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Qur'anic Perspectives on Child Grooming: An Analytical Study of Ibn 'Ashur's *Tafsir al-Tahrir wa al-Tanwir*

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Abstract

Child grooming involves a gradual process of approaching, manipulating, and gaining control over children for exploitation, including sexual exploitation, and may occur in person or online. Although the Qur'an does not explicitly address child grooming, its teachings on protecting vulnerable people and preventing sexual misconduct offer a basis for examining it. This study analyzes QS. al-Nisa' [4]: 9, QS. al-Isra' [17]: 32, and QS. al-Nur [24]: 30–31 in relation to child grooming through Muhammad al-Tahir ibn 'Ashur's interpretation in *al-Tahrir wa al-Tanwir*. Using library research and a descriptive-analytical approach, the study reads the three passages together. The analysis finds that QS. al-Nisa' [4]: 9 emphasizes responsibility toward vulnerable children; QS. al-Isra' [17]: 32 establishes a preventive principle by prohibiting approaches to adultery; and QS. al-Nur [24]: 30–31 addresses ethical conduct, bodily privacy, and social relations. Viewed through Ibn 'Ashur's *maqāṣid* approach, these passages provide an ethical framework for preventing the manipulation and sexual exploitation of children. The study contributes a Qur'anic interpretation of child protection that extends these preventive principles to the contemporary phenomenon of child grooming.

Keywords: Child Grooming; Child Protection; Qur'anic Interpretation; Ibn 'Ashur; *Al-Tahrir wa Al-Tanwir*

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INTRODUCTION

Child protection is a crucial issue in contemporary social life. Children are relatively vulnerable because their psychological, emotional, and social development, as well as their decision-making abilities, are not yet fully mature. This vulnerability can be exploited by adults through various forms of manipulation. One form of exploitation that requires attention is child grooming. Child grooming is a form and motive of sexual violence that involves ensnaring underage victims using cybergrooming techniques, namely the use of technology to deliberately identify potential victims who have the potential to be abused or deceived (Antarsih, 2021). Child grooming, or this manipulative method, is not a new practice among pedophiles, but it has only become a trending topic in recent years due to its prevalence in our communities. Between January 1 and 15, 2026, the National Crime Information Center (PUSIKNAS) recorded 247 reports of child abuse, including physical, psychological, and sexual abuse, from the police (Pusiknas Bareskrim Polri, 2026).

The phenomenon of child grooming has become a global threat. Advances in the internet, social media, and messaging apps allow perpetrators to reach children without geographical boundaries. Various international reports indicate an increase in cases of child sexual exploitation that begins through grooming in digital spaces. UNICEF notes in its report, "Ending Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse," that 1 in 5 girls and 1 in 13 boys experience sexual violence and exploitation before reaching the age of 18 (Unicef, 2021). In the Republic of Indonesia Law Number 12 of 2022 concerning criminal acts of sexual violence, Article 1 paragraph 5 states that a child is a person under 18 (eighteen) years of age, including children who are still in the womb.

A rise in cases of online sexual exploitation, including psychological manipulation, sextortion, and child trafficking for sexual purposes has also accompanied the rise in internet use by children. The perpetrators come from diverse backgrounds, including not only those uneducated but also those with prestigious social statuses, such as teachers and religious figures.

This issue is interesting when examined through the perspective of the Qur'an. Although the term "child grooming" is a modern term and not found literally in the Qur'an, principles related to child protection, honor protection, prevention of adultery, gaze control, and the formation of healthy social relations are found in several verses. Therefore, a contextual interpretation approach is necessary so that the normative message of the Qur'an

can be dialogued with contemporary social issues without claiming that the Qur'an explicitly mentions this modern phenomenon. This phenomenon shows that child grooming is not simply a legal or technological issue, but also a moral, social, psychological, and religious issue that requires a multidisciplinary approach. The phenomenon of child grooming is a serious problem because it is gradual and covert, making it difficult for victims to recognize. Seeing the phenomenon of child grooming increasingly discussed by both academics and legal practitioners, making it a serious problem because it often occurs gradually and covertly, making it difficult for victims and their surroundings to recognize. Various reports from child protection agencies indicate that cases of sexual exploitation of children, which begin with psychological approaches and manipulation, continue to increase. This condition demands preventive and educational efforts that are not only based on law and psychology but also based on religious values that can serve as moral guidelines for society.

To date, studies on child grooming have been primarily focused on criminal law, criminology, psychology, and cybersecurity. These approaches have contributed significantly to explaining perpetrator behaviour patterns, impacts on victims, and law enforcement strategies. However, the theological dimension, particularly from the perspective of Quranic interpretation, remains relatively limited. Yet, the Quran, as the primary source of Islamic teachings, contains fundamental principles regarding child protection, safeguarding honour (*hifẓ al-'ird*), protecting offspring (*hifẓ al-nasl*), safeguarding human dignity, prohibiting the approach to adultery (*zina*), social etiquette, gaze control, and preventing various forms of harm (*sadd al-zari'ah*), all of which can serve as a normative basis for understanding the phenomenon of child grooming.

From an Islamic perspective, although the term child grooming is not found explicitly in the Qur'an, several verses contain principles of child protection, as mentioned in the previous paragraph, namely the protection of honor (*hifẓ al-'ird*), protection of offspring (*hifẓ al-nasl*), protection of human dignity, prohibition against approaching adultery, ethics of social interaction between men and women, and the obligation to guard the gaze and personal purity. These principles can be used as a normative basis for understanding and preventing various forms of behavior that lead to child sexual exploitation. Therefore, an interpretive study is needed that can reveal the relevance of the verses of the Qur'an to the phenomenon of child grooming in the contemporary context.

One contemporary commentator who pays great attention to the social and welfare dimensions of Qur'anic interpretation is Muhammad al-Tahrir Ibn 'Ashur. Through his monumental work, al-Tahrir wa al-Tanwir, he offers an interpretive approach that emphasizes the *maqasid al-shari'ah* (objectives of Islamic law), linguistic analysis, and the social relevance of Qur'anic verses. This approach allows for a more comprehensive reading of Qur'anic verses related to the protection of individuals, especially children, from various forms of deviation and exploitation.

Many researchers have previously conducted studies on child protection in the Qur'an. However, research specifically examining the phenomenon of child grooming through the perspective of Qur'anic interpretation, particularly through examining Ibn 'Ashur's interpretation in al-Tahrir wa al-Tanwir, remains relatively limited. Most studies focus on issues of sexual violence, child education, or child protection in general, without linking them to the concept of child grooming as a form of crime with its own characteristics. Thus, there is an academic gap that needs to be filled through research that connects this contemporary phenomenon with the treasury of Islamic interpretation.

Ibn 'Ashur was a Tunisian Muslim intellectual who frequently criticized public policies that deviated from the goals of sharia through his works. One of his most phenomenal works is the book "Tafsir al-Tahrir wa al-Tanwir." This work was undoubtedly inspired, in part, by the political conditions at the time (Abdulwaly, 2023). His interpretations, which relate to the conditions of Muslim communities worldwide, make this tafsir one of the most widely used tafsir books to address contemporary issues. Furthermore, Ibn 'Ashur is a figure who has made a significant contribution to promoting a culture of critical thinking (Suleiman et al., 2024).

The uniqueness of Ibn 'Ashur's methodology lies in his ability to integrate linguistic analysis, social context, and the objectives of shari'ah in the interpretation process. He views the message of the Qur'an not only through the text, but also through the wisdom and benefits it seeks to achieve. With this approach, verses that talk about maintaining honour, prohibiting approaching adultery, protecting the weak, and social responsibility can be interpreted more broadly as an ethical and normative basis for preventing the practice of child grooming. Ibn 'Ashur's maqasid al-shari'ah approach also provides space to connect the message of the Qur'an with contemporary social reality without ignoring the authority of the text. So, applying it to research on contemporary issues such as child grooming is the

right decision. Based on this background, this paper seeks to answer the question: How does Ibn 'Ashur interpret QS. an-Nisa' [4]: 9, QS. al-Isra' [17]: 32, and QS. al-Nur [24]: 30–31, which can then be used to build a Qur'anic understanding regarding the prevention of child grooming?

METHODS

This research is a library research study, which utilizes written literature as the primary reference in compiling it. In this study, the author employed a descriptive-analytical approach, a method that explains Quranic verses from various perspectives, in accordance with the views, tendencies, and desires of the interpreter or researcher (Shihab, 2013).

Descriptive research itself means an attempt to describe a current event. This research focuses on actual problems as they occur at the time the research is conducted (Rusmana, 2015). The method used is the analytical method (*tahlili*), a method that attempts to systematically explain Quranic verses from various aspects related to them. For example, *asbab al-nuzul*, *munasabah*, its *balagah* aspects, legal aspects, and so on (Mustaqim, 2014). So, this research explains actual problems using verses of the Qur'an related to current events and explains them systematically.

As the title of this research is "Interpretation of Qur'anic Verses on Child Grooming: A Study of Ibn 'Ashur's Interpretation in Tafsir al-Tahrir wa al-Tanwir," in this study, the author uses the holy book of the Qur'an as the primary data because it relates to several verses within it, and uses tafsir books to gain a deeper understanding of these Qur'anic verses. There are two data sources in this study:

Primary data is the primary data in a study. The data used is data directly related to the topic of this study. These data are the Qur'an and Ibn 'Ashur's book Tafsir al-Tahrir wa al-Tanwir. Secondary data is the second source of data in this study. This data supports the accuracy of this research. This data includes books, journal articles, and dictionaries. For example, in this study, the author used books and articles related to child grooming. The dictionaries used are Al-Qur'an dictionaries and language dictionaries, as well as other tafsir books to help understand verses related to the research theme.

RESULTS

A Short Biography of Ibn 'Ashur and the Characteristics of *Tafsir al-Tahrir wa al-Tanwir*

Ibn 'Ashur is a contemporary Maqasid al-shari'ah figure born in Tunisia. He is the successor and complement to the Maqasid concept initiated by his predecessors such as Imam al-Shatibi, al-Gazali, Izuddin bin Abd. Greetings, Ibn Taymiyah, Ibn Qayyim al-Jauziyah and others. Ibn 'Ashur's full name is Muhammad al-Tahir ibn Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Shazili ibn Abdil Qadir ibn Muhammad Ibn 'Ashur. His father Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Tahir ibn 'Ashur was a shaikh in various fields of science who was nicknamed Shaikh al-Maqasidi, al-Faqih, al-Usuli, al-Mufassir, al-Lugawi, al-Adibi, al-Nahwi. Meanwhile, his mother's name was Fatimah bint al-Shaikh al-Wazir Muhammad al-'Aziz ibn Muhammad al-Habib ibn Muhammad al-Tayyib ibn Muhammad ibn Muhammad Bu'attur, Minister in the Ali Bai era (Abdulwaly, 2023).

Ibn 'Ashur was born on the coast of La Marsa about 20 kilometers from the city of Tunisia in 1296 H corresponding to 1879 AD. He died in Tunisia on Sunday 3 Rajab in 1393 H corresponding to June 12, 1973 AD. The Ibn 'Ashur family came from the original Andalusian lineage who migrated to Tunis to save their religion after the collapse of Islamic power there. From the Ibn 'Ashur clan were born great scholars in Tunisia, such as: Ahmad ibn 'Ashur (died 1839 AD), Muhammad ibn 'Ashur (died 1849 AD), Muhammad al-Tahir ibn 'Ashur, his grandfather (died 1868 AD) and Muhammad al-Fadil ibn 'Ashur (died 1970 AD). The scholars from the Ibn 'Ashur family have become the tower of knowledge in the country of Tunis and have colored its political power until now (Hasanudin, 2020).

Judging from his family tree, Ibn 'Ashur was born into a learned family that combined religious and sociocultural knowledge. Therefore, they mastered not only religious knowledge but also social sciences. Therefore, when writing or creating works, they carefully considered both religious and social perspectives, and both were integrated into their works.

As previously explained, Ibn 'Ashur was fortunate to grow up in a family environment that fostered a passion for knowledge. Therefore, his education naturally became a focus of attention from his family, especially his father, mother, and grandfather, who wanted him to become a noble figure through knowledge like his ancestors. From childhood, Ibn 'Ashur received instruction from scholars, both within his own family and outside the family. At the age of six, he began studying religious sciences at the Sayyidi Abi Hadid Mosque, located nearby. He studied the Quran with al-Shaikh al-Muqri' Muhammad al-Khiyari. Apart from that, he also memorized various scientific texts, such as Matn Ibn

'Ashir, ar-Risalah, al-Qatr, and others which were usually taught to children his age, especially those who were prepared to continue their education at al-Zaitunah (Abdulwaly, 2023).

At the age of 14, he entered Zaitunah University. There, he learned about resistance to the attitude of *Taqlid* and called for a renewal of thought. At the age of 14, he entered Zaitunah University. There, he learned about resistance to the attitude of *taqlid* and called for a renewal of thought. Some of the scholars who became his teachers were Shaikh Ahmad bin Badr al-Kafy, from whom he learned the rules of Arabic, read in nahwu and (al-diry) Maliki fiqh from Shaikh Ahmad Jamaluddin, studied tarjamah, literature, mathematics, history, and geography from Shaikh Salim Bawahajib (Misno, 2020).

Ibn 'Ashur has written works in Islamic scholarship, one of which is the phenomenal book of interpretation, Tafsir al-Tahrir wa al-Tanwir. This book is actually a number of lessons once taught to his students at al-Jami' al-A'zam, which he called Amali. First published in this book were juz 'amma and sabbaha in Tunis in 1956 CE. There are 15 volumes containing interpretations of 30 juz of the Qur'an. Like scientific papers in general, the book uses various references. These are sourced from books on interpretation, hadith, fiqh, nahwu, balagah, Sufism, references to poetry, philosophy, and so on. The preface is also published separately, containing the basics of the sciences of the Qur'an. 'Ashur explains his introduction into ten parts. Apart from his phenomenal book, here are some of the works he has written.

It is *Maqasid al-Shari'ah al-Islamiyah*. This book discusses Maqasid al-Shari'ah in the field of fiqh, written because he believes that arguments in fiqh issues are very necessary to be able to arrive at Maqasid ash-shari'ah. Usul al-Nizam al-Ijtima'i fi al-Islam. In this book, Ibn ‘Ashur explains the causes of the rise of the Muslim community, the causes of decline, and the means of improvement for Islamic society. A Laisa al-Subh bi Qarib. In this book, Ibn ‘Ashur explains his support for the islahiyah movement in Tunisia, also explains how improvements in the field of education were carried out by al-Jami'ah al-Zaitunah.

It is al-Waqf wa Asaruh fi al-Islam. This book contains questions and answers about problems that occur in society, such as economic problems for the Egyptian people. Kashf al-Mugatta min al-Ma'ani wa al-Alfaz al-Waqi'ah fi al-Muwatta'. This book explains the hadith of the Prophet SAW, especially those contained in al-Muwatta'. In it, he explains the essence and valuable lessons that can be taken from the book al-Muwaththa'. Qissah al-Mawlid. Hawashi ‘ala al-Tanqih li Sihabiddin al-Qarafi fi Usul al-Fiqh. Radd 'ala Kitab al-Islam wa

Usul al-Hukm Ta'lif 'Ali Abdirrazzaq. Fatawa wa Rasa'il Fiqhiyah. This book is an explanatory book on the book Tanqih al-Fusul fi 'Ilm al-Usul by al-Qarafi. Al-Taudih wa al-Tashih fi Usul al-Fiqh. Al-Nazr al-Fasih 'inda Madayiq al-Anzar fi al- Jami' al-Sahih. This book contains Ibn 'Ashur's views regarding hadith-hadith contained in al-Jâmi ash-Saheeh, as well as his views on various opinions regarding the understanding of hadith- hadith in al-Jami' al-Sahih by al-Bukhari. Ta'liq wa al-Tahqiq ala Sharh Hadith 'Umm Zar'. Qadaya Shar'iyah wa Ahkam Fiqhiyah wa Ara Ijtihadiyah wa Masa'il 'Ilmiyah. Amal 'ala Mukhtasar Khalil. Ta'aliq 'ala al-Mutawwal wa Hashiyah al-Sayalikuti. Amal 'ala Dala'il al-l'jaz. Usul al-Taqaddum fi al-Islam Ibn 'Ashur also has many works on Arabic language and literature (Abdulwaly, 2023).

Child Grooming Concept

Child grooming is a process of manipulation carried out by an adult perpetrator to build emotional closeness, thereby gaining trust and establishing a power relationship. Most victims, after feeling safe and comfortable, and flattered by the gifts and attention they receive, begin to depend on the perpetrator because of their efforts. Therefore, this condition can be considered child grooming (Saimima, 2025). In current cases of sexual violence, perpetrators often seek out victims using cybergrooming techniques, namely by leveraging technology. The National Commission on Violence Against Women (Komnas Perempuan) recognizes cybergrooming as a category of Online Gender-Based Violence (KBGO). Grooming, meanwhile, is an approach to deceiving potential victims, whether in terms of education, age, physical condition, or economic status, to be abused or deceived. One form of this is child grooming, where adults build closeness and create emotional dependence on children for sexual exploitation (Komnas Perempuan, 2026).

Child grooming is an approach process to sexually exploit children through manipulation, generally carried out by adults to build emotional relationships and trust in children, with the ultimate goal of sexually exploiting children (Putri & Sugama, 2025). Child grooming is the process of building a community with a child to engage in sexual activity by luring, manipulating, or inciting the child through the internet. This sexual activity is usually carried out through online meetings between the perpetrator and the victim of sexual violence. This sexual abuse involves sexually assaulting a child using a webcam, or the perpetrator displaying forms of sexual violence to the child, or the child producing the sexual material themselves.

Grooming itself leads to criminal activity, namely befriending someone to persuade them into a sexual relationship. The meaning of a child in law, Article 1 paragraph (1) of the Child Protection Law states, "a child is a person who is not yet 18 (eighteen) years old, including a child who is still in the womb." (Wiguna et al., 2025). So it can be said that child grooming is a criminal act carried out by adults against children under the age of 18 by manipulating the child's psychology for the purpose of sexual exploitation of the child.

1. The basic principles of child grooming

There are six common factors underlying child grooming, namely: Manipulation: Using various manipulation techniques, such as compliments to make the victim feel special or intimidation to make the victim afraid and obedient. Accessibility: The internet allows perpetrators to interact with victims without face-to-face contact or revealing their identities. Rapport building: Perpetrators adjust their communication methods to make the victim comfortable, while also gaining information about the victim's interests and situation. The perpetrators usually keep this relationship secret by asking the victim not to tell others.

Sexual context: Initiating a sexual relationship by using vulgar language, seducing, sending pornographic images, or introducing the victim to pornographic content. Risk assessment: A risk assessment of the victim is conducted before and during online child grooming, which includes the victim's individual aspects, internet factors, and the surrounding environment. Deception: The perpetrator disguises himself as a peer to approach the victim. The victim is aware that they are interacting with an adult but continues anyway (Amilda et al., 2025).

2. Model dan fase terjadinya *child grooming*

Research on the Sexual Grooming Model (SGM) indicates that grooming is a planned process. The pattern typically involves five stages. First, victim selection. The perpetrator deliberately targets vulnerable minors, either due to psychological factors or family circumstances. For example, they lack attention or supervision, or are experiencing problems at home, such as parental conflict. Second, approaching and then isolating the victim, usually gaining access through work, volunteer activities, or by building family trust. Once trusted, the victim is isolated or distanced from their social environment, such as friends and family, to increase their dependence on the perpetrator. This is done, for example, by inviting them on vacation together, staying overnight, or emotionally distancing the victim from those closest to them.

Third, building a "good person" image. The perpetrator attempts to build trust and win over the child and their parents. The goal is to expand access to the victim without arousing suspicion. Fourth, exposing sexual content and physical contact. This stage usually occurs before sexual exploitation. It begins with jokes, conversations, or inappropriate content. Sexual violence then escalates to physical contact. Everything is made to appear normal to confuse and silence the child. Fifth, controlling through fear. The goal of the "grooming" stage is to maintain control over the victim while avoiding suspicion. The perpetrator manipulates the child into feeling guilty, responsible for the incident, or afraid of the consequences of disclosing the incident (McElvaney, 2019).

From these stages, it's clear that this is not a consensual relationship. It's systematic manipulation of a child who is unable to protect themselves. Protecting oneself isn't just about physical aspects; it encompasses everything about the manipulated victim, including their immature mental and psychological state. This unstable mental and psychological state creates ample opportunities for groomers.

Ibn 'Ashur's Interpretation of the Qur'anic Verses on Child Grooming

The term "child grooming" is not found explicitly in the Quran. However, values related to child protection, prohibition of exploitation, safeguarding honor, and preventing behavior that leads to moral decay can be found in various verses, such as the following.

1. Principles of Child Protection/protection of offspring

This principle of child protection is as described in QS. al-Nisā' [4]: 9.

وَلْيَخْشَ الَّذِيْنَ لَوْ تَرَكُوْا مِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّةً ضِعٰفًا خَافُوْا عَلَيْهِمْۖ فَلْيَتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَلْيَقُوْلُوْا قَوْلًا سَدِيْدًا

The meaning: Let them be afraid of those who should (die) leave behind them, weak offspring (whom) they fear. So, fear Allah and speak with the right words (in terms of protecting the rights of your descendants).

Ibn 'Ashur begins his interpretation of this verse by stating its connection to the previous verse. 'Ashur states that this verse is advice for every call, prohibition, warning, or encouragement in the previous verse. Namely, regarding the management of the property of orphans and the weak, rather than women and children. It begins with the command to fear Allah or fear His punishment. Then it awakens a sense of compassion in parents for their children, so that they feel like heirs whose property they have misused and consider their children as children whose rights have been usurped. 'Ashur adds that this is also contained

in the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad, which in Indonesian means "none of you believes until you love for your brother what you love for yourself." This verse means that everyone should act justly and compassionately, especially towards those who are weak, such as orphans, oppressed children, and women. And parents should be afraid to leave their children in such a weak state (Al-Tunisi, 1984).

The fear referred to and emphasized is the parental affection for their fear of their child becoming weak. "Weak" does not only mean physically weak but is broader than that. In the interpretation of the Ministry of Religion, the term meaning "weak offspring" is mentioned at least twice: first with the phrase zurriyyah du'afa' in QS. al-Baqarah [2]: 266. Second in QS. al-Nisā' [4]: 9 with the phrase zurriyyah di'afan. zurriyyah du'afa' means "children (offspring) who are still small, in the sense of not yet adults." Meanwhile, the word zurriyyah di'afan means "offspring who are weak in all aspects," physically, mentally, socially, economically, scientifically, spiritually, and so on, which causes them to be unable to carry out the main functions of humans.

2. Prohibition of Approaching Heinous Acts in QS. al-Isrā' [17]: 32

وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا الزِّنٰٓى اِنَّهٗ كَانَ فَاحِشَةًۗ وَسَاۤءَ سَبِيْلًا

The meaning: "Do not come near to adultery. Indeed, it is a heinous act and a terrible path."

Ibn Kasir in his interpretation explains this verse with a hadith relating to a young man who asked for permission to commit adultery. Another factor in killing girls is fear of their daughters being raped or committing adultery. So this verse further orders to avoid causes that lead to such actions, not to destroy human children who have the potential to become devout or disobedient.

Quoting from Sayyid Quthub, Quraish Shihab wrote in the tafsir al-Misbah, that in adultery there is murder in several aspects. First, the placement of the cause of life (sperm) is not in its rightful place. This is usually followed by the desire to abort, that is, to kill the unborn fetus. If the child is born alive, then usually he is left alone without anyone looking after and educating him, and this is a form of murder. Adultery is also a form of murder against society, rampant in the midst of this evil, because it causes a person's lineage to become unclear or mixed up, and trust regarding honor and children is lost, weakening relationships within society, ultimately leading to the demise of the community. On the other hand, adultery also kills society by making it easier to indulge in lust, making married life very fragile and even unnecessary (Shihab, 2012).

This prohibition is accompanied by a prohibition on burying or destroying female children to preserve offspring. Adultery is also strictly prohibited because it destroys offspring. Therefore, any act approaching it is also strictly prohibited. Furthermore, 'Ashur understands that adultery is a bad thing that becomes a habit (Al-Tunisi, 1984). In the contemporary context, this prohibition also extends to the form of protection for children so that they are not easily influenced or as adults do not commit any form of act approaching adultery, including manipulating children.

3. Maintaining Views and Honor in QS. al-Nūr [24]: 30–31

"Say to men who believe, let them guard their eyes and guard their private parts. Thus it is purer for them. Indeed, Allah is careful about what they do. Say to the believing women that they should guard their eyes, guard their private parts, and do not reveal their ornaments (parts of their bodies), except those that are (normally) visible. You should cover the veil over your chest"

According to Muhammad al-Tahir ibn 'Ashur in at-Taḥrir wa al-Tanwir, QS. al-Nūr [24]: 30–31 does not only talk about clothing, but also building good manners in social interactions between men and women and gradually preventing the path to adultery. In the verse يَغُضُّوْا مِنْ اَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوْا فُرُوْجَهُمْۗ according to Ibn 'Ashur, this verse comes after the discussion about asking permission to enter the house in the previous verse. So, once someone enters and interacts with the occupants of a house, the Quran provides etiquette for that interaction: do not stare at women with a persistent or intent gaze. A gaze that is difficult to avoid or occurs accidentally is not the same as intentionally staring (Al-Tunisi, 1984).

The meaning of "يَغُضُّوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ" Ibn 'Ashur paid special attention to the word مِنْ(min) in yaguddū min abṣārihim. According to him, the use of min indicates that what is commanded is not to close the eyes from all sight, but to lower the gaze from objects that are not worthy of being looked at. Therefore, according to Ibn 'Ashur, gadd al-baṣar has several levels: there are gazes that are obligatory to avoid and others that do not reach the level of obligatory. He also explains that الغضّ (al-gadd) means to reduce or turn the gaze away from continuous staring (Al-Tunisi, 1984).

The prohibition is not merely "looking," but specifically, intentionally gazing, fixing one's gaze, and enjoying the object of one's gaze. He further stated that gazing is a form of zina (*ra'id al-zina*), that is, something that leads to or paves the way for zina. Therefore, immediately after the command to lower the gaze, the command to guard the private parts is mentioned (Al-Tunisi, 1984).

DISCUSSION

Contextualization of Ibn 'Ashur's Thoughts on the Verses of the Qur'an on Child Grooming

Methodologically, Ibn ʻĀshūr certainly did not discuss "child grooming" as a modern term. Therefore, what can be done is to extract the principles, maqāṣid, and logic of preventing harm from his interpretation, then contextualize them to child grooming. Conceptually, the three groups of verses, namely QS. an-Nisā' [4]: 9, QS. al-Isrā' [17]: 32, and QS. al-Nūr [24]: 30–31 can be arranged into three layers of child protection: protection against vulnerability, prevention of paths to sexual exploitation, establishing boundaries between gaze and private parts, and preventing social harm due to deviant sexual behavior. Ibn ʻĀshūr did not only write an interpretation, but more than that. He wrote a solution-oriented interpretation. According to him, the purpose of the revelation of the Qur'an is to create benefits for all human affairs. Whether it's for individual welfare, social welfare, or the welfare of civilization. This means that a work of interpretation must be able to provide solutions to all of humanity's problems (Razak et al., 2025).

1. QS. al-Nisā' [4]: 9: Children are weak and must be protected

Ibn ʻĀshūr explained the verse: وَلْيَخْشَ الَّذِينَ لَوْ تَرَكُوا مِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّةً ضِعَافًا خَافُوا عَلَيْهِمْ as a mauʻiẓah (moral advice) to those who have authority over the weak, especially in the context of managing the property of orphans. He directed adults to imagine themselves in the position of those who abandon vulnerable children, thus creating a fear that their children would be treated unjustly. This principle is crucial for reconstructing the issue of child grooming: the protection of those in vulnerable positions (*ḍuʻafā'*). Ibn ʻĀshūr explained that the reference to "ذُرِّيَّةً ضِعَافًا" (weak offspring) serves to evoke feelings of compassion

and concern for them. He even linked it to the Prophetic principle: "No one believes until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself." (Al-Tunisi, 1969).

From a reconstructive perspective on child grooming, children are not merely objects that must be prohibited, but rather vulnerable subjects, so adults have a protective obligation. Child grooming essentially exploits this inequality; perpetrators build trust, emotional closeness, or dependence on children before leading them to exploitation. Therefore, from QS. al-Nisā' [4]: 9, a principle can be reconstructed: the more vulnerable a person is, the greater the moral obligation of adults to protect them from abuse of power and trust. Thus, this verse provides an ethical-protective foundation for preventing child grooming. In addition to prevention, it also creates a safe and supportive environment for recovery and restoring the self-confidence of children who have become victims of child grooming (Saimima, 2025).

2. QS. al-Isrā' [17]: 32: The prohibition is not only adultery, but also "approaching" adultery

The verse that reads "The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is interesting in Ibn 'Ashūr's interpretation because it does not stop at prohibiting adultery. 'Ashūr connects this verse to the context of the previous verse about infanticide and the issue of protecting offspring. According to him, adultery can lead to the loss of clarity of lineage, thus having a destructive side similar to the act of wasting children. The word that is very important is لَا تَقْرَبُوا"do not approach" meaning, the construction of the prohibition is not just "do not commit adultery", but do not take the path that leads to adultery (Al-Tunisi, 1969).

This is a very strong point to link to child grooming. Grooming actually works through processes that precede sexual exploitation. For example, building excessive trust, giving manipulative attention or gifts, creating secrets between the perpetrator and the child, isolating the child from parental supervision, gradually engaging in sexual communication, normalizing sexual talk or behavior, and then leading the child to exploitation. Within Ibn Āshūr's framework, prevention should not wait until "zina" or sexual violence occurs. The logic of lā taqrabū al-zinā allows us to understand that the pathways that systematically lead to sexual harm must also be prevented. This also means that as a person enters adulthood, it is necessary to develop an understanding of themselves regarding physical and psychological changes. An understanding of the ethics of social interaction, both with family and with others, is crucial (Ichsan, Basyari, et al., 2023; Ichsan, Samsudin, et al., 2023; Munawaroh et al., 2024; Pranajati & Ichsan, 2025; Satriyawan, 2020).

Thus, this verse provides a preventive basis, if applied according to the maqāṣidī (principle of action), and its formula can be reconstructed. The prohibition against illicit goals includes attention to the means and stages that strongly lead to them. The illicit goal here is adultery, and therefore all the means and stages that lead to adultery, or in this case, the perpetrator of child grooming. However, the author must emphasise that this is a contextual reconstruction of Ibn 'Ashur's thinking, not a claim that he ever mentioned child grooming directly in his work.

3. QS. al-Nūr [24]: 30–31: Prevention begins with visual and sexual behaviour

QS. an-Nūr: 30 commands: يَغُضُّوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا فُرُوجَهُمْ. Ibn 'Āshūr provides an explanation that is very relevant to the preventive approach. According to him, gadd al-baṣar does not mean closing the eyes completely but averting the gaze from something that is not worth looking at, while a look that is difficult to avoid is forgiven. Al-gadd itself has the basic meaning of "reducing" or "restraining" so it is not interpreted as closing the gaze completely but rather controlling it from things that can trigger lust. As for *hifẓ al-farj*, it means protecting sexual desires from forbidden channels and things that lead to them (Al-Tunisi, 1984). Meanwhile, Surah al-Nur verse 31 is seen as a continuation of the previous verse and contains similar content but specifically mentions verse 30 for men and verse 31 for women. In the current context, especially regarding child grooming issues, controlling one's gaze and maintaining one's dress code are preventive measures against child sexual exploitation.

CONCLUSION

This study confirms that Ibn 'Āshūr's interpretation in Tafsīr al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr provides a solid ethical-normative framework in mitigating child grooming through a synthesis of three main pillars: the mandate to protect children's vulnerabilities (QS. al-Nisā' [4]: 9), a preventive approach based on closing all loopholes for exploitation (*sadd al-dharī'ah*) (QS. al-Isrā' [17]: 32) and enforcing boundaries for social and digital interactions to maintain honor (QS. al-Nūr [24]: 30–31). Although the Qur'an does not contain the terminology literally, this contextual reading oriented towards the benefit (*maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*) proves that preventing child sexual crimes requires intervention from the phase of manipulating power relations, not just post-incident action. Thus, this finding provides a theoretical contribution

to contemporary Islamic legal discourse while offering a comprehensive protection foundation that is relevant for formulating child protection policies in the digital era.

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