

## THE QURAN ON PATRIARCHY: A Study of the Concept of *Qiwamah* in Surah Al-Nisa' (4): 34

**Fina Lailatul Masruroh, Nurilhilmah, Faisal Rojihisawal, Mutamimah, Ahmad Solahuddin**

Universitas PTIQ, Universitas Negeri Semarang, UIN Syarif Hidayatullah, UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim, UIN Sunan Kalijaga

[Finaable14@gmail.com](mailto:Finaable14@gmail.com), [nurilhilmah140@gmail.com](mailto:nurilhilmah140@gmail.com), [faisalrojihisawal@gmail.com](mailto:faisalrojihisawal@gmail.com),  
[mutamimahamanan@gmail.com](mailto:mutamimahamanan@gmail.com), [Solahuddin.purwodadi@gmail.com](mailto:Solahuddin.purwodadi@gmail.com)

**Abstract:** This study examines Quranic verses, especially Surah Al-Nisa, verse 34, which discusses the relationship between men and women in the household, focusing on the concept of *qiwamah*. It explores the interpretation of *qiwamah* using a linguistic approach. The interpretation of *qiwamah* sees the husband as a protector and provider for his wife, rejecting the idea of male superiority or absolute authority. This article argues that *qiwamah* is not based on individual competence, but rather, is a permanent responsibility for the husband, supported by the linguistic structure of the Quranic verse. This view contrasts with some Muslim scholars who see *qiwamah* as dependent on individual ability and not necessarily assigned to the husband. This perspective challenges patriarchal views, suggesting that *qiwamah* should not justify domestic oppression. Instead, it represents a financial and moral duty for the husband, emphasizing that Islam values women within the household. This interpretation places *qiwamah* in a broader Quranic context, offering a more comprehensive understanding of gender roles in Islam.

**Keywords:** *Patriarchal Bias, Legal Feminism, Maternal and Child Welfare, Women's Rights, Gender Equality*

**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini mengkaji ayat-ayat Al-Qur'an, khususnya Surah An-Nisa ayat 34, yang membahas hubungan antara laki-laki dan perempuan dalam rumah tangga, dengan fokus pada konsep *qiwamah*. Studi ini mengeksplorasi tafsir *qiwamah* menggunakan pendekatan linguistik. Tafsir *qiwamah* melihat suami sebagai pelindung dan penyedia bagi istrinya, sekaligus menolak gagasan tentang superioritas laki-laki atau otoritas absolut. Artikel ini berpendapat bahwa *qiwamah* tidak didasarkan pada kompetensi individu, melainkan merupakan tanggung jawab permanen suami, sebagaimana didukung oleh struktur linguistik ayat Al-Qur'an tersebut. Pandangan ini bertentangan dengan sebagian ulama Muslim yang melihat *qiwamah* sebagai sesuatu yang bergantung pada kemampuan individu dan tidak harus diemban oleh suami. Perspektif ini menantang pandangan patriarkal, dengan

menegaskan bahwa *qiwamah* tidak seharusnya menjadi pembenaran bagi penindasan domestik. Sebaliknya, *qiwamah* merepresentasikan tanggung jawab finansial dan moral suami, serta menekankan bahwa Islam menghargai perempuan dalam rumah tangga. Penafsiran ini menempatkan *qiwamah* dalam konteks Al-Qur'an yang lebih luas, menawarkan pemahaman yang lebih komprehensif tentang peran gender dalam Islam.

**Kata Kunci:** *Bias Patriarkal, Legal Feminism, Kesejahteraan Ibu dan Anak, Hak Perempuan, Kesetaraan Gender*

## INTRODUCTION

The Quranic concept of *qiwamah* has often been interpreted through a patriarchal lens, leading to debates about its implications for gender roles in Islamic households. Traditional interpretations of Surah An-Nisa (4:34) often portray *qiwamah* as male guardianship or authority over women, which some scholars argue justifies male dominance. However, these interpretations are increasingly scrutinized for being influenced by cultural biases rather than the Quran's core principles of justice and equality. Scholars advocating for reinterpretation emphasize the need to contextualize *qiwamah* within contemporary social realities while remaining faithful to Islamic teachings.<sup>1</sup>

Modern studies on *qiwamah* reveal a diverse range of perspectives. For instance, Khaled Abou el-Fadl's hermeneutic approach highlights the social realities of Islamic societies, advocating for interpretations that align with justice and equality.<sup>2</sup> Similarly, Abdullah Saeed's contextual methodology underscores the importance of historical and social contexts in understanding Quranic verses.<sup>3</sup> These approaches challenge static and patriarchal readings of *qiwamah*, offering nuanced insights into the functional responsibilities of husbands without endorsing authoritarianism.

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<sup>1</sup> Al-Sharmani, Mulki, and Jana Rumminger. "Understanding Qiwamah and Wilayah through Life Stories." *Men in Charge* (2015): 219-55.

<sup>2</sup> Labib, Muhammad Alfreda Daib Insan. "A Study of the Concept of Qiwamah in Surah Al-Nisa' (4): 34 From the Perspectives of Kecia Ali and Khaled M. Abou El-Fadl." *Albasirah Journal* 13.2 (2023): 51-63.

<sup>3</sup> Ilham, M., Andi Tri Saputra, and Abdul Syatar. "Abdullah Saeed's Construction of the Hierarchy of Values in the Qur'an: A Philosophical Hermeneutic Perspective." *Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization* 13.1 (2023): 119-132.

Classical interpretations, such as those by Ibn Jarir Al-Thabari, reflect the patriarchal cultures of their time while occasionally presenting views that align with modern egalitarian perspectives. For example, Al-Thabari's functional interpretation of *qiwamah* limits its scope to the domestic sphere, distancing it from claims of male superiority in all aspects of life.<sup>4</sup> Such interpretations provide a bridge between classical exegesis and contemporary understandings of gender dynamics in Islam. Despite these advancements, patriarchal readings still persist, necessitating further critical engagement with Islamic texts.

This article examines the concept of *qiwamah* in Surah An-Nisa (4:34) through a linguistic approach, focusing on the Quranic language to uncover its intended meaning. The analysis explores the term *qiwamah* beyond traditional patriarchal interpretations, which often frame it as male dominance or authority over women. Instead, the study highlights how the linguistic structure of the verse portrays *qiwamah* as a functional responsibility entrusted to husbands, emphasizing their roles as protectors and providers within the household. This interpretation aligns with the Quran's broader principles of justice and equity, challenging cultural misreadings that have historically justified male superiority and domestic oppression. By grounding the concept in its linguistic and textual context, the article seeks to provide a more balanced understanding of gender dynamics in Islam, reframing *qiwamah* as a duty rooted in accountability and care rather than authority or control.

## RESULT

### *Definition and Basic Meaning of Qiwamah*

The discussion on *qiwamah* begins with the Quranic text from Surah An-Nisa, verse 34, which states:

*Ar-rijālu qawwāmuna 'alan-nisā'i bimā faḍḍalallāhu ba'dahum 'alā ba'diw wa bimā anfaqu min amwālihim, faṣ-ṣāliḥātu qānitātun ḥāfizātul lil-gaibi bimā ḥafizallāh, wallāti takhāfunā nusyūzahunna fa'izūhunna wahjurūhunna filmaḍājī'i waḍribūhunna, fa in aṭa'nakum fa lā tabgu 'alaihinna sabīlā, innallāha kāna 'aliyyang kabīrā*

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<sup>4</sup> Mujahid, Ahmad. "Rekonstruksi Penafsiran Ibnu Jarir Al-Thabari (224–310 H/839–923 M) Tentang Ayat-Ayat Gender." *Kafaah: Journal of Gender Studies* 11.2 (2021): 228-241.

Men are in charge of women by [right of] what Allah has given one over the other and what they spend for maintenance from their wealth. So righteous women are devoutly obedient, guarding in [the husband's] absence what Allah would have them guard. But those [wives] from whom you fear arrogance – [first] advise them; [then if they persist], forsake them in bed; and [finally], strike them [lightly]. But if they obey you [once more], seek no means against them. Indeed, Allah is ever Exalted and Grand.

Surah An-Nisa' verse 34 employs *kalam khabar*, a declarative sentence intended to convey information or clarification.<sup>5</sup> In this context, Allah SWT explains the role of men in the household as *qawwamun* (caretakers or protectors) over women. This designation is not a form of domination but a responsibility entrusted to men. The declarative nature of this sentence emphasizes the structure and respective roles within the family.

The verse begins with a nominal phrase (*jumlah ismiyyah*), *Ar-rijālu qawwāmūna 'alan-nisā'i*. In this structure, the term *rijāl* (men) serves as the *muftada* (subject), while *qawwāmūna* (caretakers) functions as the *khabar* (predicate). The phrase *'alan-nisā'i* acts as an additional descriptor, clarifying men's relationship to women – not as one of power, but as a responsibility. This structure underscores that the relationship between men and women in the household is complementary rather than hierarchical.<sup>6</sup>

The verse provides two main reasons for men's role as *qawwamun*. First, the phrase *bimā faḍḍalallāhu ba'dahum 'alā ba'di* refers to specific advantages Allah has given to men in certain areas, such as physical strength or leadership capacity. Second, the phrase *wa bimā anfaqū min amwālihim* points to men's financial responsibilities toward their families. These reasons establish *qiwamah* as a responsibility grounded in men's abilities and obligations, rather than in any notion of gender superiority.

The use of a nominal structure (*jumlah ismiyyah*) in this verse conveys the permanence (*dawam*) and continuity (*istimrar*) of the role of *qiwamah*. Additionally, the phrase *ba'dahum 'alā ba'di* illustrates the relationship between men and women as complementary parts of a whole, rather than a hierarchical distinction. In this

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<sup>5</sup> Agustiar, Agustiar, and Khairunnas Jamal. "Structural Analysis And Stilistic Meaning Of Khabariyah Verses In The Qur'an." *Jurnal Ushuluddin* 29.2: 176-188.

<sup>6</sup> Munajat, Fuad. "Pembelajaran Nahwu dalam perspektif fungsional." *Arabia* 7.1 (2015)

analogy, men and women are likened to body parts that rely on each other: the head depends on the body, and vice versa. This message highlights the importance of collaboration in the household, where each party fulfills their respective roles based on their responsibilities.<sup>7</sup>

The verse concludes with two of Allah's names, *āliyyan* (The Most High) and *Kabiran* (The Most Great), serving as a reminder against the misuse of position or power. In the context of patriarchy, this verse explicitly rejects the idea that men have an absolute right to dominate women. Instead, the role of *qiwamah* is defined as a moral and financial responsibility intended to ensure the welfare of the family, not to oppress. A comprehensive understanding of this verse reveals that *qiwamah* aligns with principles of justice and harmony, presenting a balanced and equitable approach to family dynamics in Islam.

In Shafwah Al-Tafasir, Muhammad Ali Al-Shabuni explains that *qawwam* is a *sighat mubalaghah* (intensive form) derived from the word *qiyam* 'alal amri, which means "guardianship and protection." In *Rawai' al-Bayan*, he further elaborates that *qiwamah* refers to the husband's responsibility for his wife in terms of safeguarding and protecting her. Al-Shabuni emphasizes that *qiwamah* is to be understood as a form of responsibility (*mas'uliyah*) and burden (*taklif*), not as a mark of superiority (*tafdhil*) or privilege (*tasyrif*) of the husband over the wife. Nor does it signify control (*isti'la'*) or dominance (*saytharah*).<sup>8</sup>

According to Al-Shabuni, *qiwamah* reflects the role of the husband as a protector and the one responsible for the household, which includes providing guidance (*taujih*) and financial support (*infaq*). Thus, the husband's responsibilities toward his wife are both moral and financial in nature. This interpretation aligns with Said Ramadan Al-Buthi's view, who asserts that *qiwamah* in this context implies honor and protection, ensuring that the wife benefits from this protection in the form of peace of mind.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Wijaya, Irfan Rhamdan. "Prinsip *Dakwah* Qur'ani: Perspektif Balaghah Surat Al-Nahl Ayat 125." *ZAD Al-Mufassirin* 1.1 (2019): 47-77.

<sup>8</sup> Muhammad Ali Al-Shabuni, *Shafwah Al-Tafasir*, Beirut: Darul Fikr, 2001, 250.

<sup>9</sup> Muhammad Ali Al-Shabuni, *Shafwah Al-Tafasir*, Beirut: Darul Fikr, 2001, 250.

Similarly, the interpretation provided by the Ministry of Religion states that *qiwamah* means men are leaders, caretakers, defenders, and providers of sustenance, bearing full responsibility for their wives and families.

This interpretation of *qiwamah* as confined to the domestic sphere contrasts with the views of other Muslim scholars, such as Al-Taba'tabai, who aligns with Ar-Razi and Al-Qurtubi. These scholars argue that *qiwamah* is not a specific rule granting a husband control over his wife but rather a general principle applicable in society. They define *al-Qayyim* as someone who oversees the affairs of others, noting that *qawwam* is an intensive form of *qayyim*. Al-Taba'tabai interprets the phrase "with what Allah has given some over others" as referring to natural characteristics possessed by men, which they argue make men superior to women.

Different opinions are offered by scholars who emphasize a non-patriarchal approach, such as Haifa Jawad, Ikhwanul Muslimin, and Riffat Hassan.<sup>10</sup> They argue that *qawwam* is primarily related to economic responsibilities and the role of the breadwinner. Similarly, Amina Wadud, Asma Barlas, and Azizah al-Hibri align with Jawad, asserting that *qiwamah* is functional, socially constructed, and not inherently or naturally predetermined.<sup>11</sup> They contend that the role of men as guides in this verse is linked to the husband's position as a breadwinner within the gender dynamics of 7th-century Medina. Consequently, if a husband lacks sufficient wealth, *qiwamah* would no longer apply.<sup>12</sup>

This interpretation resonates with Sahiron Syamsuddin's model of interpretation, which categorizes Quranic verse 4:34 as a historical-cultural-normative verse. This perspective suggests that the verse reflects the social and cultural context of the Arabs during the time of its revelation while embedding moral values into the prevailing culture. According to Syamsuddin, the core message of the verse can be summarized as follows: 1. Male leadership is not absolute or inherently the most appropriate in Islam. Leadership can take patriarchal, matriarchal, or collective forms,

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<sup>10</sup> Alyabis, Najla. *Muslim Women's Identity in a Changing World: the Fiction of Leila Aboulela*. Diss. 2023.

<sup>11</sup> Barlas, Asma. "Roundtable: Feminism and Islam: Exploring the Boundaries of Critique." *Journal of feminist studies in Religion (JFSR)* 32 (2016): 111-151.

<sup>12</sup> Barlas, Asma. "Secular and feminist critiques of the Qur'an: anti-hermeneutics as liberation?." *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 32.2 (2016): 111-121.



depending on the prevailing system; 2. Leadership should be determined by capacity and competence, ensuring that the most qualified individual assumes the role, regardless of gender; 3. Obedience to the leader is expected, but the leader's identity depends on the specific context—in this case, the patriarchal system at the time of revelation placed the husband in this role.<sup>13</sup>

Muhammad Ali Al-Shabuni, in his works *Shafwah Al-Tafasir* and *Rawai' al-Bayan*, does not support the notion of transferring the responsibility of *qiwamah* to the wife, even if the wife possesses greater competence and capacity. Unlike some scholars who interpret *qiwamah* as conditional and applicable to either spouse, Al-Shabuni views the husband's responsibility as definitive and permanent. He bases this on the structure of the phrase *al-Rijaluna qawwamuna 'ala al-Nisa'*, which is a nominal sentence (*jumlah ismiyyah*) that signifies continuity (*al-dawam*) and permanence (*al-tsubut*).<sup>14</sup>

Al-Shabuni identifies two reasons for conferring *qiwamah* upon the husband: one is *wahbi* (a divine gift requiring no effort), and the other is *kasbi* (achieved through effort). Men are endowed with qualities such as reason, determination, willpower, and the responsibility (*taklif*) to provide for their wives and children, making them more suited to assume this role. In *Shafwah Al-Tafasir*, Al-Shabuni cites Abu Su'ud's statement that men are granted *qiwamah* due to their superior reasoning, organizational abilities (*tadbir*), and physical strength (*mazid al-quwwah*).<sup>15</sup>

The findings of this research reveal that *qiwamah* in Surah An-Nisa' (4:34) reflects the husband's role as a caretaker and protector within the household, grounded in financial and moral responsibility rather than authority or superiority over the wife. By analyzing the linguistic structure of the verse, particularly the use of a nominal sentence (*jumlah ismiyyah*), the study emphasizes the permanence and continuity of this responsibility. The phrase *bimā faḍḍalallāhu ba'dahum 'alā ba'diww* highlights men and women's complementary roles, where advantages granted to men

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<sup>13</sup> Musfiroh, Mayadina Rohmi, and Sahiron Syamsuddin. "Contextualization of Qiwamah Meaning: Reflection on Abdullah Saeed, Application and Consistency." *PALASTREN: Jurnal Studi Gender* 13.2 (2020): 321-336.

<sup>14</sup> Muhammad Ali Al-Shabuni, *Shafwah Al-Tafasir*, Beirut: Darul Fikr, 2001, 250

<sup>15</sup> Muhammad Ali Al-Shabuni, *Shafwah Al-Tafasir*, Beirut: Darul Fikr, 2001, 250

in specific areas are balanced by mutual dependency, akin to the relationship between the parts of a body. Furthermore, the inclusion of Allah's names *Aliyyan* and *Kabiran* at the end of the verse serves as a moral safeguard against oppression or misuse of power. This interpretation challenges patriarchal readings of the verse, reaffirming that *qiwamah* aligns with the Quranic principles of justice, equity, and mutual respect within the marital relationship.

***The Concept of Husband-Wife Relations in the Qur'an: Analyzing Al-Shabuni's Interpretation and Its Relevance to Patriarchal Contexts***

This article emphasize that *qiwamah* should not be understood as an absolute right for a husband to dominate or control his wife. Instead, *qiwamah* is framed as a duty of protection and responsibility, encompassing financial support and moral guidance for the wife. The article negates any notion of superiority in the marital relationship, as reflected in the phrase *bima faddhalallahu ba'dhahum 'ala ba'dhin*. The choice of this phrase over the more concise *bitafdhilihim 'alaihinna* demonstrates the Quran's portrayal of men and women as parts of a unified entity. In this analogy, men are likened to the head and women to the body, emphasizing mutual dependence. Just as the ears need the eyes and the hands need the feet, no single part is inherently superior, but each fulfills a complementary role. This perspective underscores that the relationship between husband and wife is one of collaboration and complementarity within the household rather than hierarchy.

The verse concludes with two of Allah's names, *Aliyyan* and *Kabiran*, serving as a reminder against injustice. These divine attributes caution husbands against arrogance or misuse of their roles, emphasizing that Allah is the Most High and Most Great and will hold accountable those who oppress or act unjustly toward women. This inclusion of Allah's names demonstrates the coherence (*munasabah*) within the Quranic text, linking the verse's message to its broader divine context.

The article also highlights the importance of the linguistic structure of the verse, particularly the nominal sentence (*al-Rijalu qawwamuna 'ala al-Nisa'*), to argue for the permanence of *qiwamah* as a responsibility. It stresses the nuanced phrasing of *bima faddhalallahu ba'dhahum 'ala ba'dhin* to reflect the cooperative nature of the marital relationship, rather than a relationship of dominance. The article underscores



that *qiwamah* is not a justification for oppression but a framework for financial and moral accountability.

In relation to patriarchy, the article's findings reject patriarchal interpretations that misuse *qiwamah* to justify household oppression. Instead, it frames *qiwamah* as a reflection of the high regard Islam places on women, presenting a balanced and just perspective on marital roles. This approach aligns *qiwamah* with the Quran's principles of equity and mutual respect while challenging cultural misreadings that reinforce male dominance.

This article highlights the critical role of Arabic linguistic sciences in Quranic exegesis, emphasizing the significance of syntax (*nahw*), morphology (*sarf*), rhetoric (*balaghah*), and semantics (*ma'ani*) for uncovering the Quran's nuanced meanings. This linguistic grounding ensures a holistic understanding of *qiwamah*, allowing interpreters to appreciate its literary depth and its alignment with the Quran's ethical and spiritual objectives.

## DISCUSSION

This research found that *qiwamah* reflects the husband's role as a protector and caretaker within the household, emphasizing responsibility rather than superiority or authority over the wife. The findings challenge patriarchal interpretations, asserting that *qiwamah* should not justify oppression but instead highlight financial and moral accountability. This interpretation underscores the value of women's roles in the household and aligns *qiwamah* with the Quran's principles of justice, equity, and mutual respect, offering a balanced understanding of marital dynamics in Islam.

Patriarchal culture is not rooted in Islamic teachings but has been deeply ingrained in society even before the advent of Islam. During the pre-Islamic era, also known as the age of ignorance (*jahiliyyah*), the birth of daughters was often unwelcome, leading to widespread infanticide of newborn girls. For many, daughters were perceived as a disgrace to the family, with fears that they might marry outsiders or individuals of lower social status. Additionally, there was concern that daughters could become part of the enemy's harems or concubines if their community lost a war. The arrival of Islam and the revelation of Quranic verses aimed, in part, to abolish

male superiority over women and elevate the status of women, who had previously been treated as commodities that could be inherited. While patriarchy does not originate from Islamic teachings, patriarchal perspectives have often influenced the interpretation of religious texts, leading to the use of religion to justify and reinforce patriarchal norms.<sup>16</sup> Such interpretations typically reflect outdated perspectives from a time when women were marginalized. Conversely, some modern interpretations that attempt to grant rights exceeding natural roles can also deviate from the intended spirit and guidance of religious texts, relying on flawed logic inconsistent with Islamic principles.<sup>17</sup>

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The concept of *qiwamah* has been the focus of several studies. One such study is by Mutiullah M., titled *Reinterpretation of the Meaning of Qiwamah in Surah An-Nisa, Verse 34: A Hermeneutic Perspective* of Khaled M. Abou el-Fadl, published in the *Proceedings of the National Conference on Gender and Social Movements* (2022). Mutiullah argues that the concept of *qiwamah* in the Quran requires reinterpretation. He critiques traditional interpretations that stem solely from a textual framework, which often define *qiwamah* as guardianship, leadership, or protection. This

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<sup>16</sup> Nasaruddin Umar, *Argumen Kesetaraan Gender*, (Jakarta: Dian Rakyat, cet.II, 2010) hlm. 122

<sup>17</sup> Sayyid Muhammad Bin Alawi Al-Maliki, *Adabul Islam Fii Nidhamil Usroh*, Penerbit: Ash-Shofwah, 7.

<sup>18</sup> M. Quraish Shihab, *Perempuan: Dari Cinta sampai Seks, dari Nikah Mut'ah sampai Nikah Sunnah, dari Bias Lama sampai Bias Baru* M. Quraish Shihab Lentera Hati Group, Jun 11, 2010, 34.

understanding, he contends, can lead to authoritarian tendencies in husbands who feel legitimized by such interpretations.<sup>19</sup>

Mutiullah's study concludes that the traditional understanding of qiwamah by some scholars requires reexamination. One way to achieve this is by employing Khaled M. Abou el-Fadl's negotiative hermeneutic approach, which emphasizes the social realities of Islamic societies and upholds the values of justice and equality between men and women. This method seeks to provide a more balanced and contextually relevant understanding of qiwamah.

Research on qiwamah from Abdullah Saeed's perspective was conducted by Musfiroh M. R. and Syamsuddin S., titled *Contextualization of Qiwamah Meaning: Reflection on Abdullah Saeed, Application, and Consistency*, published in *Palastren: Jurnal Studi Gender* (2020). The study yielded several conclusions. First, Saeed's contribution to contextual interpretation represents a significant theoretical-methodological advancement, establishing nine principles for engaging with texts. Second, Saeed applied three stages of hermeneutics in interpreting verses related to the relationship between men and women, though his application did not fully align with his proposed contextual interpretation model, particularly in the third stage (the meaning for the original audience) and the fourth (the meaning for contemporary contexts). While he extensively explored the perspectives of pre-modern and modern scholars to illustrate contextual shifts and potential changes in interpretation, he refrained from explicitly offering his own interpretation of qiwamah.<sup>20</sup>

Another study on qiwamah from the perspective of Muslim scholars was conducted by Mujahid A. Kafa'ah and published in the *Journal of Gender Studies* (2021). Mujahid approached qiwamah through Amin al-Khuli's methods, which encompass the *ma fi al-Qur'an* (the internal textual aspects of the Quran) and *ma hawla al-Qur'an* (the surrounding contextual elements) frameworks, as well as

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<sup>19</sup> Mutiullah, Muhammad Yaufi Nur. "Reinterpretation Meaning of Qiwama in Surah an-Nisa'verse 34 Perspective Hermeneutics of Khaled M. Abou el-Fadl." *Prosiding Konferensi Gender dan Gerakan Sosial* 1.01 (2022): 193-209.

<sup>20</sup> Musfiroh, Mayadina Rohmi, and Sahiron Syamsuddin. "Contextualization of Qiwamah Meaning: Reflection on Abdullah Saeed, Application and Consistency." *PALASTREN: Jurnal Studi Gender* 13.2 (2020): 321-336.

Schleiermacher's approach, which emphasizes grammatical and psychological interpretation. In his article titled Reconstruction of the Interpretation of Ibn Jarir Al-Thabari (224-310 H/839-923 M) Regarding Gender Verses, Mujahid analyzed Surah An-Nisa (4), verses 1 and 34.<sup>21</sup>

He concluded that Al-Thabari's interpretation was deeply influenced by the patriarchal culture of his era, evident in his understanding of the term *nafs wahidah* in verse 1, which he interpreted as referring to a male figure, Adam. However, when interpreting *qiwamah* in verse 34, Al-Thabari's views align with contemporary scholars, setting him apart from other classical scholars. He understood *qiwamah* functionally rather than structurally, limiting its application to the domestic sphere and not extending it to the public domain. This interpretation challenges claims by feminists such as Asma Lamrabet, who generalize that all classical commentators equated *qiwamah* with male superiority.<sup>22</sup> Despite this, Al-Thabari remained committed to a literal understanding of the verse, as evidenced in his interpretation of the term *dharaba*. He understood it to mean physical beating, albeit light, painless, and leaving no marks, rejecting metaphorical interpretations.

Based on this understanding, it can be concluded that the core issue of patriarchy lies in the superiority, control, and dominance of men over women. This dynamic inherently positions one party as superior, necessitating the inferiority of the other. In Indonesia, patriarchy has become deeply ingrained in the culture, influencing various aspects of life.<sup>23</sup> This includes the dominance of men in decisions regarding family size and their impact on the participation of fertile couples in the Family Planning program, particularly in the choice of contraception. According to

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<sup>21</sup> Mujahidin, Muhammad Saekul. "Hermeneutika Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd Dalam Metode Perkembangan Tafsir Modern." *Jurnal Al-Mubarak: Jurnal Kajian Al-Qur'an dan Tafsir* 8.1 (2023): 25-42.

<sup>22</sup> Lamrabet, Asma. "An egalitarian reading of the concepts of Khilafah, Wilayah and Qiwamah." *Men in charge* (2015): 65-87.

<sup>23</sup> Dwi Puspita Sari, & Ella Nurlaella Hadi. (2023). Pengaruh Budaya Patriarki terhadap Partisipasi Pasangan Usia Subur dalam Program Keluarga Berencana di Indonesia: Tinjauan Sistematis. *Jurnal Ilmiah Permas: Jurnal Ilmiah STIKES Kendal*, 13(2), 369-380. <https://doi.org/10.32583/pskm.v13i2.761>

Infodatin (2013), women are significantly more likely to use contraception than men; 93.66% of women use contraception, compared to only 6.34% of men.<sup>24</sup>

During the New Order era, the societal perception that the use of contraceptives was inherently a woman's responsibility became deeply embedded. This long-standing narrative, reinforced through official and societal discourse, led to a normalized expectation that women should bear the primary responsibility for contraception—a norm that persists today. Only in cases where women are medically advised against contraceptive use are men typically encouraged to take on this role. Community cadres have played a significant role in shaping women's perceptions of this ideology through both formal and informal socialization efforts. This demonstrates that patriarchal culture has been systematically perpetuated in Indonesian society through the dissemination of specific discourses and structured socialization practices.

In the book *Patriarchy, Gender Injustice, and Violence against Women* by Yanuarius You, patriarchy is described as a complex institution of power and control within society. Men are perceived as naturally dominant and superior to women, which grants them the right to oppress and maintain control. One manifestation of this oppression is violence against women. According to data from the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, as of January 1, 2024, up to November 10, 2024, there were 22,113 reported cases of violence, involving 4,880 male victims and 19,185 female victims. Most of these incidents occurred within the household. The primary forms of violence were sexual violence (the most frequent), followed by physical violence and psychological violence. Male perpetrators accounted for the majority of cases, numbering 14,626, compared to 1,852 female perpetrators. In terms of the relationship between perpetrators and victims, the majority involved boyfriends and friends, followed by husband-and-wife relationships.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Udasromo, Wening. "Konsep Nasionalisme Dan Hak Reproduksi Perempuan: Analisis Gender Terhadap Program Keluarga Berencana Di Indonesia." *Humaniora* 16.2 (2004): 147-154. <http://journal.ugm.ac.id/index.php/jurnal-humaniora/article/viewFile/814/65>.

<sup>25</sup> <https://kekerasan.kemenpppa.go.id/ringkasan> diakses pada 20 November 2024.

Finally, Patriarchy is a social system where men hold the primary positions of power, dominating political leadership, moral authority, social privileges, and property ownership.<sup>26</sup> As Alfian Rokhmansyah explains in his book *Introduction to Gender and Feminism*, patriarchy originates from the term patriarchate, describing a structure that centralizes men as the sole and dominant authority figures.<sup>27</sup> Within this system, men control societal roles while women often have limited influence or lack rights in public spheres, including economic, political, social, and psychological domains, as well as in marriage.<sup>28</sup> This article challenges patriarchal interpretations by arguing that *qiwamah* should not serve as a justification for oppression but rather as a framework of financial and moral responsibility. It emphasizes the significance of women's roles in the household and aligns *qiwamah* with the Quran's principles of justice, equity, and mutual respect, providing a more balanced perspective on marital relationships in Islam.

## CONCLUSSION

From the discussion above, the author concludes that *qiwamah* reflects the role of the husband as a protector and caretaker of the household. This understanding affirms the absence of superiority of the husband over the wife in the marital relationship, negating any interpretation that suggests the verse grants the husband power or full authority over his wife.

This article found that the interpretation differs from that of some other Muslim scholars who view verse 34 of Surah An-Nisa' as a historical-normative verse. These scholars suggest that the responsibility of *qiwamah* depends on an individual's competence and capacity, implying that the financial and moral responsibilities associated with *qiwamah* are not permanently assigned to the husband. In contrast, Al-Shabuni, using a linguistic approach, argues that this responsibility is permanent. He bases this on the structure of the phrase *Al-Rijalu Qawwamuna 'ala al-Nisa'*, which

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<sup>26</sup> Bressler, Charles E. *An introduction to theory and practice*. New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc, 1999.

<sup>27</sup> Alfian Rokhmansyah, *Pengantar Gender dan Feminisme: Pemahaman Awal Kritik Sastra Feminisme*, Penerbit Garudhawaca, 2016.

<sup>28</sup> Ade Irma Sakina, Dessy Hasanah Siti A. (2017). "Menyoroti Budaya Patriarki di Indonesia". *Share: Social Work Journal*. 7 (1): 72.



is presented as a nominal sentence (jumlah ismiyyah), indicating continuity (istimrar) and permanence (dawam).

Regarding its relevance to patriarchy, the study's findings highlight several important implications. First, the concept of *qiwamah* should not be framed as a justification for oppression within the household. Instead, it is best understood as a framework for financial and moral responsibility. This interpretation shifts the focus from domination or control to one of caretaking and accountability. Second, the findings reinforce the idea that Islamic teachings place significant value on women's roles within the household. This perspective emerges from a holistic interpretation of Qur'anic verses, which emphasizes the interconnectedness of their meanings and situates them within the broader ethical and spiritual objectives of the Qur'an. By considering the verses as a unified message, the study underscores the balance and mutual respect inherent in the relationship between husband and wife, thereby challenging patriarchal readings that imply male superiority. This approach offers a nuanced understanding of *qiwamah*, aligning it with principles of justice and equity while addressing its misuse as a tool for legitimizing patriarchal norms.

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