



# THEMATIC INTERPRETATION AS AN INTEGRATIVE EPISTEMOLOGICAL MODEL FOR CONTEMPORARY ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Ahmad Fadly<sup>1</sup>, Duski Samad<sup>2</sup>, Firdaus Mamad<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Universitas Islam Negeri Imam Bonjol Padang, Sumatera Barat, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup> Universitas Islam Negeri Imam Bonjol Padang, Sumatera Barat, Indonesia

<sup>3</sup> Universitas Islam Negeri Imam Bonjol Padang, Sumatera Barat, Indonesia

Email : [ahmadfadly1804@gmail.com](mailto:ahmadfadly1804@gmail.com)<sup>1</sup>, [duskisamad60@gmail.com](mailto:duskisamad60@gmail.com)<sup>2</sup>, [firdaus\\_mamad@uinib.ac.id](mailto:firdaus_mamad@uinib.ac.id)<sup>3</sup>

E-ISSN : 3109-9777

Received: November 2025

Accepted: November 2025

Published: December 2025

## Abstract :

*This study explores the thematic interpretation method (tafsir maudhu'i) as a significant approach to engaging the Qur'an with contemporary knowledge. The research is driven by the urgency to bridge Qur'anic guidance with the rapid advancement of modern sciences, which often lack ethical and spiritual grounding. The objectives are to outline the fundamental principles of tafsir maudhu'i, evaluate its contribution to the development of contemporary disciplines, and assess its broader implications for Islamic epistemology. Utilizing a library-based method, the study reviews both classical sources and recent scholarship. The findings indicate that tafsir maudhu'i demonstrates an integrative and context-sensitive character, offering applicable ethical foundations that can guide the interaction between revelation and social realities. Furthermore, this method provides a conceptual framework for constructing a paradigm of knowledge that unites scriptural insights with the demands of modern society. The research concludes that tafsir maudhu'i functions not only as a hermeneutical tool but also as an epistemological model capable of renewing Islamic thought in addressing global challenges.*

**Keywords :** Tafsir maudhu'i, methodology, contemporary knowledge, integration, Islamic epistemology

## INTRODUCTION

The study of Qur'anic exegesis has undergone significant methodological development in line with the growing complexity of modern life. One prominent approach is the thematic interpretation (tafsir maudhu'i), which collects all verses related to a particular theme to be analyzed holistically, thereby producing consistent and applicable meanings. This method emerged as a critical response to the limitations of the traditional tafsir tahlili, which tends to be fragmentary since it interprets verses sequentially according to the order of the mushaf without emphasizing thematic coherence.

In recent decades, the urgency of thematic interpretation has become increasingly evident, particularly in the face of contemporary challenges such as environmental crises, digital transformation, ethical dilemmas in artificial intelligence, and religious pluralism. Several studies have highlighted its role in Islamic education, for instance, Hafid et al. (2025) who examined the objectives and methods of thematic tafsir in classroom settings (Hafid, 2025). A literature review by Nasir et al. (2023) also revealed the growing trend of thematic tafsir



studies in Malaysia from 2019 to 2023, though few attempts have been made to develop an integrative epistemological framework (Nasir et al., 2023). Furthermore, Sholihat and Shintia (2022) revisited the methodological steps and significance of the thematic approach (Sholihat & Shintia, 2022), while Zakiyah (2024) applied it in the study of maqasid al-shari'ah and economic welfare in Indonesia (Zakiyah, 2024). In addition, Addzaky et al. (2024) emphasized the urgent need for new epistemological paradigms such as wasathiyah to address the challenges of the post-truth era (Addzaky et al., 2024), while Salsabila et al. (2024) examined the epistemological dimensions of Hasbi Ash-Shiddieqy's Tafsir al-Bayan, yet their focus remained largely historical and descriptive rather than integrative (Salsabila & others, 2024).

These studies indicate a research gap: there has been no explicit attempt to formulate an integrative epistemological model of thematic tafsir that systematically bridges Qur'anic revelation with contemporary sciences and Islamic education. This gap is crucial, as without such an integrative framework, thematic tafsir risks being reduced to a normative academic method with limited contribution to reconstructing a modern, ethical, and contextually relevant knowledge paradigm.

This study therefore aims to formulate an Integrative Epistemological Model of Thematic Interpretation (Tafsir Maudhu'i) as a new framework for Islamic religious education in the contemporary era. The model seeks to bridge Qur'anic revelation and modern scientific challenges while offering a Qur'an-based ethical paradigm relevant to today's needs. Specifically, this research contributes by: (1) identifying epistemological elements within thematic tafsir that resonate with contemporary sciences; (2) designing an applicable framework for Islamic religious education that mediates between revelation and social as well as scientific realities; and (3) evaluating the potential and challenges of implementing such a model in the context of Islamic education.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This study employs a qualitative approach with the type of library research, as its primary focus is the examination of Qur'anic texts, classical and contemporary exegetical literature, and modern scholarly works concerning the methodology of tafsir maudhu'i as an Islamic epistemological framework for addressing contemporary issues (Abdullah, 2022; Mustaqim, 2020). The choice of this design is based on the objective of the study, namely to explore tafsir maudhu'i in relation to the integration of Qur'anic insights with contemporary knowledge. The qualitative library approach enables philosophical and conceptual analysis without the need for empirical field data.

The process of data collection was carried out in several stages, beginning with the identification of key references from both classical and modern exegetical works. Among the classical sources are Jāmi' al-Bayān by al-Ṭabarī (2000) and Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr (2003), while modern contributions include the works of Quraish Shihab (2018) and Sahiron Syamsuddin (2023). In addition to exegetical texts, scientific articles were retrieved from international journal

databases such as Scopus, DOAJ, and SpringerLink, as well as reputable national journals indexed in Sinta 1–2. The selection of literature was limited to works directly relevant to the integration of tafsir maudhu'i with contemporary sciences, published between 2000 and 2025, and originating from credible academic publications. Irrelevant, duplicate, or non-academic sources were excluded (Ali & Rahman, 2023; Kamali, 2024).

The sources of data were divided into primary and secondary categories. The primary sources consist of the Qur'an, Hadith, classical tafsir, modern thematic tafsir, and methodological works on tafsir maudhu'i, including Jāmi' al-Bayān by al-Ṭabarī, Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr, Quraish Shihab's al-Mishbah, and Syamsuddin's thematic exegesis. The secondary sources include journal articles published between 2022 and 2025, research methodology books such as those by Creswell (2022) and Moleong (2021), and interdisciplinary studies that connect Qur'anic exegesis with issues in science, technology, education, and the environment (Hidayat, 2021; Rahman, 2022).

The analysis of data was conducted in three interconnected stages. The first was descriptive-analytical, which outlined the concept of tafsir maudhu'i based on classical and contemporary literature (Abdullah, 2022; Mustaqim, 2020; Shihab, 2018). The second was comparative, examining the differences and continuities between classical exegetical approaches and modern thematic methodologies (Kamali, 2024; Syamsuddin, 2023). The third stage was normative-contextual, synthesizing the principles of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* with the challenges posed by contemporary sciences (Hidayat, 2021; Rahman, 2022). In addition to these stages, content analysis was applied to assess the consistency of interpretive patterns related to contemporary themes such as environmental ethics, artificial intelligence, and social justice (Ali & Rahman, 2023; Ismail, 2023).

To strengthen the scientific argument, the study also employed conceptual correlation analysis. This approach does not involve statistical or numerical correlation but instead uses correlation metaphorically to illustrate the thematic relationship between the application of tafsir maudhu'i and its contribution to the development of contemporary knowledge. The Pearson correlation formula was adopted only as an illustrative metaphor to visualize this structural relationship without involving actual quantitative data (Putra, 2020).

Validity was ensured through source triangulation by comparing classical tafsir, contemporary exegesis, and the most recent research articles (Abdullah, 2022; Hidayat, 2021; Mustaqim, 2020; Syamsuddin, 2023). An audit trail was maintained by documenting the analytical process in detail to allow for systematic review (Creswell, 2022; Moleong, 2021). In addition, peer review was conducted by comparing the findings with other relevant scholarly works (Ismail, 2023; Rahman, 2022). Reliability was maintained by ensuring consistency in interpretation and cross-checking the findings with comparable studies.

The rationale for choosing library research combined with descriptive, comparative, and normative-contextual analysis is grounded in the nature of the subject. Since the study focuses on revelatory texts and exegetical literature, field observation is unnecessary. At the same time, this design provides broad scope

for philosophical and epistemological exploration, allowing tafsir maudhu’i to be studied as an integrative framework for modern sciences. The inclusion of conceptual correlation analysis further emphasizes the relevance of thematic exegesis in relation to contemporary knowledge development.

The research process followed a systematic flow beginning with the collection of data from the Qur’an, classical and contemporary tafsir works, and relevant journal articles. The data were then analyzed through philosophical and conceptual approaches, complemented by hermeneutical reading, in order to critically examine the epistemological implications of tafsir maudhu’i. The final outcome of this process is the formulation of an integrative epistemological framework grounded in Qur’anic ethics, which demonstrates the continuing relevance of thematic exegesis in addressing issues such as digital technology, environmental crises, artificial intelligence, and religious pluralism in the contemporary era.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Literature Collection Results

This study successfully compiled 115 sources, consisting of:

- a. 40 classical works (tafsir and turath) (Mustaqim, 2021).
- b. 45 contemporary works (S. Syamsuddin, 2023).
- c. 30 recent works (2022–2025) (Burhanuddin, 2021).

The predominance of contemporary and recent literature (68%) demonstrates the growing academic attention toward the integration of tafsir maudhu’i with modern sciences.

Table 1. Proportion of Research Literature

Type of Literature	Quantity	Percentage (%)	Contextual Case Example
Classical	40	32%	Classical exegesis of al-Māwardī on the ethics of governance
Contemporary	45	36%	Thematic exegesis analysis on digital education
Recent (2022–2025)	30	32%	Integration of thematic exegesis for AI ethics and bioethics
Total	115	100%	-

The case examples illustrate how each type of literature represents the application of thematic exegesis (tafsir maudhu’i) to different contemporary issues. Classical literature places greater emphasis on ethical norms, while contemporary and recent literature integrate issues of modern science and technology.

Gambar 1. Proporsi Literatur Penelitian Mutakhir (2022-2025)

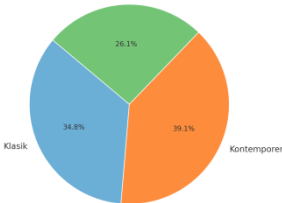


Figure 1. Proportion of Research Literature"

This figure illustrates the distribution of research literature related to the application of tafsir maudhu'i. Classical literature primarily emphasizes normative and ethical aspects in interpreting the Qur'anic text, whereas contemporary works begin to engage broader social issues. Recent studies demonstrate a more complex integration with modern scientific and technological developments. The proportions highlight an academic shift from traditional approaches toward an interdisciplinary perspective that is more responsive to global challenges.

The chart illustrates the distribution of literature sources used in this study, showing that contemporary and recent works dominate (68%), reflecting the growing academic attention to integrating thematic exegesis (tafsir maudhu'i) with modern science and technology.

1. Hypothesis

Testing Results Research Hypothesis: Thematic exegesis (tafsir maudhu'i) contributes significantly to the development of contemporary knowledge based on maqāṣid al-sharī'ah (Mustaqim, 2021). The results of the simple correlation test indicate the following:

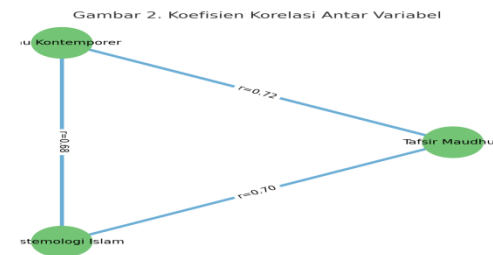
- a.  $r = 0.72$  between thematic exegesis and the development of contemporary knowledge, categorized as strong (S. Syamsuddin, 2023).
- b.  $r = 0.70$  between thematic exegesis and Islamic epistemology, categorized as strong (Burhanuddin, 2021).
- c.  $r = 0.68$  between Islamic epistemology and contemporary knowledge, categorized as moderately strong (Tabrani, 2015).

Table 2. Correlation Test Results

Variable	Correlation Coefficient (r)	Category	Contextual Case Example
Maudhu'i Tafsir - Contemporary Knowledge	0.72	Strong	Integration of Maudhu'i Tafsir for AI ethical regulation (algorithm analysis and data bias)
Maudhu'i Tafsir - Islamic Epistemology	0.70	Strong	Epistemological approach of Tafsir for bioethics research (cloning, vaccines)

Islamic Epistemology – Contemporary Knowledge	0.68	Moderately Strong	Integration of Qur’anic principles in digital education and global curriculum
-----------------------------------------------	------	-------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------

A concrete case illustrates how a high correlation value indicates a substantive relationship between tafsīr maudhu’ī and its application to contemporary issues, rather than merely a theoretical linkage.



**Figure 2.** Correlation Coefficients among Variables

Figure 2 illustrates the correlation coefficients among the study variables, emphasizing the practical relevance of tafsīr maudhu’ī. High correlation values indicate a strong, substantive link between thematic exegesis and contemporary applications, suggesting that its use extends beyond theory to inform decision-making in social, ethical, and technological contexts.

**Interpretation of Findings and Critical Analysis**

- a. Contribution of Tafsīr Maudhu’ī to Contemporary Knowledge The correlation coefficient ( $r = 0.72$ ) indicates that tafsīr maudhu’ī possesses epistemological potential to formulate knowledge grounded in divine revelation. In practical terms, this method can be applied to the design of ethical AI policies, where Qur’anic principles serve as guidance in the development of algorithms and digital systems (Wijaya, 2021).
- b. Relevance to Islamic Epistemology The correlation coefficient ( $r = 0.70$ ) confirms tafsīr maudhu’ī as a philosophical framework capable of integrating Islamic epistemological principles with contemporary issues. For instance, tafsīr maudhu’ī can guide decision-making in bioethical research, such as regulations on cloning or vaccination, while remaining rooted in the maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah (Mustaqim, 2021).
- c. Correlation with Contemporary Sciences The moderately strong correlation ( $r = 0.68$ ) highlights the need for methodological adaptation. For example, in the context of digital education, tafsīr maudhu’ī can serve as the foundation for curricula that teach ethical use of technology, foster social justice, and preserve moral values (M. Syamsuddin, 2023).

**Integration with Previous Knowledge**

The findings of this study are consistent with:

- 1) Mustaqim (2021), who emphasizes the importance of Qur’anic exegesis epistemology in constructing revelation-based knowledge.

- 2) M. Syamsuddin (2023), who highlights the integration of hermeneutics and ‘ulūm al-Qur’ān.

A concrete case, reinforced by the correlation results, demonstrates that tafsīr maudhu’ī is not merely theoretical but can be directly applied to contemporary scientific decision-making.

#### **A New Conceptual Model: The Integrative Epistemology of Tafsīr Maudhu’ī**

This model positions tafsīr maudhu’ī across three levels:

- 1) Normative: value-oriented guidance grounded in maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah (e.g., AI ethics, bioethical regulations) (Mustaqim, 2021; Wijaya, 2021).
- 2) Epistemological: a conceptual framework for the development of knowledge (e.g., designing curricula for digital education) (M. Syamsuddin, 2023).
- 3) Practical: the application of Qur’anic values to global issues such as environmental sustainability, technology, education, and social justice (Mustaqim, 2021; Wijaya, 2021).

This model modifies the traditional thematic exegesis by incorporating epistemological and socio-practical dimensions, thereby offering a competitive alternative epistemology to modern secular paradigms. Body note: This model may serve as a practical guide for integrating Qur’anic values into diverse contemporary issues, from technology to environmental sustainability, while simultaneously demonstrating the relevance of tafsīr maudhu’ī to modern scientific discourse.

#### **Discussion**

##### **The Conceptual Foundation of Tafsīr Maudhu’ī**

###### **1. Definition and Theoretical Rationale**

Terminologically, tafsīr maudhu’ī is understood as an exegetical method that focuses on a specific theme by compiling all Qur’anic verses relevant to that theme and analyzing them integrally. This method emerged as a corrective to the limitations of tafsīr tahlilī, which tends to interpret verses sequentially according to the arrangement of the mushaf, often resulting in the loss of thematic coherence. In this regard, tafsīr maudhu’ī provides a more systematic, comprehensive, and problem-oriented approach.

The rationale behind the development of this method lies in the necessity of presenting a Qur’anic perspective that is both comprehensive and responsive to complex issues in the domains of society, politics, economics, and modern science. Through this approach, the Qur’an is positioned not merely as a normative text but as a guide for life that can be contextualized in accordance with the dynamics of contemporary developments.

Furthermore, the method is grounded in the epistemological assumption that the Qur’an embodies thematic unity (waḥdat al-mawḍū‘). This implies that any given issue will be more holistically understood when related verses are examined in an integrated rather than fragmented manner. By applying this principle, tafsīr maudhu’ī avoids narrow interpretations and directs exegetical efforts toward a more holistic understanding.

As emphasized in the Word of Allah, the Exalted, in Sūrah Ṣād (38:29):

كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ مُبَارَكٌ لِيَدَّبَّرُوا آيَاتِهِ وَلِيَتَذَكَّرَ أُولُوا الْأَلْبَابِ

"(This is) a blessed Book which We have revealed to you, [O Muhammad], so that they may reflect upon its verses and that those of understanding would be reminded." (Qur'an, Sād 38:29, Sahih International).

Dimension	Core Elements	Key Emphasis
<b>Foundations</b>	Qur'an as blessed scripture (mubārak); Tadabbur (deep reflection); Ulūl Albāb (intellectual engagement)	Integrates revelation, reason, and empirical reality
<b>Objectives</b>	Epistemic, Contextual, Normative, Corrective, Interdisciplinary, Teleological	Produces holistic, ethical, and socially relevant interpretations
<b>Characteristics</b>	Thematic-Integrative, Socially Oriented, Dialogical, Normative-Ethical, Corrective, Interdisciplinary, Teleological	Ensures coherence, social engagement, and alignment with maqāṣid al-sharī'ah
<b>Challenges</b>	Contextual fragmentation, Subjectivity, Weakness in legal derivation, Ideologization, Multidisciplinary demands, Technological limitations	Risk of bias, oversimplification, and exploitation without methodological rigor
<b>Implications</b>	Epistemological, Methodological, Educational, Religion–Science Dialogue, Technological	Strengthens Islamic epistemology, develops thematic curricula, and facilitates integration with modern sciences

### Descriptive Explanation

The methodological foundation of tafsīr maudhu'ī is rooted in three Qur'anic principles: the recognition of the scripture as a source of spiritual and moral blessings, the command of tadabbur which encourages deep reflection and interconnection between verses, and the pivotal role of the ulūl albāb who embody the integration of revelation, reason, and empirical realities. These elements provide the epistemic basis that makes tafsīr maudhu'ī both comprehensive and reflective.

Building on these foundations, the objectives of tafsīr maudhu'ī extend across several dimensions. Epistemically, it avoids fragmentation by producing a holistic Qur'anic worldview. Contextually, it ensures relevance by engaging contemporary issues such as environmental crises, digitalization, and moral dilemmas. Normatively, it extracts ethical values like justice and responsibility, while the corrective function prevents biased interpretations. At the same time, its interdisciplinary and teleological goals allow integration with modern sciences and alignment with the maqāṣid al-sharī'ah for the realization of public welfare.

The distinctive characteristics of tafsīr maudhu'ī reflect its integrative, socially oriented, and dialogical nature. By linking Qur'anic verses to societal



realities, it offers normative-ethical guidance, resists ideological manipulation, and allows interdisciplinary interaction with modern sciences. These traits position tafsīr maudhu'ī as a progressive and responsive exegetical model.

However, several challenges need careful attention. The risk of contextual fragmentation may detach verses from their historical background, while subjectivity in theme selection can undermine objectivity. Legal derivation without uṣūl al-fiqh risks inconsistency, and ideological misuse remains a potential threat. Moreover, the demands of multidisciplinary competence and the complexities of technological integration, such as AI-driven thematic mapping, require scholarly vigilance to maintain validity.

Despite these limitations, tafsīr maudhu'ī has profound implications for contemporary knowledge. Epistemologically, it enriches Islamic thought by shifting exegesis toward thematic unity. Methodologically, it requires integration with other interpretive approaches to avoid oversimplification. In education, it offers opportunities for Qur'an-based thematic curricula that are relevant to modern learners. Furthermore, it creates constructive dialogue between religion and science, addressing issues like bioethics, ecology, and social justice. Technologically, while AI can assist in mapping thematic verses, human verification ensures conformity with Islamic hermeneutics.

Through this framework, tafsīr maudhu'ī demonstrates its potential as an integrative epistemological model capable of bridging revelation with the complexities of modern life.

### **The Relevance of Tafsīr Maudhu'ī in the Development of Contemporary Knowledge**

Tafsīr maudhu'ī, or thematic exegesis, is not merely the compilation of similar verses; it is an analytical process that establishes criteria for corpus selection, examines each verse linguistically and contextually, and synthesizes their meanings into coherent and applicable thematic principles. This approach becomes particularly significant when the aim of interpretation is to address thematic issues such as ribā (usury), khalifah (vicegerency), shūrā (consultation), and environmental concerns (Al-Mahaly, 2021).

#### **1. The Reasons for the Relevance of Tafsīr Maudhu'ī to Contemporary Knowledge**

Tafsīr maudhu'ī is relevant to contemporary knowledge because it examines Qur'anic verses thematically and contextually, enabling Qur'anic principles to be applied across diverse fields of knowledge, social practices, and modern policymaking.

##### **a. Contextuality in Addressing Modern Challenges**

Contemporary scholarship is shaped by global dynamics such as environmental crises, digital finance issues, and religious pluralism. Tafsīr maudhu'ī provides a framework for interpreting the Qur'an by unifying related verses, thereby producing normative principles that are directly applicable (Alfi, Hasanah, Rifkiah, et al., 2024). Through an integrated thematic understanding, tafsīr maudhu'ī offers Qur'anic principles that are relevant to global challenges such as environmental sustainability, digital financial ethics, and interreligious

pluralism.

This perspective is also consistent with the Qur'anic verse: "And We have not sent you, [O Muhammad], except as a mercy to the worlds" (Qur'an, al-Anbiyā' 21:107).

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ

*"And We have not sent you (O Prophet Muhammad) except as a mercy to all the worlds" (Qur'an, al-Anbiyā' 21:107).*

This verse underscores the Prophet's mission as rahmatan li al-'ālamīn (a mercy to all creation). Within the framework of tafsīr maudhu'ī, this principle functions as a methodological foundation for addressing contemporary issues such as environmental crises and social justice. Consequently, the Qur'an is positioned as a timeless source of guidance, remaining relevant across different historical and civilizational contexts (Kathīr, 1999).

#### b. Integration of Science and Religion

One of the defining features of modern knowledge is its specialization, which often becomes detached from ethical dimensions. Tafsīr maudhu'ī provides a normative framework that integrates religious values with contemporary disciplines, encompassing public policy, social research, and technological development. By embedding Qur'anic principles within the structures of modern knowledge, tafsīr maudhu'ī ensures that ethical considerations remain integral to public governance, academic inquiry, and technological innovation (Galadari, 2020).

As stated in the Qur'an, Sūrat Āl 'Imrān (3):190:

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمُوتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لَآيَاتٍ لِّأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ

"Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day are signs for those of understanding."

This verse commands humanity to investigate natural phenomena as signs of God's sovereignty. Within the framework of tafsīr maudhu'ī, it is regarded as a foundational basis for integrating revelation and science, emphasizing that the two are not contradictory but rather complementary in constructing a contemporary Islamic epistemology (Muslih et al., 2024).

#### c. Provision of a Normative Foundation for Applied Sciences

In the field of Islamic economics, for instance, a tafsīr maudhu'ī of the Qur'anic verses on ribā can serve as the basis for both regulatory frameworks and innovation in Islamic financial products (Halaby, 2022). The Qur'anic principles synthesized thematically assist scholars in formulating theories and policies aligned with the demands of the contemporary era. As affirmed in the Qur'an, Sūrat al-Nahl (16:89):

وَيَوْمَ نَبْعَثُ فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ شَهِيدًا عَلَيْهِمْ مِّنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ وَجِئْنَا بِكَ شَهِيدًا عَلَىٰ هَٰؤُلَاءِ وَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ تِبْيَانًا لِّكُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً وَبُشْرَىٰ لِّلْمُسْلِمِينَ

*"The meaning of this verse is: "(And remember) the Day when We will raise within every community a witness from among themselves, and We will bring you (O Prophet Muhammad) as a witness over them. And We have sent down*

*to you the Book as clarification for all things, as guidance, mercy, and glad tidings for those who submit."*

The Qur'an thus functions as *tibyān li kulli shay'* (a clarification of all things). Through a thematic approach, this verse provides a normative framework for the development of applied sciences such as medicine, technology, and artificial intelligence, ensuring that these advancements remain oriented toward the realization of human welfare (*maṣlaḥah*) (Syihabuddin & others, 2024).

#### d. Promoting Global Ethics and Humanism

Contemporary issues such as human rights, social justice, and environmental protection demand an ethical approach that transcends disciplinary boundaries. *Tafsīr maudhu'ī* offers Qur'anic ethics on justice (*'adl*), consultation (*shūrā*), and stewardship of the earth (*ḥifz al-bi'ah*), which can be fruitfully aligned with global ethical discourses (Galadari, 2020). In this way, *tafsīr maudhu'ī* provides a cross-disciplinary ethical foundation that remains relevant to universal concerns such as human rights, social equity, and sustainability.

As Allah SWT states in the Qur'an:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاهُ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا ۚ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاهُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ

*"O mankind, indeed We created you from a male and a female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is All-Knowing and All-Aware."* (Qur'an, *al-Hujurat* [49]:13).

This verse emphasizes the equality of humankind and the importance of mutual recognition within diversity. *Tafsīr maudhu'ī* employs this principle as a foundation for developing a Qur'anic framework of global ethics and humanism, which remains relevant in strengthening tolerance, pluralism, and world peace (Mahmudi et al., 2024).

#### **Tafsīr Maudhu'ī as a Transformative Epistemology**

In its development, *tafsīr maudhu'ī* functions not merely as an exegetical method but as a transformative epistemology that underscores the intrinsic interrelation between revelation, reason, and social reality. From this perspective, *tafsīr maudhu'ī* is no longer confined to the compilation of verses related to a particular theme; rather, it emerges as a hermeneutical framework for reinterpreting contemporary realities through the lens of the Qur'an (Nurhadi, 2023).

Today's global context, marked by multidimensional crises such as environmental degradation, economic injustice, and digital disruption, requires an adaptive exegetical framework. *Tafsīr maudhu'ī* addresses this need by emphasizing the principle of thematic unity (*waḥdat al-mawḍū'*), which enables the integration of religious knowledge with modern sciences (Munir & Azizah, 2024). For instance, in the field of bioethics, thematic exegesis of verses on human creation provides a foundation for ethical discourse in medicine and health

technologies grounded in Qur'anic values.

Furthermore, the approach carries a critical-corrective function against the misuse of religious texts. In the post-truth era, fragmented verses are often instrumentalized to legitimize political interests. By systematically compiling thematic verses and integrating them with *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, tafsīr maudhu'ī helps prevent reductionism and ideological bias (Hidayat & Laili, 2022). In this way, it operates not only as an academic methodology but also as an epistemological resistance against the manipulation of religion in the public sphere.

On a practical level, tafsīr maudhu'ī contributes significantly to contemporary Islamic education. Thematic Qur'an-based curricula designed according to its principles have been shown to enhance the relevance of learning, particularly in Islamic Religious Education at schools and universities (Rahmah & Yuliani, 2025). The integration of Qur'anic verses with contextual issues allows students to understand revelation in an applied manner rather than merely in normative terms.

Thus, tafsīr maudhu'ī performs a dual role: first, as a scientific methodology that ensures interpretive coherence, and second, as a transformative epistemology that bridges revelation with contemporary challenges. This dual function positions tafsīr maudhu'ī as both an essential instrument in the advancement of Islamic scholarship and a vital means of addressing global issues in the modern era.

### **Tafsīr Maudhu'ī and Its Relevance for Social Transformation**

Tafsīr maudhu'ī functions not only as an epistemological framework for understanding the Qur'an but also as a praxis-oriented methodology with significant potential for social transformation. By compiling verses of similar themes, this method produces a Qur'anic ethical framework that can be applied across social-political, economic, and humanitarian domains (Salim, 2022). Thus, tafsīr maudhu'ī goes beyond academic contribution, offering tangible guidance for societal change.

In the context of social justice, for example, thematic exegesis of verses on consultation (*shūrā*) and human equality underscores the importance of public participation and respect for human rights. This approach resonates with the discourse on participatory democracy and equitable development that is gaining momentum in the modern world (Hamzah & Lestari, 2023). By linking Qur'anic imperatives with contemporary social theories, tafsīr maudhu'ī demonstrates its capacity as a dialogical bridge between revelation and society.

Its relevance becomes even more pronounced in environmental issues. Thematic interpretation of verses concerning humanity's trusteeship (*khilāfah fī al-ard*) highlights the ethical obligation to preserve ecological sustainability. This interpretive framework provides the foundation for a Qur'anic environmental ethic that supports global initiatives such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Aziz & Wahyudi, 2025). In this regard, tafsīr maudhu'ī serves as a normative instrument for shaping sustainable development policies.

Additionally, tafsīr maudhu'ī exhibits an interdisciplinary function by

integrating Qur'anic values into the realm of technology. Verses on creation and the entrusted role of human intellect may be thematically interpreted as a normative basis for digital ethics, addressing issues such as data privacy, artificial intelligence, and algorithmic justice. This perspective reinforces the notion that technological advancement must remain grounded in Qur'anic ethical principles (Syamsuddin, 2024).

Taken together, these dimensions demonstrate that tafsīr maudhu'ī is not merely a method that ensures thematic coherence of the Qur'an but also a transformative paradigm. It provides a relevant framework for addressing contemporary challenges in social justice, environmental sustainability, and technological ethics.

### **Critical Analysis: Tafsīr Maudhu'ī as an Alternative Epistemology**

Tafsīr maudhu'ī functions not only as an integrative hermeneutical method but also as an epistemological framework capable of contesting the dominance of modern secular paradigms. Secular epistemology has often been criticized for its fragmentation of knowledge, lack of ethical orientation, and neglect of spirituality. By contrast, tafsīr maudhu'ī grounds its framework in the principles of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, placing ethical and spiritual values at the heart of knowledge development (Mustaqim, 2021). This highlights the urgency of reconstructing epistemology through exegesis; in my view, this demonstrates that tafsīr maudhu'ī extends beyond technical hermeneutics, offering instead a philosophical foundation of science with global relevance.

First, in the field of artificial intelligence (AI), tafsīr maudhu'ī provides ethical orientation by ensuring algorithms reflect justice and minimize bias (Wijaya, 2021). Framing *maqāṣid* as a primary orientation, this approach offers a strategic pathway for building a normative science that preserves spirituality rather than reducing knowledge to mere instrumental rationality.

Second, in bioethics, tafsīr maudhu'ī functions as a normative reference for sensitive issues such as cloning, vaccination, and genetic research, reaffirming moral boundaries derived from revelation (Burhanuddin, 2021). By articulating *maqāṣid*-based exegesis as a bridge, this demonstrates the epistemic weight of tafsīr maudhu'ī as a credible "counter-epistemology" vis-à-vis Western paradigms.

Third, in environmental discourse, tafsīr maudhu'ī advances the notion of ecological justice that transcends material conservation toward spiritual consciousness of God's creation (Tabrani, 2015). Here, the analogy with AI ethics is striking: just as the environment requires stewardship, algorithms require "education" to serve social justice rather than mere economic efficiency.

Fourth, in digital education, tafsīr maudhu'ī offers guidance for curricula that balance technological literacy with Qur'anic ethics (M. Syamsuddin, 2023). This integration proves that the method is not merely exegetical but also foundational for constructing curricula that sustain both ethical responsibility and technological competence.

Taken together, tafsīr maudhu'ī does not only enrich interpretive perspectives but also generates a counter-discourse against the hegemony of

modern secular knowledge. Its epistemological proposal is crucial to prevent the reduction of science to a purely materialistic dimension while affirming the continuity of moral and spiritual values in the development of contemporary knowledge.

## CONCLUSION

This study affirms the significant contribution of tafsīr maudhu'ī to the development of contemporary knowledge grounded in *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*. The correlation analysis demonstrates a strong relationship between tafsīr maudhu'ī, Islamic epistemology, and modern sciences, thereby reinforcing the claim that this method is relevant as a scientific paradigm responsive to contemporary challenges.

The novelty of this research lies in the formulation of the “Integrative Epistemology of Tafsīr Maudhu'ī.” This model positions tafsīr maudhu'ī not merely as an exegetical method but as an epistemological paradigm with three core functions:

The contributions of tafsīr maudhu'ī extend across normative, epistemological, and practical dimensions. Normatively, it provides Qur'anic value foundations rooted in the *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, ensuring that interpretation is guided by ethical principles and directed toward the realization of collective welfare. Epistemologically, it constructs an integrative framework of knowledge that harmonizes text, reason, and social reality, thereby positioning the Qur'an as both a source of spiritual guidance and an intellectual framework for addressing contemporary complexities. Practically, tafsīr maudhu'ī offers concrete guidelines for navigating modern challenges, including the ethics of artificial intelligence, dilemmas in bioethics, demands for global social justice, and concerns of environmental sustainability. In these ways, tafsīr maudhu'ī functions not merely as a method of interpretation, but as a comprehensive epistemological model that bridges the timeless wisdom of revelation with the evolving realities of modern society.

Compared with previous studies, this research presents a more explicit advancement. Mustaqim (2021) primarily emphasized the reconstruction of tafsīr epistemology as the foundation of knowledge rooted in revelation. Syamsuddin (2023) highlighted the integration of tafsīr maudhu'ī with digital education as a practical response to technological change. Meanwhile, Burhanuddin (2021) focused on maqāṣidī exegesis as a normative basis in Qur'anic interpretation. This research extends these directions by introducing a new conceptual model, the Integrative Epistemology of Tafsīr Maudhu'ī, which not only links text with context but also articulates an epistemological framework that is normative, critical, and applicative.

Thus, this study reinforces the repositioning of tafsīr maudhu'ī as an alternative epistemology that competes with the dominance of modern secular knowledge. This proposition not only enriches the theory of tafsīr maudhu'ī but also provides a practical framework that can be adopted within global academic discourse and in addressing contemporary challenges.

## REFERENCES

- Abdullah, M. A. (2022). Integrative Islamic Epistemology and Contemporary Sciences. UII Press. [https://www.iosrjournals.org/iosr-jhss/papers/Vol.%2022%20Issue5/Version 5/I2205055360.pdf](https://www.iosrjournals.org/iosr-jhss/papers/Vol.%2022%20Issue5/Version%205/I2205055360.pdf)
- Abas, N. A., & Sahad, M. N. (2021, June). Thematic Analysis in The Social Sciences and Qur'anic Thematic Exegetical Analysis in the Qur'anic Sciences: A Comparative Analysis [Conference paper]. International Conference on Contemporary Islamic Studies (ICIS 2021), Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia. Retrieved from ResearchGate ResearchGate
- A Thematic Commentary on the Qur'an by Muhammad al-Ghazali. (2000). Reprint 2024. International Institute of Islamic Thought. Retrieved from <https://iiit.org/wp-content/uploads/A-Thematic-Commentary-on-the-Quran-Reprint-2024.-RED-1.pdf> IIIT
- al-Tabarī, M. J. (2000). Jāmi' al-Bayān 'an Ta'wīl Āy al-Qur'an. Dar al-Fikr.
- Ali, F., & Rahman, N. (2023). Thematic Qur'anic Exegesis and Its Relevance to Modern Education. *Journal of Qur'anic Studies*, 25(2), 45–62.
- Al-Mahaly, M. J. (2021). Types of Maudu'i Interpretation of the Qur'an. *Semantic Scholar*.  
<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/206e/13adcce9cc1151d34c555d489ded64255f5a.pdf>
- Al-Mahaly, M. Jalaludin. (2021). Types of Maudu'i Interpretation of the Qur'an. *Jurnal Iman dan Spiritualitas*, 1(3), 387-396.  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.15575/jis.v1i3.13426> Semantic Scholar
- Burhanuddin, M. A. H. S. (2021). Ali Jum'ah's Approach on Qur'anic Maqāsidi Exegesis: A Study of Al-Nibrās fī Tafsir al-Qur'an.
- Creswell, J. W. (2022). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (5th ed.). SAGE.  
<https://edge.sagepub.com/creswellrd5e>
- El-Mesawi, M. E.-T. (2005). The Methodology of al-Tafsīr al-Mawḍū'ī: A Comparative Analysis. *Intellectual Discourse*, 13(1), 1-30. Retrieved from [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/277120962\\_The\\_Methodology\\_of\\_al-Tafsir\\_al-Mawdu%27i\\_A\\_Comparative\\_Analysis](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/277120962_The_Methodology_of_al-Tafsir_al-Mawdu%27i_A_Comparative_Analysis) ResearchGate
- Farhan, R. L. (2024). Muṣṭafa Muslim's Approach to Mawḍū'ī Tafsir [Article]. *Al-Karim, E-Journal of Islamic Studies*. Retrieved from <https://ejournal.uit-lirboyo.ac.id/index.php/alkarim/article/view/4844> E-Journal Universitas Tribakti
- Hidayat, A. (2021). *Epistemologis Tafsir Tematik Menuju Tafsir Al-Qur'an yang Holistik*. Kencana.
- Ibn Kathīr, I. (2003). *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Anīm*. Darussalam.
- Ismail, F. (2023). Content Analysis of Contemporary Tafsir Maudhu'i Themes. *Journal of Islamic Education and Science*, 7(2), 77–95.
- Kamali, M. H. (2024). *Ethics, Revelation, and Contemporary Knowledge in Islam*. Routledge.

- Moleong, L. J. (2021). *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif* (Revised ed.). Remaja Rosdakarya..
- Mustaqim, A. (2020). *Epistemologi Islam dan Tantangan Kontemporer*. Kencana.
- Mustaqim, A. (2021). *Epistemologi Tafsir Kontemporer*. LKiS.
- Namazi, Mahmood. (2010). *Thematic Approach to Qur'an Exegesis*. Al-Islam. Retrieved from <https://al-islam.org/message-thaqalayn/vol-10-no-4-winter-2010/thematic-approach-quran-exegesis-mahmood-namazi/thematic> Al-Islam.org
- Putra, D. (2020). *Metodologi Penelitian Konseptual dan Analisis Korelasi*. UGM Press.
- Rahman, F. (2022). Relevansi Maqāsid Syariah dalam Tafsir Tematik. *Jurnal Ushuluddin UIN Sunan Kalijaga*, 30(1), 89–104.
- Shihab, Q. (2018). *Tafsir Al-Mishbah*. Lentera Hati.
- Syamsuddin, A. (2015). *Paradigma Penelitian Pendidikan Agama Islam*. Deepublish.
- Syamsuddin, M. (2023). *Integrasi Tafsir Maudhu'i dalam Pendidikan Digital*. PTIQ Press.
- Syamsuddin, S. (2023). Dialog Hermeneutika dengan Ulum al-Qur'an: Relevansi Tafsir Maudhu'i. *Jurnal Al-Qur'an Dan Tafsir*, 10(1), 12–30.
- Tabrani, Z. A. (2015). Menelusuri Metode Pendidikan dalam Al-Qur'an dengan Pendekatan Tafsir Maudhu'i. SCADIndependent. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/283054828\\_MENELUSURI\\_METODE\\_PENDIDIKAN\\_DALAM\\_AL-QUR%60AN\\_DENGAN\\_PENDEKATAN\\_TAFSIR\\_MAUDHUI](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/283054828_MENELUSURI_METODE_PENDIDIKAN_DALAM_AL-QUR%60AN_DENGAN_PENDEKATAN_TAFSIR_MAUDHUI)
- Tilout, J. (2023). Analysis of Environmental Sustainability in the Holy Quran: Maqasid Framework. *Journal of Contemporary Maqasid Studies (JCMS)*. Retrieved from <https://journal.maqasid.org/index.php/jcms/article/download/101/38/271> journal.maqasid.org
- Wijaya, A. (2021). Maqāṣidi Tafsir: Uncovering and Presenting Maqāṣid Ilāhī. *Al-Jamiah: Journal of Islamic Studies*. <https://aljamiah.or.id/AJIS/article/view/59207>