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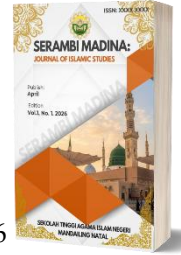
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Recontextualizing The Essence Of Human Dignity Through Fazlur Rahman's Double Movement Hermeneutics Of Qs. Al-Isrā' (17): 70

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

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Abstract

This study stems from the absence of previous studies that tend to interpret QS. al-Isrā' (17): 70 normatively without connecting it to contemporary moral and social realities, while modern dehumanization such as discrimination, marginalization, structural inequality, and ecological crises are still ongoing. Using Fazlur Rahman's Double Movement Hermeneutics, this study attempts to recontextualize the understanding of human dignity (*karāmah*) by exploring the meaning of the verse and the historical dynamics behind it. This method is applied in two main stages. The first stage traces the socio-historical context and meaning structure of QS. al-Isrā' (17): 70, reinforced by classical exegesis analysis such as Ath-Thabari, Al-Razi, and Az-Zamakhsharī, to explore the basic principles of human dignity as intended by the text. The second stage brings these principles into the reality of modern life in order to produce an understanding that is relevant to the challenges of humanity today. The results of the study show that human dignity in this verse is ontological and theological in nature, inherent in every individual as a creation of Allah and demanding collective moral responsibility in communal life. Recontextualization through Rahman's methodology produces four main principles of human dignity, namely the principles of equality, civilization building, resource management, and solidarity. This finding confirms that QS. al-Isrā' (17): 70

not only contains recognition of human dignity, but also provides a functional ethical framework that can be used to respond comprehensively to contemporary humanitarian issues.

Keywords: Double Movement; Fazlur Rahman; Hermeneutics; Human Dignity

Abstrak

Penelitian ini berangkat dari kekosongan kajian sebelumnya yang cenderung menafsirkan QS. al-Isrā' (17): 70 secara normatif tanpa menghubungkannya dengan realitas moral dan sosial kontemporer, sementara dehumanisasi modern seperti diskriminasi, marginalisasi, ketimpangan struktural, dan krisis ekologis masih berlangsung. Dengan menggunakan Hermeneutika Double Movement Fazlur Rahman, penelitian ini berupaya merekontekstualisasikan pemahaman mengenai martabat manusia (*karāmah*) melalui penelusuran makna ayat serta dinamika historis yang melatarbelakanginya. Metode ini diterapkan melalui dua tahapan utama. Tahap pertama menelusuri konteks sosiohistoris dan struktur makna QS. al-Isrā' (17): 70, diperkuat oleh analisis tafsir klasik seperti Ath-Thabari, Al-Razi, dan Az-Zamakhsharī, untuk menggali prinsip dasar kemuliaan manusia yang dikehendaki teks. Tahap kedua membawa prinsip tersebut ke dalam realitas kehidupan modern agar menghasilkan pemahaman yang relevan dengan tantangan kemanusiaan masa kini. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa martabat manusia dalam ayat tersebut bersifat ontologis dan teologis, yaitu melekat pada setiap individu sebagai ciptaan Allah serta menuntut tanggung jawab moral kolektif dalam kehidupan bersama. Rekontekstualisasi melalui metodologi Rahman menghasilkan empat prinsip utama martabat manusia, yaitu prinsip kesetaraan, pembangun peradaban, pengelola sumber daya, dan prinsip solidaritas. Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa QS. al-Isrā' (17): 70 tidak hanya memuat pengakuan atas kemuliaan manusia, tetapi juga menyediakan kerangka etis fungsional yang dapat digunakan untuk merespons persoalan kemanusiaan kontemporer secara komprehensif.

Kata Kunci: Double Movement; Fazlur Rahman; Hermeneutika; Martabat Manusia

INTRODUCTION

In Islamic studies, hakikat refers to the deepest essence of something, namely the permanent and unchanging state of a reality (Nurasa et al., 2022, p. 181). Meanwhile, martabat is understood as the noble position inherent in human beings as a gift from Allah SWT (Antonius P Sipahutar et al., 2024, p. 156). This understanding is in line with the concept of karamah insaniyyah, which describes the basic nobility of humans as God's creation (Resthy et al., 2023, p. 1281). Thus, human dignity does not depend on social status or physical abilities, but is an inherent value that has been inherent since humans were created (Saputro, 2021, p. 604).

The Qur'an refers to humans using the terms *basyar*, *insan*, *nas*, and *bani Adam*, each of which highlights the biological, intellectual, social, and moral

dimensions of humans (Maldini; Alwizar, 2025, p. 10630). This framework of terms indicates that humans possess physical and spiritual wholeness and are endowed with reason and morality as the foundation of their social responsibility (Bari, 2024, p. 53). Therefore, human dignity in the Islamic perspective is ontological because it has existed since the beginning of creation and is also theological because it is related to the moral mandate that must be realized in life (Wibowo et al., 2025, p. 309).

QS. al-Isra verse 70 is important to study because this verse provides a very clear statement regarding the nobility of humans as beings who have been given a special position by Allah SWT (M.sukeriyadi, M.barni, 2023, p. 1921). This verse is also a key reference in the discussion of karamah insaniyyah in the tradition of tafsir. However, many previous studies tend to place human dignity solely within a theological concept without linking it to the ever-changing dynamics of humanity. This situation certainly necessitates an approach to tafsir that is able to connect the message of the verse with a broader social reality.

To bridge this gap, this study chose to use Fazlur Rahman's Double Movement Hermeneutics methodology. This methodology was chosen based on its high relevance and effectiveness in overcoming the gap between the moral ideals of the Qur'an and the reality of an ever-changing social order. The Double Movement method systematically allows researchers to combine textual understanding through its original historical context, while connecting it to moral and social challenges in the present day. This unique ability ensures that the research produces a universal understanding of the Qur'an that remains relevant and applicable in providing a functional ethical foundation for contemporary human needs.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The study of human dignity and contemporary methods of interpreting the Qur'an is a central issue in Islamic studies. To further emphasize the uniqueness of this research, a comprehensive description of the contributions and limitations of previous studies is necessary.

The first article discussed is the work of Sandriya Kurniawan and Juli Julaiha Pulungan (2026) entitled "Human Dignity in the Qur'an According to Prof. Hamka's Tafsir Al-Azhar," using the Thematic Interpretation (Tafsir Maudhu'i) method and explicitly making QS. al-Isrā' (17):70 as the main object of study. The results of this study identify four main pillars of human dignity, demonstrating Hamka's progressive approach and rejection of discrimination (Sandriya Kurniawan, Pulungan, 2025). The second article is a study by Ahmad Hendri Maulana,

Muhammad Fitri, and Muhammad Nauval (2025) entitled “Existence, Dignity, and Human Responsibility: A Philosophical Review from an Islamic Perspective.” This research is purely philosophical, using the Qualitative Literature Study method, and concludes that human dignity is guaranteed by Islam as rational beings and caliphs (Maulana et al., 2025). Both works are thematically relevant because they focus on human dignity and even touch on key verses, but neither uses Fazlur Rahman's Double Movement Hermeneutics framework, instead focusing on traditional interpretation and philosophical review.

The third article shifts the focus to methodology, namely the study by Nurcahyati and Haqiqi (2025) entitled “Transformation of Traditional to Modern Tafsir from the Perspective of Fazlur Rahman's Hermeneutics,” which uses hermeneutic analysis. This study confirms that Fazlur Rahman's Double Movement method is a fundamental instrument for transforming and maintaining the relevance of Qur'anic interpretation in the modern global context (Nurcahyati, 2025). The fourth article, which also focuses on methodology, is Putra Pandu Dinata Nurdiansyah's (2025) research entitled “The Paradigm of Reconstructing Fazlur Rahman's Ethical-Legal Contextual Interpretation of the Qur'an.” This study uses Qualitative Literature Study, and the results of the analysis focus on the application of Fazlur Rahman's conceptual moral approach in reconstructing Islamic legal interpretation (Pandur; Nurdiansyah, 2025). The latter two studies are very relevant in terms of method, but their application has not been specifically directed at recontextualizing the Essence of Human Dignity.

Thus, there is a clear and urgent research gap to be filled by this study. Previous studies have separated the thematic study of human dignity from the use of Fazlur Rahman's method. The novelty of this study is that it synthesizes these two focuses: explicitly applying Fazlur Rahman's Double Movement Hermeneutics framework to conduct an in-depth recontextualization of the message of QS. al-Isrā '(17):70 regarding the Essence of Human Dignity.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a library research type. The primary data that is the focus of analysis is the text of the Quran, namely QS. Al-Isra '(17) verse 70. Secondary data includes Fazlur Rahman's works on Double Movement Hermeneutics, as well as various supporting literature relevant to human dignity and contemporary ethical issues. The main data analysis method used is Fazlur Rahman's Double Movement Hermeneutics, which is carried out through two main movements.

The first movement uses stages from the present to the time when the verse was revealed, aiming to explore the basic meaning and Universal Moral Principles contained in the verse. In this stage, the analysis of the wording of the verse and its socio-historical context is reinforced by referring to several classical tafsir books, such as Tafsir al-Kashshaf by az-Zamakhsharī, Tafsir al-Munir by Wahbah al-Zuhailī, Tafsir Mafatih Al-Ghaib by al-Razi, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azhim by Ibn Kathir, and Jāmi' Al-Bayān by ath-Thabari. The second movement, the stage of bringing universal moral principles back to the present, is aimed at applying these eternal values to the changing realities of contemporary society. This process of recontextualization aims to produce an understanding that is relevant to the challenges of humanity today, and from this, four new principles of human dignity have been identified, namely the principles of equality, civilization building, resource management, and solidarity.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Biography of Fazlur Rahman

Fazlur Rahman, affectionately known as Rahman, was born on September 21, 1919, in Hazara, in the northwestern region of Pakistan. He grew up in a deeply religious family that followed the Hanafi school of thought, one of the schools of Ahlus Sunnah wal Jama'ah that emphasizes a rational approach over the Shafi'i, Hanbali, and Maliki schools (T. Qomariyah; Delta Y.N, 2023, p. 380). From an early age, Rahman was raised with strong religious values and consistent religious education from his family. His father, Maulana Syahabuddin, was a renowned scholar who graduated from Deoband, a leading traditional madrasah in the Indo-Pakistan region at that time, which was an important center of religious education for many generations.

Under his father's guidance, Fazlur Rahman began his early education in the classical Islamic tradition, from memorizing the Qur'an to studying various disciplines such as rhetoric, literature, logic, philosophy, kalam, fiqh, hadith, and tafsir. At the age of 14, after completing his secondary education at the Deoband madrasah, Rahman and his family moved to Lahore, in northeastern Pakistan. It was in this city that he began his modern education, completing his secondary studies, then continuing on to obtain a bachelor's and master's degree from the Department of Arabic, Punjab University, in 1940 and 1946, respectively (Moh, 2024, p. 31).

In 1950, Fazlur Rahman successfully completed his doctoral studies at Oxford University (England) through in-depth research on the philosophy of Ibn Sina. Two years later, his work on Kitab al-Najāt was published by Oxford University Press in

the form of a critical edition entitled *Avicenna's Psychology* (Syakir et al., 2025, p. 275). After completing his education in England, Rahman chose to remain in the Western academic world. He taught Persian and Islamic Philosophy at Durham University from 1950 to 1958. During his tenure at Durham, he compiled one of his important intellectual works, *Prophecy in Islam: Philosophy and Orthodoxy*, which was finally published when he continued his academic career at McGill University, Canada, as an associate professor in Islamic Studies (Mustaqim, 2008, p. 45).

After gaining experience and contributing in the West for several years, Fazlur Rahman returned to Pakistan in the early 1960s and became a senior staff member at the Institute of Islamic Research (1961–1968) and a member of the Islamic Ideology Advisory Council. During this phase, he proposed the idea of Islamic reform through the methodology of interpretation. Fazlur Rahman's thinking tended to be radical and rational, shaped by his educational background and experience in Western academic circles, making many of his ideas difficult for conservative groups to accept. His intellectual style, which developed from a critical and analytical Western tradition, meant that his views were often considered too progressive by some traditional scholars, ultimately triggering a fierce reaction against him, even threats of assassination. Due to the increasingly unfavorable situation, he finally moved to Chicago, United States, in 1986 and settled there until his death in 1988.

According to Sutrisno, the development of his thinking can be divided into three phases. First, the formative phase, marked by the publication of early works such as *Avicenna's Psychology* (1952), *Avicenna's De Anima* (1959), and *Prophecy in Islam* (1958). Second, the phase of development towards maturity, when Rahman used his understanding of the Qur'an and Sunnah to respond to social issues in Pakistan, such as usury, family planning, and education. Third, the phase of maturity, which was the period when he emphasized the liberation of humans from social, political, and religious injustice, including those related to ethnicity, gender, class, and religion.

In line with this intellectual development, Fazlur Rahman produced many influential works in Islamic studies, especially while he was in Chicago. Among his other works, in addition to those mentioned above, are a number of important contributions such as studies of classical philosophy, *Avicenna's De Anima* (1958), *Islamic Methodology in History* (1965), and *Letters of Ahmad Sirhindi* (1975). In the same year, he also produced a philosophical work, *The Philosophy of Mulla Sadra* (1975). His subsequent works include *Islam* (1979), *Major Themes of the Qur'an* (1979), and *Islam and Modernity: Transformation of the Intellectual Tradition* (1982). In

addition, his thoughts on the revival and fundamentalism movements are summarized in *Revival and Reform in Islam: A Study of Islamic Fundamentalism* (Ulyati, 2017, p. 17).

Of Fazlur Rahman's many intellectual contributions, one of his most influential works in the field of tafsir is *Islam and Modernity: Transformation of Intellectual Tradition*, published in 1982. In this book, Rahman developed an interpretive framework that focuses on reconstructing the historical context and social dynamics at the time of the revelation. This approach became known as the double movement method, which is an important feature of his interpretive methodology (Rahman, 1982, p. 306).

Fazlur Rahman's Double Movement Hermeneutics

The double movement method formulated by Fazlur Rahman is an approach to interpreting the Qur'an that takes place in two stages. The first stage is carried out by drawing current issues into the historical context when the revelation was sent down in order to understand its basic meaning and ethical purpose. The next stage is to bring that understanding back to the present day, so that the message of the Qur'an can be applied in a relevant way to contemporary reality.

1. The first step is to bring current issues back to the context in which the verses of the Qur'an were revealed. Fazlur Rahman emphasizes that the Qur'an was revealed in response to the moral and social conditions of Arab society during the time of the Prophet, so that each verse is closely related to a specific socio-historical reality. Therefore, at this stage, interpreters need to explore the meaning of a Qur'anic statement through an understanding of the historical situation and issues that led to the revelation of the verse. In this process, there are a number of steps that must be taken, namely:
 - a. Understanding the meaning of verses in the Qur'an by examining the historical context of those verses. The key point of this step is to examine the macro situation in Arab society, including culture, religion, internal society, and institutions. Thus, a comprehensive understanding of the meaning of the Qur'an is carried out, in addition to specific verses that respond to certain events.
 - b. Formulating the core values contained in the verses revealed to address specific issues, while still considering the socio-historical context and rationality of the message. From this process, interpreters are guided to discover the universal moral values that form the core of the Qur'an's teachings, so that the results of their interpretation are coherent and reflect a comprehensive ethical vision.

2. The second step is to bring back the understanding gained from the context of the verse into the present day. The basic values and long-term goals produced in the first stage must then be brought to life in the actual social and historical situation. At this stage, interpreters are required to carefully read contemporary reality, understand the components that shape it, and assess existing needs and challenges. Through this process, appropriate priorities can be determined so that the values of the Qur'an can be applied in a relevant way in modern life.

The two movements are interrelated, because the second movement serves to correct the interpretation of the first movement. If the first interpretation fails to apply to the current situation, then it also fails to assess the current situation accurately, or in other words, it fails to understand the Qur'an. According to Fazlur Rahman, it is impossible for something that could be applied in the past to not be applicable in the present, of course, without forgetting to consider the specific differences in the current situation. This does not change the principles or general values of the past or the present.

Double Movement Hermeneutics on QS. Al-Isra' (17): 70

1. Interpreting From the Present to the Time of the Verse's Revelation

﴿وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِي آدَمَ وَحَمَلْنَاهُمْ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَرَزَقْنَاهُمْ مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَفَضَّلْنَاهُمْ عَلَى كَثِيرٍ مِمَّنْ خَلَقْنَا تَفْضِيلًا﴾ (17:70)

“Indeed, We have honored the children of Adam and carried them on land and sea. We have provided them with good things and have preferred them over many of those We have created with a perfect preference.”

First Phrase Analysis (وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِي آدَمَ)

- **Interpretation of Classical Exegesis**

The first phrase, *“wa laqad karramnā banī Ādam”* (“And indeed, We have honored the children of Adam”), affirms that humans have been bestowed with karāmah or glory by Allah. Classical exegetes such as al-Zamakhshari explain that this honor is manifested through the intellect, which is capable of distinguishing between good and evil, the ability to speak, a proportional physical form, and the potential for humans to manage the affairs of this world and the hereafter (Az-Zamakhshari, 2009, p. 582).

Wahbah al-Zuhailī adds that this glory is evident in the gifts of hearing, sight, and the heart, which serve as instruments for understanding the truth and

receiving divine guidance (Az-Zuhaili, 2016, p. Vol. 8, 130). This explanation is confirmed by other verses such as QS. al-Tīn (95): 4 “Indeed, We have created man in the best form” and QS. al-Sajdah (32): 9 which mentions the perfection of human creation and the breathing of the divine spirit into him. A hadith narrated by Muslim also emphasizes the ethical aspect of human dignity: “Indeed, Allah does not look at your appearance and wealth, but Allah looks at your hearts and deeds” (HR. Muslim no. 2564).

- **Socio-Historical Context**

In the socio-historical context of pre-Islamic Arab society, human dignity was usually measured by lineage, tribe, and social status. The hierarchical social structure meant that a person's dignity was determined by their ancestry or position within the tribe (Rahmadani et al., 2024, p. 1224). This verse represents a revolution in values that shifts the tribalistic paradigm, which is a way of viewing human dignity based on tribal ties and social hierarchy (Al-Achsanah et al., 2025, p. 156), towards a universalistic paradigm, which is a way of viewing that affirms that nobility applies to all people as a whole regardless of their origins or position (Febrianto, 2021, p. 32). Thus, true dignity is not a product of social status, but rather a gift from Allah in the form of reason, spirit, and moral potential inherent in every human being.

- **Universal Moral Values (Equality)**

From this phrase, we can derive a universal moral principle that all human beings have equal basic dignity. The glory given by God is universal, so it cannot be used to justify differences in human value based on ancestry, status, or social group. Thus, this verse lays the foundation that equality of dignity is a moral value that must be recognized, and every human being is asked to use their gift of reason and moral potential to maintain and realize this value in life.

Second Phrase Analysis (وَحَمَلْنَاهُمْ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ)

- **Interpretation of Classical Exegesis**

Based on the continuation of the verse “*wa ḥamalnāhum fī al-barr wa al-baḥr*” (“And We carried them on land and sea”), al-Rāzī explains that one of the proofs of human dignity is how Allah has subjugated various means of transportation and necessities of life to serve humans. He quotes Ibn ‘Abbās’ explanation that “on land” refers to humans’ ability to ride horses, donkeys, mules, and camels, while “at sea” refers to humans’ ability to use ships as a means of travel and trade. This interpretation is reinforced by other verses such as QS. al-Naḥl (16):8:

"And (He created) horses, mules, and donkeys for you to ride and (as) adornment. And Allah creates what you do not know," as well as QS. Yāsīn (36):41–42, which states: "And a sign for them is that We carried their descendants in a fully loaded ship, and We created for them something similar to what they rode."

Al-Rāzī then emphasized that all forms of subjugation were part of human dignity. Allah made land animals and sailing facilities under human control so that they could be used as means of travel, transportation of goods, self-defense, and even seeking sustenance. He described the position of humans in the midst of creation as figures who are "like leaders who are followed and kings who are obeyed," while other creatures become elements that support their activities. Thus, this verse not only describes the technical ability to move on land and sea, but also affirms the glory of humans through the subjugation of the mobility system that supports social life and the development of civilization (Al-Rāzī, 1990).

- **Socio-Historical Context**

In the socio-historical reality of pre-Islamic Arab society, land and sea transportation were essential elements for survival. Desert communities depended on camels as their "ships of the desert" to reach trade routes, migration paths, and travel between tribes. Horses and donkeys played a role in warfare, message delivery, and daily mobility. Meanwhile, coastal communities such as those in Yemen and Jeddah used ships for maritime trade with Africa, India, and Syria (Basid et al., 2022, p. 95).

Thus, this verse interacts directly with their social experience, where the ability to move and explore is understood as a form of convenience provided by God to support social, economic, and cultural activities, as well as an important foundation for the growth of Arab civilization.

- **Universal Moral Values (Civilization Builder)**

This phrase contains the moral principle that the ability to move and travel is a mandate oriented towards the development of civilization. Mobility not only serves as a means of fulfilling practical needs, but also forms the foundation for social interaction, knowledge exchange, and economic development. Through mobility, communities can connect different regions, expand cooperation networks, and create spaces for intercultural encounters. These travel patterns

and transportation networks then give rise to the dynamics of trade, the dissemination of knowledge, the exchange of ideas, and the formation of more organized social institutions. Thus, the ethical use of means of mobility for the common good, social services, and cooperation is part of the ethics of civilization emphasized in this verse.

Third Phrase Analysis (وَرَزَقْنَاهُمْ مِّنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ)

- **Interpretation of Classical Exegesis**

The third phrase from QS. al-Isrā' (17): 70, "*wa razaqnāhum minat-ṭayyibāt*" ("We provide them with good sustenance"), is understood by exegetes as an affirmation that Allah SWT bestows upon humans sustenance that is lawful, good, and beneficial (Muzakki, 2021, p. 14). Ibn Kathir explains ṭayyibāt in more detail by mentioning that humans are blessed with crops and fruits, meat and milk, as well as various types of delicious and nutritious foods. He also adds that these blessings include clothing in various colors, shapes, and styles, both those produced domestically and those obtained through trade from various regions of the world (Katsir, 2003, Vol. 15, p. 289).

This meaning is in line with other verses that emphasize the abundance of halal sustenance provided by Allah. QS. al-Baqarah (2): 172 commands, "O you who believe, eat of the good things We have provided for you and be grateful to Allah if you worship Him alone." Similarly, QS. al-A'rāf (7): 32 affirms, "Who has forbidden the adornment of Allah which He has brought forth for His servants and the good things?" These two verses reinforce that various forms of lawful worldly pleasures are part of Allah's blessings that should be appreciated.

Thus, according to Ibn Kathir, *ṭayyibāt* encompasses all means of fulfilling human needs, whether food, clothing, or the pleasures of life, all of which demonstrate the breadth of Allah's mercy and emphasize that sustenance must be understood as a gift whose purity must be preserved and whose use must be appreciated.

- **Socio-Historical Context**

Pre-Islamic Arab society was highly dependent on natural resources and trade to meet their daily needs. Fruits, wheat, dates, and livestock such as camels, goats, and sheep were the main sources of food, drink, and clothing (Abdul Gani Jamora Nasution, dkk. 2022, p. 128). Cross-regional trade with Yemen, Sham, and Africa also provided spices, fabrics, and luxury goods that added to the variety of needs and prosperity of the community (Amri, 2022, p. 118).

The verse *wa razaqnāhum minat-ṭayyibāt* emphasizes that this sustenance is available by Allah's permission and can be utilized by humans. At that time, people grew limited amounts of food crops and fruits in oases (fertile areas with water sources) to meet some of their needs. For more extensive needs, they raised livestock for meat, milk, and hides, and sold or traded livestock and goods with merchants or neighboring communities to meet needs that were not available locally.

This verse also describes that humans have a role as managers of the sustenance and resources given by Allah. The position of humans is higher not merely because of their ability to utilize animals and nature, but because Allah has given humans reason and moral potential to regulate and maintain the balance of creation (Umami, 2014, p. 346).

- **Universal Moral Values (Resource Managers)**

Through the phrase *wa razaqnāhum minat-ṭayyibāt*, the Qur'an teaches that humans have a dual role as recipients of sustenance and responsible managers. Good sustenance should not only be enjoyed by oneself, but must be managed so that it remains sustainable and benefits many people. This understanding gives rise to the universal moral value of Resource Management Responsibility. Humans are required to use God's gifts not only for personal gain, but also for the benefit of the community. Wise and sustainable use of sustenance includes efficient use, environmental conservation efforts, and fair and equitable distribution. Thus, life's needs can be met without damaging the balance of nature while maintaining the harmony of social, economic, and cultural stability in society.

Fourth Phrase Analysis (وَفَضَّلْنَاهُمْ عَلَىٰ كَثِيرٍ مِّمَّنْ خَلَقْنَا تَفْضِيلًا)

- **Interpretation of Classical Exegesis**

The closing phrase of this verse, "*wa faḍḍalnāhum alā kaṣīrim mimman khalaqnā tafḍīlan*," which means ("We have favored them over many of the creatures We have created with perfect excellence"), serves as a theological foundation that binds all previous moral principles. The word *tafḍīlan* is interpreted as a layered gift consisting of three advantages. First, there is spiritual superiority, which includes the potential for desire and piety, to choose one's own path of faith. Second, there is intellectual superiority, emphasized by the potential of reason

to enable humans to consciously distinguish between truth and falsehood. Then there is functional excellence, as highlighted by Ath-Thabari in his interpretation through Ibn Juraij, which emphasizes that the meaning of this excellence is the unique capacity to use both hands to work and process food more effectively and efficiently, which certainly surpasses most other creatures (Al-Ṭabari, 2010, Vol. 16, p. 796).

From the union of these three, an ethical obligation arises for humans to create a complementary social order. This is based on the fact that this perfection (*tafḍīlan*) is a fundamental gift given by Allah to all humans with the aim that humans use their perfection to bring about benefit on earth. As stated in QS. Al-Baqarah (2): verse 30. This verse clearly affirms the appointment of humans as Khalifah (representatives/stewards) on earth, which implies a fundamental responsibility to manage, prosper, and protect the earth in order to create peace for all.

- **Socio-Historical Context**

In the socio-historical context of pre-Islamic Arab society, definitions of superiority and social status were measured in materialistic and hierarchical terms. A person's dignity was often equated with wealth, tribal power, or position. In this social order dominated by power and wealth, material arrogance (*takabbur*) became the main social disease that hindered collective humanity. The upper class (elite) refused to recognize the dignity of individuals who were weak, poor, or enslaved. The phrase “*wa faḍḍalnāhum ‘alā kaṣīrim mimman khalaqnā tafḍīlan*” appears as a grand declaration that dismantles the foundations of such social arrogance. This verse emphasizes that human dignity is not measured by wealth or worldly status, but rather comes from divine gifts in the form of spiritual, intellectual, and functional virtues inherent in every individual (Umami, 2014, p. 346).

- **Universal Moral Values (Solidarity)**

The recognition that the dignity of every human being is a fundamental divine gift negates any justification for oppression based on material differences or social status. This universal virtue (*karāmah*) demands collective responsibility to protect and promote the dignity of others. Therefore, it is important to promote the value of solidarity, namely mutual respect as an essential ethical mechanism that bridges social divides, especially the legacy of arrogance in pre-Islamic hierarchical societies.

Human dignity, imbued with the value of Solidarity, then becomes a tangible manifestation of humanity's stewardship on earth. The implementation of solidarity, which emphasizes strong bonds and a high sense of empathy, ensures that the spiritual, intellectual, and functional advantages bestowed upon humans are used synergistically to achieve the main goal, namely the common good (*al-maṣāliḥ al-'āmma*). By prioritizing collective interests and strengthening each other, humanity effectively creates a just and equitable social order, making it a real antithesis to the destruction and inequality predicted by the angels when the caliphate was appointed in QS. Al-Baqarah (2): 30, and fulfilling the Divine mandate to prosper the earth.

2. Interpreting From the Time the Verse Was Revealed to the Present Day

Principle of Equality

- **Contemporary Challenges and Issues**

One of the main challenges in realizing the principle of equality in the modern era is the wage gap between women and men. Although women's productivity is equal to that of men, the wages they receive are often lower due to structural bias and discrimination in the workplace. This injustice shows that equal rights and opportunities for women have not been fully realized, so that the principle of equality remains a goal that must be fought for (Rika Dewi, dkk. 2025, p. 6).

- **Ethical and Social Implications**

The wage gap between women and men is a fundamental ethical violation of the phrase “*Wa laqad karramnā banī Ādama.*” This verse affirms that dignity (*karāmah*) is an inherent divine value given to every human being equally, so that there should be no distinction in value based on external factors such as gender. Ethically, the practice of wage discrimination directly negates the recognition of women's dignity and structurally reflects the social disease of *takabbur* (arrogance), which assumes that a person's value can be measured by material or social factors. Socially, this injustice undermines the mandated principle of equality of dignity, hinders the full and fair participation of the entire potential of society, and weakens the bonds of collective solidarity necessary to create a peaceful order and achieve the Common Good (*al-maṣāliḥ al-'āmma*).

Civilization Builder

- **Contemporary Challenges and Issues**

One of the important challenges in the development of civilization today is the inequality of access to education, which limits learning opportunities for certain groups of people. Access to and quality of education often differ significantly between cities and remote areas, where infrastructure, digital facilities, and the distribution of qualified teachers tend to be concentrated in urban areas, while outlying, disadvantaged, and remote areas still experience serious shortages. This situation results in disparities in the quality of learning and opportunities for the development of young people's abilities, thereby limiting individuals' ability to play an active role in the development of civilization due to these structural barriers (Tanti Nurmala Sari, 2025, p. 1735).

- **Ethical and Social Implications**

Inequality in access to and quality of education is an ethical violation of the gift of human intellectual excellence. The potential of reason bestowed by God, which serves to distinguish between truth and falsehood and forms the basis for the development of civilization, becomes locked or distorted by structural barriers. Ethically, this not only hinders the fulfillment of the individual's right to develop, but also demonstrates a failure of collective responsibility to provide the basic prerequisites for the optimal use of reason. Socially, this educational discrimination results in a waste of collective potential and perpetuates social and economic inequality. By limiting opportunities for learning, society as a whole fails to effectively carry out its function of stewardship, because civilization cannot be built and prosper without the full and synergistic contribution of the entire intellectual potential of humankind.

Resource Manager

- **Contemporary Challenges and Issues**

Current resource management faces various challenges, one of which is the unsustainable management of natural resources, which has a negative impact on the environment and the lives of local communities. For example, in the coastal region of Southeast Sulawesi, massive nickel mining activities have caused water and soil pollution around the mining site due to mining waste flowing into irrigation rivers, reducing water quality and soil fertility in rice fields, and disrupting local farmers' agricultural production. Mining sludge deposits have even caused silting in irrigation channels and reduced the water flow needed for

farming, resulting in a drastic decline in farmers' incomes. These impacts not only damage the physical environment but also undermine the livelihoods of communities that depend on these natural resources (Febrina, dkk. 2025, p. 10).

- **Ethical and Social Implications**

Unsustainable natural resource management activities, such as nickel mining that damages coastal environments and agricultural land, constitute a double violation of the Divine mandate. Ethically, this is a failure to use human Functional Excellence (the capacity to process food and work) responsibly. The exploitative use of resources that causes damage (*fasād*) directly contradicts the goals of glory (*karāmah*) and virtue (*tafḍīlan*), which should be used to prosper, not destroy, the earth.

Socially, environmental damage that undermines the livelihoods of local communities (farmers) is a violation of Solidarity and Distributive Justice. This creates environmental injustice, where economic benefits are enjoyed by a handful of parties, while the losses (pollution, reduced income, siltation) are unfairly borne by vulnerable communities. This failure demonstrates a disregard for the collective responsibility mandated by the function of stewardship to maintain ecological balance and ensure the right to a decent life for all human beings.

The Principle of Solidarity

- **Contemporary Challenges and Issues**

One significant challenge in applying the principle of solidarity today is the dualistic role of social media. On the one hand, social media enables humanitarian campaigns and collective action that increase awareness, but on the other hand, it encourages individualism and social polarization. Online interactions dominated by a culture of self-branding and competition for attention often divide society into fragmented groups. This situation reduces opportunities to build genuine and mutually supportive social relationships in everyday life, so that ideal social solidarity in the form of caring, cooperation, and mutual assistance between individuals faces serious challenges in the era of social modernization and digital technology (Siti Hardini, Naila, 2025, p. 6).

- **Ethical and Social Implications**

The duality of social media, which encourages a culture of self-branding and divides society, poses a serious ethical threat to the foundations of Solidarity.

Ethically speaking, excessive attention to oneself (*self-branding*) erodes empathy and limits our ability to fulfill the reciprocal responsibilities demanded by collective dignity (*karāmah*). Socially, this polarization weakens the real community bonds necessary for collective action. As a result, society becomes fragile and fails to achieve the Common Good, making the Caliphate's task of maintaining peace and justice very difficult amid a divided social order.

CONCLUSION

This study confirms that the essence of human dignity contained in QS. al-Isrā' (17): 70 is a divine gift that is ontologically and theologically inherent in every individual. Through the application of Fazlur Rahman's Double Movement Hermeneutics methodology, this dignity has been successfully recontextualized and actualized in the modern social context into four functional main principles, namely the Principles of Equality, Civilization Building, Resource Management, and Solidarity. These four principles prove that human dignity does not stop at the normative level but contains ethical demands and collective responsibilities that must be realized in real life. Scientifically, this study contributes by introducing the application of the Double Movement methodology to QS. al-Isrā' (17): 70, which produces four principles of human dignity as a functional ethical framework for responding to contemporary problems. Thus, human dignity becomes a universal foundation for the creation of a social system that is fair, sustainable, and meaningful for contemporary society. For further development, it is recommended that follow-up research examine the extent to which these principles of human dignity can be practically applied in the formulation of public policy, human rights discourse, ecological ethics, and structural social justice in an Islamic context.

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