind. As stated in his saying, *innama bu'itstu li utammima makārima al-akhlāq* (indeed I was sent to perfect morals). Based on this hadith, Mahbūb Abbās said that the world order according to the Islamic ideal is a moral world (Abbās M., 2006).

As the ideals of Islam is to create a moral world, then violence and war are strongly opposed. Islam carries out *rahmatan li al-ālamīn* (love for the universe). Prof. Dr. Abuddin Nata said that Islam *rahmatan lil alamin* is an Islamic education model to enter the ASEAN Community era (Nata, 2016). For KH. Hasyim Muzadi, Islam with grace, peace, gentleness is suitable for a multi-religious, ethnic, and cultural nation-state. Therefore, war, violence, and crime are no longer needed (Rasyid, 2016). In other words, a moral world order can be built from the Islamic concept of compassion, peace, non-violence and anti-war.

In building the ideal world order, Islam concerns to form pious individuals to shape social change positively (Kasim & Husain, 2008). Many Islamic educations have sought an individual approach to being pious. Individual piety is the beginning of social piety and it then becomes parameter of one's Islam. Suppose individual piety is only measured in relationship with God, social piety is seen from implementation of Islamic values in social sector. (Riadi, 2014).

One of the most important social or societal elements according to Islam is woman's individual. Islam respect abolishes the Jahiliyah tradition of woman discrimination. In interpreting Islam as *Rahmatan lil alamin*, Agustin Hanafi said that women in Islam have a noble position by having the same rights as men as long as they maintain Islamic norms and avoid immorality or other negative things so that women can be involved in social activities that are beneficial to their nation and country (Hanapi, 2015).

According to Muhammad Sakti Garwan, women's social piety is affected by identity and cultural construction. By citing the case of the Ternate women, social piety as a

cultural identity of women is seen from their devotion to their husbands, children, and the surrounding community. The daily activities of women are an indicator of their level of social piety. For example, helping husbands obey local traditions indicates women's social piety, including cooperation and mutual help (Garwan, 2020). Muna Ali Salus added that the personal formation of pious women is part of the responsibility of the Islamic state. In contrast, the social responsibility of women is educating their children to contribute to the people and the country (Salūs, 2003).

Al-Qur'an talks about women's individual and social piety, by describing the word *Nisā'*. Such as:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً

"O mankind, fear your Lord, who created you from one soul and created from it its mate and dispersed from both of them many men and women (*Nisā'*)."
(Qs. Al-Nisā': 1).

In this verse, Allah explains that women and men come from the same soul and are commanded by the same commandment to fear God. They are equal before God's law, referred to as human beings as the principle of humanity. Hence, Islam does not recognize discrimination between men and women. This kind of honorable position uses *Nisā'* diction.

Al-Qur'an also uses the *Nisā'* diction to explain women rights to receive good treatment, and men are prohibited to treat women as their property, as in the verse:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَرِثُوا النِّسَاءَ كَرِهًا وَلَا تَعْضُلُوهُنَّ لِتَذْهَبُوا بِبَعْضِ مَا آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِيَنَّ بِفَاحِشَةٍ مُبَيِّنَةٍ وَعَاشِرُوهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ فَإِنْ كَرِهْتُمُوهُنَّ فَعَسَى أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَيَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا

"O believers! It is not permissible for you to inherit women against their will¹ or mistreat them to make them return some of the dowry 'as a ransom for divorce'— unless they are found guilty of adultery.² Treat them fairly. If you happen to dislike them, you may hate something which Allah turns into a great blessing," (Qs. Al-Nisā': 19).

Hayati Nizar said that during the Jahiliyah era, the Arabs treated women as property that could be inherited and pawned, and considered despicable (Nizar, 2004). Women as *Nisā'* in al-Qur'an generally aims to form an ideal social order by starting from the formation of the ideal Muslim woman in the family environment and the scope of the nearest public

space. The word *Nisā'* becomes the concept of women in al-Qur'an, which explains the meaning of social piety for women. This concept is the main theme in this research.

Methods

This is a library research, which enables the researcher to collect primary data from various records, documents, books, journals, websites, and other sources (George, 2008). A philosophical approach, which is a research step to discover the value of wisdom and fundamental principles of knowledge, is used to collect the data (Williamson, 2020). Considering the research subject is related to the text, precisely the word *Nisā'* in al-Qur'an, the philosophical approach used in this research is hermeneutics, which is a perspective to explore a complete understanding of the text (Harahap, 2014).

While the data and the text's understanding are sufficient, this study conducts a critical analysis using the social piety theory. Abdul Jamil Wahab said that social piety is goodness in society (Wahab, 2015). A good relationship with others becomes a person's religious orientation in interacting with God and fellow creatures. Because social piety involves a philosophical orientation in one's life, social piety has three main dimensions: cognitive, affective, and conative (Muzammil, 2020).

Social piety in Islam

Social piety in the Islamic perspective is closely related to the purpose of human creation, implicitly and explicitly believed by religious and secular ideologies. The basic assumption about humans will significantly affect the social system they create. The conception of man has been put forward by many Muslim thinkers from classical to modern times, ranging from philosophers, such as Al-Ghazali, Ibn Sina, to Iqbal, and Sufis such as Al-Jilli and Ar-Raniry, as well as scientists such as Ibn Khaldun, Sayed Husen Nasr, and intellectuals like Ali Syari'ati Muthahari Fazlur Rahman (Kemenag, 2015).

According to them, humans are not merely to perform devotion (worship) to God individually, but also have a social duty and role to create an egalitarian and just moral social order, eliminate *fasad* or other social destroyers. Humans have a moral and social responsibility to be God's representatives on earth in realizing peace, and prosperity for the universe. That is why social piety is inseparable to the main purpose of human

creation; it is even the main task of human presence as God's chaliph on earth (Kemenag, 2015).

Iqbal, Nasr, Syari'ati, Fazlur Rahman, and Muthahari seemed interested in this problem and then tried to develop a theory of human consciousness. According to Iqbal, humans are described as successors of God's creation trying to perfect the world. He interpreted Adam's fall from heaven as a resurrection, as heaven is a picture of a primitive state in the history of humankind. It is a description of the humans' rise from a primitive state of instinctive appetite to conscious ownership of themselves. Meanwhile, according to Syari'ati, man is God representative on earth. In its manifestation, humans by God have been given the ability to do and choose something. The ideal human is a theomorphic human with divine qualities to control other lower qualities (Rahardjo, 1985).

Meanwhile, Fazlur Rahman said that the human mission as God's caliph on this earth is the struggle to create a moral, social order. This mission is trust. Allah had offered this trust to the heavens and the earth, but they refused for fear of bearing the burden. Thus, God created humans not just for games, but to carry out a heavy task, and humans must be responsible for their success or failure (Rahman, 1983).

In addition, K.H. A. Mustofa Bisri stated that we worship and serve Allah in our prayers, fasting, zakat, hajj, in domestic relations with our wives and children, and in social relations with neighbors and others. It is in all our steps. Unfortunately, too often, we limit worship and devotion not only to such special rites, but also to outward fiqh. It is often just routine actions with empty meaning. Our *dhikr* and recitations are often simply carried away by the lips that are used to it, not driven and controlled by the meaning contained in it. So it is not surprising that prayer, for example, which should have *tanha 'an al-fakhsya'i wa al-munkar* (can fortify from heinous and evil deeds), does not appear to have a positive influence on the life of the *mushalli*. Moreover, such superficial rites are used as an excuse by those who have not performed them not to do it immediately. Especially if it turns out that their actions, who perform the rites superficially, do not reflect the actions of good servants of God in everyday life as the meaning of the rituals themselves should be. (Bisri, 2016).

As for Sahal Mahfudh, there are two kinds of worship, namely: First, *qashirah* worship, whose benefits return to the person. Second, *muta'addiyah* worship, whose

benefits focus on the public interest. He added that in Islam there are *huquq Allah* (the rights of Allah) and *huquq al-Adami* (human rights). Human rights are essentially obligations over others. If the rights and obligations are fulfilled, attitudes will arise social solidarity, mutuality or cooperation, moderation, and stability (Mahfudz, 1994).

There is also an opinion that social piety is understood as piety which shows the behavior of someone who cares about Islamic social values. Therefore, the most important thing is to make worship not only worth individual piety but also at the same time worth social piety so that worship is not dichotomized between individual and social. For example, being gentle, having intention to help others, being concerned about the problems of the people (society), paying attention and respects the rights of others, able to think from the perspective of others, and able to empathize (Istiqomah, 2019). These forms of social piety are marked by bowing and prostration, fasting, and pilgrimage, and by how much a person has social sensitivity and does good to others, which in Islam is called *habl min an-nas* or human relations with humans..

Human relations with humans are interactions between humans or between groups that are intertwined humanely. The essential meaning of human relations here is not human in the sense of human being, but the meaning in a spiritual process focused on happiness based on character, nature, temperament, personality, attitude, and behavior, which are psychological aspects that exist in humans. Therefore, human relations here are not only blood relations, bosses and workers, husband and wife, but broader than those (Rifqi, 2019).

The basic concept of human relations in Islamic perspective is contained in several verses of al-Qur'an, which can be used as a philosophical basis regarding the meaning of human relations, including in surah ali Imron, which means as follows: "*They will be stricken with disgrace wherever they go, unless they are protected by a covenant with Allah or a treaty with the people*" (QS. Ali Imran [3]: 112).

The verse tells that humans in any situation are filled with humiliation unless they continually improve their relationships with fellow humans. Contextually, the verse can be understood that although humans always worship God, if their relationship with others is not good, they are considered despicable people. This means that a harmonious relationship with fellow human beings is a prerequisite in their lives, even a part of

worship to Allah. In this context, in Islam, human relation is a command that must be carried out (Rifqi, 2019).

The concept of human relations is also in line with Aristotle's statement that humans are *zoon politicon* creatures. Humans are creatures who always want to hang out and gather with other human beings, creatures who like to socialize. From the nature of socializing with each other, humans are called social creatures. Thus, the perfection possessed by humans cannot stand alone without the participation of other parties. The other party in question can be humans or other God's creations, such as the environment, plants, animals, and other God's creatures (Dali, 2016).

In further analysis, linguistically, humans come from the word "*manu*" (Sanskrit), "*mens*" (Latin), which means thinking, reasoning, or intelligent beings (capable of controlling other creatures). Thus, humans can be interpreted as a concept or fact, idea or reality, group or individual (Depdikbud, 2007). The definition of man is a creature created by Allah and endowed in the form of mind, heart, and body. Humans are different from other God's creatures by possessing the potential of mind, heart, and others as capital to develop their lives.

Women's Socio-domestic Piety in al-Qur'an

Al-Qur'an uses *Nisā'* diction several times: surah al-Baqarah (49, 187, 222, 223, 226, 231, 232, 235, 236), surat Ali Imran (14, 42, 61), al-Nisā' (1, 3, 4, 7, 11, 15, 19, 22, 23, 24, 32, 34, 43, 75, 98, 127, 129, 176), al-Maidah (6), al-A'raf (81, 127, 141), Ibrahim (6), al-Nur (31, 60), al-Naml (55), al-Qashash (4), Ghafir (25), al-Ahzab (30, 32, 52, 55, 59), al-Fath (25), al-Mujadilah (2, 3), al-Hujurat (11), at-Thalaq (1, 4). Meanwhile, the word *Niswah* (plural form of *Nisā'*) is found in Surah Yusuf verses 30 and 50 (Bāqiy, 1364 H).

The description of women's quality as *Nisā'* is quite complex. It can be seen from various dimensions and interpreted based on the text's content and context. Verse 49 of surah al-Baqarah mentions *Nisā'* thus: "*Remember how We delivered you from the people of Pharaoh, who afflicted you with dreadful torment, slaughtering your sons and keeping your women. That was a severe test from your Lord.*" This verse tells about the luck and fortune of the baby girls who survived the genocidal attempt by Pharaoh, who feared that his power would collapse at the hands of the newborn. (Abbās I., 1992). Women as

Nisā' in the context of Pharaoh's story repeats itself in verses 127 and 141 of Surah al-A'raf, verse 6 of surah Ibrahim, verse 4 of Surah al-Qashash, and verse 25 of Surah Ghafir (al-Mukmin).

All the stories of God's salvation of women in the era of Pharaoh reflect Islam's defense of women. The spirit of anti-discrimination, anti-genocide, anti-violence, is the context of the *Nisā'* verse. Islam's defense of women who are weak and weakened in the context of the story of Pharaoh is compatible with other verses that explain the honorable position of women, their essential role in domestic life, in Islam. Allah said: "*It has been made permissible for you the night preceding fasting to go to your wives [for sexual relations]. They are a clothing for you and you are a clothing for them.*" *Nisā'* in this verse is interpreted figuratively as clothing. According to Imam at-Tabari, the meaning of clothing (*libās*) is *as-sukūn* (calm, peaceful) and *as-sitr* (cover). That is, a woman plays an essential role in keeping domestic life calm, peaceful, harmonious. Women become husband partners to work together to cover up the family's disgrace, the disgrace of each party, and cover their disgrace from outsiders' views. That way, domestic life becomes harmonious (at-Tabari, 2001).

Women are also referred to as true and essential partners for men. Allah says: "*Indeed, you approach men with desire, instead of women. Rather, you are a transgressing people*" (Al-A'raf: 81). The same thing is emphasized in verse 55 of surah al-Naml. The people of the Prophet Luth were cursed and sunk to the bottom of the earth for carrying out the bad tradition of homosexuality and dumping women (Ghazali & others., 2019).

A wife has the right to comfort, especially during menstruation. Therefore, Allah forbids the husband to have intercourse with his wife who is menstruating. Allah forbids men to have sex in this unstable psychological situation of women: "*And they ask you about menstruation. Say, "It is harm, so keep away from wives¹ during menstruation. And do not approach them until they are pure. And when they have purified themselves,² then come to them from where Allah has ordained for you.*" (Al-Baqarah: 222). Medical research shows that women during menstruation experience less stable mental stress. Menstruation is always the cause of psychological symptoms such as irritability, tension, and fatigue. The appearance of these psychological symptoms exacerbates menstrual pain (Khoerunisya, 2015).

Domestic relationships are not always successful. Disputes often lead to divorce. When a divorce occurs, women still have the right to be treated well. Allah says: "*When you divorce women and they have 'almost' reached the end of their waiting period, either retain them honorably or let them go honourably. But do not retain them 'only' to harm them 'or' to take advantage 'of them.'*" (Al-Baqarah: 231). This iddah period lasts for three months and ten days, and men are obliged to bear a living (living expenses) during the iddah period, as in verse 4 of surah al-Thalaq (Depag, 1988). During the Iddah period, women are prohibited from leaving the house (Qs. Al-Thalaq: 1). Consequently, the harmony of the household after the landslide is still being pursued by the technical rules of Islamic law.

If the Iddah period does not affect post-divorce reconciliation efforts, and both parties have no intention of getting back together, Allah's concern for women will continue. Allah forbids the family to prevent the woman's will to remarry (Qs. Al-Baqarah: 232). Abdul Mutakabbir said that the Arabs adhered to a patriarchal system where women did not have the opportunity and power to support themselves. The main concern of the Islamic treatise at that time was to overcome the morality of this nation by elevating the status of women. For this reason, widowed women, who are weak in terms of economy, education, psychology, and spirituality, are encouraged to marry, even to become second wives (Mutakabbir, 2019). Therefore, Allah allows other men to propose to the women who are already widowed, either by satire or by having the intention of marrying them in the future (Qs. Al-Baqarah: 235).

The public atmosphere that we want to build is a social atmosphere that supports economic strengthening and elevates women's honor. Therefore, Islam forbids a husband from divorcing his wife through Zihar, and it is not permissible to have intercourse before first paying a fine in the form of freeing slaves and retracting his words that insulted women (Qs. Al-Mujadilah: 2-3). According to Aftab Hussain, the practice of *zihar* in Arab society was a divorce practice originating from pre-Islamic Arab traditions, which aimed to abandon women (Hussain, 1987).

Al-Quran wants to place women as the main element or component forming happiness, the source of happiness, among the types of worldly happiness. Allah said: "*Beautified for people is the love of that which they desire - of women and sons, heaped-up sums of gold and silver, fine branded horses, and cattle and tilled land. That is the*

enjoyment of worldly life, but Allah has with Him the best return [i.e., Paradise]," (Surah Ali Imran: 14). Most Islamic thinkers oppose celibacy, a tradition that refuses to marry forever, especially in a social context where women are still weak in various dimensions. Marriage, living in pairs between a man and a woman, is part of the world's beauty (Munfarida, 2010).

So great is Islam's concern for the honor of women, Allah defends the position of Maryam, who was accused of being pregnant out of wedlock, and ostracized by her community (Qs. Ali Imran: 42). A legal husband who accuses his wife of adultery is required with quite tricky conditions, bringing four eyewitnesses, and the fifth condition is an oath from the husband (Gifriana, 2018). This is intended to maintain the honor of women as *Nisā'*.

Another right of a woman in domestic life is to get fair treatment from her husband. Husbands who are unable to do justice are ordered to marry only one wife, not polygamous. Allah says: *"And if you fear that you will not deal justly with the orphan girls, then marry those that please you of [other] women, two or three or four. But if you fear that you will not be just, then [marry only] one"* (Qs. al-Nisā ': 3) While in another verse, Allah ensures that a husband cannot be fair even though he tries hard to do justice between his wives (Qs. Al-Nisā': 129) That is, monogamy is the best choice, if polygamy does not contribute to the improvement of the honor and social status of the second, third and fourth wives.

The interests of Islam to women's social status at the beginning of its da'wah, became the background for the obligation to pay dowries, from husband to wife (Qs. al-Nisa': 4). Dowry is an abstract concept, where the nominal amount is not determined and women have the authority to determine, although mainly based on agreement (al-Khasyt, 2010).

The concept of agreement has one stripe of elevating the status of women, who in pre-Islam had no authority at all. Women are entitled to a share of the family inheritance (Qs. al-Nisā ': 7). The honor of women as long as they are married must be maintained. Therefore the husband has no right to accuse his wife of committing a bad act, such as adultery/infidelity before strong evidence is presented. Without evidence, women still have the right to be positioned with respect and are called a *Nisā'* (Qs. al-Nisā': 15). The public is not allowed to harm the image of women.

The rules of Islamic law are very strict and technical because women in the Arab Jahiliyah era were treated as property, inanimate objects, which could be passed down from a father to his son or pawned to another man accept a pawn. This Jahiliyah practice is opposed, and Islam presents a new social system and a more humane construction of cultural identity (Qs. al-Nisā': 19). Islam forbids a child from marrying his father's widow (Qs. al-Nisā': 22); prohibited from marrying one's mother (Qs. al-Nisā' : 23); forbidden to marry someone else's wife (Qs. al-Nisa' : 24).

The public space that Islam strives for is also to respect women's property rights. The wealth obtained from the hard work of a wife belongs to herself and does not necessarily become the property of her husband (Qs. al-Nisā' : 32); even though in an Islamic household, the husband is the leader for the wife (Qs. al-Nisā': 34). The separation of property and property rights is guaranteed. This new teaching of Islam is to overhaul the old order of Arab Jahiliyah, which made women a common property among other family members (Hendra, 2015).

Outside the domestic/family scope, Islam places women in a strategic position, namely having the right to social protection. Allah said: "*Why do you not want to fight in the way of Allah and (defense) the weak men, women and children who all pray: "Our Lord, get us out of this land (Mecca)) who are unjust people,"*" (Qs. al-Nisā': 75). The meaning of *Jihad fi Sabilillah* is also to free weak and weak women (*al-mustadh'afin*). Hilmy Bakar Al-Mascaty said, the sword broadcasts Islam solely to liberate *the mustadh'afin* from the clutches of the *Thaghut*, dictators, and tyrants (Almascaty, 2001).

Another policy of Islam is to free women from the obligation of jihad, if they themselves are oppressed, oppressed, helpless, and do not know the way (Qs. al-Nisa' : 98). Orphaned women are also under Allah's protection, and Muslims are encouraged to do good to them (Surah al-Nisā': 127). In addition to guaranteeing honor and defending the interests of women, Islam also regulates social ethics, especially about women's fashion/clothing in public spaces. For Islam, menopausal women who no longer have the desire to get married get relief from the strict Islamic rules regarding dress (Qs. Al-Nur: 60).

For women who are not menopausal, Allah Almighty says: "Say to women who believe: "*And tell the believing women to reduce [some] of their vision and guard their private parts and not expose their adornment except that which [necessarily] appears*

thereof and to wrap [a portion of] their headcovers over their chests and not expose their adornment [i.e., beauty] except to their husbands, their fathers, their husbands' fathers, their sons, their husbands' sons, their brothers, their brothers' sons, their sisters' sons, their women, that which their right hands possess (i.e., slaves), or those male attendants having no physical desire, or children who are not yet aware of the private aspects of women. And let them not stamp their feet to make known what they conceal of their adornment. And turn to Allah in repentance, all of you, O believers, that you might succeed." (Surah Al-Nur: 31).

The ideal image of Muslim women is the Prophet's wife. In fact, Allah threatens them with double punishment for Islamic rules violation. Allah says: *"O wives of the Prophet! If any of you were to commit a blatant misconduct, the punishment would be doubled for her. And that is easy for Allah."* (Surah Al-Ahzab: 30). Because the Prophet wives are role models for the public, they are not the same as other women. *"O wives of the Prophet! You are not like any other women: if you are mindful 'of Allah', then do not be overly effeminate in speech (with men) or those with sickness in their hearts may be tempted, but speak in a moderate tone."* (Surah Al-Ahzab: 32).

The important thing that should be noted about the wisdom of the Prophet's wives is the decision of God's Revelation. The Prophet's wives came from different social backgrounds, and the Prophet's marriage to them was based on revelation. Some come from respectable circles, and there are Jews and Christians who converted to Islam. There are also prisoners of war (Supriyadi, 2016). Therefore, there was no room for the Prophet Muhammad to marry according to his wish. Allah said: *"It is not lawful for you (O Prophet) to marry more women after this, nor can you replace any of your present wives with another, even if her beauty may attract you—except those 'bondwomen' in your possession."* (Qs. Al-Ahzab: 52).

Regarding women's clothing as *Nisā'*, it is not necessarily limited and strict. In their immediate family environment, they are allowed to socialize without having to use a barrier, as long as they are able to maintain their honor and dignity. Allah says: *"There is no blame on the Prophet's wives (if they appear unveiled) before their fathers, their sons, their brothers, their brothers' sons, their sisters' sons, their fellow (Muslim) women, and those (bonds people) in their possession. And be mindful of Allah (O wives of the Prophet) Surely Allah is a Witness over all things."* (Surah Al-Ahzab: 55).

In the wider public sphere, the new Islam teaches certain limits and rules, such as wearing the hijab and as a strategy to maintain safety. The substance so that the honor of women is maintained is the main wisdom of Islamic rules. Allah said: "O Prophet, say to your wives, your daughters and the wives of the believers: " *O Prophet! Ask your wives, daughters, and believing women to draw their cloaks over their bodies. In this way it is more likely that they will be recognized 'as virtuous' and not be harassed.*" (QS Al-Ahzab: 59).

Nisā' in the public sphere is not always have an object, but also an active subject. *Nisā'* who wants to enter the public space must be actively involved in building a positive social atmosphere and sterile from hate speech. Allah says: " *O believers! Do not let some (men) ridicule others, they may be better than them, nor let (some) women ridicule other women, they may be better than them. Do not defame one another, nor call each other by offensive nicknames. How evil it is to act rebelliously after having faith! And whoever does not repent, it is they who are the 'true' wrongdoers.* " (QS Al-Hujurat: 11).

Woman as *Nisā'* should avoid hate speech in public spaces. The image of women who actively build an atmosphere full of morality, ethics, and law enforcement is depicted by Allah through the figures of women in Pharaoh's palace when they criticize the terrible behavior of Zulaikha, Pharaoh's wife. For this meaning, Allah chose to use the *Nisā'* diction: "*Some women of the city gossiped, "The Chief Minister's wife is trying to seduce her slave-boy. Love for him has plagued her heart. Indeed, we see that she is clearly mistaken,"* (Qs. Yusuf: 30). Yusuf also used the *Nisā'* diction in quoting the women who criticized Zulaikha, when asking for direct testimony from them. Allah said: "*Yusuf said, "Go back to your master and ask him about the case of the women who cut their hands. Surely my Lord has (full) knowledge of their cunning."* (Surah Yusuf: 50).

When viewed from a religious point of view, the presence of pious Muslim women in this kind of public space can bring God's forgiveness. Their active involvement amid unbelievers, and their role in building a positive public atmosphere, are the reasons why believers are prohibited from punishing infidels haphazardly because haphazard punishment can harm the presence of pious women among unbelievers.

Allah says: "*They are the ones who disbelieved and obstructed you from al-Masjid al-Ḥarām while the offering¹ was prevented from reaching its place of sacrifice. And if not for believing men and believing women whom you did not know - that you might trample [i.e.,*

kill] them and there would befall you because of them dishonor without (your) knowledge – (you would have been permitted to enter Makkah). (This was so) that Allah might admit to His mercy whom He willed. If they had been apart (from them), We would have punished those who disbelieved among them with painful punishment." (QS Al-Fath: 25).

As a result, women (*nisā'*) are highly respected in Islam, having the same rights as men in upholding norms, ethics, and laws and regulations in the life of society, nation, and state. *Nisā'* can start the role from in improvement herself, family, then public life, because the role and contribution of family to preserve social and cultural values is huge (Fitriyani, Suryadi, & Syam, 2015). In other words, implementing the values of social piety, with *nisā'* as the actor, starts from a narrower family domestic environment and leads to a broad public sector. The example of women in the household needs to be prioritized before playing a role in managing the social dimension, which has a much broader scope.

Conclusion

The social piety offered by al-Qur'an through the word *Nisā'* presents an alternative discourse on building the woman individual character, expected to contribute positively to society. A woman who is honorable because she is in line with the mission of the al-Quran is called *Nisā'*. The word *Nisā'* in al-Qur'an reflects the figure of a woman who must be defended, both by her husband, family, and the Muslim community. *Nisā'* is also a reflection of women who obey the rules of Islamic law and an ideal image in the community. This ideal image is formed because of the perfection of his physical, psychological, social behavior.

The concept of *Nisā'* in al-Qur'an describes social piety which is more inclined to morality formation in the domestic environment, the household, husband and wife relationships, as the basis for community and public space development. Meanwhile, in the public sphere, al-Qur'an already envisages the presence of women who actively contribute to the development of a positive and constructive atmosphere. The maturity of women in the domestic sphere is a pre-condition for their contribution and role in the public sphere. In this public space, women act as subjects and objects; they become the character formation of community and the leading actor of the development. Islam

regulates many regulations directed at helping women (objects), and at the same time, describing women who control (subjects) public morality.

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