

UNDERSTANDING AHKAM VERSES: CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF *TAFSIR BI AL-LISĀN* KH. AHMAD BAHAUDDIN NURSALIM

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Abstract

The growing dissemination of Qur'anic interpretation through digital platforms has expanded public access to Islamic scholarship; however, the hermeneutical characteristics and socio-legal relevance of orally delivered interpretations of legal verses remain insufficiently examined. This study aimed to analyze the interpretive methods employed by KH Ahmad Bahaiddin Nursalim (Gus Baha) in his oral exegesis of *ahkām* verses on the Santri Gayeng YouTube channel and to assess their relevance to contemporary family ethics and religious education. The study employed qualitative library research with a case-study approach. Recorded exegesis sessions were transcribed and analyzed thematically using relevant literature on *tafsīr*, *uṣūl al-fiqh*, and religious pedagogy. The findings indicate that Gus Baha employs a communicative hermeneutical approach characterized by the clarity of *tafsīr bi al-lisān*, thematic concision associated with the *mandū'ī* method, and a balanced integration of *tafsīr bi al-ma'thūr* and *ra'y*. This approach prioritizes accessibility and ethical persuasion for non-specialist Indonesian audiences. His interpretation of marriage-related verses emphasizes honoring wives and children as religious obligations, promoting affectionate and trust-based child-rearing grounded in prophetic exemplarity, and contextualizing prohibitions concerning dowry reclamation and unlawful marriages within the

socioeconomic realities of historical Arabian society. His interpretation also foregrounds *maqāṣid* and intention in advancing rehabilitative marital ethics. These findings demonstrate that Gus Baha's oral exegesis effectively translates textual authority into accessible, family-centered moral guidance with potential relevance to religious education and social policy. Nevertheless, caution is required regarding claims of *naskh* and *mansūkh* and the limited capacity of concise, anecdotal exposition to address structural concerns such as patriarchy and unequal household power relations. This study contributes to contemporary Qur'anic hermeneutics by elucidating the pedagogical and socio-legal significance of digital oral exegesis and provides a foundation for empirical and juridical research on its influence on household practices, legal interpretation, and curriculum development.

Keywords: *Aḥkām* Verses; Digital Qur'anic Exegesis; Gus Baha; Islamic Family Ethics; *Tafsīr bi al-Lisān*

INTRODUCTION

Since the beginning of Islamic history, attention to the interpretation of the Quran has always occupied a crucial place in religious life. This stems from two main dimensions: structurally, the Quran occupies a central position as one of the sources of Islamic teachings; functionally, the Quran serves as a guide for humanity. Because of this dual position, the study of tafsir has developed rapidly and become a priority discipline among scholars and the Muslim community. Within the scholarly tradition, various definitions of tafsir have emerged, ranging from the concise to the very comprehensive (Ath-Thayyar, n.d.). For example, Musa'id ath-Thayyar (d. 1384 H) defined tafsir as an explanation of the meaning of the Qur'an as desired by Allah SWT, while az-Zarkasyi (d. 794 H) expanded the scope of the definition by including information related to verses, such as *asbāb al-nuzūl*, *makkīy-madaniy*, *qashash*, *muhkam-mutasyābih* categories, *nāsikh-mansūkh*, as well as the division of *khāsh-ām* and *muthlaq-muqayyad*. This variety of definitions reflects the methodological richness and interpretive aims of classical to contemporary periods.

Lexically, the word tafsir in Arabic means explaining or explaining and is often used to explain vocabulary that is difficult to understand (Al-Ashfihani, 2009; Faris, 2001). In the development of the Indonesian language, the term interpretation is also sometimes combined with the term for interpreting dreams, so that the meaning relationship between contexts needs to be differentiated conceptually in scientific studies. Furthermore, the terms

used for religious experts—such as *faqih*, *ushulī*, *muhaddith*, and *mufassir*—emphasize specialization, although a formal definition of "mufassir" was rarely formulated separately by classical scholars (Al-Harbi, 1996).

The history of Quranic interpretation begins with the Prophet Muhammad Saw, the first interpreter to explain the holy verses. After him, the Companions—with Ibn 'Abbas as one of the most famous—developed oral and written interpretative traditions. During the period of the successors and successors, attempts at codification began to be seen, although many were integrated within hadith literature. The tradition of independently compiled and comprehensive exegesis only emerged intensively in the third century AH through works by authors such as Ibn Jarir al-Tabari and several other authors, which remain important references to this day (Al-Zaeqani, 2010).

Over time, the variety of exegesis has evolved to meet the needs of the times. The primary premise underlying this proliferation is the assumption that the Qur'an is universal and relevant for every age and place (*shālih li kulli zamān wa makān*). From this premise emerged the practice of contextualizing interpretation to address contemporary religious issues, so that interpretation becomes not only a textual study but also a response to the social, legal, and ethical dynamics of society (Gusmian, 2013; Mustaqim, 2012).

One area that has received significant attention is the interpretation of *ahkām* (legal) verses. Generally, the content of the Qur'an encompasses *aqidah* (belief), morals, and sharia (Islamic law). The *ahkam* verses are then categorized according to their scope, for example, *munakahat* (family), *ibadah* (worship), *mu'āmalāt* (civil transactions), and *hudūd* (criminal) (Kultsum & Muqsih, 2015). The formulation of these legal verses does not always directly imply the formulation of *taklifiyyah* law without further methodological study. Therefore, legal interpretation often requires special attention to the principles of *ushuliyah* and their application to the contemporary national legal system. In Indonesia, limited access to language and a reading culture means that most lay people lack access to the classical tafsir, which is largely written in Arabic. This phenomenon has given rise to works of Nusantara tafsir in Indonesian, Malay, and regional languages (e.g., Sundanese and Javanese), as well as the practice of oral tafsir delivered through pulpits, religious study groups, and—in the digital era—platforms like YouTube. This shift in media positions local religious figures, particularly *kiai* (Islamic scholars) or *ustadz* (Islamic teachers), as popular and widely accepted interpretative mediators (Farchan & Syarifuddin, 2005; Shihab, 1992).

The study of the Understanding of Ahkam Verses in the oral interpretation of KH. Ahmad Bahauddin Nursalim shows that previous research still focuses on mapping the methodology, oral character, and the tendency of *fihiyah* patterns in Gus Baha's interpretation. The article 'Tafsir Syafahi Ahmad Bahaudin Nur Salim (Analysis of Characteristics of Orality and Interpretation)' emphasizes that Gus Baha's interpretation has the main characteristics of contextual, communicative orality, and relies on explaining the meaning of verses practically according to the needs of the congregation, thus showing a pattern of interpretation that lives in the contemporary socio-religious space (Maymun et al., 2024).

The study of Moderate Islamic Discourse Analysis: A Study of Oral Interpretation from the Perspective of Gus Ahmad Bahauddin Nursalim expands the reading by showing that Gus Baha's oral interpretation contains a message of Islamic moderation through an inclusive, non-confrontational and close to the social problems of the community, so that his interpretation is not only normative but also has an educational and social function (Afif, 2022). Meanwhile, other studies on verbal/oral interpretation in Islamic boarding school figures and explanations of the Qur'an on social media show that the oral interpretation model is a new form of transmission of religious authority that allows the verses of *ahkam* to be read more applicatively, communicatively, and relevant to the legal-religious needs of modern society (Prastyo & Fikra, 2022; Zulkarnaen, 2024).

One contemporary figure who has attracted attention is KH. Ahmad Bahauddin Nursalim (Gus Baha), who combines the traditions of Nusantara tafsir with digital media to reach a wide audience. As a *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school) leader and an interpreter formed within the Nusantara ulama tradition, Gus Baha is known for his contextual and applicable interpretive approach to *ahkam* verses, including their relevance to legal practice in Indonesia. This study attempts to analyze the methodology of KH. Ahmad Bahauddin Nursalim's oral interpretations on YouTube and assess the extent to which these interpretations are relevant to Indonesian law.

METHODS

This research uses a library research approach combined with a case study, focusing on KH. Ahmad Bahauddin Nursalim (Gus Baha') and his interpretation of the *ahkam* verses documented in video recordings on the Santri Gayeng YouTube channel. The primary source

analyzed was a recording of the tafsir recitation, which was transcribed before being analyzed. Secondary sources include books, journals, and other relevant scholarly works to support the study. Data and study materials were collected from the literature and related documents, both personal and official, that are directly related to the research object (Creswell, 2013; Rosidah et al., 2023).

In general, this research applies qualitative research methods as described by Bogdan and Taylor, namely research procedures that produce descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words and observable behaviour, to understand individuals and their contexts holistically. A qualitative approach is the process of gathering information from the natural conditions in an object's life to formulate generalisations that are acceptable from both theoretical and practical perspectives (Yusuf, 2016). Thus, this research places data collection in the natural setting of the recitation as the basis for analysis.

The data collection technique used was documentation: collecting and reviewing recorded religious studies (video/audio) on YouTube, then transcribing relevant content for analysis. In addition, the researcher collected additional literature in the form of books and journal articles discussing the interpretation, biography, and thoughts of Gus Baha'. The collection procedure was designed to ensure that primary and secondary data complement each other, allowing for a comprehensive interpretation of the verses on *ahkam*.

Data analysis was conducted qualitatively using a descriptive-analytical approach: describing the findings from the recording transcripts and literature documents, then analyzing the content of Gus Baha's interpretation of the verses on *ahkam* according to the research focus. The analysis stages included selecting relevant text fragments, categorizing interpretative themes, and synthesizing the findings to draw rational conclusions supported by empirical evidence (Kusumastuti & Khoiron, 2021; Nasution, 2023). Thus, this research presents a contextual and accountable textual interpretation.

RESULTS

The Law of Marriage in *Tafsir bi al-Lisān* Gus Baha'

1. Honoring Children and Wives (QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 127)

"(Remember) when Ibrahim raised the foundations of the Baitullah together with Ismail (while praying), "Our Lord, accept (charity) from us. Indeed, You are the All-Hearing, All-Knowing." (QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 127)

In a video recorded on the Santri Gayeng channel (uploaded August 13, 2020), Gus Baha emphasized the importance of respecting one's wife and children as part of respecting fellow Muslims. He reminded them that anyone who recites the Kalima (the phrase "Tawhid") becomes part of the Islamic community, whose honor must be maintained, and therefore basic rights such as the safety of life, property, and dignity must be protected (Channel Santri Gayeng, 2020b). This emphasis is not simply a social norm but has theological undertones: respect for fellow Muslims is rooted in a shared faith, making respectful treatment a moral and religious requirement (Mailin et al., 2025).

Gus Baha continued with a warning about language practices in teaching knowledge. He condemned the behavior of scholars or preachers who use excessively high language in front of laypeople, leaving their interlocutors feeling confused or ignorant. He argued that forcing scientific language out of context can create social distance and demean others, ethically equivalent to harassment. This statement demonstrates Gus Baha's emphasis on a humanistic da'wah method: knowledge must be conveyed with linguistic flexibility to avoid alienating the recipient. As a practical example, Gus Baha explained that truly knowledgeable scholars tend to adapt to their interlocutors—sometimes even acting like laypeople—so that communication is effective and respectful. He cited the use of humor as a strategy to lighten the mood, bridge the gap, and prevent others from feeling inferior. This pragmatic approach demonstrates that ethical requirements in religious interactions concern not only the content of the teachings but also the manner in which they are conveyed: the form of communication can either strengthen or undermine the dignity of the interlocutor (Erlina, 2025).

In the context of the family, Gus Baha asserted that respect for wives and children should be more intense than simply respecting other Muslims. He questioned the moral inconsistency of respecting Muslim neighbors while neglecting the dignity of one's own family members. His argument positioned children as the successors of the monotheistic teachings of their parents; therefore, respect for children is respect for the continuation of the family's faith and religious identity. This emphasis emphasized the intergenerational dimension of religious responsibility.

Gus Baha cited the story of the Prophet Abraham and Ishmael (e.g., Al-Baqarah verse 127) as textual evidence that children, despite their infancy and lack of understanding of the full purpose of religious action, are enshrined in the Qur'anic narrative. He used this reference to bolster his theological claim: respect for children is not merely sentimental, but rooted in the prophet's attitude toward the younger generation in the Islamic tradition. This

historical-theological reference serves as a normatively binding authority for his audience. Furthermore, Gus Baha provides a functional rationale for why wives should be respected: they hold a dual role—as companions, protecting husbands from adultery, and as spiritual guides who contribute to their journey to the afterlife. By emphasizing that wives have uttered the Kalima of Tawhid (the declaration of faith), he links a wife's religious status to her social role within the household. This argument combines religious and practical dimensions to reject discriminatory justifications based solely on gender.

From a methodological perspective, the author's analysis shows that Gus Baha, in his concise presentation, employs the *bi al-lisān* approach (speaking according to the word and context), a tendency toward *bi ar-ra'y* (rational thinking), and the *maudhu'i ijmalī* method (presenting themes generally and concisely). The nuance of fiqh emerges in the way he positions family ethical norms as the husband's obligation, while simultaneously acknowledging the Qur'anic text as a basis for reference. This combination of methods makes his message easily understandable to a wide audience while remaining grounded in religious authority. As a critical note, although Gus Baha's emphasis on family respect is strong and morally relevant, further study is needed to understand how this respect translates into everyday practice—for example, household policies, division of labor, and mechanisms for protecting dignity during conflict. It is also important to examine whether references to texts and the practice of joking as communication strategies are sufficient to address patriarchal structures that marginalize women. Field research or case studies of Muslim families would enrich these normative claims and provide practical recommendations for their implementation.

2. Glorifying Children (QS. Maryam [19]: 5, 12-13)

"Indeed, I fear for my family after my departure, and my wife is barren. Grant me a child from Yourself." (QS. Maryam [19]: 5)

For some parents, educating children is often perceived as a process that must be carried out with strict discipline, often accompanied by harshness. This pattern often stems from the belief that firmness is the only way to shape obedience and character in children. However, if this firmness goes too far, it can degenerate into disrespectful treatment, creating an emotional distance between parents and children. It is in this context that KH. Baha'uddin Nursalim, also known as Gus Baha, presents an important perspective. He emphasised that pampering, in the sense of treating children with respect and affection, is not contrary to

Islamic teachings. In fact, he argued, honouring children is part of the etiquette of the previous prophets (Channel Santri Gayeng, 2021b). This attitude is intended to maintain and strengthen the values of monotheism (tawhid) instilled in children from the beginning by parents.

Gus Baha emphasised that children are not simply objects of education to be pressured into obedience, but rather trusts who will one day carry on the teachings of monotheism. Therefore, parents need to be careful that the rigours of education do not lead to children's disappointment with the Islamic value system introduced within their own families (Anjelita, 2025). If children grow up with negative experiences with home and religion, the Islamic message they want to pass on can weaken in their consciousness.

Gus Baha's affirmation aligns with the prayer of the Prophet Zacharias in Surah Maryam, verse 5, when he asked for descendants as heirs to continue the mission of faith. From this perspective, children are seen as spiritual successors, not merely biological ones. Therefore, the presence of pious children is highly valuable, as their good deeds will become part of the continuation of their parents' rewards after death (Najib, 2020).

This understanding is reinforced by Gus Baha's explanation that one of the good deeds that continues after death is pious children. In fact, he places pious children as the closest and most likely opportunity for most parents. It means that child education is not merely a domestic matter, but also a religious strategy to ensure the continuity of goodness across generations. Thus, affection for children has a very strong dimension of worship.

Furthermore, Gus Baha also reminded that the relationship between parents and children must be built on mutual respect, not a one-way relationship that only demands children submit to their parents. The Qur'an through Surah Maryam verses 12-13 describes how the Prophet Yahya received wisdom from childhood, accompanied by the characteristic of Hanan, namely love which creates an atmosphere of comfort, gentleness and acceptance. This verse gives a signal that the glory of children is not something foreign to the prophetic tradition, but is part of the morals of the prophets.

Thus, it can be concluded that Gus Baha's interpretation of Surah Maryam displays a style of interpretation that combines history, reasoning and a concise thematic approach. From a methodological perspective, the explanation shows the balanced use of *bi al-ma'tsur* and *bi ar-ra'yi*, with a *maudhu'i-ijmali* presentation. Meanwhile, in terms of style, his emphasis is closer to the style of fiqh, because it highlights the practical implications of verses in family

formation, especially the obligation of parents to honor their children in order to maintain the continuity of monotheism.

3. Dowry in Marriage (QS. An-Nisa [4]: 22 and 20)

"Do not marry women your father has married, except for (incidents in the) past. Indeed, this (act) is very vile and hated (by Allah) and the worst of the paths (taken)." (QS. An-Nisa [4]: 22).

Gus Baha once said: "There are verses in the Quran that can make Javanese people feel awkward. Of course, Javanese people who are somewhat pious and willing to think. If they don't want to think, then how could they ever (or dare to) "protest" the contents of the Quran. If Javanese people are pious, then they won't protest or find it awkward." (Channel Santri Gayeng, 2021a).

Gus Baha's statement demonstrates that the text of the Quran often appears "strange" to readers who view it solely through their own cultural lens. This oddity stems not from the verses themselves, but from the distance between the context in which they were revealed and the social customs of the society at the time. Therefore, a good interpretation must connect the wording of the verses to the social reality of Arabia at the time of revelation, rather than simply translating them into Javanese cultural standards. Such an explanation is crucial to prevent readers from assuming that the Quran speaks abstractly, when in fact it is intimately connected to concrete social issues.

The first verse discussed is Surah An-Nisa', verse 22, which prohibits marrying a woman already married to one's father. For some Javanese, this prohibition seems strange because the relationship between a father's wife and a father, which is morally taboo, does not require revelation. However, this sense of "strangeness" arises because Javanese culture generally recognizes monogamy and simpler family relationships, making such cases rarely imagined. In the context of the Arab Jahiliyah era, such a possibility is even more real and needs to be explicitly prevented by the Quran. This prohibition makes even more sense when considered in light of the Arab social structure of the time, when polygamy was common and marital relations could be much more complex (Azam, 2026). A father might have several wives, one of whom might be young or the same age as his own son. In such a situation, there is the potential for attraction or confusion of status between the father's children and wives, so the Qur'an closes the door to such corruption early on. Thus, this verse not only

prohibits an act that is undoubtedly considered bad, but also closes the door to the possibility of deviation that could arise in certain societies.

Thus, this prohibition reflects the sharia's principle of caution against moral corruption and disruption of lineage. The Qur'an does not wait for an act to become commonplace before prohibiting it, but often preempts the possibility of its occurrence (Ichsan et al., 2025, 2026; Miftahurrohman et al., 2021). Here, revelation appears to act as a social guide, highly sensitive to the potential for deviation in family relationships. Therefore, this verse is called abominable, hateful, and a bad path, not only because the act itself is wrong, but also because it destroys the family structure from its very roots.

The second verse discussed is Surah An-Nisa', verse 20, which prohibits taking back a dowry given to a wife. From a Javanese cultural perspective, where dowries are relatively small, this prohibition can seem excessive, as if the Quran is warning against something that is unlikely to occur. If a dowry is only a small amount or a set of prayer items, then asking for it back after divorce seems highly inappropriate (Khotibi, 2023). Therefore, readers who do not understand the context may consider this verse too harsh on something that is socially automatically avoided.

However, in the Arabic context, a dowry can be very substantial and is both a form of respect and carries serious economic consequences within a marriage. Because of its high value, a husband may be tempted to reclaim the dowry upon divorce, especially if the marriage has only been short. The Quran then strictly forbids this practice, as reclaiming the dowry constitutes a combination of deceit, injustice, and betrayal of the woman's rights. In other words, this verse does not address a small dowry amount, but rather addresses social traditions that allow for the economic exploitation of wives.

From this, it is clear that Gus Baha employs a highly contextual and communicative style of explanation. He begins not with abstract theory, but with cultural examples familiar to his audience, then compares them to Arabic realities to bring the verse's meaning to life. This approach makes the interpretation more easily accepted, especially by congregants who are more familiar with everyday social experiences than theoretical debates. Therefore, his explanation can be categorized as a descriptive and educative *tafsir bi al-lisān*, rather than simply a rigid legal explanation.

4. Marriage of a Pious Man (QS. An-Nur [24]: 3)

“It is not fitting for a male adulteress to marry except with an adulteress or a polytheist woman, and it is not fitting for a female adulteress to marry except with an adulteress or a polytheist man. That is forbidden to the believers.” (QS. An-Nur [24]: 3)

An analysis of Gus Baha's interpretation of the *asbab an-nuzul* (the cause of the occurrence of a consequence) in Surah An-Nur, verse 3, begins with a common social premise: good people usually associate with good people, and bad people tend to meet bad people. This premise is described as a reasonable social custom or practice, but Gus Baha' quickly emphasizes its limits when entering the realm of destiny: human relationships cannot be determined solely by the laws of fate. Thus, the phenomenon of many pious people pairing up with problematic individuals, and vice versa, is not surprising in historical experience and everyday life (Channel Santri Gayeng, 2020a).

The story of the *asbab an-nuzul* told by Gus Baha' depicts a pious, handsome, and poor companion of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). He once had a lover during the pre-Islamic period named Anaq. After migrating to Medina and living until the eighth year of the Hijriah, he remained in poverty, even though other companions had been given wealth. After the conquest of Mecca, his reunion with *Anaq* led to a marriage proposal from the woman, aimed at eliminating his materialistic life. The woman's desire is accompanied by an admission of a disgraceful past (prostitution), making the offer a dilemma for the friend.

In the dialogue, the friend initially rejects adultery and states that he would like to marry if that were the solution; however, the woman's economic motives, as a result of prostitution, give rise to a different response from revelation/ruling: a pious man is not permitted to marry a prostitute if his motive is solely for financial gain. Conversely, if his motivation is to convert or improve the woman, then marriage is permissible. This explanation places intention (*maqṣid*) as the primary ethical criterion in accepting or rejecting such a marriage.

Gus Baha' adds historical and sociological context: in the early days of Islam, there was a social phenomenon in which some men—especially poor immigrants (Muhajirin)—married wealthy women and became "living off." He believes that the more problematic issue is not simply the moral status of women, but rather the anthropological motives of men seeking economic support. From this perspective, the prohibitions or regulations of sharia

regarding such marriages are interpreted as efforts to protect the moral integrity of the early community and prevent counterproductive social practices (Khairuddin, 2025).

Gus Baha' further argues that the provisions that emerged in the context of the Companions were specific to their time (specific to the Companions) and therefore ceased (*mansukh*) at a later stage. He concludes that today it is not problematic for a repentant former prostitute to marry anyone, including a Muslim student (*santri*), as long as her intention to guide and convert is clear. This argument emphasizes the historical-contextual dimension of law and the practice of *ijtihad* in the fiqh tradition.

In examining Gus Baha's reasoning, the author sees that the dominant methodology is the use of *ra'y* (opinion/ratio) and the *maudhu'i ijmal* (concise thematic) approach, patterned on *fiqh* and social *adab*. This way of reasoning prioritizes practical context, the perpetrator's intentions (*maqāṣid*), and social reality rather than referring to lengthy textual interpretations or systematic legal propositions. This explains Gus Baha's delivery style, which is more communicative and applicable to the general public.

Analytically, Mansukh's claim requires a distinction between universal texts that are applicable to all times and provisions that arise due to specific social cases. If indeed the verse or provision responds to a unique social practice of the friend's time - for example, marriage with the motif of living together - then the argument for temporal limitations could be reasonable. However, stating that *mansukh* is a matter of caution: the study of *ushul fiqh* and the history of *naskh* requires systematic evidence (*matan* and *sanad*) as well as a comparative study of legal practices among the early generations of the ulama (pious scholars).

From the perspective of social ethics and religious education—lines relevant to the interests of academic readers of religious education—Gus Baha's message has two important implications. First, the emphasis on intention and potential for development suggests a rehabilitative focus rather than a lasting stigma against former moral offenders. Second, the warning about economic motives highlights the need for socio-economic policies that discourage marriage as a mere solution to survival. Both are relevant to the formulation of moral education programs and social interventions in the context of modern Islamic education.

DISCUSSION

Gus Baha's hermeneutic emphasis on honoring wives and children—grounded in his reading of Q.S. al-Baqarah (2):127—advances a normative claim that religious identity entails reciprocal social duties within the household. Framed as both theological obligation and moral imperative, this claim aligns with contemporary work in Islamic ethics that locates moral responsibility in embodied domestic relations rather than only in ritual observance. By asserting that the dignity of immediate family members should be prioritized even above general obligations to co-religionists, Gus Baha reorients discourse on Islamic fraternity toward an intra-familial axis, making family care a locus of communal honor and religious continuity.

Methodologically, Gus Baha's use of *bi al-lisān* (plain speech) and *maudbu'i ijmalī* (thematic concision) exemplifies an interpretive strategy optimized for accessibility and ethical persuasion. This communicative mode—avoiding abstruse scholarly registers and adopting humor and lay idioms—can be evaluated as an intentional pedagogical tactic that reduces epistemic distance between scholars and laity. Such a praxis-oriented *tafsīr* contributes to debates on religious authority by privileging didactic efficacy and humanistic outreach over technical juridical exposition.

Gus Baha's critique of elitist linguistic practices among preachers signals an ethical dimension of da'wah that overlaps with contemporary concerns in education and communication studies: the form of pedagogical delivery shapes both comprehension and dignity. When scholars employ inaccessible language, they risk reproducing epistemic injustice—marginalizing interlocutors and undermining the moral aim of guidance. This observation invites empirical inquiry into how sermon style and language choice affect religious socialization, emotional well-being, and retention of doctrinal values across socioeconomic strata (Jung et al., 2016).

Theologically, Gus Baha's appeal to the Abraham–Ishmael narrative to legitimize respect for children underscores the use of prophetic exemplarity (*uswa*) to extend normative claims about parental conduct. By elevating children as carriers of tawhid continuity, he links family ethics to soteriological concerns—arguing that child-rearing is a form of ongoing worship with intergenerational spiritual consequences. This interpretive move resonates with literatures that conceptualize domestic practices as extensions of religious agency and collective memory. Gus Baha's insistence that pampering (*hunan*) and affectionate treatment are consistent with prophetic pedagogy—drawn from Q.S. Maryam (19)—challenges

pedagogical paradigms that valorize strictness as the primary route to moral formation. From a developmental and ethical perspective, his stance aligns with research showing that warmth and secure attachments foster moral internalization and prosocial orientation, thereby supporting the religiously grounded claim that gentleness can be a strategic method for inculcating lasting piety (Syaiful et al., 2025).

Framing children as trusts (*amanah*) with spiritual succession value reframes parental investment as both ethical duty and theological enterprise. This reframing has important implications for educational policy and religious curricula: it legitimates expanded investments in character education, early childhood moral formation, and family-centered interventions within Islamic pedagogy. It also problematizes disciplinary regimes that rely on fear or coercion by highlighting the risk of alienation from religious identity when early experiences are negative (Marranci, 2020).

Gus Baha's contextualization of quranic injunctions about dowry and prohibited marriages (Q.S. An-Nisa' 4:20,22) illustrates a historically sensitive hermeneutic that seeks to reconcile textual commands with contemporary cultural norms. His approach—explaining Arabic-era socio-economic realities to mitigate perceived oddities among Javanese audiences—demonstrates a pedagogical hermeneutics aimed at cultural translation rather than literalist reception. Such contextualization aligns with scholarly models that view the Qur'an as engaged with concrete social practices rather than abstract legalism.

However, the interpretive move to label certain provisions as historically specific (and thus potentially *mansukh*) requires careful *ushul al-fiqh* scrutiny. Claims of abrogation or temporal limitation demand robust chains of textual and exegetical evidence; casual declarations of *mansukh* risk oversimplifying a complex jurisprudential apparatus. Future research should therefore examine the methodological consistency of such claims within classical *naskh* debates and seek comparative assessments across *madhahib* and historical commentaries.

Gus Baha's discussion of marriageability and intention (*maqṣid*) in relation to marrying a former prostitute foregrounds ethical agency and rehabilitation. By privileging sincere intent to reform and spiritual uplift as the legitimating criterion for marriage, his reading advances a restorative ethic rather than a permanent stigma. This emphasis intersects with broader Islamic juridical principles that assess actions by intentions and underscores the potential for fiqh to be applied in ways that support social reintegration and moral rehabilitation (Okumus, 2025).

The critique of economic motives in marriage—particularly the use of marriage as a survival strategy leading to moral compromise—highlights the intersection of socio-economics and religious normative orders. Gus Baha's analysis suggests that legal restrictions and moral injunctions function, in part, as social safeguards against exploitative practices. Policy-oriented research could build on this insight by exploring how economic supports and social welfare measures might reduce marriages of convenience and thereby uphold the ethical aims of family law.

Although Gus Baha's pragmatic, conversational *tafsir* has clear pedagogical strengths, its reliance on anecdotal illustration and rhetorical concision may limit analytical depth when addressing structural issues such as patriarchy and gendered power imbalances. For example, exhortations to respect wives and children, while ethically sound, need complementary analyses of household labor division, decision-making authority, and conflict resolution mechanisms to ensure respect is operationalized rather than rhetorical. Gus Baha's interpretive corpus offers a model for bridging textual authority and contemporary moral pedagogy: it privileges accessibility, ethical intentionality, and historical-contextual reading. This orientation is promising for religious educators seeking to make scriptural ethics relevant to modern family life. Yet, for uptake in policy and curriculum design, his approach would benefit from integration with empirical evidence—longitudinal studies on parenting practices, evaluations of da'wah communication methods, and juridical analyses of *mansukh* claims—to robustly substantiate the practical claims his *tafsir* advances.

CONCLUSION

Drawing on a case study of KH Ahmad Bahaiddin Nursalim's (Gus Baha) YouTube *tafsir*, this study finds that his hermeneutic—characterized by *bi al-lisān* clarity, *maudhu'ī* concision, and a balanced use of *bi al-ma'tsur* and *ra'y*—effectively translates Qur'anic *abkām* into accessible, ethically oriented guidance for contemporary Indonesian families; his emphasis on honoring wives and children, contextualizing historical-legal provisions (e.g., dowry and prohibited marriages), and privileging intention (*maqṣid*) in moral judgments advances a restorative, pedagogical model of Islamic ethics that aligns with developmental and social aims but also raises methodological cautions regarding claims of *mansukh* and the need to move from rhetorical exhortation to operationalized practices.

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