SOCIAL SINS IN SOCIETY 5.0: NOUMAN ALI KHAN'S INTERPRETATION OF QUR'AN SURAH AL-ḤUJURĀT 49:12

THESIS

Submitted to Faculty of Islamic Theology and Humanities in Partial Fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of S-1 of Islamic Theology on Qur'anic Science and Tafsir Study Program

Submitted by:

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is my own original work and has been carried out and completed by me personally. All sources and references used in the preparation of this thesis have been duly acknowledged. No part of this thesis has been submitted for any other degree or qualification at any institution.

Semarang, June 19, 2025



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MOTTO

وَمَنْ يَّتَّقِ اللّٰهَ يَجْعَلْ لَّهٗ مَخْرَجًا ۙ وَّيَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ ۗ وَمَنْ يَّتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللّٰهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهٗ ۗ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ بَالِغُ اَمْرِهٖ ۗ قَدْ جَعَلَ اللّٰهُ لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدْرًا [1]

And whoever fear Allah – He will make for him a way out. And will provide for him from where he does not expect. And whoever relies upon Allah – then He is sufficient for him. Indeed, Allah will accomplish His purpose. Allah has already set for everything s [decreed] extent.[2]

[1] Qurʾan Surah al-Talāq (65:2-3)
[2] Saheeh International, *The Qur'an: English Meanings* (Al-Muntada Al-Islami, 2004), 574.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to:

My parents, Abdul Hakim and Titi Faridatun Nikmah, for their endless love, support, and encouragement.

❖

My sisters, Hasanah Fitriya and Latifah Amalia, for their constant motivation, support and understanding.

❖

My big family—my aunts, uncles, and cousins—for their unconditional love, encouragement, and continuous source of inspiration throughout this journey.

❖

My teachers, for their guidance, knowledge, and patience.

❖

All of my friends, for their friendship and support.

Thank you to everyone who has been part of this meaningful experience

TRANSLITERATION

Arabic Romanization Table[1]:

1. Single Consonant

Arabic	Written	Arabic	Written
ا	Omit	ض	ḍ
ب	b	ط	ṭ
ت	t	ظ	ẓ
ث	th	ع	‘ (ayn)
ج	J	غ	gh
ح	ḥ	ف	f
خ	kh	ق	q
د	d	ك	k
ذ	dh	ل	l
ر	r	م	m
ز	z	ن	n
س	s	ه	h
ش	sh	و	w
ص	ṣ	ي	y

[1] Library of Congress, “Arabic Romanization Table,” in *ALA-LC Romanization Tables: Transliteration Schemes for Non-Roman Scripts*, (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 2012), 45.

2. *Shaddah or Tashdid* (ّ)

a. Over و:

1) وُّ, representing the combination of long vowel plus consonant, is romanized *ūw.*

ʻadūw عدُوّ

2) وَّ, representing the combination of dipthong plus consonant, is romanized *aww*.

jaww جوّ

b. Over ي:

1) Medial يِّ, representing the combination of long vowel plus consonant, is romanized *īy*.

al-Miṣrīyah المصريّة

2) Final يِّ is romanized *ī*.

3) Medial and final يَّ, representing the combination of diphthong plus consonant, is romanized *ayy*.

sayyid سيّد

Quṣayy قصيّ

c. Over other letters, ّ is represented in romanization by doubling the letter or digraph concerned.

al-Ghazzī الغزّيّ

3. *Tā' Marbūṭah* (ة) in the End of Word

a. When the noun or adjective ending in ة is indefinite, or is preceded by the definite article, ة is romanized *h*.

ṣalāh صلاة

b. When the word ending in ة is the construct state [*muḍāf wa-muḍāf ilayh*], ة is romanized *t*.

Wizārat al-Tarbiyah وزارة التربية

c. When the word ending in ة is used adverbially, ة (vocalized ةً) is romanized *tan*.

4. Vowels and Diphthongs

◌َ	a
◌ِ	i
◌ُ	u
◌َا	ā
◌ِي	ī
◌ُو	ū
◌َى	á
◌َوْ	aw
◌َيْ	ay

5. The Definite Article

a. The romanized form *al* is connected with the following word by a hyphen.

al-ittiḥād الإتحاد

b. When ال is initial in the word, and when it follows an inseparable preposition or conjunction, it is always romanized *al* regardless of whether the preceding word, as romanized, ends in a vowel or a consonant.

ilá al-ān الى الأن

Abū al-Wafā’ ابو الوفاء

Note the exceptional treatment of the preposition ل followed by the article:

lil-Shirbīnī للشربني

c. The ل of the article is always romanized *l*, whether it is followed by a “sun letter” or not, i.e., regardless of whether or not it is assimilated in pronunciation to the initial consonant of the word to which it is attached.

al-ḥurūf الحروف

al-Samarqandī	السمرقندي

6. Examples of Irregular Arabic Orthography

a. Note the romanization of الله, alone and in combination.

Allāh	الله
billāh	بالله
lillāh	لله
bismillāh	بسم الله

b. Note the romanization of the following personal names:

Ṭāhā	طه
Yāsīn	يس
ʻAmr	عمرو

c. ابن and بن are both romanized *ibn* in all positions.

Ahmad ibn Muhammad	احمد بن محمد
Alfīyah ibn Mālik	الفية ابن مالك

ABSTRACT

The phenomenon of social sins such as *ghībah* (backbiting), *tajassus* (spying to expose faults), and *sūʾ al-ẓann* (negative suspicion) has become increasingly prevalent in modern society, especially in the era of Society 5.0 characterized by the merging of digital connectivity and social life. This thesis explores these issues through Nouman Ali Khan's interpretation of Qur'an Surah al-Ḥujurāt (49:12). The research is guided by the questions: how does Nouman Ali Khan interpret al-Ḥujurāt 49:12 concerning the prohibition of social sins? and how is his interpretation relevant in the context of Society 5.0? In line with these questions, this study aims to identify the prohibitions of social sins in Qur'an Surah al-Ḥujurāt (49:12) and to analyze the relevance of Nouman Ali Khan's interpretation as an ethical guide for digital-age society. The research employs a qualitative model using the library research method. The primary data sources are Nouman Ali Khan's lectures on the Bayyinah YouTube channel, particularly two videos from the series *Striking Examples 2.0*, episodes 24 and 25. The collected data is analyzed using content analysis. This research aligns its findings with the guiding questions: first, Nouman Ali Khan's interpretation of al-Ḥujurāt 49:12 reveals a threefold prohibition—against *sūʾ al-ẓann*, *tajassus*, and *ghībah*—framing suspicion, secretive fault-finding, and backbiting as a sequential threat to social trust; and second, in the Society 5.0 era of seamless digital connectivity, these prohibitions translate into practical norms—verify before sharing, honor privacy boundaries, and refrain from dehumanizing speech—thereby providing an ethical blueprint to curb hate speech, doxing, rumor-spreading, and cancel culture in modern online communities.

Keywords: Social Sins, Qurʾān Surah al-Ḥujurāt:12, Nouman Ali Khan, Society 5.0

ملخص البحث

أصبحت الخطايا الاجتماعية مثل الغيبة والتجسس وسوء الظن أكثر انتشاراً في المجتمع المعاصر، وخاصة في عصر Society 5.0 الذي يتميز بالترابط الوثيق بين التكنولوجيا الرقمية والحياة الاجتماعية. تهدف هذه الرسالة إلى تناول هذه الظواهر من خلال تفسير نعمان علي خان لقوله تعالى في سورة الحجرات آية ١٢ . وتنطلق الدراسة من سؤالين رئيسيين: كيف شرح نعمان علي خان هذه الآية فيما يتعلق بالنهي عن الخطايا الاجتماعية؟ وما مدى ارتباط هذا التفسير بسياق مجتمعSociety 5.0 ؟ ويهدف هذا البحث إلى الكشف عن مظاهر النواهي الاجتماعية الواردة في سورة الحجرات: ١٢ وتحليل مدى أهمية تفسير نعمان علي خان كنموذج لبناء الأخلاق في المجتمع الرقمي. يعتمد هذا البحث على المنهج النوعي القائم على الدراسة المكتبية (Library Research)، مع اتخاذ محاضرات نعمان علي خان المنشورة في قناة Bayyinah على YouTube

مصدراً أساسياً، وخاصة حلقتين من سلسلة *Striking Examples 2.0*(الحلقة ٢٤ و٢٥). وقد تم تحليل البيانات باستخدام منهج تحليل المضمون. يركّز هذا البحث على توجيهين أساسيين: أولاً، يبيّن تفسير نعمان علي خان للآية ٤٩:١٢ من سورة الحجرات ثلاث محظورات متتالية—سوء الظن، التجسس، والغيبَة— حيث يُعدّ الظنّ السيئ اعتداءً على الثقة، والتجسس تعدّياً على الخصوصية، والغيبَة هتكاً لحرمة الإنسان؛ وثانياً، في عصر المجتمع ٥,٠ الرقمي المتصل باستمرار، تتحوّل هذه المحظورات إلى قواعد عملية—التحقّق قبل النشر، واحترام خصوصية الآخرين، والامتناع عن خطاب التجريد من الإنسانية—لتوجيه السلوك الإلكتروني وكبح خطاب الكراهية والتنمر الإلكتروني وانتشار الشائعات وثقافة الإلغاء بما يعزّز تناغم المجتمعات الرقمية.

الكلمات المفتاحية :الخطايا الاجتماعية، سورة الحجرات: ١٢، نعمان علي خان، Society 5.0

PREFACE

All praise and gratitude be to Allah SWT, the Almighty, the Most Merciful, who has granted me the strength, patience, and opportunity to complete this thesis. Without His blessings and guidance, this achievement would not have been possible. May peace and blessings be upon the Prophet Muhammad SAW, the best of creation and the guide for humanity. My thesis entitled "Social Sins in Society 5.0: Nouman Ali Khan's Interpretation of Qur'an Surah al-Ḥujurāt 49:12", was submitted to the Islamic Theology and Humanities Faculty to fulfill part of the requirements for the degree of S-1 of Islamic Theology, Department of Qur'anic Studies and Tafsir.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to everyone who has supported and encourage me throughout my academic journey at Walisongo State Islamic University. Special thanks to:

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I am profoundly grateful to my beloved parents, Abdul Hakim and Titi Faridatun Nikmah, whose unconditional love, guidance, prayers, and support have been my greatest strength. May Allah bless them with mercy and grant them the highest place in Paradise.

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I would like to thank the family of the Faculty of Ushuluddin Special Program (FUPK), especially FUPK-14, and the entire Qur'anic Studies and Tafsir Department family.

Finally, I humbly request constructive criticism and suggestions to improve this work. I pray this thesis will be beneficial to myself and all readers. *Jazākumullāh khairan jazā', wa jazākumullāh ahsan al-jazā'. Āmīn*.

Semarang, June 19, 2025

The author,



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TABLE OF CONTENT

PAGE OF TITLE ..... **i**

DECLARATION OF AUTHENTICY ..... **ii**

ADVISOR APPROVAL ..... **iii**

THESIS APPROVAL ..... **iv**

MOTTO ..... **v**

DEDICATION ..... **vi**

TRANSLITERATION ..... **vii**

ABSTRACT ..... **xi**

PREFACE ..... **xiii**

TABLE OF CONTENT ..... **xv**

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION **1**

A. Background 1

B. Research Questions 8

C. Research Objectives 8

D. Research Benefits 8

E. Literature Review 9

F. Research Method 11

G. Thesis Outline 15

CHAPTER II THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK **17**

A. Overview of Qurʾan Surah Al-Ḥujurāt 49:12 17

B. The Concept of Society 5.0: Characteristics and Implications 25

C. The Concept of Thematic Tafsir: Methodology and Application 26
D. Overview of *Ẓann*, *Ghībah*, and *Tajassus* from Classical Perspective 28
E. Digital Manifestations of *Ẓann*, *Tajassus*, and *Ghībah* 34

CHAPTER III DATA PRESENTATION 40

A. Biography of Nouman Ali Khan 40
B. Methodological Characteristics of Nouman Ali Khan's Interpretive Approach 44
C. Nouman Ali Khan's Interpretation of Qur'an Surah al-Ḥujurāt Verse 12 48
D. Ethical Implications of Q.S. al-Ḥujurāt Verse 12 in the View of Nouman Ali Khan 59

CHAPTER IV DATA ANALYSIS 62

A. The Progressive Nature of Digital Social Sins 62
B. Algorithmic Bias as Systematized *Sū' al-Zann* 63
C. Ubiquitous Surveillance as Digital *Tajassus* 64
D. Social Media as Amplified *Ghībah* 66
E. Human-Machine Collaboration and Moral Responsibility 67
F. Building Ethical Society 5.0 Systems 68
G. Islamic Digital Ethics for Society 5.0 69
H. Implementation Strategies for Islamic Digital Ethics 70

CHAPTER V CONCLUSION 71

A. Conclusion 71
B. Recommendations for Further Research 72

BIBLIOIGRAPHY 73

CURRICULUM VITAE 81

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background

The emergence of Society 5.0 has ushered the world into a far more complex digital era, marked by the seamless integration of advanced technologies into all aspects of daily life. As society transitions into this super-smart age—characterized by innovations such as artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things, robotics, and big data—the ways people work, communicate, and solve problems are fundamentally transformed.[1] Technology now enables people to connect, share, and access information in ways never before possible; however, these advances also introduce complex ethical challenges.

The fundamental transformation in human interaction and communication, have emerged new phenomena that require profound examination from an Islamic perspective. Behaviors such as excessive suspicion (*ẓann*), spying or privacy violations (*tajassus*), and backbiting (*ghībah*)—all explicitly prohibited in al-Ḥujurāt 49:12—are increasingly prevalent in social media and digital communication platforms. The meaning of *ẓann* in the Islamic and Arabic context broadly refers to conjecture, suspicion, belief, or prejudice.[2] The integration of artificial intelligence and machine learning systems has created environments where assumptions about individuals can be systematically generated and acted upon.

Excessive suspicion in digital environments fuels misinformation campaigns and viral rumors that can destroy reputations and relationships within minutes. A single unfounded allegation can spread across networks with unprecedented speed, causing reputational damage that traditional social control cannot effectively mitigate.

[1] Sirajul Fuad Zis, Nursyirwan Effendi, and Elva Ronaning Roem, "Perubahan Perilaku Komunikasi Generasi Milenial Dan Generasi z Di Era Digital," *Satwika: Kajian Ilmu Budaya Dan Perubahan Sosial* 5, no. 1 (2021): 69–87, 84.

[2] Departemen Agama RI, *Al-Qur'an Dan Tafsirnya*, vol. 9 (Jakarta: Widya Cahaya, 2010), 412.

Meanwhile, the word *tajassus*, as defined in *Tafsir Ringkas al-Qur'an* by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, refers to the deliberate act of seeking others' faults or hidden shortcomings to be used as material for mockery.[3] This concept has now evolved from traditional covert spying into sophisticated digital forms with expanded reach and impact.

In contemporary digital contexts, behaviors such as viewing stories without permission, stalking social media accounts, or accessing private messages without the owner's knowledge have become manifestations of digital *tajassus* that are often considered trivial by society. These practices represent a technological evolution of prohibited behaviors that extend beyond traditional communication boundaries into comprehensive digital interaction spectrums that continue to rapidly develop in the information technology era.

The third prohibition, *ghībah*, understood as the tendency to discuss negative aspects or faults of others who are not present and unaware of the conversation.[4] It has similarly evolved from traditional verbal communication into globally accessible digital activities. In social science and communication studies, *ghībah* has several equivalent terms including gossip, rumors, slander, and issues.[5] Contemporary digital practices of gossiping have been commonly referred to as "spill the tea", an expression meaning to reveal secrets to the general public.[6] This phenomenon represents a normalization of *ghībah* in digital spaces, where the act of sharing private information about others has become part of social media culture.[7]

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[3] Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia, *Tafsir Ringkas Al-Qur'an Kementerian Agama* (Jakarta: Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Qur'an, 2016).

[4] Raihan Raihan et al., "Spill The Tea: Fenomena Gibah Masa Kini Perspektif AlQur'an (Kajian Tafsir Maudhuâ€™i)," *Jurnal Riset Agama* 2, no. 1 SE-Articles (February 18, 2022): 69–91, https://doi.org/10.15575/jra.v2i1.15658.

[5] Raihan et al.

[6] Nurul Sidiqah and Syahidin Syahidin, "Spill the Tea: Fenomena *Ghī* Virtual Dalam Perspektif Islam Dan Kewarganegaraan," *Jurnal Yudistira : Publikasi Riset Ilmu Pendidikan Dan Bahasa* 2, no. 3 SE-Articles (June 4, 2024): 85–94, https://doi.org/10.61132/yudistira.v2i3.880.

[7] Nurul Sidiqah and Syahidin Syahidin.

In digital contexts, *ghībah* manifest in various forms of digital activities including negative comments, unauthorized sharing of private information, and distribution of private conversation screenshots. The freedom of expression on social media often causes users to become negligent and unaware of *ghībah* committed through their typing. The ambiguity of boundaries between private and public spaces on social media has created gray zones.[8] In this context, social media users can engage in personal dialogue while simultaneously participating in broader conversations, enabling violations of privacy and honor among fellow Muslims. This problem is exacerbated by the speed of information dissemination in the digital era, which allows a single screenshot or private video to go viral and destroy someone's reputation within seconds.

The complexity of these issues becomes more apparent when considering that baseless assumption, digital *tajassus* and online *ghībah* practices are often regarded as trivial and performed without full awareness of their spiritual and social implications. Yet these behaviors are condemned in the Qurʾān and Hadith due to their potential to damage relationships, social harmony, and individual dignity.[9] This transformation demonstrates that reprehensible behaviors prohibited in Islam are not limited to conventional communication but encompass the entire spectrum of digital interactions that continue to rapidly develop in the information technology era.

This phenomenon indicates a gap in understanding between Islamic teachings that prohibit *ẓann*, *tajassus* and *ghībah* and the reality of contemporary Muslim digital behavior that often ignores ethical boundaries in cyberspace. The interconnected nature of these three prohibited behaviors creates a cascading effect in digital environments.

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[8] Ni Putu Sari Oktaviana, Cantika Nur; Mani, La;Lazuardi, Muhammad Azhar; Darmayanti, "MILLENIALS IN JAKARTA AND THEIR EXPERIENCES WITH CYBERBULLYING ON INSTAGRAM," *Journal of Theoretical and Applied Information Technology* 102, no. 20 (2024).

[9] Ahmad Raza et al., "Islamic Perspective on Social Media Ethics and Responsible Usage," *Al-Mahdi Research Journal (MRJ)* 5, no. 5 (2024): 214–21.

The Islamic perspective on digital ethics emphasizes that these violations are not merely technical issues but fundamental breaches of human dignity and Islamic values.[10]

The primary issue that emerges is how Muslim communities, particularly digital natives who were born and raised during the technological development era, understand and apply Islamic ethical principles in the context of continuously evolving digital technology. Deep understanding of the Qurʾān and Hadith becomes more important in responding in social ethical dynamics in this digital era. Amidst the complexity of online interactions that often trigger behaviors such as suspicion (*ẓann*), online *ghībah*, and digital *tajassus*, the noble values of Islam can serve as guidance in building healthy social media ethics and online interactions.[11] These social ethical principles are articulated in Qur'an Surah al-Ḥujurāt 49:12:

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا اجْتَنِبُوْا كَثِيْرًا مِّنَ الظَّنِّۖ اِنَّ بَعْضَ الظَّنِّ اِثْمٌ وَّلَا تَجَسَّسُوْا وَلَا يَغْتَبْ بَّعْضُكُمْ بَعْضًاۗ

اَيُحِبُّ اَحَدُكُمْ اَنْ يَّأْكُلَ لَحْمَ اَخِيْهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوْهُۗ وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ ۗاِنَّ اللّٰهَ تَوَّابٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ١٢

> "O you who have believed, avoid much [negative] assumption. Indeed, some assumption is sin. And do not spy or backbite each other. Would one of you like to eat the flesh of his brother when dead? You would detest it. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is Accepting of repentance and Merciful".[12]

This Qurʾānic verse contains social ethical principles, commands believers to avoid having negative assumption, seeking others' faults (*tajassus*), and backbiting (*ghībah*) one another, likening backbiting to eating the flesh of one's dead brother—a vivid metaphor emphasizing the severity of such acts and the social harm they cause.

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[10] Amina Hussain, "Cyberbullying and Islamic Ethics: Modern Applications of Classical Principles," *Journal of Digital Islamic Studies* 6, no. 1 (2024): 89–112.

[11] Ramlah Ramlah and Nurliana Damanik, "Transformasi Kejahatan Dari Offline Menjadi Online Berbasis Media Sosial Menurut Pandangan Al-Qur'an (Analisis Cyber Bullying)," *Academy of Education Journal* 15, no. 1 SE-Articles (May 25, 2024): 1036–46, https://doi.org/10.47200/aoej.v15i1.2319.

[12] International, *The Qur'an: English Meanings*, 519.

However, traditional interpretations of this verse require contemporary contextual understanding to address the unique challenges posed by digital transformation.

The complexity of applying classical Islamic teachings to contemporary digital challenges necessitates interpretive approaches that can bridge traditional scholarship with modern realities. One figure whose work has gained significant attention in this context is Nouman Ali Khan, an American Muslim scholar and founder of the Bayyinah Institute[13]. Renowned for his accessible and linguistically nuanced approach to Qurʾānic exegesis, Khan has dedicated much of his career to making the teachings of the Qurʾān relevant and understandable for contemporary audiences, particularly through digital platforms such as YouTube and online courses.[14] His background in both traditional Arabic studies and modern communication allows him to address complex spiritual and ethical issues in a manner that resonates with digital natives and global Muslim communities alike.

Furthermore, the necessity to utilize Khan's interpretation arises from his unique ability to translate the timeless wisdom of the Qurʾān into actionable insights that are highly relevant for today's interconnected world.[15] More specifically, in his interpretation of al-Ḥujurāt 49:12, Khan emphasizes the psychological and spiritual progression of social sins, beginning with internal thoughts and assumptions and progressing to outward actions, thereby moving beyond traditional exegesis that often focuses solely on external behaviors and primarily on prohibiting the acts themselves. By using vivid analogies relevant to online and social contexts, and addressing issues that are prevalent in digital communities, Khan's modern applications make complex Qurʾānic concepts easy to understand and highly relatable for younger generations and

[13] Nouman Ali Khan, *Revive Your Heart* (Kube Publishing Limited, 2017).

[14] Lia Qurrato Aini, "Perspektif Barakah Dalam Kesarjanaan Muslim Barat: Studi Atas Pemikiran Nouman Ali Khan Di Youtube," *Mushaf: Jurnal Tafsir Berwawasan Keindonesiaan* 1, no. 1 (2020): 53–75.

[15] Nurul Hafizah Sidek and Kamariah Yunus, "THE RHETORICAL STRATEGIES OF AN INTERNATIONALLY RENOWNED PREACHER: NOUMAN ALI KHAN," *Jurnal ILMI* 14, no. 1 (2024): 36–47.

digital natives, reinforcing the necessity and impact of his interpretations in guiding ethical behavior and spiritual consciousness in the Society 5.0 era.[16]

Despite extensive scholarship on Islamic ethics and growing literature on digital transformation challenges, a significant research gap exists in applying contemporary Qurʾānic interpretation to specific digital-age ethical dilemmas. While studies have explored general Islamic approaches to technology ethics, there remains insufficient academic attention to how classical prohibitions against *ẓann*, *tajassus*, and *ghībah* manifest in and respond to Society 5.0's technological environment.

The urgency of this research stems from several critical factors. First, Muslim communities, particularly digital natives, increasingly engage in behaviors that contradict Islamic ethical principles without recognizing their spiritual significance. Second, the rapid pace of digital transformation continues to create new ethical challenges that traditional scholarship has not adequately addressed. Third, the global nature of digital platforms means that ethical violations can have immediate international consequences, making Islamic guidance more crucial than ever.

The impact of *ẓann*, *tajassus*, and *ghībah* in Society 5.0 era extends beyond individual consequences to encompass broad social implications.[17] Individually these practices can damage mental and psychological health, create digital trauma, and destroy personal reputations built over years. Victims of these practices often experience stress, depression, and social isolation that can have long-term impacts on their quality of life.[18] Additionally, perpetrators of *ẓann*, digital *tajassus*, and *ghībah* also experience spiritual degradation due to continuous involvement in religiously prohibited activities,

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[16] Moh. Nor Ichwan, Mustaqim Pabbajah, and Faizal Amin, "Digitization of Religious Tafsir: The Fading of Indonesian Ulama Authority in Post Truth Era," *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Hadis* 25, no. 2 SE-Articles (September 20, 2024): 320–45, https://doi.org/10.14421/qh.v25i2.5545.

[17] Raza et al., "Islamic Perspective on Social Media Ethics and Responsible Usage."

[18] Nur Bakri Abd Hamid, Mohd Fakardian Che Rus, and Muhammad Izzul Syahmi Zulkepli, "Exploring the Impact of Namimah (Gossip) and Gheebahhh (Backbiting) from Islamic, Psychological, and Organizational Perspectives," n.d.

ultimately affecting the quality of their faith and relationship with both Allah SWT and community.

More broadly, this phenomenon potentially damages Islam's image as a religion that upholds humanitarian values such as tolerance, compassion, and social justice.[19] Islam as *rahmatan lil 'ālamīn* (mercy to the entire universe) promotes a deep understanding of human rights.[20] Islamic teachings emphasize honesty, courtesy, and responsibility in all interactions, while promoting tolerance, mutual understanding, and interfaith cooperation in pluralistic society.[21] However, when unfounded suspicion, digital *tajassus* and online *ghībah* practices become mainstream among Muslim communities, this creates a stark contradiction to these foundational principles.

Research on *ẓann*, *tajassus*, and *ghībah* in Society 5.0 era, from a Qurʾānic interpretation perspective become critically important for several fundamental reasons. First this research can provide academic contributions in the field of Qurʾānic and interpretive studies by presenting contemporary perspectives on how Qurʾānic verses can be interpreted to respond to modern challenges. Second, this research has practical urgency in providing digital ethical guidance for Muslim society, who are predominantly active users of social media and digital technology. Third, this research can bridge traditional scholarship and contemporary societal needs in understanding Islamic teachings contextually and applicative.

The significance of this research also lies in its potential to generate an Islamic values-based digital ethics framework that can be used as a reference in developing digital literacy policies and character education in Islamic educational institutions. This research can also contribute to interfaith and intercultural dialogue about how religious

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[19] Dian Sandi Utama, Tobroni Tobroni, and Faridi Faridi, "Pendidikan Agama Islam: Perspektif Teologis, Sosial, Dan Kemanusiaan," *Jurnal Syntax Admiration* 6, no. 1 SE- (January 20, 2025): 158–164, https://doi.org/10.46799/jsa.v6i1.2033.

[20] Moh. Maftuhah; Khozin; Nurhakim, "The Rahmatal Lil Alamien Islamic Education Paradigm in Various Perspectives," Naturalistic: Jurnal Kajian Dan Penelitian Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran 9, no. 1 SE-Articles (n.d.): 391–402, https://doi.org/10.35568/naturalistic.v9i1.4445.

[21] Maftuhah; Khozin; Nurhakim.

traditions can provide solutions to problems arising from modern technological developments.

This research, titled "Social Sins in Society 5.0: Nouman Ali Khan's Interpretation of Qurʾān Surah al-Ḥujurāt (49:12)", serves as an academic response to the urgent ethical challenges emerging in today's hyper-digital world. By centering its analysis on al-Ḥujurāt 49:12 and highlighting practical insight from Nouman Ali Khan's contemporary tafsir, the study seeks to illuminate the Islamic ethical principles most relevant to issues such as digital suspicion, online spying, and backbiting. As Society 5.0 continues to reshape human interaction, this study offers a timely contribution to understanding how Islamic ethical principles can guide believers in maintaining spiritual integrity while engaging with advanced digital technologies.

B. Research Questions

1. How does Nouman Ali Khan interpret the social sins mentioned in Qurʾān Surah al-Ḥujurāt 49:12 (*ẓann, tajassus,* and *ghībah*) in the context of contemporary digital society?
2. How is Nouman Ali Khan's interpretation relevant in the context of Society 5.0?

C. Research Objectives

The research objectives of this study are:

1. To analyze Nouman Ali Khan's interpretation of social sins in Qurʾān Surah al-Ḥujurāt 49:12.
2. To examine the relevance of Nouman Ali Khan's interpretation of Qurʾān Surah al-Ḥujurāt 49:12 for ethical conduct in Society 5.0's digital transformation era.

D. Research Benefits

The benefits of this research include:

1. Theoretical Benefits: advancing understanding of contemporary Qurʾānic interpretation methodologies and its application to technological challenges, specifically on Qurʾān Surah al-Ḥujurāt 49:12; bridging classical Islamic social

ethics with modern digital challenges; and providing faith-based perspectives on human-centered technology development.

2. Practical Benefits: Offering guidance for Muslim individuals navigating digital spaces ethically; providing understandings to society, especially the digital generation, about the importance of Qurʾānic values in addressing negative behaviors on social media particularly social sins, such as *sū` al-ẓann*, online *ghībah* and digital *tajassus*; and providing insights for educators, policymakers, and technology developers on incorporating Islamic ethical principles into digital technologies.

E. Literature Review

The author has reviewed several previous studies to ensure that this research is original, and the discussions here are related to this research. There are several earlier studies related to the discussions of this research after the researchers conducted their research. According to the author's search, there are no other works that discuss the issues raised in this study. Among the previous studies are:

1. Muhammad Ulul Albab et al. (2025), in research titled "The Limitation of Bad Prejudice in Social Relations: A Comparison of The Interpretation of Quraish Shihab and al-Thabathaba'i In Qurʾān Surah al-Ḥujurāt: 12" highlighted differences in interpreting bad prejudice between Sunni and Shia scholars. Quraish Shihab strictly prohibits all forms of *su' al-ẓann* (prejudice), while al-Ṭabathaba'i permits it as long as it does not turn into action or speech.[22] Their focus was on general social interactions and not specifically on digital or technological contexts. Compared to these findings, the present study specifically focuses on digital manifestations like online suspicion and privacy violation in Society 5.0 and examines interpretation from a contemporary, digital-relevant angle.

[22] Muhammad Albab, R Silvia Andayani, and Ahmad Yusam Thobroni, "The Limitations of Bad Prejudice in Social Relations: A Comparison of the Interpretation of Quraish Shihab and Al-Thabathaba'i in QS. Al-Hujurat:12," *FALASIFA : Jurnal Studi Keislaman* 16, no. 01 SE-Articles (March 14, 2025), https://doi.org/10.62097/falasifa.v16i01.2178.

2. Lukman Nul Hakim and Iffatul Bayyinah (2023), conducted research titled "*Etika Sosial Perspektif Mufassir Nusantara: Kajian Qurʾān Surah al-Ḥujurāt Ayat 9-13 dalam Tafsir al-Ibriz*" with a descriptive-analytic approach, identifying five pillars of Quranic social ethics: justice, conflict resolution, mutual respect, open-mindedness, and appreciation of diversity.[23] Their broader focus across multiple verses and reliance on local tafsir (*al-Ibriz*) differs from the current research, which is narrowed to the ethical principles in verse 12 (especially *ẓann*, *tajassus* and *ghībah*) within the online ecosystem and informed by contemporary global commentators like Nouman Ali Khan.
3. Muhammad Luthfi (2023), in his thesis titled "*Tajassus dalam* AlQurʾān *dan Relevansinya terhadap Fenomena Media Sosial (tinjauan Tafsir al-Jami'li Ahkam AlQurʾān)*", uses a qualitative method with library research approach. This research analyzes the concept of *tajassus* in al-Ḥujurāt 49:12 from the perspective of the classical commentary al-Qurtubi. The results indicate that *tajassus* is fundamentally prohibited in Islam except in emergency situations or for the sake of public interest, such as state security surveillance. [24] Luthfi's approach emphasizes the classical/exegetical dimension; in contrast, this present research highlights the contextual adaptation of those prohibitions to digital culture and examines the nuance provided by a modern, accessible interpreter like Nouman Ali Khan.
4. Raihan et al. (2022) conducted research titled "*Spill the Tea: Fenomena Gibah Masa Kini Perspektif al*-Qur'an (*Kajian Tafsir Maudhu'i*)". this research uses qualitative research method with library research approach and applies the thematic tafsir method (*maudhu'i*) to discuss verses related to *ghībah* from the Qurʾānic perspective. The results show that the Qurʾān has indicated the prohibition of *ghībah* through various verses, along with the consequences arising from such

[23] Lukman Nul Hakim and Iffatul Bayyinah, "Etika Sosial Perspektif Mufassir Nusantara: Kajian Qs. Al-Hujurat Ayat 9-13 Dalam Tafsir Al-Ibriz," *Al-Shamela: Journal of Quranic and Hadith Studies* 1, no. 1 (2023): 70–86.

[24] Muhammad Luthfi, "Tajassus Dalam Al-Qur'an Dan Relevansinya Terhadap Fenomena Media Sosial (Tinjauan Tafsir Al-Jami' Li Ahkam Al-Qur'an)" (UIN Walisongo Semarang, 2023).

actions. The study concludes that *ghībah* can trigger serious problems such as hostility, hatred, revenge, depression, and can lead to murder or suicide.[25] The difference lies in the present research's emphasis on a single verse (49:12) and focusing on the three social sins (*al-ẓann, tajassus,* and *ghībah*) in the framework of Society 5.0.

5. Ahmad Faaza Hudzaifah (2024) in thesis titled "*Tafsir al-Qur'an Kosmopolitan: Telaah atas Penafsiran Nouman Ali Khan*" provides a valuable understanding of Khan's approach. This thesis uses a qualitative method with primary data collected from YouTube content and secondary data from various works discussing Nouman Ali Khan. The study highlights Khan's focus on universal values, practical linguistic analysis, and adaptation of Qurʾānic teachings to globally diverse and technologically advanced audiences on YouTube and Bayyinah TV. The study concludes that Khan is a cosmopolitan figure with a tolerant mindset who emphasizes universal values in his exegesis, making his approach suitable to be categorized as cosmopolitan tafsir.[26] The key difference addressed in this research compared to prior works lies in its focus on the theoretical construction of cosmopolitan tafsir and how digital platforms reconstruct religious authority and engagement.

F. Research Method

To facilitate research activities in a directed and systematic preparation, a method is required with the aim that the results can be achieved and maximized. A method refers to a systematic approach employed facilitate an activity in order to

[25] Raihan et al., "Spill The Tea: Fenomena Gibah Masa Kini Perspektif Alquran (Kajian Tafsir Maudhuâ€™i)."

[26] Ahmad Faaza Hudzaifah, "TAFSIR AL-QUR'AN KOSMOPOLITAN: TELAAH ATAS PENAFSIRAN NOUMAN ALI KHAN" (UIN SUNAN KALIJAGA YOGYAKARTA, 2024).

achieve specific objectives.[27] Based on the issues addressed, this research uses the following methods:

1. Type and Research Approach

The type of research conducted by the author is library research which is a scientific study that obtains its data sources by collecting data from various literatures and substances, while this research emphasizes aspects that are conceptual, theoretical, and ideational.[28] This research employs qualitative research method. Qualitative research aims to holistically and descriptively understand phenomena experienced by research subjects—such as behavior, perception, motivation, action, and conceptualizations—expressed in words and language, within a specific context, by utilizing various natural methods.[29] Qualitative research is chosen in this study to gain in-depth understanding of the interpretation and meaning of Qurʾān Surah al-Ḥujurāt 49:12 by Nouman Ali Khan.

2. Data Sources

Data source refers to the origin of the data used and from where it is obtained.[30] The data in this research was obtained from two sources, namely primary data sources and secondary data sources, in order to achieve comprehensive research results. The sources of data that serve as references for the author in the research include:

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[27] Indonesia. Departemen Pendidikan Nasional and Pusat Bahasa (Indonesia), *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia Pusat Bahasa* (Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2008), 910.

[28] Nashruddin Baidan and Erwati Aziz, *Metodologi Khusus Penelitian Tafsir* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2016), 28.

[29] Ipa Hafsiah Yakin, *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif*, ed. Uus Supriatna (Garut: CV. Aksara Global Akademia, 2023).

[30] Arikunto Suhartini, "Prosedur Penelitian Suatu Pendekatan Praktik" (Jakarta: Rineka Cipta, 2002), 107.

a. Primary Data

The primary data is information that comes directly from the primary source or is directly collected by data gatherers.[31] They serve as the main source of information to support the analysis and answer the research questions. Primary data in this study consist of the interpretation of Qurʾān Surah al-Ḥujurāt 49:12 by Nouman Ali Khan. Khan's interpretation is drawn from his public lectures and tafsir videos, particularly those published on the official platforms of the Bayyinah Institute, such as YouTube and podcasts. Specifically, this study refers to the YouTube videos titled "*Consuming a Brother's Flesh [49:12] | Ep 24 | Striking Examples in the Qur'an| Nouman Ali Khan*" (March 25, 2025) *And* "*Feeding on a Brother's Corpse [49:12] | Ep 25 | Striking Examples in the Qur'an | Nouman Ali Khan*" (March 27, 2025).

b. Secondary Data

Secondary data are data that have been previously published or disseminated by other researches, institutions, or media platforms.[32] Secondary data in this research is obtained from supporting materials such as books, journals, articles, previous research and scientific publications that discuss the interpretive approaches of Nouman Ali Khan, thematic interpretation (*tafsir Maudhu'i*) of the Qurʾān, digital ethics in Islamic discourse, studies on *ẓann*, *tajassus* (spying) and *ghībah* (backbiting) in the digital era.

3. Data Collection Techniques

The data collection process enables researchers to gather the information needed to answer research questions and to obtain a holistic and contextual

[31] Prof Dr Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Bisnis: Pendekatan Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, Kombinasi, Dan R&D* (Bandung: Penerbit CV. Alfabeta, 2017), 193.

[32] Hamed Taherdoost, "Data Collection Methods and Tools for Research; a Step-by-Step Guide to Choose Data Collection Technique for Academic and Business Research Projects," *International Journal of Academic Research in Management (IJARM)* 10, no. 1 (2021): 10–38.

understanding of the phenomenon under study.[33] The data collection process involves systematic identification, selection, and analysis of various existing sources that are relevant to the subject matter. In this qualitative study, data collection is conducted through documentation techniques, which involve gathering and analyzing various forms of textual and audiovisual documents. The documentation technique in this research comprises two main components:

a. Digital Documentation

The primary sources of data in this study are digital documents, specifically tafsir videos and online lectures of Nouman Ali Khan. These materials are accessed through publicly available platforms such as YouTube and podcast services. The data for Nouman Ali Khan's interpretation are derived from his public lectures and tafsir series published by the Bayyinah Institute, especially the YouTube videos mentioned above.

b. Literature Review

Supporting data are obtained through a systematic review of scholarly literature. This includes books and journal articles discussing the methods and philosophies of Qurʾānic interpretation, particularly thematic (*tafsīr mauḍūʿī*), also academic works analyzing the interpretive contributions of Nouman Ali Khan, Society 5.0, and prior research on *ẓann*, *tajassus* and *ghībah*.

4. Data Analysis Techniques

Data are analyzed using content analysis, which is a systematic approach to analyzing text or other materials to reveal themes or patterns in the data.[34] The research steps are as follows: First, the author will inventory and select data, especially the works of Nouman Ali Khan related to the interpretation of Qurʾān Surah al-Ḥujurāt 49:12 and discussions about the concepts of *ẓann*, *tajassus* and

[33] Juriko Abdussamad et al., "Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, Dan Mixed Methode: Buku Referensi" (PT. Media Penerbit Indonesia, 2024).

[34] Abdussamad et al.

ghībah. Second, the author will comprehensively examine the collected data, then classify the data into broader and deeper themes.

Third, the author will analyze and assess the relevance of the interpretation to the current digital manifestations of *ẓann*, *tajassus* and *ghībah*. After that, the author will provide a careful and clear research conclusion as an answer to the research problems, thereby producing a new, comprehensive, and systematic understanding.[35]

G. Thesis Outline

This thesis will be systematically structured into five main chapters as follows:

Chapter I – This chapter provides an overview of the research flow; it introduces the emergence of Society 5.0, defines the digital manifestations of social sins, and explains the academic problem, its significance, research questions, objectives, benefits, literature review, methodology, and the overall structure of the thesis.

Chapter II – This chapter establishes the theoretical framework by presenting the text and translation of Q.S. al-Ḥujurāt 49:12, examining its occasions of revelation (*asbāb al-nuzūl*) and verse correlation (*munāsabah*), and detailing the concepts of Society 5.0, thematic tafsīr methodology, classical definitions of *ẓann*, *tajassus*, and *ghībah*, and their digital manifestations.

Chapter III – This chapter profiles Nouman Ali Khan's scholarly background and methodological characteristics, analyzes his thematic interpretation of Q.S. al-Ḥujurāt 49:12 through a three-stage progression, and explores the contemporary digital applications and relevance of his tafsīr approach.

Chapter IV – This chapter offers a systematic analysis of digital social sins by tracing their progressive nature, framing algorithmic bias as systematized *sū' al-ẓann*, ubiquitous surveillance as digital *tajassus*, and social media dynamics as amplified *ghībah*, while

[35] Abdul Mustaqim, "Metode Penelitian Al-Qur'an Dan Tafsir" (Yogyakarta: idea press, 2019).

discussing human-machine moral responsibility, ethical system design for Society 5.0, and an integrated Islamic digital ethics framework.

Chapter V – This chapter summarizes the research findings, highlights theoretical contributions and practical implications, acknowledges limitations, proposes future research directions, and offers final reflections on the universal relevance of Qur'anic ethics in guiding human-centered technology development.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A. Overview of Qurʾan Surah Al-Ḥujurāt 49:12

1. Qurʾanic Text and Translation

The Qurʾanic verse al-Ḥujurāt 12 serves as the main scriptural basis of this study. The verse stands as one of the most comprehensive ethical directives in Islamic scripture, providing a multi-layered framework for interpersonal conduct that addresses both individual psychology and social dynamics. The verse states:

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا اجْتَنِبُوْا كَثِيْرًا مِّنَ الظَّنِّۖ اِنَّ بَعْضَ الظَّنِّ اِثْمٌ وَّلَا تَجَسَّسُوْا وَلَا يَغْتَبْ بَّعْضُكُمْ بَعْضًاۗ

اَيُحِبُّ اَحَدُكُمْ اَنْ يَّأْكُلَ لَحْمَ اَخِيْهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوْهُۗ وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ ۗاِنَّ اللّٰهَ تَوَّابٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ١٢

> "O you who believe! Avoid much suspicion, indeed some suspicions are sins. And spy not, neither backbite one another. Would one of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? You would hate it (so hate backbiting). And fear Allah. Verily, Allah is the One Who forgives and accepts repentance, the Most Merciful".[1]

Qurʾān Surah al-Ḥujurāt 49:12 contains three primary prohibitions in Islamic communication ethics and social interaction. These three prohibitions are *sūʼ* al-*ẓann* (negative suspicion or unfounded assumption), *tajassus* (spying, seeking faults, or prying into others' private matters), and *ghībah* (backbiting, gossip, or speaking ill of someone behind their back).

Understanding the lexical meanings of significant terms in this verse deepens one's comprehension of its ethical imperatives. Three primary words—*al-ẓann*, *tajassus*, and *yaghtab*—serve as the conceptual pillars of this verse's moral guidance.

[1] International, *The Qur'an: English Meanings*, 519.

The Arabic term *ẓann* generally means thought, assumption, or suspicion. According to classical Arabic lexicons like *Lisān al-ʿArab*, *ẓann* can refer to either positive or negative conjecture, but it often carries a negative connotation when not based on clear evidence.[2]

In this verse, the command "*ijtanibū kathīran min al-ẓann*" (avoid much suspicion) implies that excessive or baseless suspicion—especially of fellow believers—is a spiritual and social vice. Al-Rāghib al-Aṣfahānī defines *ẓann* as "a strong assumption that is not founded upon certainty", and warns of its use in forming unjust judgments.[3] According to al-Ṭabarī, the command to "avoid much suspicion" is a call to leave behind unfounded assumptions (*sū' al-ẓann*) that are not supported by clear evidence.[4] He cites companions such as Ibn ʿAbbās and Mujāhid, who held that suspicion becomes sinful when it is translated into unjust action or judgment without verification.

Tajassus comes from the root *j-s-s* (ج س س), which means to probe, investigate, or spy. In classical usage, it implies an active attempt to uncover what others have concealed, especially their faults or private matters. Al-Rāghib al-Aṣfahānī distinguishes between *tajassus* (malicious spying) and *taḥassus* (seeking good or necessary information), noting that the Qurʾān criticizes *tajassus* due to its invasive and distrustful nature.[5]

The verb *yaghtab* is derived from the root *gh-y-b* (غ ي ب), which relates to something being absent or hidden. *Ghībah* (backbiting) thus refers to mentioning something about a person in their absence that they would dislike, even if it is true.[6]

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[2] Muḥammad ibn Mukarram ibn ʿAlī Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān Al-ʿArab*, vol. 13 (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1994), p. 244-245.

[3] Abū al-Qāsim al-Ḥusayn ibn Muḥammad al-Rāghib al-Aṣfahānī, *Al-Mufradāt Fī Gharīb Al-Qur'ān*, ed. Ṣafwān ʿAdnān Dāwūdī (Damascus: Dār al-Qalam, 2002), p. 311.

[4] Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ Al-Bayān ʿan Taʾwīl Āy Al-Qurʾān*, vol. 26 (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1995), p. 129-131.

[5] al-Rāghib al-Aṣfahānī, *Al-Mufradāt Fī Gharīb Al-Qur'ān,* p. 157.

[6] al-Rāghib al-Aṣfahānī, p. 353.

A prophetic tradition defines *ghībah* as: "Mentioning about your brother something he dislikes."[7] When the companions asked, "But what if what I say is true?" the Prophet replied, "If what you say about him is true, that is *ghībah*. If it is false, then you have slandered him (*buhtān*)."[8] The Qurʾān's metaphor—likening it to eating the flesh of one's dead brother—is a linguistic device to emphasize the moral ugliness of this act. According to Ibn Kathīr, the vividness of the metaphor used, "eating the dead flesh of one's brother", serves not only to shock but to invoke deep moral reflection, indicating that backbiting is as detestable as cannibalism.

The final part of the verse reminds believers to observe *taqwa* (God-consciousness), affirming that Allah is always ready to accept repentance (*Tawwāb*) and is *Raḥīm* (Most Merciful). This serves as both a spiritual admonition and a theological reassurance, urging believers to uphold *taqwa* as a safeguard against moral transgressions such as suspicion, spying, and backbiting. By concluding with the affirmation that Allah is *Tawwāb* and *Raḥīm*, the verse not only highlights divine mercy but also opens the door for ethical reform and personal accountability. This closing underscores that despite the severity of the prohibitions, the opportunity for forgiveness remains accessible to those who sincerely repent and strive to improve their conduct in accordance with divine guidance.

This verse is central to Islamic ethics on interpersonal conduct, particularly in matters involving privacy, character judgment, and communal trust. The prohibitions in the verse aim to preserve *ukhuwwah islāmiyyah* (Islamic brotherhood) and prevent social disintegration. Thus, this verse serves as an important foundation for building healthy communication ethics in Muslim society, both in traditional contexts and in the modern digital era.[9]

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[7] Ismāʿīl ibn ʿUmar Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr Al-Qur'ān Al-ʿAẓīm*, ed. Sāmī bin Muḥammad Salāmah, vol. 7 (Riyadh: Dār Ṭayyibah, 1999), p. 378-380.

[8] Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Kitāb al-Birr wa al-Ṣilah, no. 2589.

[9] Wathroh Mursyidi, Nur Fauziah, and Faznah Faznah, "Internalisasi Nilai-Nilai Karakter Keislaman Dari Qs Al Ḥujurāt Ayat 11-12 Dalam Menghadapi Fenomena Hate Speech Di Lingkungan

From a classical interpretive perspective, this verse has been extensively analyzed by major exegetes throughout Islamic history, each contributing layers of understanding that reflect both the universal principles embedded in the text and the specific social contexts of their respective eras. Ibn Kathir's interpretation emphasizes the progressive nature of the three prohibitions, noting how negative assumptions (*ẓann*) naturally lead to investigative behaviors (*tajassus*) which then culminate in public defamation (*ghībah*), creating a cascading cycle of social harm that undermines community cohesion.[10] Al-Ṭabari's exegesis focuses on the precise linguistic distinctions between different types of suspicion, noting that the verse specifically prohibits "*kathīran min al-ẓann*" (much suspicion) rather than all suspicion, thereby acknowledging that some level of caution and discernment is necessary for practical life while condemning unfounded negative assumptions that lack evidence or justification.[11]

Al-Qurtubi's interpretation provides extensive legal analysis of the three prohibited behaviors, establishing jurisprudential frameworks that have influenced Islamic legal reasoning for centuries.[12] His work particularly emphasizes the social dimensions of these sins, arguing that they function not merely as individual moral failings but as systemic threats to the stability and trust that underpin Islamic social order. The classical commentators consistently emphasize the metaphor of consuming dead flesh as representing the ultimate moral revulsion, designed to create visceral emotional rejection of backbiting behavior while highlighting the fundamental violation of human dignity that such actions represent.

Pergaulan Peserta Didik," *Journal on Education* 6, no. 4 SE-Articles (June 26, 2024): 22192–202, https://doi.org/10.31004/joe.v6i4.6314.

[10] Imam Shofwan and Achmad Munib, "Pendidikan Karakter Sosial Qur'ani: Studi Tafsir Surat Al-Hujurat Ayat 11-13," *Jurnal Intelektual: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Studi Keislaman* 13, no. 1 (2023): 72–84, https://doi.org/10.33367/ji.v13i1.3500.

[11] Ibn Jarīr Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ Al-Bayān ʿan Taʾwīl Āy Al-Qurʾān* (Beirut: Dār al-Maʿārif, 2008), 374.

[12] Abū ʿAbdillāh Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Anṣārī al-Qurṭubī, *Al-Jāmiʿ Li Aḥkām Al-Qur'ān, Terj. Ahmad Khatib* (Jakarta: Pustaka Azzam, 2009), vols. 20, 315–322.

Contemporary interpretive approaches to Qurʾān Surah al-Ḥujurāt 49:12 have expanded these classical insights by examining their application to modern social contexts, particularly the complex dynamics of mass society, media communication, and digital interaction.[13] Modern exegetes such as Quraish Shihab have explored how the verse's prohibitions apply to contemporary forms of media consumption, rumor propagation, and public discourse, arguing that the principles embedded in the verse provide essential guidance for navigating information-rich societies where verification, respect for privacy, and dignified communication become increasingly challenging.

The verse's contemporary relevance has been particularly highlighted by scholars examining its application to digital contexts, where the speed, scale, and permanence of online communication create new dimensions of potential harm from the prohibited behaviors. The concept of *ẓann* in digital contexts extends beyond personal assumptions to include algorithmic bias, selective information consumption, and the tendency to interpret ambiguous online communications in negative ways. Digital *tajassus* encompasses not only active surveillance behaviors but also passive participation in invasive information gathering through social media stalking, data mining, and the normalization of privacy violations that characterize much contemporary digital interaction.[14]

2. *Asbāb al-Nuzūl* (Occasions of Revelation)

Etymologically, *asbāb al-nuzūl* means "the reasons for revelation" of Qur'anic verses, referring to the events, questions, or specific conditions that prompted a verse or series of verses to be revealed. Al-Zarqānī defines it as any explanation of the

[13] Muhammad Istiqomah, Siti Nur; Amin, Muhammad Nur; Ikhwanudin, "Pandangan Al-Qur'an Terhadap Hoaks Persepektif Tafsir Maqāṣidī (Studi Q.S. Al-Ḥujurāt: 6 Dan Al-Nūr: 15)," *Jurnal Ilmiah Islam Futura* 5 (2025): 22–40.

[14] Diana Durrotul Lum'ah, Suqiyah Musafa'ah, and Muhammad Ihsan Mahbub, "THE PARADIGM OF DIGITAL PRIVACY IN INDONESIAN TAFSIR: A STUDY OF TAFSIR AL-AZHAR ON QS. AL-HUJURĀT (49): 12," *MUSHAF: Jurnal Tafsir Berwawasan Keindonesiaan* 5, no. 2 (2025).

circumstances behind a verse or group of verses—whether legal or contextual—that illuminates why the Qur'an addressed a given matter at a particular time.[15] The study of *asbāb al-nuzūl* is fundamental to tafsīr because it bridges the divine text and its historical-social context. Without awareness of the circumstances of revelation, interpretation can become partial or even misleading.

The scholars agree that Surah al-Ḥujurāt 49:12 is a Madani verse, revealed after the Prophet Muhammad's migration from Mecca to Medina. The historical context of the revelation of Qur'an Surah al-Ḥujurāt 49:12 relates to several incidents during the time of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). According to Quraish Shihab, this verse was revealed during a crucial period when the Prophet was undertaking three major initiatives: building the mosque, promoting social harmony, and establishing brotherhood.[16] Medina's transformation from a persecuted minority into a complex socio-political entity—with diverse Arab tribes, Jewish and Christian communities—required an ethical framework to overcome tribal biases, group stereotypes, and tendencies to expose others' faults. Qur'an 49:12 responded to these dynamics by providing concrete guidance to manage differences without undermining individual dignity or collective harmony.

According to a well-known narration, this verse was revealed concerning two companions of the Prophet who had backbitten their fellow companion, Salman al-Fārisī.[17] During travel, it was customary for the Prophet to assign one servant to assist two wealthier companions. In this instance, Salman was appointed to serve two affluent men. When Salman did not help prepare the meal, the two companions asked him to eat leftovers from Usāmah, whom they suspected of miserliness. They secretly

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[15] Muḥammad ibn Al-Zarqānī, *Manāhil Al-'Irfān Fī 'Ulūm Al-Qur'Ān* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1997), vols. 2, 14–15.

[16] Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah Pesan Kesan Dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an* (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2002), p. 223.

[17] Abū Muḥammad 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Umar Al-Wāḥidī, *Asbāb Al-Nuzūl* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Khānjī, 1984), 453.

spied on Usāmah, and the Prophet rebuked them, saying, “I saw fresh flesh in both your mouths,” illustrating that they had “consumed the flesh of Usāmah and Salman.” It was then that Qurʾān Surah al-Ḥujurāt:12 was revealed, strongly condemning suspicion (*ẓann*), spying (*tajassus*), and backbiting (*ghībah*) among believers as acts akin to consuming the flesh of one's dead brother.[18]

Another report cited by Ibn al-Mundhir from Ibn Jurayj offers a similar yet slightly different context. According to this narration, the verse was revealed after Salman al-Fārisī finished eating and fell asleep, snoring loudly.[19] Some companions who saw him then spoke ill of his behavior behind his back, leading to gossip and suspicion, which prompted the revelation prohibiting negative assumptions, digging for faults, and backbiting.[20]

These narratives provide a contextual and moral backdrop for the verse, illustrating those divine injunctions against *tajassus* and *ghībah* were not abstract legal prohibitions but responses to real human behavior—even among the Prophet’s companions. This background enriches the ethical force of the verse and emphasizes the Qurʾān’s concern with fostering mutual respect, trust, and social harmony within the Muslim community.

3. *Munāsabah* (Verse Correlation)

The concept of *munāsabah* in Qurʾānic studies refers to the thematic and contextual coherence between verses within a Surah or between different Surahs. Scholars of tafsir emphasize the importance of understanding the logical and rhetorical connections between verses to grasp the holistic message of the Qurʾān.

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[18] Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ Al-Bayān ʿan Taʾwīl Āy Al-Qurʾān*, p. 298.

[19] Waqi’atul Hasanah and Hartono Hartono, “Analisis Larangan *Ghī* Dalam Surah Al-Ḥujurāt Ayat 12 Pendekatan Fenomologi Sosial,” *As-Syifa: Journal of Islamic Studies and History* 3, no. 1 (2024): 43–54.

[20] Aulia Mar’atu Dzikra et al., “Urgensi Asbab Nuzul Dalam Memaknai Penafsiran Al-Qur’an,” *Hamalatul Qur’an: Jurnal Ilmu Ilmu Alqur’an* 5, no. 2 (2024): 559–567.

Al-Suyūṭī notes that every verse in the Qurʾān is placed with divine wisdom and that identifying the links between them enhances comprehension and reflection.[21]

QS al-Ḥujurāt 49:12 is the culmination of a series of ethical and social instructions addressed to the believing community. The preceding verses deal with themes such as verifying information (verse 6), reconciliation among believers (verses 9–10), avoiding mockery and name-calling (verse 11), and maintaining mutual respect.[22] Verse 12, therefore, follows naturally by addressing three further social vices—*ẓann* (suspicion), *tajassus* (spying), and *ghībah* (backbiting)—which, if left unchecked, can destroy the trust and cohesion of a Muslim society. While verse 13 speaks about the creation of human in different tribes and nations to know each other, emphasizing the importance of brotherhood and appreciation for differences.[23] Verse 13 provides a positive foundation for building healthy social relationships based on appreciation for diversity.[24]

These three verses (11-13) form a unified theme about social ethics and communication in Muslim society. The *munāsabah* between verse 12 and the verses before it shows the Qurʾānic methodology of building a morally sound society by gradually addressing internal attitudes and outward behaviors. While verse 11 focuses on visible acts like mockery and defamation, verse 12 turns attention to inner thoughts (*ẓann*) and covert actions (*tajassus* and *ghībah*), highlighting how both internal and external dimensions of human interaction are subject to ethical scrutiny.

Moreover, the closing part of verse 12—"Indeed, Allah is *Tawwāb* and *Raḥīm*"—connects with earlier divine attributes mentioned in the Surah, reminding

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[21] Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, *Al-Itqān Fī ʿUlūm Al-Qur'ān*, ed. Muhammad Abū al-Faḍl Ibrāhīm, vol. 2 (Beirut: Dār al-Maʿrifah, 1974), p. 273.

[22] Siti Aisah and Mawi Khusni Albar, "Telaah Nilai-Nilai Pendidikan Sosial Dari - Q.S Al Ḥujurāt: 11-13 Dalam Kajian Tafsir," *Arfannur: Journal of Islamic Education* 2, no. 1 SE-Articles (December 9, 2021): 35–46, https://doi.org/10.24260/arfannur.v2i1.166.

[23] Husnan Sulaiman and Firdan Mutaqin, "Nilai-Nilai Pendidikan Multikultural Menurut Al-Qur'an Surah Al-Ḥujurāt Ayat 11 Dan 12 Kajian Ilmu Pendidikan Islam," *Masagi* 3, no. 1 (2024): 48–59.

[24] Sulaiman and Mutaqin.

believers that while Allah forbids such harmful behaviors, He also remains open to repentance, signaling a path of moral reform and social healing.

B. The Concept of Society 5.0: Characteristics and Implications

Society 5.0 represents a revolutionary paradigm shift in human civilization, characterized by the seamless integration of cyber-physical systems that blur the traditional boundaries between digital and physical realms while placing human-centered values at the core of technological development.[25] Originally conceptualized by the Japanese government as part of their strategic vision for national development, Society 5.0 transcends previous industrial revolutions by emphasizing the harmonious coexistence of technological advancement and human flourishing, creating what scholars term a "super-smart society" that leverages artificial intelligence, Internet of Things, big data analytics, and robotics to address complex social challenges while enhancing quality of life.

The foundational characteristics of Society 5.0 include the pervasive deployment of cyber-physical systems that enable real-time data collection, analysis, and response across all sectors of society, from healthcare and education to transportation and governance.[26] These systems create unprecedented capabilities for social coordination, resource optimization, and problem-solving while simultaneously generating new forms of social interaction and community formation that transcend geographical and temporal limitations. The integration of artificial intelligence into decision-making processes, both individual and collective, represents another defining characteristic, as machine learning algorithms increasingly influence everything from personal recommendations to policy formulation, creating new questions about agency, accountability, and the distribution of power in digitally mediated societies.

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[25] Japanese Government (Cabinet Office), "Society 5.0: A Human-Centered Society That Balances Economic Development with the Resolution of Social Issues through a Highly Integrated System of Cyberspace and Physical Space" (tokyo, 2016), https://www8.cao.go.jp/cstp/english/society5_0/index.html.

[26] Japanese Government (Cabinet Office), 5–12.

From a social perspective, Society 5.0 fundamentally alters the nature of human relationships, community formation, and social identity construction through the mediation of digital technologies that enable new forms of connection while creating new vulnerabilities to isolation, manipulation, and social fragmentation. The concept of digital citizenship emerges as a critical framework for understanding how individuals navigate their roles and responsibilities within digitally mediated communities, requiring new forms of literacy, ethical reasoning, and social competence that extend traditional concepts of civic engagement into virtual realms.[27]

The implications of Society 5.0 for ethical reasoning and moral behavior are profound and multifaceted, creating new contexts for traditional ethical challenges while generating entirely novel moral dilemmas that lack precedent in traditional ethical frameworks. The speed and scale of digital communication create new possibilities for both beneficial and harmful behaviors, as information, emotions, and social influence can be transmitted instantaneously across global networks with potentially lasting consequences for individuals and communities.[28] The permanence of digital records and the searchability of online content create new forms of accountability while also raising concerns about forgiveness, redemption, and the possibility of personal growth and change.[29]

C. The Concept of Thematic Tafsir: Methodology and Application

Thematic interpretation (*tafsīr mawḍū'ī*) represents a methodological approach to Quranic exegesis that has gained increasing prominence in contemporary Islamic scholarship due to its effectiveness in addressing complex modern issues through

[27] Birgit Jæger, "Digital Citizenship–A Review of the Academic Literature/Digital Citizenship: Eine Systematische Literaturanalyse," *Dms–Der Moderne Staat–Zeitschrift Für Public Policy, Recht Und Management* 14, no. 1 (2021): 24–42.

[28] Dhruv Grewal et al., "The Future of Digital Communication Research: Considering Dynamics and Multimodality.," *Journal of Retailing*, 2022.

[29] Hannin Pradita Nur Soulthoni and Maya Itasari, "The Implementation of Electronic-Based Archiving to Accelerate Government Digitalization in Indonesia," *Indonesian Journal of Innovation and Applied Sciences (IJIAS)* 5, no. 1 SE- (February 28, 2025): 49–57, https://doi.org/10.47540/ijias.v5i1.1735.

systematic analysis of related Qur'anic passages. Unlike traditional sequential interpretation that follows the chronological order of verses or chapters, thematic tafsir organizes Qur'anic material around specific topics, concepts, or themes, enabling comprehensive examination of how the Quran addresses particular subjects through multiple passages and contexts.[30]

The methodological foundations of thematic tafsir involve several interconnected processes that require both linguistic expertise and hermeneutical sophistication. The first step involves comprehensive identification and collection of all Qur'anic verses related to the chosen theme, requiring detailed knowledge of Qur'anic vocabulary, concepts, and cross-references that may not be immediately apparent.[31] This process often reveals connections between seemingly disparate passages and enables identification of recurring patterns, progressive development of concepts, and complementary perspectives that enrich understanding of the overall Qur'anic message regarding the chosen theme.

The analytical phase of thematic interpretation requires careful attention to both the specific contexts of individual verses (*asbab al-nuzul*) and their integration within the broader thematic framework, ensuring that particular historical circumstances are understood while identifying universal principles that transcend specific temporal and cultural contexts. This dual focus enables interpreters to maintain authenticity to the original meaning while developing applications that remain relevant to contemporary circumstances and challenges.

Contemporary scholars have identified several advantages of the thematic approach that make it particularly suitable for addressing modern challenges and questions. The systematic organization of related material enables comprehensive

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[30] ʿAbd al-Ḥayy al-Farmawi, *Bidāyah Fī Al-Tafsīr Al-Mawḍūʿī* (Cairo: Ḥadarat al-Gharbiyyah, 1977), 62–85.

[31] Suryana Alfathah, Eni Zulaiha, and Asep Ahmad Fathurrohman, "Qur'anic Ethics for Social Media: Insights from Indonesia's Thematic Tafsir," *Mashadiruna Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qurân Dan Tafsir* 4, no. 1 (2025): 9–22.

understanding of complex topics that may be addressed across multiple chapters and contexts, providing a holistic perspective that individual verse interpretation might miss.[32] The thematic approach also facilitates engagement with contemporary issues by enabling direct dialogue between Qur'anic teachings and current challenges, making religious guidance more accessible and applicable to modern Muslim communities facing unprecedented circumstances.[33]

However, scholars have also identified potential limitations and risks associated with thematic interpretation that require careful attention and methodological rigor to avoid. The selection and organization of material around predetermined themes can potentially impose artificial categories on the Qur'anic text, leading to selective interpretation that emphasizes passages supporting particular perspectives while neglecting contrary or complicating evidence. The focus on thematic coherence can also lead to oversimplification of complex issues or forced harmonization of passages that may reflect different aspects or stages of Qur'anic teaching on particular topics.[34]

The application of thematic tafsir to contemporary issues requires particular attention to hermeneutical principles that ensure authentic engagement with the Qur'anic text while enabling meaningful application to current contexts. This involves careful distinction between universal principles and particular applications, recognition of the developmental nature of Quranic teaching on some topics, and attention to the social and ethical objectives (*maqāṣid*) that underlie specific regulations or guidance.

D. Overview of *Ẓann*, *Ghībah*, and *Tajassus* from Classical Perspective

The classical Islamic understanding of the three social sins prohibited in Qur'an Surah al-Ḥujurāt 12 provides a sophisticated framework for analyzing interpersonal

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[32] Alfathah, Zulaiha, and Fathurrohman.

[33] Ayu Wigati and Muhammad Derry Pramuja, "Kelebihan Dan Kekurangan Serta Ke Empat Metode Tafsir (Al-Ijmali, At-Tahlili, Al Muqaran, Al Maudhu'i)," *Jurnal Multidisipliner Kapalamada* 3, no. 04 (2024): 117–38.

[34] M Quraish Shihab, *" Membumikan" Al-Quran: Fungsi Dan Peran Wahyu Dalam Kehidupan Masyarakat* (Mizan Pustaka, 2007), 120.

behavior that addresses both psychological dynamics and social consequences of negative interpersonal conduct.

1. *Ẓann*

The concept of *ẓann* encompasses a complex range of mental and emotional states that involve forming judgments about others without adequate evidence or justification, representing not merely cognitive error but moral failing that violates the dignity and rights of others while corrupting the character of those who engage in such behavior.

Classical scholars developed nuanced taxonomies of *ẓann* that distinguish between different types and degrees of suspicion, recognizing that complete elimination of all suspicious thoughts is neither possible nor desirable for practical life. The prohibited *ẓann* specifically refers to *sū' al-ẓann* (negative suspicion) that lacks justification and tends toward assuming the worst about others' motivations, actions, or character. This differs from legitimate caution (*ihtiyāṭ*) or reasonable prudence based on evidence or experience, which classical scholars generally considered not only permissible but sometimes obligatory for protecting oneself and one's community from genuine threats or harm.

The psychological dimensions of *ẓann* have been extensively analyzed in classical Islamic literature, with scholars noting how negative assumptions tend to become self-reinforcing through selective attention to confirming evidence while ignoring contradictory information. This creates what contemporary psychology would recognize as confirmation bias, leading to increasingly negative perceptions of others that may bear little relationship to actual behavior or character. The social dimensions of *ẓann* are equally significant, as negative assumptions about others contribute to social fragmentation, conflict, and the breakdown of trust that enables community cooperation and mutual support.

2. *Tajassus*

Tajassus etymologically derives from the Arabic root word "*jassa-yajussu*" which means to feel, investigate, spy.[35] Linguistically, *tajassus* means searching for news and investigating something secret, which can also be interpreted as activities of seeking out others' faults.

Tajassus, traditionally translated as spying or surveillance, encompasses a broader range of behaviors involving inappropriate investigation or monitoring of others' private affairs without justification or permission. Classical scholars understood *tajassus* as representing a fundamental violation of privacy (*hurmat al-khuṣūṣiyya*) that contradicts both divine command and social necessity for maintaining trust and dignity in human relationships. The prohibition against *tajassus* reflects recognition that privacy is not merely personal preference but essential requirement for psychological well-being, social stability, and spiritual development.

Islamic scholars distinguish *tajassus* from *taḥassus*. *Tajassus* (with the letter jim) comes from the word *al-jass* which means to examine something with the hand, and it is one of the five senses. The word means looking for the secrets of the matter, and most of what is said is in the context of evil.[36] While both involve forms of inquiry, *tajassus* is typically associated with negative intent—such as spying, surveillance, or exposing others' private affairs—whereas *taḥassus* may refer to a positive search for information, such as in matters of justice or communal welfare. Al-Akhfash explains that *tajassus* means searching for what is concealed, while taḥassus means seeking news through one's senses.[37]

Terminologically, *tajassus* is defined as the act of seeking out the others faults, flaws, or private matters without their consent through investigation and spying.[38] According to al-Ghazali, *tajassus* (spying) constitutes an action of seeking evidence

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[35] Achmad Warson Munawwir, "Kamus Al-Munawwir Arab-Indonesia Terlengkap," 1997, 192.

[36] Muhammad Murtadla Zabidi, *Taj Al-Arus Min Jawahir Al-Qamus*, *Kuwait: Hukumah*, 1975, 499.

[37] Ahmad Musṭafā Al-Marāghī, *Tafsīr Al-Marāghī*, vol. 9 (Beirut: Dar Al-kotob Al-ilmiyah, 1971), 251.

[38] Angga Febrian and Uswatun Hasanah, "LARANGAN TAJASSUS DALAM PERSPEKTIF HADIS.," *Journal of Syntax Literate* 9, no. 12 (2024).

that could clarify a particular matter. According to al-Qurṭubī in al-Jāmi' li Aḥkām al-Qur'an, *tajassus* refers to investigative behavior aimed at uncovering hidden matters, especially those related to someone's sins or personal weaknesses.[39]

In the context of Islamic law, *tajassus* represents a prohibited act as stipulated in Qurʾān Surah al-Ḥujurāt 49:12 alongside suspicion and backbiting. The Prophet Muhammad also reinforced this prohibition in a ḥadīth narrated by At-Tirmidhi: "Whoever conceals the faults of a Muslim, Allah will conceal his faults in this world and the Hereafter." The prohibition of *tajassus* in Islam is based on the principle of respect for individual privacy and dignity.[40] Every Muslim has the right to maintain their personal secrets, and efforts to reveal these secrets without justified reasons constitute a violation of human rights from an Islamic perspective.[41]

Nevertheless, some scholars classify *tajassus* into two categories: it is permissible when it serves a justifiable public interest, such as preventing crime or corruption with clear indicators and evidence. But it is impermissible, when it arises from baseless suspicion and leads to unjustified invasion of privacy.[42] The essence of the prohibition lies in preserving *satr al-'awrah* (concealing faults) and maintaining trust and harmony within the Muslim community.

3. *Ghībah*

Ghībah represents perhaps the most extensively analyzed of the three social sins, with classical scholars developing detailed jurisprudential frameworks that address everything from the definition and scope of prohibited behavior to the conditions for exception and the requirements for repentance and restoration. *Ghībah* etymologically originates from Arabic '*ghaaba – yaghiibu - ghaiban*" meaning absent

[39] al-Qurṭubī, *Al-Jāmiʿ Li Aḥkām Al-Qur'ān, Terj. Ahmad Khatib*.

[40] Ahmad Bin Zayed, "Contemporary Applications of Islamic Privacy Principles," *Journal of Islamic Ethics* 8, no. 2 (2024): 45–67.

[41] Yaser Amri, "Tajassus in The Qur'an: Implementation, Laws, and Deviations," *Jurnal At-Tibyan: Jurnal Ilmu Alqur'an Dan Tafsir* 8, no. 1 (2023): 1–19.

[42] Muhammad Luthfi, "Tajassus Dalam Al-Qur'an Dan Relevansinya Terhadap Fenomena Media Sosial (Tinjauan Tafsir Al-Jami' Li Ahkam Al-Qur'an)", Skripsi, (UIN Walisongo Semarang, 2023), p. 57.

or not present, or something that is hidden from view.[43] Based on the Indonesian Dictionary, *ghībah* refers to the activity of discussing the badness (faults) of others or gossiping.[44]

According to Islamic terminology, *ghībah* constitutes the act of discussing the badness or faults of others in their absence that they would dislike.[45] Although what is discussed corresponds to reality, *ghībah* remains an oppressive and prohibited act in Islam. The Prophet Muhammad explained: "Do you know what backbiting is?" The Companions replied, "Allah and His Messenger know best." He said, "It is to mention something about your brother that he dislikes." Someone asked, "What if what I say is true?" The Prophet replied, "If what you say is true, you have backbitten him. If it is not true, then you have slandered him (*buhtān*)."[46] This definition places *ghībah* as a serious ethical transgression in Islam encompasses both obviously defamatory statements and more subtle forms of negative communication that violate dignity while appearing superficially harmless or even justifiable. It is strictly forbidden in both the Qur'an and Hadith due to its destructive social consequences. As stated in Qur'an Surah al-Ḥujurāt:12, backbiting is metaphorically is likened to eating the flesh of one's own deceased brother and represents an act very close to envy, jealousy, and even slander, which reflects its moral severity and repulsiveness.

The definition of gossip according to experts in as follows:

a. Al-Raghib said: *ghībah* is when someone mentions another person's faults without there being a need to mention them.[47]
b. Al-Ghazali said: the definition of *ghībah* is that you mention something about your brother that he does not like if it reaches him. According to al-Ghazālī,

[43] Ibn Faris and Abu al-Husayn Ahmad, *Mu'jam Maqayis Al-Lughah*, *Beirut: Dar Al-Fikr*, vol. 4, 1979, p. 403.
[44] Nasional and (Indonesia), *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia Pusat Bahasa,* p.497 .
[45] Hasanah and Hartono, "Analisis Larangan *Ghī* Dalam Surah Al-Ḥujurāt Ayat 12 Pendekatan Fenomologi Sosial."
[46] Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah Pesan Kesan Dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an,* p. 223.
[47] Raghib Isfahani, "Al-Dhari'a Ila Makarim Al-Shari'ah" (Cairo: Dar al-Salam, 2007), 142.

ghībah includes not only explicit statements but also gestures, insinuations, tone of voice, and even silence if used to suggest disapproval or contempt of another.[48] In this sense, *ghībah* is not limited to words but extends to any communicative act that seeks to dishonor someone without their knowledge or consent.

c. Ibn al-Athir in *al-Nihayah* said: *ghībah* is mentioning someone (with bad things) when he is not present, even though it is indeed with him.[49]

d. Al-Nawawi in *al-Adhkar*, following the opinion of al-Ghazali, said: *ghībah* is mentioning someone with something that he does not like, whether it is related to his physical appearance, his religion, his world, himself, his body shape, his morals, his wealth, his parents, his children, his wife, his servants, his clothes, his gestures, his fluency in speaking, his sour face, or anything else related to him whether you mention it verbally, with gestures, or with codes.[50]

The classical analysis of *ghībah* emphasizes both the immediate harm to the person being discussed and the broader social consequences of normalizing negative communication about others. Individual harm includes damage to reputation, relationships, and psychological well-being, while social harm includes the erosion of trust, increase in conflict, and creation of environments where negative communication becomes accepted or even expected. The classical scholars also recognized the spiritual dimensions of *ghībah*, noting how engagement in negative communication about others corrupts the character of those involved while creating barriers to genuine spiritual development and social harmony.

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[48] al-Ghazālī, *Iḥyā' ʿUlūm Al-Dīn, Trans. Jamaluddin Al-Qosimi, Saripati Ihya' Ulumiddin,* p. 390-392.

[49] Ibn Al-Athir, *Al-Nihayah Fi Gharib Al-Hadith Wa Al-Athar* (Beirut: Scientific Library Publications, 1979), vols. 3, 399.

[50] Yahya Sharaf Al-Din Al-Nawawi, "Al-Adhkar," *Investigation: Abd Al-Qadir Al-Arna'ut,(Damascus: Dar Al-Mallah, 1391 AH)*, 1994, 288.

E. Digital Manifestations of *Ẓann*, *Tajassus*, and *Ghībah*

The digital transformation characteristic of Society 5.0 has created unprecedented contexts for the manifestation of the three social sins prohibited in Qurʾān Surah al-Ḥujurāt 12, generating new forms and scales of harmful behavior that transcend traditional limitations of time, space, and social proximity while creating permanent records and viral amplification that magnify both immediate and long-term consequences. The digital manifestations of these behaviors represent both continuity with historical patterns and radical departure from traditional contexts, requiring sophisticated analysis that recognizes underlying human tendencies while accounting for the transformative effects of technological mediation.[51]

Digital *ẓann* encompasses a broad range of behaviors and mental habits that involve forming negative assumptions about others based on limited or ambiguous online information, often exacerbated by the decontextualized nature of digital communication and the tendency for online interactions to lack the nonverbal cues and immediate feedback that characterize face-to-face interaction. Social media platforms create particular vulnerabilities to negative assumptions through their emphasis on curated self-presentation, algorithmic filtering that creates echo chambers and confirmation bias, and the speed of interaction that discourages careful consideration or verification of initial impressions.[52]

The phenomenon of "context collapse" in digital environments creates additional challenges for accurate interpretation and judgment, as online communications often remove the contextual information that would enable more accurate understanding of others' intentions, emotions, or circumstances.[53] This leads to increased likelihood of

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[51] Fazlur Rahman, "Digital Transformation and Islamic Ethics: Contemporary Challenges," *International Journal of Islamic Studies* 12, no. 4 (2024): 123–45.

[52] Matteo Cinelli et al., "The Echo Chamber Effect on Social Media," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 118, no. 9 (March 2, 2021): e2023301118, https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2023301118.

[53] C Ilbury, "Researcher-Imposed Context Collapse in Digital Ethnographic Research. In S. Kotilainen (Ed.), Methods in Practice: Studying Children and Youth Online (Chapter 12)," *CO:RE - Children Online: Research and Evidence*, 2022, 49–52, https://doi.org/10.21241/ssoar.83031.

misinterpretation, negative attribution, and escalating conflict based on misunderstanding rather than genuine disagreement or incompatibility.[54] The permanent nature of digital records also means that negative assumptions formed in one context may persist and influence future interactions long after the original circumstances have changed.

Digital *tajassus* is a modern manifestation of the classical concept of spying, encompassing a complex ecosystem of surveillance behaviors that range from passive information gathering through social media stalking to active investigation using digital tools, data mining, and collaborative information sharing that can construct detailed profiles of individuals without their knowledge or consent.[55] The normalization of digital surveillance through both commercial data collection and social media culture has created environments where invasive information gathering is often considered acceptable or even expected, blurring traditional boundaries between public and private information.[56]

Practices such as accessing someone's social media accounts without permission, excessively monitoring someone's online activities, using spyware to spy on digital communications, or secretly collecting personal information through digital platforms constitute forms of digital *tajassus* that are prohibited in Islam. This prohibition aligns with the principles of privacy respect emphasized in Qurʾān Surah al-Ḥujurāt 49:12.[57] Such acts are classified as sinful (ḥarām) under Islamic law unless there is justifiable

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[54] Jennifer (M.I) Loh and Michael James Walsh, "Social Media Context Collapse: The Consequential Differences Between Context Collusion Versus Context Collision," *Social Media + Society* 7, no. 3 (July 1, 2021): 20563051211041650, https://doi.org/10.1177/20563051211041646.

[55] Tabitha Erlinda Rachmawati et al., "Tindakan Menguntit Dan Menyebarkan Data Pribadi Perspektif Maqasid Al-Shari'ah," *Ma'mal: Jurnal Laboratorium Syariah Dan Hukum* 4, no. 6 SE-Articles (December 12, 2023): 565–86, https://doi.org/10.15642/mal.v4i6.279.

[56] Nur Shazana Abdul Rani, Siti Nur Izyandiyana Ab Hadi, and Khairi Khairuddin, "From Scroll to Stalk: Analyzing Social Mediaâ€™s Impact on Teen Cyberstalking Patterns," *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science* 9, no. 13 (2025): 200–206.

[57] Aisah and Khusni Albar, "Telaah Nilai-Nilai Pendidikan Sosial Dari - Q.S Al Ḥujurāt: 11-13 Dalam Kajian Tafsir."

legal or communal necessity, such as state-sanctioned intelligence in criminal investigations.[58]

The development of information technology has facilitated digital *tajassus* practices, as someone's digital footprint can be easily accessed and monitored through various digital platforms. This raises new challenges in applying Islamic ethics in the digital era, where the boundary between public and private space becomes increasingly blurred.[59]

In contemporary reality, *tajassus* also appears in the form of hate speech, doxing, and cyber-surveillance, where individuals or groups deliberately search for the faults of others to disgrace them publicly. These behaviors violate both Islamic ethics and legal norms. The infamous case of the hacker "Bjorka" in Indonesia (2022), who leaked sensitive government and personal data, reflects the extent to which *tajassus* can destabilize public order and harm individuals.[60]

Islamic scholars emphasize that any *tajassus* lacking legitimate justification and driven by envy, curiosity (*kepo*), or personal vendetta is categorically forbidden. Instead, Muslims are encouraged to preoccupy themselves with self-correction rather than exposing the flaws of others. As al-Ghazālī emphasizes in *Iḥyā' ʿUlūm al-Dīn*, true piety includes guarding one's gaze and ears from matters that do not concern them.[61]

Thus, the digital manifestation of *tajassus*—from surveillance to social media stalking—requires critical ethical engagement from the Muslim community. While information technology can serve as a means of promoting justice, its misuse under the guise of suspicion or curiosity runs contrary to the ethical teachings of the Qurʾān and Sunnah.

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[58] Luthfi, "Tajassus Dalam Al-Qur'an Dan Relevansinya Terhadap Fenomena Media Sosial (Tinjauan Tafsir Al-Jami' Li Ahkam Al-Qur'an).", p. 57.

[59] Oktaviana, Cantika Nur; Mani, La;Lazuardi, Muhammad Azhar; Darmayanti, "MILLENIALS IN JAKARTA AND THEIR EXPERIENCES WITH CYBERBULLYING ON INSTAGRAM."

[60] Dista Amalia Arifah, "Kasus Cybercrime Di Indonesia," *Jurnal Bisnis Dan Ekonomi* 18, no. 2 (2011).

[61] al-Ghazālī, *Iḥyā' ʿUlūm Al-Dīn, Trans. Jamaluddin Al-Qosimi, Saripati Ihya' Ulumiddin*.

Digital *ghībah* represents perhaps the most visible and socially destructive manifestation of the prohibited behaviors, often occurring across social media, messaging apps, online forums, and even anonymous platforms. Online *ghībah* or digital gossip refers to the phenomenon of gossiping or discussing others' badness through digital platforms such as social media, online forums, instant messaging applications, and various other digital communication platforms.[62] This practice includes various forms of spreading negative information about someone through digital media, such as posts talking about others faults, negative comments on social media, spreading rumors through chat groups, making sarcastic or derogatory comments on someone's photo or post, creating contents that demeans others, or participating in "open confessions" or anonymous stories targeting individuals.

The digitalization era has enabled the spread of *ghībah* on a wider and faster scale through social media.[63] Unlike the traditional *ghībah* that is only heard by people present in a gathering. Additionally, online *ghībah* is also permanent in digital traces, so its negative impact can persist for a very long time.

Social media platforms have created new spaces for *ghībah* practices, where people can easily share negative information about others without mature consideration. The phenomenon of "call-out cultutre" or "cancel culture" on social media often becomes a venue for online *ghībah* practices, where someone's mistakes are publicly exposed without considering the long-term impact on their reputation and social life.[64]

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[62] Rachna and Rahul Varshney, "CYBERBULLYING AND CYBERSTALKING: BELONGINGS AND ANTICIPATION MEASURES IN INDIA," *ShodhKosh: Journal of Visual and Performing Arts* 5, no. 1 SE-Articles (June 30, 2024): 1469–1476, https://doi.org/10.29121/shodhkosh.v5.i1.2024.4289.

[63] Nurul Sidiqah and Syahidin Syahidin, "Spill the Tea: Fenomena *Ghī* Virtual Dalam Perspektif Islam Dan Kewarganegaraan."

[64] Nazil Mumtaz Dalimunthe, Maulana Andinata; Syam, Abdi Mubarak; Suhendar, Aris; Al-Mujtahid, "Deconstructing Islamic Cyberculture: Mitigating Inferiority and Cancel Culture in Virtual Space," *OPINI: Journal of Communication and Social Science* 1, no. 2 SE-Articles (July 25, 2024): 12–26, https://doi.org/10.70489/opini.v1i2.322.

The gamification elements present in many social media platforms create perverse incentives for engaging in digital *ghībah*, as negative content often generates higher engagement rates, more comments, and greater visibility than positive or neutral content. This creates what researchers' term "outrage economies" where platforms algorithmically promote content that generates strong emotional responses, including anger, disgust, and moral indignation, regardless of accuracy, fairness, or social consequences.

The pseudonymous or anonymous nature of many digital interactions reduces the social and personal consequences that traditionally served to limit *ghībah* behavior, enabling individuals to engage in negative communication about others without facing immediate social disapproval or relationship costs.[65] This disinhibition effect is compounded by the physical distance and temporal delay characteristic of digital communication, which reduces empathy and emotional connection with those being discussed while enabling more extreme and dehumanizing forms of negative communication than would typically occur in face-to-face contexts.

Thus, contemporary scholars have emphasized that *ghībah* in digital platforms can be even more dangerous than in face-to-face settings because of its reach, permanence, and amplification.[66] Unlike verbal gossip, digital *ghībah* can remain on the internet indefinitely, causing prolonged harm to a person's dignity and reputation.

In response to the increasing ethical challenges posed by digital communication, the Indonesian Council of Ulama (*Majelis Ulama Indonesia/MUI*) issued Fatwa No. 24 of 2017 concerning "Law and Guidelines for Social Media Interaction".[67] This fatwa explicitly addresses various online behaviors that are inconsistent with Islamic ethics,

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[65] Lasmini Maha, "Ghibah Virtual Dalam Media Sosial Menurut Imam Al-Qurtubi Dalam Tafsir Al-Jami'li Ahkam Al-Qur'an," *Al-I'jaz: Jurnal Kewahyuan Islam* 9, no. 1 (2023): 307–19.

[66] Nurul Sidiqah and Syahidin Syahidin, "Spill the Tea: Fenomena Ghibah Virtual Dalam Perspektif Islam Dan Kewarganegaraan."

[67] Majelis Ulama Indonesia, "Fatwa MUI Nomor 24 Tahun 2017 Tentang Hukum Dan Pedoman Bermuamalah Melalui Media Sosial" (Jakarta: Komisi Fatwa MUI, 2017), sec. IV.3.

including *ghībah* (backbiting), *namīmah* (slander), hoaxes, hate speech, and digital spying. This fatwa has underlined that *ghībah* via digital media retains the same ruling (*ḥukm*) as traditional backbiting: haram (prohibited), unless done in contexts permitted by Islamic law (e.g., seeking justice, warning against genuine harm, etc.).

Furthermore, the culture of digital voyeurism, online judging, and public shaming contributes to a toxic environment that undermines the Qurʾānic ideals of mercy, brotherhood, and self-restraint. In the age of virality, one careless comment can be amplified to thousands, thus magnifying the sin and its consequences. As such, online *ghībah* not only violates individual rights but also corrodes the ethical foundation of virtual communities. Muslims are urged to practice *ḥusn al-ẓann* (positive assumptions), digital modesty, and silence when they cannot speak good (*qaulan maʿrūfā*), as taught in Qurʾān Surah al-Isrāʾ:53 and other verses promoting ethical communication.[68]

[68] Raza et al., "Islamic Perspective on Social Media Ethics and Responsible Usage."

CHAPTER III

DATA PRESENTATION

A. Biography of Nouman Ali Khan

Nouman Ali Khan is an American Muslim preacher, author, and educator of Pakistani descent, born on May 4, 1978, in Berlin, Germany. Khan's father served as a diplomat for Pakistan, which necessitated frequent relocations and exposure to diverse cultural environments. He spent his early childhood in East Berlin before his family moved to Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, where he attended the Pakistan Embassy School from grades 2 to 8. Later, his family relocated to New York, United States, where Nouman experienced a period of religious doubt but eventually returned to Islam and became devoted to the study of the Qur'an and Arabic.[1]

Khan's educational journey reflects the complexity of multicultural upbringing. After completing his elementary education in Riyadh, he briefly returned to Pakistan for one year, where he continued his Arabic studies and secured a scholarship for ranking among the top 10 scores in the national Arabic studies board examinations in 1993. This achievement demonstrated his early aptitude for Arabic linguistics, which would become the foundation of his later scholarly work.

The family's subsequent move to New York during Khan's teenage years presented significant challenges. In an interview, Khan described feeling culturally displaced and struggling with his Islamic identity in a predominantly secular environment.[2] He attended high school in New York, where he encountered American culture and experienced what he later characterized as a period of spiritual confusion and questioning.

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[1] Aqsa Mehboob, "Nouman Ali Khan - Bio, Wiki, Age, Height, Social Media Accounts, Net Worth, Family, Hobbies, Interesting Facts, And More," celebrays, 2023, https://celebrays.com/nouman-ali-khan/ (accessed August 20, 2025).

[2] Towards Eternity, "Unknown Life Story of Nouman Ali Khan! – 'I Was An Atheist!,'" YouTube video, published October 26, 2024, 00:41:06, https://youtu.be/IgWlhlZaYkA?si=lWOJE8ZNKwkQhGZm (accessed July 3, 2025).

Khan pursued computer science studies at Nassau Community College, demonstrating his analytical mindset and technical aptitude, skills that would later prove instrumental in his innovative use of digital platforms for Islamic education and his understanding of contemporary communication dynamics. However, his true calling emerged through his continued study of Arabic and Quranic sciences. His academic background includes: Elementary Arabic Studies: Pakistan International School, Riyadh (1985-1992); Advanced Arabic Grammar: Self-study and formal training in Pakistan (1993); Computer Science: Nassau Community College, New York; Intensive Arabic Training: Under Dr. Abdus-Samie (1999-2006).

The most formative period in Khan's scholarly development began in 1999 when he encountered Dr. Abdus-Samie, founder and former principal of Quran College, Faisalabad, Pakistan. Dr. Abdus-Samie was touring the United States to deliver intensive lectures on Tafsir and Arabic studies when Khan began studying under him. Khan describes this mentorship as transformational, providing him with "a keen methodical understanding of Arabic grammar" and exposure to unique teaching methodologies. Under Dr. Abdus-Samie's guidance, Khan developed his systematic approach to Quranic analysis and learned to integrate traditional scholarship with contemporary pedagogical techniques. He also undertook the significant task of translating Dr. Abdus-Samie's work into English, making these teachings accessible to English-speaking students.[3]

From 1999 to 2006, Khan served as professor of Arabic at Nassau Community College, where he refined his teaching methodology and gained experience in academic instruction.[4] During this period, he taught Modern Standard and Classical Arabic to diverse audiences, accumulating over 10,000 students nationwide across various venues.

Khan's educational background and social associations have greatly influenced his distinctive style of interpretation. He not only has a deep knowledge of the Arabic

[3] Towards Eternity, “Unknown Life Story of Nouman Ali Khan! – ‘I Was An Atheist!’”

[4] LinkedIn, Company Bayyinah LLC, https://id.linkedin.com/company/bayyinah-llc, (accessed August 9, 2025)

language, but also skillfully uses linguistic and sociocultural approaches to explain the Qurʾānic messages in a contemporary context.[5] In his lectures, Khan often emphasizes the importance of understanding the structure of classical Arabic to uncover the hidden meaning of a word, while bridging that understanding with the social realities of modern society.

In 2005, Khan founded Bayyinah Institute with the revolutionary vision of making Arabic and Quranic studies accessible worldwide through innovative, affordable, and approachable programs. The institute, currently based in Dallas, Texas, represents Khan's commitment to democratizing Islamic education and making sophisticated scholarly content available to general audiences. Bayyinah Institute's mission reflects Khan's educational philosophy: "to make learning the Arabic language and the study of the Quran accessible worldwide in a way that is innovative, accessible, and approachable".[6] The institute offers various programs including:

- **Bayyinah TV**: Online video collection of Quranic and Arabic educational content
- **Dream Program**: Intensive Arabic and Quranic studies curriculum
- **Divine Speech**: Comprehensive Quranic literary analysis
- **Cover to Cover**: Systematic Quran study program

The recognition of Khan's influence extends beyond Muslim communities to include acknowledgment by international organizations and academic institutions. The Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Centre of Jordan has included him among the 500 most influential Muslims worldwide, reflecting his impact on contemporary Islamic thought and education.[7] His lectures are regularly featured at major Islamic conferences,

[5] Yubas Muhammad Ilham, "Analisis Wacana Teun A. Van Dijk Terhadap Buku Qur'anReview 'You Are Loved.,'" *El-Waroqoh* 7, no. 2 (2023): 160–78.

[6] Nouman Ali Khan and Sharif Randhawa, *Divine Speech: Exploring the Quran as Literature* (Bayyinah Institute, 2016), vii.

[7] Khan and Randhawa, vii.

universities, and community events across multiple continents, demonstrating the global appeal and scholarly respect that his work has achieved.

His video lectures and online presence have reached millions of viewers worldwide, with content translated into multiple languages including Indonesian, Turkish, and Bengali. Particularly his YouTube channel, [Nouman Ali Khan – Official – Bayyinah], has reached more than 2.6 million subscribers with more than 2.100 videos, and almost reach 298.4 million total views since joined in February 20, 2009.[8] His YouTube presence includes multiple series and formats, ranging from intensive linguistic analysis of specific verses or chapters to thematic explorations of Quranic concepts and practical guidance for contemporary Muslim life in various social and cultural contexts. This global reach demonstrates the universal appeal of his interpretative methodology and teaching style.

The tafsir methodology used by Nouman Ali Khan can be classified as a combination of linguistic interpretation and contextual thematic interpretation, with an emphasis on the internal coherence and literary sophistication—analyzing the semantics and morphology of words—of the Quranic text while exploring contemporary applications that maintain authenticity to original meanings and intentions. He also often raises ethical, social and psychological issues in his explanations, so that the tafsir he produces is not merely normative, but reflective and applicable.[9] Khan's approach to Quranic interpretation reflects sophisticated understanding of both classical exegetical traditions and contemporary hermeneutical challenges, demonstrating particular expertise in linguistic analysis that draws from traditional Arabic grammar, rhetoric, and stylistics while incorporating insights from modern linguistics, cognitive science, and communication theory.

Khan's interpretive style is also characterized by his ability to simplify complex concepts into messages that are easily digestible by lay listeners. This is seen in his use

[8] Nouman Ali Khan – Official – Bayyinah, YouTube Channel, https://youtube.com/@bayyinah.

[9] Ilham Washfi, "Konsep Reconnect with The Qur'an Nouman Ali Khan: Kajian *Tafsir* Al-Qur'an Di Media Sosial," *AL ITQAN: Jurnal Studi Al-Qur'an* 8, no. 1 (2022): 75–106.

of everyday analogies and concrete examples in his talks, which make the teachings of the Qur'an feel close and practical.[10] Khan's published works include several influential books that reflect his commitment to making sophisticated Islamic concepts accessible to contemporary audiences without sacrificing scholarly rigor or doctrinal authenticity. "Revive Your Heart: Putting Life in Perspective" explores practical spirituality and personal development from an Islamic perspective, while "Divine Speech: Exploring the Quran as Literature" provides detailed analysis of Quranic literary features and rhetorical strategies that demonstrate the text's linguistic sophistication and aesthetic dimensions. These publications, along with numerous other literature, audio and video lecture series, have established Khan as a significant voice in contemporary Islamic discourse and education.

B. Methodological Characteristics of Nouman Ali Khan's Interpretive Approach

The methodological framework that underlies Khan's interpretive approach demonstrates sophisticated integration of traditional Islamic exegetical principles with contemporary hermeneutical insights and pedagogical strategies that reflect both deep scholarship and practical concern for effective communication with diverse contemporary audiences.[11] His methodology can be analyzed across several interconnected dimensions that collectively define his distinctive contribution to contemporary Quranic interpretation and Islamic education.

The linguistic dimension of Khan's methodology reflects extensive training in classical Arabic linguistics combined with contemporary insights from modern linguistic theory and communication analysis. His approach to textual analysis demonstrates mastery of traditional Arabic grammar (*naḥw*), morphology (*ṣarf*), and rhetoric (*balāgha*) while incorporating insights from modern linguistics regarding semantic fields, discourse

[10] Mahbub Ghozali and Alfi Ifadatul Umami, "Model Penafsiran Quraish Shihab Terhadap Pemaknaan Dan Pemahaman Al-Qur'an Dalam Chanel Youtube Najwa Shihab," *Substantia: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Ushuluddin* 24, no. 2 (2022): 123–39, https://doi.org/10.22373/substantia.v24i2.14457.

[11] Hudzaifah, "TAFSIR AL-QUR'AN KOSMOPOLITAN: TELAAH ATAS PENAFSIRAN NOUMAN ALI KHAN."

analysis, and pragmatics that enhance understanding of how Quranic language functions both as literary art and practical communication.[12] This combination enables him to identify subtle meanings, literary devices, and rhetorical strategies that may be missed by approaches that rely solely on traditional or contemporary methods.[13]

Khan's attention to lexical precision reflects deep appreciation for the Quran's linguistic sophistication and his conviction that careful attention to word choice, grammatical structure, and stylistic features reveals meanings and emphases that are essential for accurate understanding and contemporary application. His analysis frequently involves detailed examination of root meanings, morphological variations, and contextual usage that demonstrates how specific word choices contribute to overall meaning and rhetorical impact in ways that generic or approximate translations may obscure.

The contextual dimension of Khan's methodology involves systematic attention to both the immediate historical context (*asāb al-nuzūl*) and the broader thematic context within the Quranic corpus, reflecting his commitment to understanding individual verses within their proper historical and textual frameworks while identifying universal principles that transcend specific temporal and cultural circumstances.[14] His approach to historical context goes beyond merely recounting traditional narratives about occasions of revelation to explore the social dynamics, cultural tensions, and practical challenges that the verses addressed in their original context.[15]

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[12] Khan, *Revive Your Heart*.

[13] Ayu Nur Azizah and Irta Fitriana, "A Case Study of Qs. Al-Ikhlas and Qs. Al-Bayyinah Tafseer Delivered by Nouman Ali Khan (A Pragmatics Approach)," *Diglossia: Jurnal Kajian Ilmiah Kebahasaan Dan Kesusastraan* 10, no. 1 (2018): 48–59.

[14] Nouman Ali Khan - Official - Bayyinah, "Ustadh Nouman's Study Methodology," YouTube video, published January 8, 2014, 00:23:09, https://youtu.be/kU99HsF_ysc?si=HSml5m0q7KjXKp7D (accessed August 28, 2025).

[15] Moh. Azwar Hairul, "Tafsir Al-Qur'an Di Youtube," *Al-Fanar: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Tafsir* 2, no. 2 (2019): 197–213, https://doi.org/10.33511/alfanar.v2n2.197-213.

This contextual analysis enables Khan to identify parallels and applications that remain relevant to contemporary circumstances while avoiding anachronistic interpretation that imposes contemporary concerns on ancient texts. His ability to bridge historical and contemporary contexts reflects sophisticated hermeneutical awareness of both the temporal distance between text and interpreter and the universal dimensions of human experience that enable meaningful dialogue across cultural and historical boundaries.[16]

The pedagogical dimension of Khan's methodology demonstrates deliberate integration of educational theory and communication strategy with scholarly content, reflecting his commitment to making sophisticated Islamic concepts accessible to contemporary audiences without sacrificing intellectual rigor or doctrinal authenticity. His lectures demonstrate awareness of diverse learning styles, attention spans, and educational backgrounds among his audiences, leading to instructional strategies that combine detailed analysis with practical application, abstract concepts with concrete examples, and scholarly content with engaging delivery.

Khan's use of contemporary examples, analogies, and references demonstrates his understanding of effective cross-cultural communication while maintaining authentic connection to Islamic sources and principles. His ability to illustrate abstract or unfamiliar concepts through reference to contemporary experiences, technology, and social dynamics enables audiences to grasp meanings and implications that might otherwise remain inaccessible while creating bridges between traditional Islamic teachings and contemporary life challenges.

The technological dimension of Khan's methodology reflects strategic use of digital media platforms to extend the reach and impact of traditional Islamic education while adapting content and delivery methods to the affordances and constraints of digital

[16] IDHA NURHAMIDAH et al., “A Qur’anic Discourse Analysis: Exploring Values in Nouman Ali Khan’s Amazed by the Qur’an.,” *3L: Southeast Asian Journal of English Language Studies* 31, no. 2 (2025).

communication environments. His YouTube presence demonstrates sophisticated understanding of digital media dynamics, including attention to visual presentation, audio quality, content organization, and audience engagement strategies that maximize educational effectiveness within digital formats.[17]

This technological integration goes beyond merely transferring traditional lecture formats to digital platforms to include deliberate adaptation of content structure, pacing, and interaction patterns that account for the different attention patterns, consumption habits, and social dynamics that characterize digital media engagement compared to traditional classroom or mosque-based education.

Within the Striking Examples series, these methodological characteristics manifest in a structured yet dynamic interpretive sequence. Each episode opens with a concise reading of the target verse—often a vivid *mathal* (parable)—followed by a brief overview of its textual position and occasion of revelation. Khan then conducts a word-by-word exegesis, highlighting key terms (e.g., *ghībah*, *tajassus*) and exploring their semantic ranges through classical dictionaries and modern linguistic parallels. Next, he integrates scriptural cross-referencing (*tafsīr bil-Qur'an*), invoking parallel verses to reinforce thematic unity, and cites classical commentators (al-Ṭabarī, al-Rāzī) alongside contemporary linguistic studies to validate his insights. The episode culminates in a practical application segment: Khan illustrates how the verse's warning—such as equating backbiting to "eating one's dead brother's flesh"—speaks to modern challenges like social-media gossip and digital privacy. A closing invocation and exhortation invite personal reflection and behavioral change. Through this blend of classical rigor, linguistic depth, and real-world relevance, Khan's interpretive approach in Striking Examples models a method that is at once scholarly, accessible, and ethically transformative.[18]

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[17] Mehboob, "Nouman Ali Khan - Bio, Wiki, Age, Height, Social Media Accounts, Net Worth, Family, Hobbies, Interesting Facts, And More."

[18] Nouman Ali Khan - Official - Bayyinah, "Striking Examples 2.0," YouTube Series, 2025, https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLutdSTmJ7bAJGw4eW56Qe46F257dL_cG9&si=MMzUiW2lw94-Xz5G (accessed August 20, 2025).

C. Nouman Ali Khan's Interpretation of Qur'an Surah al-Ḥujurāt Verse 12

Khan's interpretation of Qur'an Surah al-Ḥujurāt 49:12 specifically presented in episodes 24 and 25 of the "Striking Examples 2.0" series in his YouTube channel, namely "*Consuming a Brother's Flesh [49:12] | Ep 24 | Striking Examples in the Qur'an| Nouman Ali Khan*" (March 25, 2025) and "*Feeding on a Brother's Corpse [49:12] | Ep 25 | Striking Examples in the Qur'an | Nouman Ali Khan*" (March 27, 2025). This series is a continuation of the original series "Striking Examples from The Quran"—a daily lecture series during Ramadan 2024—exploring the parables and metaphors from the Qur'an.

1. Historical Context and Revelation Circumstances

Khan provides detailed historical context, explaining that the verse was revealed during a critical period after the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah when tribal conversions to Islam created unprecedented challenges. He states:

> "After Hudaybiyyah, people are joining and there's no risk to them in fact they're joining the winning team they already see the dominoes are falling in the favor of Islam so now it's becoming the popular religion and tribe upon tribe upon tribe is coming"[19]

Khan explains that this expansion created a fundamental challenge for the Muslim community.

> "A large majority of the Muslims are people that never struggled alongside the prophet... a good number of them are not Muslim because they thought about it themselves. A good number of them are Muslim because their tribe leader became Muslim or the grandpa became Muslim and the whole family went with it so a lot of these are now Muslim by proxy."[20]

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[19] Nouman Ali Khan - Official - Bayyinah, "Consuming a Brother's Flesh [49:12] | Ep 24 | Striking Examples in the Quran," YouTube video, published March 25, 2025, 00:49:30, 06:34-06:50, https://www.youtube.com/live/OW4PmrXxfKU?si=Q2MIl51Zjpaw3KT_ (accessed July 14, 2025).

[20] Nouman Ali Khan - Official - Bayyinah, 07:32–07:58.

The large number of those who become Muslim after Hudaybiyyah were merely following their tribal leaders without individual commitment or understanding of Islamic values. This historical context is crucial because it reveals that the verse addresses Muslims who carried tribal biases, rivalries, and social hierarchies into their new faith. Khan describes this as creating "a completely different DNA of the ummah" where traditional tribal loyalties needed to be transformed into Islamic brotherhood.

Khan's analysis reveals a critical distinction between those who earned their Islam through struggle and those who inherited Islam through social conversion. This context explains why the verse addresses tribal prejudices and inherited biases that threatened to destroy Islamic unity. Khan emphasizes that these new Muslims brought with them centuries of tribal animosity and prejudicial thinking that required immediate address to prevent community fragmentation. This demographic shift created internal vulnerabilities that threatened the community's cohesion from within.[21]

Khan also mentioned that in this context, this verse, more broadly Surah al- Ḥujurāt and other surah that revealed after the treaty of Hudaibiyyah such as al-Fatḥ,is almost like the first surah or the first exposure for a lot of people who became Muslim. Allah SWT taught them something new, it is even the opposite of their habits as tribes. For examples: Allah and the Prophet Muhammad always come first and have higher authority than the tribe leaders, it is forbidden to raise your voice above the prophet’s voice, the believers are brothers no matter what their tribal identity or nationality and they are loving toward each other, believers don’t make fun of each other, and prohibition of *ẓann*, *tajassus*, and *ghībah*.[22]

[21] Nouman Ali Khan - Official - Bayyinah, “Consuming a Brother’s Flesh [49:12] | Ep 24 | Striking Examples in the Quran.”

[22] Nouman Ali Khan - Official - Bayyinah.

He also emphasizing how the early Muslim community in Madinah faced challenges related to social cohesion, cultural integration, and interpersonal conflict management that parallel many contemporary challenges in diverse Muslim communities and broader multicultural societies.

2. The Three-Stage Progression of Social Sins

The linguistic dimension of Khan's interpretation provides detailed analysis of key terms and concepts,[23] beginning with the opening address "*yā ayyuhā alladhīna āmanū*" (O you who believe), which he analyzes not merely as a conventional address but as a specific appeal to the community of faith that carries implications for collective responsibility, shared identity, and mutual accountability in ethical behavior. Khan concludes that before calling for all humanity, Allah calls the believers, as they supposed to be an example for all humanity. [24] Khan emphasizes how this address situates the subsequent commands within the framework of religious commitment and community membership, making adherence to these ethical principles a matter of faith integrity rather than merely social convention or personal preference.

a. Stage One: *Ẓann* (Assumption)

Khan's analysis of the first prohibition, "*ijtanibū kathīran min al-ẓann*" (stay away from assumption). The word *ijtanibū* comes from the word *janb* which means the side of something, and *wazn ifta'ala* suggest you have to make an effort on something. Thus, khan concludes that it means to avoid, with the active mind and effort, something that right next (very close) to you.[25] He defines *ẓann* as making false assumptions about people, making

[23] Hudzaifah, "TAFSIR AL-QUR'AN KOSMOPOLITAN: TELAAH ATAS PENAFSIRAN NOUMAN ALI KHAN."

[24] Khan, *Revive Your Heart*, chap. 4: Assumption.

[25] Khan, chap. 4: Assumption.

premature assumptions.[26] Khan states that assumption is an essential part of our survival, we can't live without assumptions. He gives out example of a child runs down the stairs and trips then he learns and assumes the next time he runs down the stairs he is going to trip, so he comes down slowly, he learned from experience.[27]

Khan emphasizes in this verse Allah isn't talking about all assumption but the assumption about people as the entire surah is discussing about how to deal with people.[28] Khan's analysis of negative assumptions transcends simple prohibition to reveal the psychological and spiritual mechanisms underlying this social sin. His interpretation demonstrates how assumptions function as the foundational step in a progressive chain of destructive behaviors. He looks at this qualitatively rather than quantitatively. He states:

> "Stay away in a great way as much as you possibly can from assumption. Stay away from assumption because some assumption is sinful or sin itself."[29]

He emphasizes that the verse prohibits not all thinking. He said that a bad intention that didn't act on it is not sinful, there is even a hadith supporting it. But there are things in mind that considered sinful in Qur'an, even if we didn't act on them. Specifically, the thought about someone else that are evil in nature, condescending in nature, because it can be dangerous if we use them to judge others before they even do anything because all of those biases. Khan notes that these assumptions exist in the mind but are nonetheless sinful because they poison the heart and prepare the ground for

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[26] Nouman Ali Khan - Official - Bayyinah, "Feeding on a Brother's Corpse [49:12] | Ep 25 | Striking Examples in the Quran," YouTube video, published March 27, 2025, 00:58:03, 09:54-09:59, https://www.youtube.com/live/0Nsb3paBuVA?si=v0nLnKmZvlzNYNIt (accessed July 15, 2025).

[27] Nouman Ali Khan - Official - Bayyinah, 03:04–03:30.

[28] Nouman Ali Khan - Official - Bayyinah, 04:49–04:59.

[29] Nouman Ali Khan - Official - Bayyinah, "Consuming a Brother's Flesh [49:12] | Ep 24 | Striking Examples in the Quran," 39:02–39:10.

further violations. He made example on the case of ʿĀʾishah raḍiya Allāhu ʿanhā in Surah al-Nūr 24:12. He states:

> "How come when you heard something about ʿĀʾishah raḍiya Allāhu ʿanhā the believing men and believing women didn't immediately think something better. What is Allah criticizing? What people thought"[30]

Khan then notes that Allah began with the word "*kathīran*" (stay away from a huge number of these assumption), then He said "*inna ba'ḍ al-ẓann ithm*" (some of them are sin). That phrase receives particular attention in Khan's analysis, as he explores the criteria for distinguishing between legitimate caution and sinful suspicion. He argues that the determining factor lies not in the mere presence of suspicious thoughts, which may be involuntary and natural, but in the cultivation, persistence, and acting upon negative assumptions without proper verification or justification. The word *ithm* also given attention by Khan, he said it is also mean *jazā'* (recompense or compensation), implying that it is not just any sin, but sin that you will see the consequences of it. He gives the example of the consequence such as the brotherhood being destroyed.[31]

b. Stage Two: *Tajassus* (Spying)

Khan's interpretation of the second prohibition, "*wa lā tajassasū*" (and do not spy on each other). He defines *tajassus* as spying and snooping, he says spying is snooping and being nosy into other people in other people's business.[32] He finds the word *tajassus* interesting, as he states:

> "The word spying is interesting, they used to use "*jassal badan*", "*massa*", when you, when you touch and you're trying to feel the pulse and you're trying to see if the person has a fever or this or that

[30] Nouman Ali Khan - Official - Bayyinah, 40:05–40:20.
[31] Khan, *Revive Your Heart*, chap. 4: Assumption.
[32] Nouman Ali Khan - Official - Bayyinah, "Feeding on a Brother's Corpse [49:12] | Ep 25 | Striking Examples in the Quran," 10:00–10:07.

> or the other. Even in the ancient medicine they used to try to like squeeze the muscle a little bit to figure out what's going on with the body and that was called *Jass*." [33]

According to the explanation of the term *jass*, Khan concludes that the idea is trying to get better idea. Khan's treatment of *tajassus* reveals both its etymological roots and its progressive nature as an escalation from negative assumptions. Khan provides detailed linguistic examination:

> "The word [*jassas*] was used in the Arabic language for... when the lion extends its claws and digs inside the prey like it digs into the deer and the claws go through the skin and penetrate into the flesh"[34]

This imagery reveals the aggressive, invasive nature of *tajassus*. Khan also commented that there is logical progression from assumption to spying, the first thing to comes is an assumption then there comes the urge to prove the assumption to others or even to yourself by committing *tajassus*. Khan also emphasizes the addictive quality of spying:

> "You're not just spying because 'oh you tried to spy a little bit', you didn't find anything, you're not done yet because you didn't dig deep enough, so you're going to claw more and claw more and claw more and dig in until you find something"[35]

c. Stage Three: *Ghībah* (Backbiting)

Khan's analysis of the third prohibition, "*wa lā yaghtab ba'ḍukum ba'ḍan*" (and do not backbite one another). He says:

> "don't start slandering or backbiting each other, don't talk behind each other's backs, don't criticize each other behind each other's backs"[36]

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[33] Nouman Ali Khan - Official - Bayyinah, "Consuming a Brother's Flesh [49:12] | Ep 24 | Striking Examples in the Quran," 43:06–43:30.

[34] Nouman Ali Khan - Official - Bayyinah, "Feeding on a Brother's Corpse [49:12] | Ep 25 | Striking Examples in the Quran," 14:21–14:41.

[35] Nouman Ali Khan - Official - Bayyinah, 14:52–25:06.

[36] Nouman Ali Khan - Official - Bayyinah, "Consuming a Brother's Flesh [49:12] | Ep 24 | Striking Examples in the Quran," 46:25–46:30.

Khan states that the word *ghībah* is closer to gossiping in the contemporary context, so he defines it as gossiping about somebody or talking behind someone's back. Khan's analysis of *ghībah* focuses on both its psychological appeal and its ultimately destructive nature. This final stage involves verbalizing negative information about others in their absence. Khan also explains the cycle of these social sins, he remarks:

> "You have an assumption; you try to get information be impartial but you think it's enough for you to start talking about them. The first sin was the sin of the mind and the Heart 'assumptions', the second sin spying was a sin of the eyes and ears the third sin when you start talking about them is what oh your heart is done….all done in this cycle and by the way when you start talking about them other people are listening yes those people develop an assumption they do their own spying and then they do their own and then this becomes a cancer cycle that just metastasizes and grows and grows and grows and grows and becomes an entire society and you're just ripping each other apart just tearing each other to shreds this and this becomes an entertaining thing for people."[37]

The metaphorical language that follows, "*a yuḥibbu aḥadukum an ya'kula laḥma akhīhi maytan fa karihtumūh*" (would one of you love to eat the flesh of his brother lying dead? You would hate it), receives detailed analysis as Khan explores both its emotional impact and its deeper implications for understanding the spiritual and social consequences of backbiting behavior. Gossip, in the analogy of this verse, is equated with the disgusting act of eating the flesh of one's own dead brother.[38] Khan highlights that instead of using the phrase "isn't it true that you wouldn't love to do that?", Allah said "would you love to do that?". He analyzes that the phrase isn't something expected to be used in such an imagery action.

[37] Nouman Ali Khan - Official - Bayyinah, 46:33–47:33.

[38] Waqi'atul Hasanah and Hartono Hartono, "Analisis Larangan *Ghībah* Dalam Surah Al-Ḥujurāt Ayat 12 Pendekatan Fenomologi Sosial," *As-Syifa: Journal of Islamic Studies and History* 3, no. 1 (2024): 43–54.

He states that the phrase selected making it affirmative statement, and it's almost a condemnation. He states:

> "it's as if saying you know you're already doing it right, you love it, you love it, you love what you're doing….and does one of you not hate does that does not any of you hate that you should do this no no love was used as if Allah is saying the one doing this is actually loving it, they're loving it this is a profound statement"[39]

Khan also provides some examples of the progression of social sins and reveals how *ghībah* creates addictive patterns:

> "This cycle is very enjoyable for the person who start. It started in their head and they were feeding off of their rage, the moment they captured evidence they tasted it; they could taste blood they're like "I got this guy, now I got him." And now when they're able to spread that that filth to others now they know that other people are consuming it which means now they're going to feel what I feel I'm going to feel validated"

He argues that this graphic metaphor is designed to create visceral rejection of *ghībah* while highlighting how such behavior violates fundamental human dignity and social bonds that are essential for community cohesion and individual well-being. And the irony is there are people that actually love it. Khan also mentions the phrase 'juicy gossip' that used in this modern era that describes exactly what it is, how the gossips are considered very appealing and desirable.[40]

Khan explains that the idea of eating the dead is very graphic, it is something disgusting to do. Though cannibalism does happen, for example in a plane crash, someone forced to eat the dead because there is no food and it is a life and dead situation. Even if that person survived, he would

[39] Nouman Ali Khan - Official - Bayyinah, "Feeding on a Brother's Corpse [49:12] | Ep 25 | Striking Examples in the Quran," 09:00–09:36.

[40] Nouman Ali Khan - Official - Bayyinah, 19:29-19:48.

want to hide that he has eaten another human or else he would be isolated by the society. Khan states:

> "The irony of it is this guy who's doing the *ghībah* who's doing this *ẓann* and *tajassus* and *ghībah* is going around talking about someone, so they can be excluded from society, they can be kicked out from the brotherhood, they can be ostracized, they can be isolated, 'don't be near this person he's not a trustworthy person', 'this is not a good woman', 'this is not a good person', but actually who are they truly? who are, their behavior is more disgusting than anything they're doing *ghībah,* they're actually eating and they're not eating out of disgust or out of compulsion or out of survival they're eating it because they love it"[41]

The significance of specifying one's "brother", Allah didn't say "*laḥma ahad*" or just mention a dead animal, it would have been a disgusting example already, but Allah said *"laḥma akhīhi maytan*". This highlights the betrayal of trust and violation of sacred bonds involved in *ghībah*. Khan explains:

> "If it was any other human being it was disgusting enough to do it to your own brother now you aren't just a despicable human being you are, you can never be trusted because you did that to your own brother".[42]

Khan also mentions the historical context of cannibalism, which was common among extreme enemies as a show of extreme hatred in pre-Islamic Arabia. He states:

> "Allah is using the same thing for the exact opposite, the far extreme is your own brother you're doing it to, that's the far extreme. And Allah is saying now you're treating your brother as the people in Jahilia would treat their worst worst worst enemy"[43]

Khan also adds that this verse is describing the endless hunger and appetite for *ghībah*, because in reality, even if two brothers have a fight and

[41] Nouman Ali Khan - Official - Bayyinah, 20:39-21:20.
[42] Nouman Ali Khan - Official - Bayyinah, 21:56-22:10.
[43] Nouman Ali Khan - Official - Bayyinah, 24:25–24:40.

didn't talk to each other, then one of them died usually the other one would feel remorse and regret the time he didn't talk and fight with his brother. Khan states:

> "Now imagine a scenario he finds out his brother died and he goes and everybody else is crying and making dua and he's biting into the corpse can you imagine the sickness the detestable sickness that's being described".[44]

Khan explains that the dead brother "can't defend himself," parallel to how victims of *ghībah* are often unaware and unable to respond. Khan also mentions that *ghībah* is an act of cowardice, he states:

> "If I was talking about you and you walked in the room all of a sudden you had so much to say I had so much to say about …. I turn around all of a sudden is my mouth running more or less? all of a sudden 'oh how's it going Ramadan how's, how's your Ramadan why did my tone change I was so brave a second ago I had so much to say you know what that means I can only talk about this guy when he's not there and can't defend himself."[45]

Through the explanation of these passages, Nouman Ali Khan not only provides deep linguistic meanings, but also contextualizes them with current popular culture phenomena.

Another major theme in Khan's interpretation focuses on the concept of human dignity and the violation that these behaviors represent to fundamental Islamic principles regarding the respect owed to all human beings regardless of their status, beliefs, or behavior. Khan emphasizes that the prohibition against these behaviors is not merely about maintaining social harmony but about recognizing and protecting the inherent worth and dignity that Islam attributes to every human being.[46] Khan explains that Allah is not trying to gross you out by comparing backbiting to eating dead flesh of your brother. He's showing you what you're actually

[44] Nouman Ali Khan - Official - Bayyinah, 29:56-30:15.
[45] Nouman Ali Khan - Official - Bayyinah, 35:25–35:55.
[46] Nouman Ali Khan - Official - Bayyinah, 27:50-28:05.

doing when you talk about someone behind their back. You're consuming them, you're feeding off their reputation, their dignity, their honor. And they can't defend themselves because they're not there—they're like a dead person who can't fight back. This is about human dignity. This is about treating people the way Allah wants them to be treated.

This emphasis on human dignity extends to Khan's analysis of digital behaviors, where he argues that the apparent anonymity and distance of online interaction can lead people to dehumanize others and treat them in ways that violate basic principles of respect and consideration. In the end of the verse "*fattaqullāh*, *innallāha tawwābur-rahīm*", Khan translates it as "be mindful of Allah, Allah is accepting *tawba*". Regarding this phrase Khan highlights that Allah did not say "make *tawba*, Allah accepts *tawba*", but instead "have taqwa, Allah accepts *tawba*". He explains:

> "Having *taqwa* means you'll be careful from now on and when you're careful, if you're careful from now on that itself is a *tawba*. It's not 'Ya Allah forgive me'. No. now you're going to show Allah you're going to be careful and when you show Allah that, that is Allah accepting your *tawba*."[47]

According to Nouman Ali Khan, Qurʾān Surah al-Ḥujurāt 49:12 is not just a prohibition against three despicable behaviors, prejudice, *tajassus*, and *ghībah*, but a very profound social guideline for Muslims. He explains that this verse is placed in a Surah that talks about social ethics, so its main context is to form a Muslim society that is harmonious, full of trust, and maintains mutual honor. In his view, Allah SWT structures this verse in stages, starting from the root of the problem (prejudice), progressing to active action (*tajassus*), and then to the most obvious form (*ghībah*).[48]

Khan emphasizes that these three prohibitions are interrelated psychologically and socially. Prejudice that is allowed to grow will encourage

[47] Nouman Ali Khan - Official - Bayyinah, 56:45-57:08.
[48] Nouman Ali Khan - Official - Bayyinah, 51:51-51:58.

someone to investigate or spy, and the result of that investigation can lead to negative talk behind someone else's back. Thus, this verse is not just prohibiting a specific action, but rather pointing out the chain of causation that must be broken in the first place in order to maintain social harmony. It also shows that the choice of words and the arrangement of the verse reflect the importance of guarding the mind and tongue in relations between individuals.[49]

Khan's era is also very relevant to today's digital life. He highlights that prejudice now emerges more quickly due to access to incomplete information on social media, while *tajassus* and gossip are increasingly practiced unknowingly through digital features such as private messages, public comments and viral posts. For Khan, this verse is evidence that the Qur'ān has anticipated social dynamics across the ages, and provides universal moral principles that can be applied in any context, including modern digital interactions.

By emphasizing the interconnection between the verse's structure, moral message and social reality, Khan wants to encourage Muslims to not only understand the text textually, but also reflectively and contextually.[50] He considers that Qurʾān Surah al-Ḥujurāt 49:12 is a representation of the values of prudence, respect for privacy, and social responsibility, all of which are highly relevant in today's society. Therefore, understanding this verse deeply is an important step in building an ethical and civilized Muslim civilization, both in the real and virtual worlds.

D. Ethical Implications of Q.S. al-Ḥujurāt Verse 12 in the View of Nouman Ali Khan

Nouman Ali Khan emphasizes that Qurʾān Surah al-Ḥujurāt 49:12 has profound ethical implications for individual and community life. He views this verse not only as a ritualistic prohibition, but as a practical guide to building healthy, fair and respectful

[49] Khan, *Revive Your Heart*, chap. 4: Assumption.

[50] Washfi, "Konsep Reconnect with The Qur'an Nouman Ali Khan: Kajian Tafsir Al-Qur'an Di Media Sosial."

social relations. For Khan, maintaining prejudice, not spying and avoiding gossip are the first steps to creating a community based on security and mutual trust.

In his lectures, Khan often relates this verse to the phenomenon where Muslims often slip into destructive digital behaviors, such as spreading disgrace, publicly shaming others, or violating privacy without guilt. He criticized the social media culture that encourages people to feel free to comment on, judge or expose others' private matters just for the sake of popularity or online engagement. According to him, such actions go directly against the spirit of Qurʾān Surah al-Ḥujurāt 49:12, which emphasizes the importance of maintaining the honor and dignity of fellow human beings.[51]

Another implication highlighted by Khan is the need to internalize Qurʾānic values in daily behavior, especially in the use of information technology. He invites Muslims to make the Qurʾān a source of digital ethics, where every social media action must pass moral and spiritual considerations. Principles such as *tabayyun* (clarification before judging), *satr al-ʻuyub* (covering others' disgrace), and *husn al-ẓann* (prejudice), he said, are concrete reflections of this verse that need to be revived in the era of the internet and online media.

Khan also said that violating the principles in this verse not only has implications for relationships between individuals, but also damages the vertical relationship with Allah SWT. He explained that the Qurʾān describes gossip as if one were eating the flesh of his dead brother, an extreme image to show how despicable it is. Therefore, guarding one's tongue and attitude, both in person and digitally, is part of obedience to Allah and a reflection of the quality of faith.

Thus, in Nouman Ali Khan's view, Qurʾān Surah al-Ḥujurāt 49:12 is not just a verse that talks about verbal ethics, but about social ethics, spirituality and moral responsibility in all forms of human interaction, including in the digital world. This verse

[51] Nouman Ali Khan - Official - Bayyinah, "Feeding on a Brother's Corpse [49:12] | Ep 25 | Striking Examples in the Quran," 26:54–28:40.

is a very relevant ethical basis for building a more polite, empathetic and responsible Muslim digital culture.[52]

[52] Raza et al., "Islamic Perspective on Social Media Ethics and Responsible Usage."

CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS

A. The Progressive Nature of Digital Social Sins

Nouman Ali Khan's interpretation of Qurʾān Surah Al-Hujurāt 49:12 provides a remarkably prescient framework for understanding social sins in the Society 5.0 era, where individuals are hyper-connected through digital platforms. In his detailed analysis, Khan traces a clear progression—from *sū'al-ẓann* (negative assumptions) to *tajassus* (spying) to *ghībah* (backbiting)—showing how each state erodes trust and dignity. This sequence mirrors the way technology can transform private moral lapses into systemic harms: an offhand assumption becomes an algorithmic profile, covert surveillance morphs into pervasive data harvesting, and whispered gossip explodes into viral defamation.

The echo chamber dynamics described by Cinelli et al. (2021) bring this progression into sharp relief. Their comparative study of Facebook, Twitter, Reddit, and Gab, demonstrates how homophilic clustering and algorithmic bias create tightly knit groups of like-minded users.[1] Within these clusters, repeated exposure to similar content intensifies negative assumptions, normalizes surveillant behaviors, and accelerates the spread of harmful rumors—effectively systematizing *suʾ al-ẓann*, digital *tajassus*, and amplified *ghībah*. This emergent network effect—where a small seed of misinformation triggers broader cascades as it resonates within polarized clusters—demonstrates how individual lapses in judgment can aggregate into society-wide harms, reinforcing and escalating the very "social sins" that Qur'an 49:12 condemns.

The historical context Khan provides is particularly relevant: Khan shows the similarity of the majority of Muslims after Hudaybiyyah and the reality of Muslims in this modern era where much of them didn't have *tarbiya* and being Muslims merely

[1] Cinelli et al., "The Echo Chamber Effect on Social Media."

because inheritance, because their parents and grandparents are Muslims.[2] The lack of the depth in religion makes Muslims nowadays just like the tribes, who fight with each other mostly because of superiority and bias or negative assumption. Which now not only physical and face-to-face but also digitally through digital media. And just as the post-Hudaybiyyah period saw rapid expansion with insufficient spiritual formation, the Society 5.0 era witness rapid technological adoption without corresponding ethical development. Khan's insight that "the biggest threat to Islam after Hudaybiyyah are the Muslims" parallels how the greatest ethical challenges in Society 5.0 come not from external opposition but from internal misuse of technology by those who should know better.

B. Algorithmic Bias as Systematized *Sū' al- Ẓann*

1. Institutional Prejudice in Digital Systems

Khan's analysis of negative assumptions provides a comprehensive framework for understanding algorithmic bias as a technological manifestation of *sū' al-ẓann*. His description of how individuals "read a bad intention into every action this person is doing"[3] directly parallels how machine learning algorithms make systematized inferences about individuals' character, creditworthiness, or potential behavior based on limited data points.[4]

Research on artificial intelligence ethics from Islamic perspectives confirms this parallel. As noted in contemporary Islamic scholarship, "AI algorithms trained on historically biased datasets can yield discriminatory outcomes in employment decisions, criminal justice systems, and access to social services". This represents exactly the kind of systematized negative assumption that Khan warns against.

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[2] Nouman Ali Khan - Official - Bayyinah, "Consuming a Brother's Flesh [49:12] | Ep 24 | Striking Examples in the Quran," 07:46-23:14.

[3] Nouman Ali Khan - Official - Bayyinah, "Feeding on a Brother's Corpse [49:12] | Ep 25 | Striking Examples in the Quran," 05:21-05:30.

[4] Ricardo Trainotti Rabonato and Lilian Berton, "A Systematic Review of Fairness in Machine Learning," *AI and Ethics* 5, no. 3 (2025): 1943–54.

2. The Psychological Appeal of Bias Confirmation

Khan's insight about the psychological reward system—"I feed off of my rage it feeds me every day"—reveals how biased algorithms can create feedback loops that reinforce prejudicial thinking. [5] In Society 5.0 environments, these psychological dynamics become embedded in technological systems that make decisions affecting millions of people.

Islamic scholars examining AI ethics emphasize that "algorithmic bias constitutes a significant ethical challenge, particularly within an Islamic ethical framework that prioritizes *'adl* and equity".[6] Khan's framework provides practical guidance for recognizing and addressing these systematized forms of negative assumption.

3. Individual Judgment vs. Pattern Recognition

Khan's emphasis on judging "every individual case... on its own merits" provides a crucial principle for developing fair algorithmic systems. His analysis suggests that Islamic ethics requires evidence-based individual assessment rather than pattern-based group profiling, directly challenging the machine learning approaches that characterize Society 5.0 decision-making systems.

C. Ubiquitous Surveillance as Digital *Tajassus*

1. The Invasive Nature of Modern Surveillance

Khan's etymological analysis of *tajassus*—describing it as clawing "all the way into the flesh"—provides a powerful framework for understanding the invasive nature of contemporary surveillance technologies characteristic of Society 5.0. His

[5] Cinelli et al., "The Echo Chamber Effect on Social Media."

[6] Zainal Habib, "Ethics of Artificial Intelligence in Maqāṣid Al-Sharīa's Perspective," *KARSA Journal of Social and Islamic Culture* 33, no. 1 SE-Articles (June 19, 2025): 105–34, https://ejournal.iainmadura.ac.id/index.php/karsa/article/view/19617.

description of the "relentless quality" of spying accurately captures the comprehensive nature of digital surveillance in ubiquitous computing environments.

Contemporary Islamic scholarship on digital surveillance confirms this analysis. Research indicates that "pervasive surveillance through AI represents a profound breach of the principle of *amānah* (trust)" and that "AI-driven surveillance, particularly without transparent ethical oversight, risks disproportionately targeting marginalized communities".[7]

2. Validation-Seeking Behavior in Digital Environments

Khan's insight that spying involves "validating my claim" reveals how surveillance data is often collected not for legitimate security purposes but to confirm pre-existing assumptions.[8] This analysis directly applies to Society 5.0 environments where IoT devices, facial recognition systems, and data analytics create surveillance capabilities that far exceed traditional forms of *tajassus*.[9]

3. The Compulsive Nature of Digital Investigation

Khan's description of the compulsive nature of spying—"you're not done yet because you didn't dig deep enough"—perfectly captures the comprehensive data collection mentality characteristic of Society 5.0 surveillance systems. The "clawing" metaphor accurately describes the deep packet inspection, behavioral analytics, and comprehensive profiling that characterize modern surveillance technologies.

D. Social Media as Amplified *Ghībah*

1. The Psychological Reward System of Digital Platforms

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[7] Amana Raquib et al., "Islamic Virtue-Based Ethics for Artificial Intelligence," *Discover Artificial Intelligence* 2, no. 1 (2022): 11, https://doi.org/10.1007/s44163-022-00028-2.

[8] Rabonato and Berton, "A Systematic Review of Fairness in Machine Learning."

[9] Septi Aisyah and Muhammad Farhan Bin Mat Noradin, "Privacy, Security, and Ethics in Technology: A Qur'anic Perspective Through Cybercrime," *Al-Fahmu: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Tafsir* 4, no. 1 SE-Articles (March 28, 2025): 92–101, https://doi.org/10.58363/alfahmu.v4i1.262.

Khan's analysis of *ghībah*—particularly his description of how people "love it" and how "this cycle is very enjoyable"—provides crucial insights into the psychological mechanisms that drive harmful behavior on social media platforms characteristic of Society 5.0 communication systems.

His observation that perpetrators want "other people to feel what I feel" explains the viral nature of online character assassination and "cancel culture" phenomena.[10] This analysis reveals how social media platforms' design—optimized for engagement and viral spread—systematically incentivizes the kind of harmful communication that the Qur'anic verse prohibits.

2. Disguised Forms of Digital Character Assassination

Khan's description of how people disguise *ghībah*—"just slipping it in a little bit"[11]—accurately captures how social media posts often contain subtle forms of character assassination disguised as information sharing, concern, or social commentary.[12] His analysis reveals that technological mediation does not change the fundamental ethical nature of these behaviors.

3. Scale and Speed Amplification

While the core psychological and spiritual dynamics remain unchanged, Society 5.0 platforms amplify both the scale and speed of harmful communication.[13] Khan's framework suggests that what once required physical

[10] Dalimunthe, Maulana Andinata; Syam, Abdi Mubarak; Suhendar, Aris; Al-Mujtahid, "Deconstructing Islamic Cyberculture: Mitigating Inferiority and Cancel Culture in Virtual Space."

[11] Nouman Ali Khan - Official - Bayyinah, "Feeding on a Brother's Corpse [49:12] | Ep 25 | Striking Examples in the Quran," 18:21-18:30.

[12] Nurul Sidiqah and Syahidin Syahidin, "Spill the Tea: Fenomena Ghibah Virtual Dalam Perspektif Islam Dan Kewarganegaraan."

[13] Ahmad Muhamad Mustain Nasoha et al., "Etika Komunikasi Dalam Islam : Analisis Terhadap Konsep Tabayyun Dalam Media Sosial," *ALADALAH: Jurnal Politik, Sosial, Hukum Dan Humaniora* 3, no. 2 SE-Articles (April 30, 2025): 224–32, https://doi.org/10.59246/aladalah.v3i2.1315.

presence and deliberate effort now occurs instantaneously across global networks, making the spiritual and social consequences exponentially more severe.

E. Human-Machine Collaboration and Moral Responsibility

1. Individual Accountability in Automated Systems

Khan's emphasis on individual accountability—"every individual case has to be judged on its own merits"—provides crucial guidance for addressing moral responsibility in human-machine collaborative systems characteristic of Society 5.0. His analysis suggests that moral responsibility cannot be transferred to algorithmic systems, regardless of their sophistication.

Contemporary research on human-centric Society 5.0 confirms this perspective: "the human-centric approach is crucial as it emphasizes the collaboration between AI systems and human workers. Rather than replacing human labor, AI serves as an augmentation tool".[14] Khan's framework supports this approach by maintaining clear lines of human moral responsibility.

2. Intention and Algorithmic Decision-Making

Khan's analysis of how social sins begin "in the mind, fueled by rage and ego" indicates that ethical behavior ultimately depends on human intention and choice, not technological capability. This perspective is crucial for maintaining human moral agency in increasingly automated environments characteristic of Society 5.0.

Islamic scholarship on AI ethics emphasizes that "the integration of AI, especially in domains involving automated decision-making such as healthcare, finance, and legal adjudication, poses significant challenges to this conception of autonomy".[15] Khan's framework provides guidance for preserving human moral agency within these systems.

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[14] Habib, "Ethics of Artificial Intelligence in Maqāṣid Al-Sharīa's Perspective."
[15] Raza et al., "Islamic Perspective on Social Media Ethics and Responsible Usage."

F. Building Ethical Society 5.0 Systems

1. Prevention-Focused Design Principles

Khan's emphasis on "pushing away" negative thoughts and not entertaining harmful assumptions suggests that technological systems should be designed to discourage rather than amplify biased thinking. His framework indicates several principles for ethical Society 5.0 development:

a. Assumption Verification: Systems should require evidence before making negative inferences about individuals
b. Privacy Protection: Technologies should minimize rather than maximize surveillance capabilities
c. Dignity Preservation: Platforms should discourage rather than incentivize harmful communication about others
d. Individual Accountability: Systems should maintain clear lines of human moral responsibility

2. Community-Centered Technology Development

Khan's analysis of how social sins create "self-destructive cycles" indicates that technologies promoting these behaviors ultimately harm the communities that use them. This insight supports arguments for designing Society 5.0 systems that prioritize social cohesion and human dignity over efficiency or engagement metrics.

Contemporary research confirms this approach: "Society 5.0 emphasizes the integration of human creativity and intelligence with advanced technological capabilities. This new era aims to create a synergistic relationship between humans and machines, enhancing productivity while prioritizing human well-being and sustainability".[16]

[16] Hitachi-UTokyo Laboratory (H-UTokyo Lab), *Society 5.0: A People-Centric Super-Smart Society* (Springer Nature, 2020).

G. Islamic Digital Ethics for Society 5.0

1. Spiritual Consequences in Digital Environments

Khan's analysis of the spiritual consequences of social sins provides important insights for understanding the broader impact of unethical behavior in Society 5.0 environments. His description of how perpetrators become "sick" and "disgusting" through their actions suggests that individuals and communities that embrace harmful technologies ultimately damage themselves.

Islamic research on digital ethics confirms this perspective: "Islamic ethical guidelines can enrich global conversations on AI ethics, ensuring technological innovations align with universally recognized moral standards while promoting social justice and human flourishing".[17]

2. Resilience and Divine Protection

Khan's insight that victims of social sins receive divine protection and reward provides perspective on resilience in digital environments. This understanding can help individuals maintain psychological and spiritual well-being even when subjected to algorithmic bias, digital surveillance, or online harassment characteristic of Society 5.0 systems.

3. Community Transformation vs. Individual Reform

Khan's framework suggests that the spiritual and psychological costs of unethical behavior are amplified rather than diminished by technological mediation. Communities that allow Society 5.0 systems to facilitate social sins will experience the same breakdown of trust and cohesion that these behaviors cause in traditional contexts, but on a larger and more rapid scale.

[17] Habib, “Ethics of Artificial Intelligence in Maqāṣid Al-Sharīa’s Perspective.”

H. Implementation Strategies for Islamic Digital Ethics

3. Educational Integration

Khan's emphasis on understanding the psychological and spiritual dimensions of social sins suggests that digital literacy education should include moral and ethical components, not just technical skills. His practical approach to explaining complex ethical concepts indicates that Islamic educators can effectively address Society 5.0 challenges by grounding contemporary applications in classical texts.

4. Policy and Governance Implications

Khan's framework suggests that policymakers should consider the social and spiritual impacts of technological systems, not just their economic or technical benefits. Research on Islamic approaches to digital governance indicates that "rigorous ethical oversight grounded in Islamic ethics" is necessary to navigate Society 5.0 challenges.

5. Technological Design Principles

Khan's interpretation provides guidance for technology developers seeking to create systems that align with Islamic values. His emphasis on prevention, individual accountability, and community well-being offers concrete principles for ethical Society 5.0 development that could benefit broader society beyond Muslim communities.

The convergence of Khan's classical textual analysis with contemporary technological challenges demonstrates that Islamic ethical principles can provide sophisticated frameworks for addressing the complex moral questions raised by Society 5.0, offering alternatives to purely secular or market-driven approaches to technology governance.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

A. Conclusion

This research investigates the growing prevalence of social sins—*al-ẓann*, *tajassus*, and *ghībah*—in contemporary society and examines how Nouman Ali Khan's interpretation of Qur'an Surah al-Ḥujurāt 49:12 offers a classical yet contextually relevant ethical framework for digital life. Utilizing a qualitative library research model and content analysis of Bayyinah's Striking Examples 2.0 lectures (episodes 24 and 25), the study situates Khan's thematic tafsīr within the multi-dimensional challenges of Society 5.0, where seamless digital connectivity amplifies suspicion, surveillance, and reputational harm.

Nouman Ali Khan explicates the verse's sequential prohibitions as a graduated moral safeguard: first, *al-ẓann* (negative suspicion) corrupts the heart by planting unjust assumptions that distort intent and prefigure deeper transgressions; next, *tajassus* (spying to expose faults) is likened to invasive "clawing into flesh," mirroring modern digital surveillance practices—from social-media stalking to algorithmic profiling—that violate privacy and erode trust; and finally, *ghībah* (backbiting) is portrayed through the graphic metaphor of "eating one's brother's dead flesh," aligning with online character assassination and cancel culture's psychologically reinforcing reward loops. This tripartite exegesis not only demonstrates the Qur'an's linguistic and thematic depth but also bridges classical principles (*asbāb al-nuzūl*, *munāsabah*, lexical analysis) with hermeneutical insights into contemporary moral ailments.

In the Society 5.0 context—characterized by real-time sharing, algorithmic curation, and pervasive data collection—Khan's interpretation informs an actionable digital-ethics framework: practitioners of *tabayyun* (verification) counter algorithmic bias as a manifestation of *al-ẓann*; designers embedding privacy-by-design principles resist *tajassus*; and communities embracing restorative discourse break cycles of *ghībah*,

mitigating hate speech, doxing, rumor propagation, and cancel culture. By reframing digital ethics as a spiritual discipline—curating thoughts, guarding privacy, and honoring human dignity—this study affirms the Qur'an's universality and provides essential guidance for sustaining trust, honor, and communal harmony amid the technological transformations of modern life.

B. Recommendations for Further Research

This research is limited to an analysis of only two video lectures from Nouman Ali Khan's Striking Examples 2.0 series (episodes 24 and 25), which constrains its scope to a narrow selection of his interpretive insights and excludes the broader corpus of his tafsīr work as well as other scholarly voices on Surah al-Ḥujurāt 49:12. Moreover, its descriptive content-analysis approach does not engage critically with the potential divergences among exegetical traditions or with empirical data on digital behavior in Society 5.0.

For future research, scholars might undertake a more expansive comparative study that incorporates additional lectures and written exegeses by Nouman Ali Khan alongside those of classical and contemporary Qur'anic commentators to assess convergences and contrasts in the understanding of social sins. A critical research design could also integrate mixed-methods fieldwork—such as surveys or interviews with digital-native communities—to evaluate the real-world efficacy of the proposed ethical guidelines. Finally, further inquiry could explore the application of Islamic ethical principles in the design and governance of digital platforms, examining how algorithmic architectures might be reconceived to operationalize concepts like *ḥusn al-ẓann*, *satr al-'uyūb*, and *tabayyun* in user experience and policy frameworks.

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