

Orphan Protection as a Quranic Social Value: A Thematic Study of Tafsir An-Nur by Teungku Muhammad Hasbi Ash-Shiddieqy

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Abstract

Orphan children constitute one of the most vulnerable groups within Islamic moral, social, and legal discourse. This article examines the Quranic construction of orphan protection as a social value through a thematic analysis of Tafsir An-Nur, the landmark Indonesian exegetical work authored by Teungku Muhammad Hasbi Ash-Shiddieqy. Using qualitative library research combined with thematic exegesis (tafsir maudhui), this study analyses key Quranic verses addressing orphan protection, specifically Surah al-Baqarah 2.83, 177, and 220; Surah al-Nisa 4.2, 6, and 10; Surah al-Insan 76.8; and Surah al-Fajr 89.17. The findings demonstrate that Hasbi's interpretive approach, which draws on the adabi ijtimaci (socio-literary) orientation, frames orphan protection not as an individual act of charity but as a comprehensive social obligation encompassing the fulfillment of basic rights, the prohibition of wealth exploitation, moral and spiritual development, and the collective accountability of family, community, and state. These protective imperatives are grounded in the five objectives of Islamic law, with particular emphasis on the preservation of life, intellect, lineage, and property. The study further demonstrates the contemporary relevance of Tafsir An-Nur by mapping its principles onto Indonesia's national child protection framework, showing significant convergence between Quranic ethical imperatives and the provisions of the Child Protection Law (Law No. 35 of 2014). The article argues that Tafsir An-Nur provides a normative philosophical foundation capable of enriching contemporary child welfare policy and reinforcing the moral basis of protective legislation in Muslim-majority societies.

Keywords: Orphan protection, Quran, Tafsir An-Nur, Hasbi Ash-Shiddieqy, social value, Maqasid al-Syariah, child welfare, Islamic social ethics.

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INTRODUCTION

The Quran addresses the condition of orphan children with a consistency and urgency that no parallel social category receives in equal measure. Across twenty-three verses distributed throughout the Quranic corpus, spanning the terms al-yatim, al-yatama, and al-yatami, the divine text returns repeatedly to the orphan's vulnerability, to the obligations of those who stand in protective relation to them, and to the severe moral and eschatological consequences that attend the violation of their rights. This sustained scriptural attention

reflects a foundational Islamic conviction that the measure of a community's moral integrity is most sharply revealed in how it treats those who lack the capacity to protect themselves.

Orphan children constitute a category of structural vulnerability. Defined in Islamic jurisprudence as a child who has lost his or her father before reaching the age of legal maturity (bulugh), the orphan is deprived of the primary source of economic provision, legal guardianship, and social protection in the family structure as Islamic civilization historically understood it. Classical lexicographers trace the Arabic root yatama to the concept of infirad, meaning aloneness or separation from one's natural protector, a semantic core that captures not merely the biographical fact of paternal death but the entire web of care and security that such a loss severs (Ibn Manzur, 1990). The Quran's engagement with orphan protection is therefore not incidental; it addresses a fundamental social problem through a framework that is simultaneously ethical, legal, spiritual, and eschatological.

Despite the richness of this Quranic framework, the scholarly literature on orphan protection in Islamic thought has developed unevenly. A substantial body of classical juridical scholarship addresses the management of orphan wealth and the conditions governing legal guardianship, but the broader dimension of orphan protection as a social value rooted in Quranic ethics has received comparatively less systematic attention in the exegetical tradition. Contemporary studies have examined orphan-related verses through the lenses of individual commentators such as Wahbah al-Zuhaili's *Tafsir al-Wasith* (Maya and Sarbini, 2018), Hamka's *Tafsir al-Azhar* (Azizah and Rahmawati, 2022), and Bisri Mustofa's *Tafsir al-Ibriz* (Ulandari et al., 2025), as well as through the lens of particular practical domains such as orphan wealth management (Arrifai, 2022) and institutional empowerment (Masduki and Masduki, 2022). However, no prior study has undertaken a thematic-exegetical examination of orphan protection through the interpretive framework of *Tafsir An-Nur*, the foundational Indonesian tafsir authored by Teungku Muhammad Hasbi Ash-Shiddieqy.

Hasbi Ash-Shiddieqy occupies a singular position in the history of Indonesian Islamic scholarship. Born in Lhokseumawe, Aceh, in 1904, he combined extensive training in the classical Islamic sciences with exposure to the reform movements emanating from the Arab world in the early twentieth century, producing a body of work characterized by methodological rigor, contextual sensitivity, and a persistent concern for the relevance of Islamic teachings to Indonesian social reality. His *Tafsir Al-Quranul Majid An-Nur*, completed across the years 1952 to 1961 and published in a definitive five-volume edition, is widely regarded as the first comprehensive Indonesian-language exegesis of the entire Quran. Its adabi ijtimaci orientation, which foregrounds the social, cultural, and ethical dimensions of Quranic meaning over purely linguistic or jurisprudential analysis, makes it particularly well-suited to the examination of orphan protection as a social value rather than merely a legal category.

This article addresses the following research questions. First, how does the Quran construct the concept of orphan protection across its key verses, and what thematic clusters can be identified within this construction? Second, how does Hasbi Ash-Shiddieqy's interpretation in *Tafsir An-Nur* understand and articulate these protective obligations, and what distinctive analytical contributions does his approach make? Third, how do the values

embedded in Tafsir An-Nur relate to contemporary social protection frameworks, particularly the Indonesian national child protection system? These questions are examined through a qualitative library research methodology employing thematic exegesis as the primary analytical method.

METHOD

This study employs qualitative library research as its foundational methodology. Library research in the context of Islamic and Quranic scholarship involves the systematic gathering, critical reading, and interpretive analysis of textual sources, both primary and secondary, in order to construct conceptual and analytical frameworks responsive to specific research questions. No fieldwork, interviews, or empirical data collection were conducted, as the inquiry is directed at texts, interpretations, and conceptual frameworks rather than at behavioral phenomena or empirical populations.

The primary data sources are threefold. First, the Quranic text itself, consulted in conjunction with the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs translation. Second, Tafsir Al-Quranul Majid An-Nur in its revised edition (Ash-Shiddieqy, 2000), which serves as the principal interpretive lens through which the selected verses are analyzed. Third, the classical Arabic lexical resources of Ibn Manzur's *Lisan al-Arab* and Ibn Faris's *Mujam Maqayis al-Lughah*, as well as al-Raghib al-Asfahani's *al-Mufradat fi Gharib al-Quran*, employed for the etymological and semantic analysis of key Quranic terms. Secondary sources include thematic tafsir scholarship, Islamic jurisprudential literature on orphan rights, works in Islamic social ethics, comparative exegetical studies, and scholarly analyses of Indonesian child protection law and its relationship to Islamic values.

The analytical method combines thematic exegesis with interpretive-contextual analysis. Thematic exegesis (*tafsir maudhui*), as systematized by al-Farmawi (1994), proceeds by collecting all Quranic verses related to a defined thematic concern, reading them in relation to one another rather than in isolation, identifying the circumstances of their revelation (*asbab al-nuzul*) where documented, tracing their intertextual relationships, and synthesizing a coherent Quranic position on the theme. This approach is applied to the eight verses identified as the study's primary corpus, namely Surah al-Baqarah 2.83, 177, and 220; Surah al-Nisa 4.2, 6, and 10; Surah al-Insan 76.8; and Surah al-Fajr 89.17. These verses were selected on the basis of three criteria. They employ Quranic terms directly related to orphan protection, they encompass the principal dimensions of that protection identified in the literature, and they are all given sustained and distinctive treatment in Tafsir An-Nur.

The analysis proceeds through three stages. The descriptive stage maps the Quranic vocabulary of orphan protection and situates each verse within its textual and historical context. The interpretive stage reads each verse through the lens of Tafsir An-Nur, extracting and systematizing Hasbi's interpretive contributions and identifying the distinctive characteristics of his *adabi ijtima'i* approach. The analytical stage places these Quranic and exegetical findings in dialogue with contemporary Indonesian child protection frameworks, identifying convergences, theoretical contributions, and practical implications.

RESULTS

The Quranic Vocabulary of Orphan Protection

The Quranic lexicon of orphan-related concern comprises three principal word forms derived from the root y-t-m. Al-yatim is the singular form, denoting the orphaned individual. Al-yatama is the broken plural most commonly employed in verses addressing the treatment, rights, and obligations owed to orphans as a class. Al-yatami is an alternative plural used in a smaller number of passages. A concordance analysis using Muhammad Fuad Abd al-Baqi's al-Mujam al-Mufahras li Alfaz al-Quran al-Karim identifies twenty-three verses containing one or more of these forms, distributed across multiple surahs revealed in both the Meccan and Medinan periods. This distribution indicates that concern for orphan welfare is not confined to the legally detailed Medinan period of revelation but is foundational to the Quran's ethical vision from its earliest articulations.

Etymologically, the root y-t-m carries the core meaning of infirad, denoting a condition of solitariness or separation from one's natural protector. Classical lexicographers including Ibn Manzur (1990) and al-Raghib al-Asfahani consistently specify that when applied to human beings, al-yatim denotes a child whose father has died before the child has reached the age of legal maturity. This precision is significant. In the social structure of the pre-Islamic and early Islamic Arabian world, the father was the primary economic provider, legal guardian, and social protector of his children. The death of the father therefore produced not merely an emotional wound but a structural rupture in the child's entire support system. The Quran's sustained attention to the yatim constitutes a recognition and a response to this systemic vulnerability.

Islamic jurisprudence has refined this definition across the classical period. The fuqaha agree that the status of yatim attaches specifically to the child who has lost his or her father, because in the normative Islamic family structure it is the father who bears primary responsibility for the child's provision and guardianship. The child who has lost only a mother is referred to by a different term, munqati (the severed one), reflecting the different but equally consequential loss involved. Orphan status in the juridical sense terminates at the point of bulugh (legal maturity), defined through the physical markers of puberty and conventionally estimated at approximately fifteen years of age by Imam al-Shafii and Imam Ahmad, or between seventeen and eighteen years by Imam Abu Hanifah's school. Beyond biological pubugh, the jurists additionally require rusyd (soundness of judgment and practical maturity) before the orphan's guardian may be relieved of responsibility for the management of the orphan's wealth.

Thematic Classification of the Quranic Orphan Protection Verses

The twenty-three orphan-related Quranic verses can be organized into four thematic clusters that together constitute the Quran's comprehensive vision of orphan protection. These clusters emerge from an analysis of the verses' content, context, and the specific protective imperatives they articulate.

Social Virtue and Communal Responsibility

Surah al-Baqarah 2.83 and 2.177 locate orphan care within the Quran's most comprehensive articulations of what constitutes genuine righteousness. In 2.83, the obligation to treat orphans well appears within the seven-part covenant God made with the children of Israel, alongside monotheism, filial piety, and the performance of prayer and almsgiving. The placement of orphan care within this foundational ethical covenant signals that protection of the orphan is not a peripheral moral duty but belongs to the core obligations of the person of faith. Surah al-Baqarah 2.177 reinforces this framing through the famous al-birr passage, which defines true righteousness not as the mere performance of ritual orientation but as the combination of correct belief, proper expenditure for the love of God, and a comprehensive range of ethical commitments, among which giving to orphans occupies a prominent position. In Tafsir An-Nur, Hasbi reads these verses as establishing orphan care as a non-negotiable dimension of the righteous social character that the Quran seeks to cultivate, rather than as an optional act of generosity (Ash-Shiddieqy, 2000).

Prohibition of Wealth Exploitation

Surah al-Nisa 4.2, 4.6, and 4.10 constitute the Quran's most legally detailed engagement with orphan wealth management. Surah al-Nisa 4.2 commands the return of orphan property to orphans when they reach maturity, forbids the exchange of the bad for the good in managing their assets, and prohibits consuming their wealth by incorporating it into one's own. Surah al-Nisa 4.6 specifies that guardians must test the orphan's readiness for independent management of property before handing it over, and authorizes guardians who lack their own financial resources to draw modest compensation from orphan wealth for their services while forbidding those who are wealthy from doing so. Surah al-Nisa 4.10 makes the moral stakes explicit through one of the Quran's most severe warnings, characterizing those who devour the wealth of orphans unjustly as eating fire into their bellies and as those who will enter a blazing fire.

Hasbi's reading of these verses in Tafsir An-Nur extends beyond the immediate prohibitions to develop a vision of amanah (trustworthiness) as the governing principle of orphan wealth management. He argues that the guardian's relationship to orphan property is fundamentally a relationship of trusteeship, not ownership, and that this trusteeship carries both legal and spiritual accountability. The guardian is not merely an administrator bound by juridical rules; he or she is a moral agent held accountable before God for the manner in which the orphan's assets are preserved, developed, and ultimately returned. This framing transforms what might otherwise appear as a technical legal matter into a dimension of personal moral formation and communal ethical culture (Ash-Shiddieqy, 2000).

Moral Condemnation of Contemptuous Treatment

Surah al-Fajr 89.17 places the contemptuous treatment of orphans within a sharp critique of a society that has abandoned its moral obligations to the vulnerable. The verse states that the people of the condemned city do not honor the orphan and do not encourage the feeding of the poor, and links this moral failure directly to their eventual destruction. The rhetorical

structure of the verse, which transitions from divine blessing to human ingratitude to social neglect to divine punishment, establishes a causal connection between the maltreatment of orphans and the dissolution of social order itself. Surah al-Maun 107.1-3, while not among the eight primary verses of this study, provides a parallel statement in which the rejection of the orphan is identified as a defining marker of the person who denies the Day of Judgment.

In Tafsir An-Nur, Hasbi reads Surah al-Fajr 89.17 as a social critique directed not merely at individuals but at collective structures of care and indifference. The verse's condemnation, in his reading, targets a civilization that has configured its priorities around wealth accumulation and self-interest at the expense of its most vulnerable members. This reading transforms the verse from a moral warning to individuals into an institutional and policy indictment, making it directly relevant to questions of social welfare system design and governmental responsibility for orphan welfare (Ash-Shiddieqy, 2000).

The Imperative of Altruistic Provision

Surah al-Insan 76.8 describes the righteous as those who feed the orphan, the destitute, and the captive despite their own desire for food, doing so for the love of God and seeking neither recompense nor gratitude from the recipients. This verse is significant for the motivational economy it establishes. The righteous person's provision for the orphan is not a transaction, not an exchange of material assistance for social recognition or spiritual credit, but a pure act of divine love expressed through human solidarity. Hasbi reads this verse in Tafsir An-Nur as establishing the highest standard of orphan care, one that goes beyond the fulfillment of minimum legal obligations to encompass a genuinely other-directed compassion that mirrors divine mercy. The feeding of the orphan in this verse is an act of ibadat, of worship, rather than merely an act of philanthropy (Ash-Shiddieqy, 2000).

Hasbi Ash-Shiddieqy's Interpretive Approach and Distinctive Contributions

Tafsir An-Nur represents a distinctive contribution to the Indonesian and broader Islamic exegetical tradition in several respects. Understanding Hasbi's interpretive method is essential to appreciating the particular analytical contributions he makes to the question of orphan protection as a social value.

Hasbi's methodology in Tafsir An-Nur combines the systematic thoroughness of tahlili exegesis with the ethical-social orientation of adabi ijtimaci interpretation. His approach to each passage follows a structured format. He begins by presenting the Arabic text and a clear Indonesian translation designed for accessibility across educational levels. He then offers a concise identification of the verse's central meaning without extended elaboration. This is followed by a fuller interpretive analysis that incorporates cross-references to related verses, selected hadith and companion reports, and contextual social observations. Where reliably documented, he includes the circumstances of the verse's revelation. Each section of exegesis concludes with a synthesis identifying the essential teachings of the passage. This format reflects Hasbi's pedagogical commitment, his concern that the Quran's teachings should be genuinely accessible to Indonesian Muslims across educational backgrounds rather than confined to specialists in classical Arabic philology (Ash-Shiddieqy, 2009).

Three distinctive contributions of Hasbi's approach to orphan protection deserve particular emphasis.

The first is his consistent framing of orphan protection as a social structure rather than an individual practice. Where many classical commentators approached orphan-related verses primarily through the lens of personal moral obligation and individual reward, Hasbi reads them as prescriptions for social organization. His interpretation of Surah al-Baqarah 2.177 emphasizes that the Quran's definition of righteousness is inherently social, that genuine piety is inseparable from structural engagement with the needs of the vulnerable. This framing connects individual moral responsibility to questions of how communities and institutions organize their collective response to orphan welfare, a move with significant implications for contemporary policy discussion.

The second is his integration of the Maqasid al-Syariah framework into his reading of orphan protection. Hasbi consistently reads the orphan-related verses through the lens of the five objectives of Islamic law as formulated by al-Syatibi, namely the preservation of religion (hifz al-din), life (hifz al-nafs), intellect (hifz al-aql), lineage (hifz al-nasl), and property (hifz al-mal). Orphan protection, in his reading, is not merely a specific juridical obligation but a realization of the fundamental objectives of the entire Islamic legal system. The protection of the orphan's life and bodily integrity realizes hifz al-nafs. The provision of education and the development of the orphan's rational capacities realizes hifz al-aql. The protection of the orphan's religious formation and moral development realizes hifz al-din. The safeguarding of the orphan's lineage and social identity realizes hifz al-nasl. And the careful management and eventual restoration of the orphan's inherited wealth realizes hifz al-mal. By positioning orphan protection within this overarching purposive framework, Hasbi elevates it from a specific obligation to a systemic value capable of organizing entire domains of social practice and public policy.

The third distinctive contribution is Hasbi's insistence on the comprehensiveness of orphan protection as an obligation. His reading of Surah al-Nisa 4.2, 4.6, and 4.10 extends the scope of guardian responsibility well beyond the management of financial assets. In Tafsir An-Nur, Hasbi argues that the orphan's guardian bears responsibility for the child's emotional wellbeing, psychological security, educational development, moral formation, and spiritual nurture alongside material provision. This comprehensive vision of guardianship anticipates contemporary understandings of holistic child welfare and is grounded in Hasbi's reading of the Quranic emphasis on kafalah, the system of comprehensive sponsorship and caregiving that Islam prescribes as the appropriate response to orphan vulnerability.

DISCUSSION

The Dimensions of Orphan Protection in Tafsir An-Nur

A synthesis of the exegetical analysis reveals that Tafsir An-Nur constructs orphan protection along four principal dimensions, each grounded in specific Quranic verses and developed through the interpretive contributions of Hasbi's adabi ijtimaci approach.

Fulfillment of Basic Rights

The foundational dimension of orphan protection in Tafsir An-Nur is the fulfillment of the orphan's basic rights, encompassing material sustenance, housing, healthcare, and education. Hasbi reads Surah al-Baqarah 2.177 as establishing the provision of material support to orphans not merely as a discretionary act of generosity but as a constitutive dimension of the righteous character that Islam aims to cultivate. The verse's enumeration of the righteous person's expenditures for the love of God places orphan support within a framework of obligatory social solidarity rather than optional charity.

Hasbi's interpretation extends the scope of this provision beyond immediate material needs to encompass education as a fundamental right of the orphan. Drawing on the Quranic principle that aql (reason and intellectual capacity) is among the most precious endowments of the human person, he argues in Tafsir An-Nur that the guardian's obligation includes ensuring the orphan's access to knowledge and moral formation. An orphan denied education is denied not merely an economic opportunity but a dimension of the human dignity that Islam insists belongs to every person regardless of their social circumstances. This educational dimension of orphan protection aligns with the maqasid objective of hifz al-aql and carries direct implications for the design of social welfare programs serving orphan populations (Ash-Shiddieqy, 2000).

Prohibition of Exploitation and the Ethics of Trusteeship

The second dimension, elaborated most fully through Hasbi's reading of Surah al-Nisa 4.2, 4.6, and 4.10, is the prohibition of exploitation and the corresponding ethics of trusteeship. These verses represent the Quran's most legally precise engagement with orphan protection, and Hasbi's treatment of them in Tafsir An-Nur is correspondingly detailed. He identifies three distinct forms of prohibited exploitation. The first is the direct consumption of orphan wealth, incorporating it into one's own assets through any means, whether open appropriation or legal sleight of hand. The second is the qualitative substitution of inferior assets for superior ones from the orphan's holdings, a manipulation that appears compliant with the letter of the prohibition while violating its spirit. The third is the neglect of the guardian's fiduciary obligations through inaction, allowing the orphan's assets to deteriorate through negligence rather than active misappropriation.

The severity of the warning in Surah al-Nisa 4.10, which describes the unjust consumer of orphan wealth as eating fire into their own belly, reflects in Hasbi's reading not merely a divine threat but an ontological truth about the nature of injustice. He argues that the appropriation of orphan wealth is among the most serious forms of moral corruption because it combines the exploitation of the powerless with the betrayal of a sacred trust. The guardian who abuses orphan property does not merely harm the child; he or she corrupts the foundational relationship of amanah that makes social cooperation possible. In this sense, orphan exploitation is not only a harm to the individual orphan but a corrosive force acting on the moral fabric of the entire community (Ash-Shiddieqy, 2000).

Moral and Spiritual Development

The third dimension of orphan protection in Tafsir An-Nur is the cultivation of the orphan's moral and spiritual development. Hasbi reads Surah al-Insan 76.8 as defining the ideal of orphan care not merely as the satisfaction of material needs but as an act rooted in divine love and oriented toward the orphan's full human flourishing. The verse's specification that the righteous feed the orphan despite their own desire for the food, and for the sake of God alone, establishes a motivational standard that transforms care from a transaction into a form of worship.

Hasbi draws a significant implication from this passage for the moral formation of the orphan as well as the caregiver. He argues that the environment of care created by genuinely altruistic guardianship shapes the orphan's moral character as much as it satisfies their material needs. An orphan who grows up in an atmosphere of genuine concern and authentic Islamic virtue is more likely to develop the empathy, resilience, and moral integrity needed to become a contributing member of the community. Conversely, an orphan who experiences care only in its most transactional or reluctant forms, who encounters guardianship as a burden rather than an expression of love, may develop the psychological wounds and relational distortions that the loss of parental protection already risks producing. The quality of moral environment provided to the orphan is therefore not merely a secondary consideration but a dimension of protection in its own right.

Collective Social and State Responsibility

The fourth and perhaps most theoretically distinctive dimension of Hasbi's treatment of orphan protection in Tafsir An-Nur is his insistence that this responsibility is collective, not merely individual. While classical Islamic jurisprudence typically assigns the primary responsibility for orphan care to the deceased father's male relatives in a hierarchical sequence, Hasbi reads the Quran's orphan-related verses as establishing a graduated system of collective responsibility that ultimately encompasses the entire community and its institutional structures.

His reading of Surah al-Fajr 89.17 is particularly significant in this regard. By situating the verse's condemnation of orphan neglect within a critique of an entire civilization's moral failure, Hasbi moves the analysis from the level of individual guardians to the level of social structures and institutional arrangements. A society that consistently fails to provide for its orphans has failed not merely in individual instances of moral duty but in its fundamental obligation to organize collective life in accordance with Quranic values. This failure, in Hasbi's reading, implicates not only private individuals but governmental and institutional actors who bear responsibility for creating and maintaining the structures through which orphan protection can be systematically ensured (Ash-Shiddieqy, 2000).

Relevance of Tafsir An-Nur to Contemporary Indonesian Child Protection Frameworks

The principles articulated in Tafsir An-Nur display significant convergences with the contemporary Indonesian child protection framework, particularly the provisions of the Child

Protection Law (Law No. 35 of 2014) and its predecessor, Law No. 39 of 1999 on Human Rights. These convergences are neither coincidental nor merely formal; they reflect the deeper alignment between the Islamic values embedded in Hasbi's exegesis and the universal human rights principles that Indonesian child protection law attempts to instantiate.

Articles 4 through 9 of the Child Protection Law establish the child's rights to life and continuation of life, to physical and psychological integrity, to education, to healthcare, to religious development, and to social participation. Each of these rights finds a direct parallel in the dimensions of protection articulated in *Tafsir An-Nur*. The right to life corresponds to Hasbi's reading of *hifz al-nafs* as the foundational obligation of orphan care. The right to education corresponds to his reading of the guardian's responsibility for *hifz al-aql*. The right to religious and moral development corresponds to his reading of the guardian's obligation to cultivate the orphan's spiritual formation in accordance with Islamic teaching. The right to physical security, specifically the protection from violence and exploitation, corresponds to the comprehensive prohibition of exploitation elaborated through *Surah al-Nisa* 4.2, 4.6, and 4.10.

Beyond formal rights provisions, *Tafsir An-Nur* offers a philosophical and ethical foundation that the legal text alone cannot provide. Indonesian child protection law establishes what must be done; Hasbi's exegesis provides the moral grounding for why these obligations are binding in the deepest sense, connecting legal requirements to divine commands, personal piety, and communal accountability. This connection is particularly important in the Indonesian context, where the majority Muslim population frequently draws on religious frameworks to motivate and evaluate social behavior. A child protection system that can articulate its obligations in both legal and religious terms is likely to achieve deeper normative penetration and more consistent compliance than one that operates only in the register of formal legality.

Several specific dimensions of the *Tafsir An-Nur* framework have particular policy relevance for the contemporary Indonesian context. Hasbi's insistence on comprehensive trusteeship accountability over orphan wealth suggests the value of strengthening legal mechanisms for the oversight of orphan asset management, including clearer regulations on guardian accountability, mandatory reporting requirements, and accessible legal remedies for orphans whose property rights have been violated. His emphasis on the educational dimension of guardianship supports policy arguments for targeted educational subsidies, scholarship programs, and school-readiness support specifically designed for orphan children. His insistence on collective social and governmental responsibility provides normative grounding for sustained governmental investment in social protection programs serving orphan populations, including the Program Keluarga Harapan and similar direct assistance schemes.

Challenges and Implications

Despite the significant convergences between the *Tafsir An-Nur* framework and contemporary child protection principles, several persistent challenges complicate the actualization of orphan protection in the Indonesian context and qualify the optimism that the theoretical alignment might otherwise suggest.

Child marriage remains a significant social reality in Indonesia, with particularly high rates in rural areas and regions of economic marginalization. Child marriages involving orphan girls are especially concerning because they frequently occur as a response to the perceived guardianship burden rather than as an expression of genuine care for the child's welfare. The Quran's insistence that the orphan's needs must be prioritized, and that the guardian's interests cannot be allowed to override the child's fundamental rights, provides direct religious authority for the prohibition of such practices. Hasbi's reading of the amanah framework in Tafsir An-Nur, which characterizes the child as a divine trust rather than a burden to be disposed of, offers powerful normative resources for advocacy against child marriage as a mechanism for managing orphan welfare obligations.

Exploitation of orphan children, including through misappropriation of their inherited wealth, labor exploitation, and in the most severe cases trafficking, remains a documented phenomenon in various parts of Indonesia. The Quranic warnings elaborated in Tafsir An-Nur provide compelling moral authority for treating such exploitation as among the most serious violations of Islamic ethics, but this moral authority requires institutional translation into effective legal enforcement, accessible complaint mechanisms, and robust social monitoring systems. The gap between Quranic values and legal practice is not primarily a problem of religious teaching but of institutional capacity and political will.

Structural inequality in access to education and social services means that orphan children from economically disadvantaged backgrounds are significantly more likely to experience educational deprivation, health vulnerabilities, and social marginalization than those from more affluent families. The Quranic vision of orphan protection in Tafsir An-Nur does not acknowledge economic class as a legitimate basis for differential treatment; the obligation to provide comprehensive care applies equally regardless of the orphan's inherited economic position. This universalist principle provides normative support for the design of child protection systems that actively work to correct for socioeconomic inequality rather than merely extending formal protections that remain inaccessible to the most vulnerable.

This study carries several theoretical and practical implications. On the theoretical level, the analysis demonstrates that Tafsir An-Nur represents a sophisticated example of contextual social exegesis that engages the Quran's teachings on orphan protection not merely as historical or juridical data but as living moral resources capable of informing contemporary practice. Hasbi's integration of the Maqasid al-Syariah framework into his exegetical approach produces an interpretation that is simultaneously grounded in classical Islamic legal thought and directed toward contemporary social challenges, demonstrating the productiveness of purposive-ethical exegesis as a methodological orientation for addressing social questions through Quranic resources.

On the practical level, the study suggests that Tafsir An-Nur and the broader Hasbi corpus deserve more systematic engagement in discussions of Indonesian social policy related to child welfare, particularly in efforts to develop protective frameworks that enjoy both legal authority and deep normative resonance in communities where Islamic ethics provide the primary moral vocabulary. Religious institutions, civil society organizations, and government agencies working on orphan welfare issues would benefit from systematic engagement with

the Hasbi exegetical tradition, not as a substitute for evidence-based policy development but as a complementary normative resource that can motivate compliance, build community support, and provide moral grounding for institutional commitment.

CONCLUSION

This study has demonstrated that Tafsir An-Nur by Teungku Muhammad Hasbi Ash-Shiddieqy constructs orphan protection as a comprehensive Quranic social value organized along four principal dimensions, namely the fulfillment of basic rights, the prohibition of exploitative treatment and the positive ethics of trusteeship, the cultivation of moral and spiritual development, and the insistence on collective social and state responsibility. These dimensions are grounded in a thematic reading of eight primary Quranic verses, interpreted through an adabi ijtimaci approach that consistently emphasizes the social implications of Quranic moral teaching over narrowly legalistic or purely pietistic readings.

Hasbi's most significant theoretical contribution in this domain is his integration of the Maqasid al-Syariah framework into the exegesis of orphan protection, positioning the care of orphan children not as a specific legal obligation among many but as a systemic implementation of the fundamental objectives of Islamic law itself. By connecting orphan protection to the preservation of life, intellect, lineage, religion, and property, Hasbi establishes it as a value capable of organizing entire domains of social practice and institutional design rather than merely specifying individual moral duties.

The study has further shown that the normative framework embedded in Tafsir An-Nur displays significant convergences with contemporary Indonesian child protection law, suggesting that the Quranically-grounded tradition represented by Hasbi's exegesis can serve as a productive normative resource for the development, implementation, and community legitimation of child welfare policy in the Indonesian context. The practical implication is not that Quranic commentary should replace evidence-based policy analysis, but that in communities where Islamic ethical reasoning provides the primary moral vocabulary, effective child protection requires engagement with both legal and religious frameworks.

Future research in this domain might productively extend in several directions. A comparative study of multiple Nusantara tafsir works, including Hamka's Tafsir al-Azhar and Ahmad Hassan's al-Furqan, would provide a richer picture of how Indonesian Islamic exegesis has engaged the question of orphan protection. An empirical study examining the degree to which the Hasbi tradition actually influences the practices of Islamic social welfare institutions, *panti asuhan* systems, and family-based orphan care arrangements would test the practical reach of the exegetical tradition identified in this study. And an interdisciplinary study integrating Quranic ethics, child developmental psychology, and social policy analysis could provide a more complete framework for the design of evidence-based and culturally resonant orphan protection programs in Indonesia and comparable Muslim-majority societies.

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