



Feminist Interpretation of Qur'an Surah al-Nisa' verse 34: An Educational Study on Gender Relations, Structural Violence and the Protection of Women's Rights

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Abstract

Issues of gender inequality and violence against women remain significant challenges across various societal strata, even within communities that strongly uphold religious values. This research critically re-examines Surah al-Nisa' verse 34 through the lens of feminist tafsir (exegesis). Its aim is to deconstruct imbalanced gender relations and analyze their implications for structural violence experienced by women in Muslim societies. This particular verse is often used as a theological justification for male dominance over women in domestic and social spheres, thereby potentially perpetuating gender-based inequality and violence. The study employs feminist gender hermeneutics, utilizing a critical approach to both the text and its context, along with an analysis of the socio-cultural constructions that inform traditional interpretations. This research emphasizes the importance of reading the text with a strong bias towards gender justice and the protection of women's rights, considering the verse's historical, linguistic, and social backgrounds. The findings indicate that traditional interpretations of this verse are often patriarchally biased, positioning men as absolute leaders and women as subordinates. However, through a feminist tafsir approach, the verse can be read as an invitation to foster harmony and reciprocal responsibility in marital relationships, rather than as a legitimization of violence or dominance. This study asserts the critical need for a reformation of Islamic exegetical paradigms towards greater gender justice to support the formation of social systems free from violence and discrimination against women. Such reinterpretation also contributes to progressive Islamic legal discourse that protects women's rights and encourages religious and educational institutions to adopt more critical and contextual approaches to religious texts.

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INTRODUCTION

The discourse on gender relations in Islam has become a central issue in contemporary Islamic studies, particularly when it touches on verses containing normative dimensions regarding the roles of men and women in domestic and social life. One of the verses most frequently debated academically and socially is QS. al-Nisa: 34. This verse states that "men are qawwāmūna over women," and details the steps that men can take against wives who are considered to have committed adultery. *nusyūz*, including acts of beating (*waḍribūhunna*). This verse, which textually appears to place men in a superior position in household relations, has become a normative basis in the formation of patriarchal structures in Muslim society. In the classical interpretation tradition, the position of men as qawwāmūn is interpreted as a form of leadership or moral and legal authority over women. This kind of interpretation is found, among others, in the work of al-Ṭabarī (al-Ṭabarī, 1968) who understands qawwāmūn as full authority based on the superiority of men's intellect, physical strength, and economic responsibility. The same thing was also expressed by al-Qurṭubī in *The Holy Quran* (al-Qurṭubī, 1967), as well as Ibn Kaṣīr in *Recitation of the Quran and the Sunnah* which even describes a form of beating in a "painless" way, using a siwak or a light object. (Ibn Kaṣīr, 1980).

This interpretation is inextricably linked to the highly patriarchal social structure of 7th-century Arab society, based on hierarchical relations between men and women. In this context, gender constructs are not natural or inherent, but shaped by social and cultural norms that place women in a subordinate position. However, problems arise when these interpretations, rooted in specific historical values, continue to be used normatively in the context of modern society without any attempt at contextualization and reinterpretation. This not only has the potential to stifle the dynamic values of the Quran but also opens up space for violent practices against women, including domestic violence (KDRT), justified in the name of religion. Data from the National Commission on Violence Against Women shows that gender-biased religious interpretations are a contributing factor to structural violence against women. The 2023 Annual Report states that many cases of domestic violence use the interpretation of Surah al-Nisa': 34 as theological justification. This demonstrates that religious texts are never value-free, and patriarchal interpretations can be reproduced as a form of symbolic and structural domination of women. (Godrati et al., 2019)

This contextual interpretation requires a re-examination of the verses that have long been the source of legitimacy for male power, using a feminist interpretation approach that offers a hermeneutic alternative that supports the values of justice, equality, and the protection of human rights. The feminist interpretation approach in Islamic studies combines a critique of the andro-centric bias in classical interpretation with a contextual reading of the Qur'anic text, using hermeneutical tools that consider history, language, social structure, and the experiences of women as subjects of interpretation. (Adam, 2016). Amina Wadud in *Qur'an and Woman*, asserting that verses about gender relations must be read with the principles of Qur'anic ethics that emphasize justice and civility. He rejects the understanding of *ḍaraba* as a domination structure, and proposes that the root word *ḍaraba* in *waḍribūhunna* is not interpreted solely as a "blow", but rather considers other meanings such as "leaving" or "separating" as used in other verses of the Qur'an. (Riyani, I, 2017).

Astha Barlas *Deep Believing Women in Islam* He dismantles the epistemological basis of patriarchal interpretations, which he believes reflect the views of commentators rather than the normative message of the sacred text. He argues that the Qur'an, as a book of monotheism, rejects all forms of inequality and oppression, including against women. (Abukari, A., 2014). Barlas emphasizes that the interpretation of gender in the Qur'an must be based on the principle of divine justice, not on temporal and contextual social assumptions. A similar approach was developed by

Nasaruddin Umar, who stated that the interpretation of gender verses in the Qur'an must be directed towards *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah*, namely the welfare, justice, and protection of women's rights. (Janah, N., 2017). Meanwhile, Nur Rofiah, in her various works, emphasizes the importance of making women the subject of interpretation, not merely the object of interpretation. According to her, a rereading of QS. al-Nisa: 34 must be done by considering the reality of women as whole human beings who have equal spiritual, social, and political rights. (Robikah, S., 2019)

Considering this background, this research is crucial and urgent. The urgency of this research lies in the need to present a new interpretive paradigm that is more responsive to the issue of gender-based violence legitimized by religious interpretation. This study also aims to unravel the complex relationship between text, context, and power in the production of meaning in verses concerning women. Furthermore, this study seeks to confirm that the feminist interpretive approach is not merely a counter-discourse, but rather part of an epistemological effort to build an inclusive, just, and socially just Islamic knowledge system. Therefore, this study aims to reread QS. al-Nisa': 34 using a feminist gender hermeneutics approach. This approach encompasses a contextual reading of the text, a critique of gender bias in classical interpretations, and an analysis of the social structures that influence the production and reproduction of interpretations. With this approach, it is hoped that a new understanding of the verse will be found that not only eliminates the legitimacy of violence against women but also strengthens the Qur'an's vision of justice, reciprocity, and the protection of human dignity as a whole.

METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach (Ishtiaq, 2019) based on literature studies. (library research), (Zed, Mestika, 2007) which focuses on the study and analysis of texts, both the Qur'an as a primary source and classical and contemporary interpretation literature as secondary sources. This approach was chosen because it is relevant to the research objective, namely to examine and reinterpret the meaning of QS. An-Nisa: 34 from a contemporary feminist perspective through a critical gender hermeneutics framework (Afifi, 2022; Engkizar et al., 2023). This research combines thematic interpretation (Al-Farmawi, 2004) (*tafsīr mawḍū'i*) and feminist hermeneutics. Thematic interpretation is used to collect, group, and compare verses of the Quran related to gender relations, such as verses on leadership in the family, the rights and obligations of husband and wife, and the principles of justice and compassion. This approach allows for an integrative and non-partial analysis of Surah An-Nisa':34, taking into account the entire ethical and moral message of the Quran. Meanwhile, Feminist hermeneutics (Arsal et al., 2020; Engkizar et al., 2025) is used as a method of critical analysis of texts and interpretations. This hermeneutics starts from the assumption that the interpretation of religious texts is not value-free, but rather shaped by specific social, political, and cultural contexts, including patriarchal structures rooted in the tradition of interpretation. In this study, the feminist hermeneutics model used refers to the thoughts of Amina Wadud and Asma Barlas, who reject literal and patriarchal readings of sacred texts and encourage readings oriented toward justice, equality, and women's liberation..

The Wadud model emphasizes the importance of the historical context of revelation (*asbāb al-nuzūl*), linguistic analysis of key terms, and understanding the universal moral purpose of the Qur'an. Meanwhile, Barlas offers an approach that unpacks power relations in interpretation, asserting that the Qur'an is inherently non-patriarchal, yet has been read patriarchally by dominant commentators. Thus, this research not only seeks to understand the meaning of the text but also to dismantle established interpretive ideologies and propose a more ethical and gender-just reinterpretation. (Zulaiha, 2017; Engkizar et al., 2024; Rahman et al., 2025) The

primary data in this research is QS text. An-Nisa:34 in Arabic, accompanied by translation and context asbāb al-nuzūl-nya. Secondary sources include classical interpretations such as Tafsir al-Ṭabarī, Tafsir al-Qurṭubī, And Tafsir Ibn Kaṣīr, as well as feminist interpretation literature such as Qur'an and Woman (Amina Wadud), Believing Women in Islam (Asma Barlas), Arguments for Gender Equality in the Qur'an (Nasaruddin Umar), and Islam, Feminism and Gender Justice (Nur Rofiah). Other supporting literature includes academic journals, institutional reports on gender-based violence, and books on contemporary Quranic interpretation and hermeneutics methods. The analysis technique used in this research is content analysis (content analysis) (Krippendorff, Klaus, 2013) on the meaning structure of key words in QS. An-Nisa:34, such as *asour beauty*, *nusyūz*, And *waḍribūhunna*. This analysis is combined with a contextual reading of the social structure of Arab society during the time of revelation, and intertextual approach with other verses in the Qur'an that discuss compassion, justice, and spiritual equality between men and women. Using this approach, this study attempts to construct a rereading of Surah An-Nisa':34 that is more inclusive, contextual, and in line with the values of gender justice in contemporary society.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

QS. An-Nisa:34 has become a focal point of debate in gender discourse in Islam.

الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَبِمَا أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ فَالصَّالِحَاتُ قَانِتَاتٌ حَافِظَاتٌ لِّلْغَيْبِ بِمَا حَفِظَ اللَّهُ وَالَّتِي تَخَافُونَ نُشُوزَهُنَّ فَعِظُوهُنَّ وَاهْجُرُوهُنَّ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ وَاصْرَبُوهُنَّ فَإِنِ اطَّعْنَكُمْ فَلَا تَبْغُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيلًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا كَبِيرًا

Classical interpretations generally position men as superior to women, that is, as leaders and controllers of the household based on their physical superiority, rationality, and economic role. This interpretation is rooted in the patriarchal social structure of 7th-century Arabia and was reinterpreted by commentators such as al-Ṭabarī, al-Qurṭubī, and Ibn Kaṣīr in accordance with the cultural and legal norms prevailing at the time. (Al-Qurṭubī, 1990) In al-Qurṭubī's interpretation, for example, it is emphasized that male leadership is a permanent sharia law, because women are considered lacking in reason and religion. This interpretation reinforces the unequal power relations within the family and opens up space for the normalization of violence against women.

However, contemporary feminist approaches challenge this interpretation using contextual, linguistic, and ethical approaches. Amina Wadud highlights that the superiority of men in Surah An-Nisa': 34 is not a fixed, essential trait, but rather a social construct based on economic contributions and responsibilities within a specific time context. (Muhammad Shahrur, n.d.) Many contemporary households demonstrate a balanced or even dominant economic role for women, making the concept of *qiwamah* as absolute leadership irrelevant. In this regard, the *maqāṣid al-sharī* approach 'It is important to reinterpret potentially discriminatory verses so that they do not conflict with universal Islamic values such as justice and welfare.

A linguistic approach enriches this argument. The word *ḍaraba* in *waḍribūhunna* has more than ten meanings in the Qur'an, including "separating," "leaving," and "making a parable." Muhammad Shahrur, in his modernist reading, rejects the meaning of "hitting" as the main interpretation, and leans more towards the meaning of "moving away" or "silencing" as a final step in conflict resolution. (Dirgayunita, et al., (2019). In fact, in the practice of the Prophet Muhammad himself, there is no authentic history that he ever hit his wives, even though this verse was revealed. This shows that the implementation of the verse is highly ethical and contextual, not an absolute law

that must be carried out. This is reinforced by the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad: "The best of you are those who are best to their wives, and I am the best to my wives" (Narrated by Tirmidhi), which strengthens Islam's moral position on anti-domestic violence.

This research also demonstrates the real impact of gender-biased interpretations on social reality. The National Commission on Violence Against Women report states that some perpetrators of domestic violence use Surah An-Nisa: 34 as religious legitimacy to strengthen their power within the household (Ghauri, N. 2015). This indicates a misunderstanding in the public's understanding of the verse and demonstrates the importance of progressive interpretations that are not only based on text, but also on context and ethical values. A feminist interpretation approach offers an important solution to reforming the understanding of verses that have long justified gender inequality, by emphasizing Islamic moral principles such as deliberation, responsibility, and compassion.

This research confirms that the reinterpretation of QS. An-Nisa 34 within a feminist framework is not merely an effort to "defend women," but also part of a larger contemporary *ijtihad* to update the interpretation so that it remains contextual and relevant to the principles of social justice. This reinterpretation has also had a positive impact on the formation of more just Islamic family law, as has been done in several Muslim countries such as Morocco and Tunisia, which have legally abolished interpretations that justify domestic violence. Thus, QS. An-Nisa 34, when read ethically and contextually, can not only be freed from violent interpretations, but can instead be used as a reference for building a healthy, just household, free from domination by one party (Rahman, 2018).

QS. An-Nisa: 34 is often debated in Islamic gender studies because it contains the concept of *qiwamah* (male leadership over women) and controversial commands regarding actions against wives deemed to be committing *nusyuz*. In classical interpretations, this verse has become a theological foundation that strengthens patriarchal structures, where men are considered leaders because of their superior strength, rationality, and economic role. For example, al-Ṭabarī explains that *qiwamah* is a form of male responsibility accompanied by authority because they are "superior" in physical and economic characteristics. (Al-Ṭabarī, n.d.) This approach has been criticized by feminists for being essentialist and generalizing biological characteristics as the basis for law. (Triantoro, 2018).

In her feminist interpretation, Amina Wadud disputes the notion that men have essential superiority. She asserts that *qiwamah* is a contextual social structure, and that economic roles should not determine leadership rights within the household. Wadud also emphasizes that the Qur'an uses inclusive language, referring to men and women as partners (*zauj*), not hierarchies. (Amina Wadud, 1999) This interpretation is important because it rejects static readings and emphasizes moral principles of the Qur'an, such as justice (*ʿadl*), love (grace), and cooperation. (Ariesita, et al., 2023)

In addition, the phrase *waḍribūhunna* is often interpreted as "hitting," but many contemporary linguistic and exegetical scholars challenge this meaning. Abdullah Saeed argues that the Arabic root word *ḍaraba* has more than ten different meanings, and that the literal choice of one meaning must be tested against general Islamic moral principles. (Rosyada, D. 2018) Even Yusuf al-Qaradawi stated that beating as a last resort in domestic conflict cannot be made the norm because it is contrary to noble Islamic morals and values. *mu'āsyarah bi al-ma'rūf* (Yusuf al-Qaradawi, 1994), with the approach of *maqāṣid al-syarīʿ* Ah, domestic violence can be considered a violation of the objectives of sharia, namely protection of the soul (Al-Nafs) and human dignity ((Ibn al-Qayyim) Karchi, 2017)

Classical interpretations often interpret this verse in ways that, consciously or unconsciously, legitimize structural violence against women. The feminist method of

gender hermeneutics identifies how patriarchal bias has shaped this interpretation: "الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ" (Men are the leaders of women): In many traditional interpretations, the phrase "qawwamūn 'ala al-nisā'" is interpreted as the absolute authority or superiority of men over women. Feminist gender hermeneutics sees this as the result of an interpretation that does not take into account the socio-historical context and tends to generalize men's role as sole providers at that time into a legitimization of permanent superiority. This creates a hierarchy that places men in a dominant position and women in a subordinate position, as if this were an inviolable divine decree. (Hakim, 2017)

"بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ" (because Allah has made some of them excel others): This verse is often interpreted as a natural or inherent superiority of men over women. Feminist gender hermeneutics highlights that this interpretation arises from a patriarchal lens that considers masculine traits as the standard of superiority. However, the Qur'an explicitly affirms the fundamental equality of men and women before Allah in creation and accountability: QS. Al-Hujurat: 13: "O mankind, indeed We created you from male and female and made you into nations and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most honorable of you in the sight of Allah is the most pious of you. Indeed, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Knowing." (Izzad, 2018). QS. An-Nahl: 97: "Whoever does righteous deeds, whether male or female in a state of faith, then surely We will give him a good life and verily We will reward them with a reward better than what they have done." These verses show that the standard of excellence is piety and righteous deeds, not gender. (Abror, 2019)

"وَاضْرِبُوهُنَّ" (and beat them): This is the most controversial phrase. The literal interpretation that allows physical beating of wives who are considered "nusyuz" has become a primary source of justification for domestic violence. The feminist gender hermeneutics method sees this as a manifestation of a patriarchal culture that tends to justify violence to assert control. Even with limitations (e.g., not to injure), this permission still opens the door to violent practices that contradict the principles of humanity and justice. (Rajan, 2018). Overall, this traditional interpretation contributes to structural violence because it: Legitimizes Gender Hierarchy: Instills the idea of male superiority and female subordination as part of religious teachings, which are then internalized in social norms. Normalizes Domestic Violence: Provides religious justification for the practice of physical violence, albeit within certain limits, which ultimately undermines women's dignity. Limits Women's Rights and Freedoms: Emphasizing women's role as objects that must be obedient and have no right to express opinions or refuse, limiting their autonomy. (Sinha, et al., 2017).

Rereading Gender Relations through Feminist Gender Hermeneutics Methods, Feminist gender hermeneutics method is an approach that consciously questions and challenges patriarchal assumptions in the interpretation of religious texts. This involves: (Caufield, 2018). Contextual-Historical Analysis: Understanding texts in the social, cultural, and political context in which they were revealed, and distinguishing between universal teachings and practices that are temporal or cultural in nature. Critique of Patriarchal Bias: Identifying and challenging how patriarchal pre-understandings have shaped interpretations that disadvantage women. Seeking the Spirit and Purpose of the Qur'an (Maqasid al-Shari'ah): Emphasis on the higher goals of Islamic law, such as justice, compassion, and protection of life, honor, and property, which must dominate the understanding of particular verses. Reading from a Woman's Perspective: Providing women's voices and experiences in the interpretive process, which are often overlooked in traditional interpretations.

Feminist interpretation reinterprets verse 34:

First, Reinterpretation of "Qawwamūn" (Protector and Caretaker): Not Domination, but Responsibility in Specific Contexts: Feminist gender hermeneutics interprets "qawwamūn" as the responsibility to protect, care for, and provide for, particularly in the economic context of Arab society at that time where men were the primary providers. This is not an absolute authority applicable in all ages, but rather a functional role associated with financial obligations "بِمَا أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ". Protection, Not Domination: This verse emphasizes that "qawwam" is a role carried out by men because they bear the economic burden. If the economic role is no longer carried out by men alone (for example, women also work and earn an income), then the implications of "qawwamūn" also need to be reviewed to align with the principles of justice and deliberation in the household. (Hassan, et al., 2022).

Second, Reinterpretation of "Bimā Faḍḍala Allāhu Ba'dahum 'alā Ba'din" (Superiority of Some over Others): Functional, not Essential, Superiority and Recognition of Diversity: Feminist gender hermeneutics rejects the idea of essential superiority of men. Instead, this "superiority" is interpreted as a functional difference or excess of gifts that God gives to individuals, both men and women, for a specific purpose. For example, men may be superior in physical strength for certain jobs, while women may be superior in childbearing and nurturing capacities. The point is complementary diversity, not a hierarchy of domination. (Ainurrofiq, 2019).

Third, Strengthening the Evidence of the Qur'an and Hadith regarding Equality: QS. Ar-Rum: 21: "And among the signs of His power is that He created for you wives of your own kind, so that you would be inclined and feel at ease with them, and He made love and affection between you. Indeed, in such a thing there are signs for the people who think." This verse emphasizes love, affection, and peace (sakinah) as the foundation of marriage, not domination. The Prophet's Hadith on Treating Women Well: "The believer whose faith is most perfect is the one whose morals are best, and the best of you are those who are best to their wives.." (Narrated by Tirmidhi). This hadith clearly emphasizes kindness and noble morals in treating one's wife, not violence. (Noorhasanah, 2020).

Fourth, Reinterpretation of "Waḍribūhunna" (Separate or Give Non-Physical Lessons): Priority of the Principles of Justice and Compassion: The feminist gender hermeneutics method places this verse within the framework of Maqasid al-Shari'ah, namely the higher goals of Islamic law such as the protection of the soul (hifz an-nafs) and honor (hifz al-'ird). Physical violence is clearly contrary to these goals. Fifth, the search for alternative meanings of "Ḍaraba": By examining the richness of Arabic semantics, feminist interpretations suggest that "ḍaraba" has many meanings besides "hitting," such as "separating," "leaving (temporarily)," or "teaching a (non-physical) lesson." The three-stage context (advice, separation, and "ḍaraba") indicates that the goal is reconciliation and maintaining the integrity of the household, not physical punishment. Even if it is interpreted as "hitting," it must be very light and non-painful, which essentially makes it no longer a "beating" in the sense of violence.

Protection of Women's Rights and the Implications of Feminist Interpretation

The feminist interpretation of QS. An-Nisa' verse 34, which is strengthened by the feminist gender hermeneutics method and supporting arguments, fundamentally contributes to the protection of women's rights in the following ways: (Urbah Rusydiana, et al., 2021). First, restoring the Dignity of Women: Rejecting the idea of subordination and affirming that women are subjects who have dignity, autonomy, and equal rights before God and in society, as emphasized in the Qur'an and Hadith regarding human equality. Second, rejecting the Legitimacy of Violence: Firmly dismantling and rejecting all forms of interpretation that justify physical, psychological, or emotional violence against women in the household, in line with the principles of mercy and the noble morals of the Prophet. Third, Promoting Gender Equity in the

Household: Promoting husband-wife relations based on deliberation, affection (*mawaddah wa rahmah*), mutual respect, and cooperation as the core of Islamic marriage, as described in QS. Ar-Rum: 21 and exemplified by the behavior of the Prophet SAW. Fourth, Strengthening Women's Autonomy and Participation: By reinterpreting the role of "qawwam" as a contextual responsibility, feminist interpretation opens up space for women to have greater autonomy and participate fully in various aspects of life, both domestic and public, in accordance with the spirit of Islam which glorifies knowledge and good deeds for all.

Muhammad Shahrur offers a modern reading of this verse. He rejects the meaning of "hitting" as the primary interpretation of *daraba*, and instead proposes a reading based on ethical and social reconstruction. For him, Surah An-Nisa': 34 critiques the practice of violence common in pre-Islamic times and aims to regulate and reduce destructive acts against women. (Muhammad Shahrur, 1990) He also emphasizes that the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) never hit his wives, even during conflicts, and that the Prophet's example should be the primary reference in Muslim household practices. The hadith, "The best of you are those who are best to their families" (Narrated by Tirmidhi), serves as a normative basis for rejecting all forms of violence. (Rizki, 2020).

The critical hermeneutical approach offered by Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd is also relevant. He emphasized that sacred texts cannot be separated from their social context, and that a just interpretation must take into account the social, political, and ideological dimensions underlying the text. (Nasr Hamid, 1990) Abu Zayd even stated that interpretive stagnation is a form of epistemic violence against a living and dynamic text. Thus, a feminist reading is not only methodologically valid but also urgently requires a fight for social justice and avoids exploiting sacred texts to legitimize patriarchal power. (Halilović, 2017)

Contemporary social realities also emphasize the urgency of this re-reading. The National Commission on Violence Against Women (Komnas Perempuan) in its annual report revealed that many perpetrators of domestic violence use Surah An-Nisa: 34 as justification for their violent acts. (Husni et al., 2015) This demonstrates that biased and literal interpretations of sacred texts can directly impact women's human rights violations. Countries such as Morocco and Tunisia have reformed their family laws based on progressive interpretations of potentially discriminatory verses of the Quran. Through this approach, the law reflects not only the text but also the universal values of Islam: justice, compassion, and equality. (Booley, 2016). A feminist interpretation of Surah An-Nisa':34, ultimately, aims not to reject the text, but to salvage its spirit of justice. It offers a new methodology that is not only textual but also ethical, historical, and contextual. This interpretation strikes a balance between fidelity to the text and a commitment to justice, and seeks to align the Quran with Muslim women's contemporary struggle for dignity and freedom. With this approach, a verse originally used to justify violence can be transformed into an instrument for protecting and upholding women's rights in Islam.

CONCLUSION

QS. An-Nisa: 34 is a verse that has long been a source of debate regarding gender relations in Islam. Traditional interpretations often understand this verse as legitimizing male leadership and permitting violence against wives under certain circumstances. However, this approach has created serious problems, particularly in the context of domestic violence, which is often justified in the name of religion. Through a feminist approach, this verse is interpreted contextually and ethically. The concept of *qiwamah* is understood as a social responsibility that is not absolute, while the phrase *waḍribūhunna* is reexamined so that it does not conflict with the values of justice, compassion, and protection of women. Feminist interpretations seek to restore

the moral message of the Quran that supports justice and equality. Thus, feminist interpretations of QS. An-Nisa: 34 provide an alternative reading that is more humanistic, critical, and relevant to current social challenges. It does not reject the text, but rather reconstructs it so that it remains alive and meaningful in fighting for the rights and dignity of Muslim women.

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