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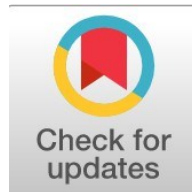
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Family Planning from the Perspective of Official State Interpretation

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Abstract

General Background: Family planning remains a debated topic in Muslim societies, balancing between the Islamic emphasis on procreation and the obligation to preserve maternal health and family welfare. **Specific Background:** In Indonesia, the government promotes family planning through the National Population and Family Planning Agency, yet religious interpretations continue to shape societal acceptance. The *Tafsir Ilmi Seksualitas dalam Perspektif Al-Qur'an dan Sains*, an official state exegesis, offers a unique integration of Qur'anic principles and scientific reasoning. **Knowledge Gap:** Despite extensive discourse on family planning in Islamic law, few studies analyze its interpretation within Indonesia's official government exegesis. **Aims:** This study investigates the concept of family planning in the state-sanctioned *Scientific Exegesis of Sexuality in the Perspective of the Qur'an and Science* to understand how it reconciles religious doctrine and modern scientific insights. **Results:** Findings reveal that the exegesis permits family planning as long as it prevents harm, drawing on verses such as Al-Baqarah (2:233) and An-Nisa (4:9) and acknowledging methods like 'azl, condoms, IUDs, and hormonal contraceptives. **Novelty:** This study offers the first systematic analysis of family planning through Indonesia's official Qur'anic interpretation. **Implications:** The results affirm that family planning aligns with Islamic principles of welfare (*maslahah*), providing theological legitimacy for national health policies.

Highlights:

- Integrates Qur'anic teachings with modern science in state-sanctioned interpretation.
- Affirms permissibility of family planning for maternal and family welfare.
- Provides theological support for Indonesia's national health policy.

Keywords: Family Planning, Islamic Exegesis, Qur'anic Interpretation, Reproductive Health

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Introduction

Family planning is a topic that is frequently debated within Muslim societies. On one hand, Islam emphasizes the importance of procreation and the expansion of the Muslim community, as reflected in Surah Al-Nahl (16:72). On the other hand, there is also a clear injunction to safeguard the health of mothers and children and to ensure that families are capable of providing a decent and sustainable quality of life, as stated in Surah Al-Baqarah (2:233).

Family planning remains a highly controversial issue across the Muslim world. The prevalence of contraceptive use in Muslim-majority countries is relatively low compared to other regions globally. Many Muslims express concern that family

planning is a program devised by Western powers to control the growth of the Muslim population. Furthermore, there is apprehension that certain contraceptive methods may be perceived as a form of infanticide, raising deep ethical and theological debates within the context of Islamic teachings [1].

Hanafi Hartanto states that family planning represents a human effort to have children within a family framework that generally does not violate religious principles, national laws, or the values of Pancasila, and aims to promote the welfare of both families and the nation. The promotion of family planning serves as a primary practical response to population-related challenges. Over the past decades, there has been remarkable interest and extensive governmental involvement in family planning initiatives. These programs, currently supported by the government, have been implemented across forty developing countries. In industrialized nations, including the United States, government participation in such programs has also expanded significantly. To implement these initiatives, the Indonesian government has undertaken several strategic measures, including regulating birth spacing, maintaining an appropriate age for marriage, providing counseling on the value of family planning, developing family planning infrastructure, and establishing Integrated Health Service Centers (Puskesmas) [2].

In Islam, family planning is not limited merely to regulating the spacing of childbirth but also encompasses broader aspects such as preparing the family mentally, spiritually, and financially before having children [3]. The ultimate goal is to establish a harmonious family characterized by tranquility (*sakinah*), affection (*mawaddah*), and compassion (*rahmah*), in accordance with the guidance of the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), as reflected in Surah Ar-Rum (30:21).

Family planning, commonly referred to in government discourse as *Keluarga Berencana* (KB), refers to the regulation of pregnancy frequency among married couples. Generally, this regulation aims to space out pregnancies or prevent unintended conception, with the expectation that parents will be better able to provide adequate attention, care, and education for their children.

Based on the background described above, the researcher formulates the research question as follows: "How are the Qur'anic verses related to family planning (*Keluarga Berencana*/KB) interpreted in the Official State Exegesis?" The objective of this study is to systematically analyze the concept of family planning, commonly known as *Keluarga Berencana* (KB), as discussed in Chapter Seven (Descendants) of Tafsir Ilmi Seksualitas dalam Perspektif Al-Qur'an dan Sains (The Scientific Exegesis of Sexuality in the Perspective of the Qur'an and Science).

After conducting a Systematic Literature Review, the researcher identified several relevant studies. The first is an article entitled "The Concept of Family Planning in the Perspective of Islamic Law" authored by Arsul, Aswar, and Naelah Nur Sofiah (2024). The study presents several key findings. First, it explains that family planning (*Keluarga Berencana* or Family Planning) aims to regulate the number and spacing of births among married couples. Its implementation is categorized into two approaches: (1) Planning Parenthood or *tanzhim al-nasl*, which focuses on birth spacing, and (2) Birth Control or *taḥdīd al-nasl*, which aims to limit the number of births. Contraceptive methods are also divided into two types, namely traditional contraception without devices and modern contraception that involves the use of specific tools. Second, the article notes that one of the Indonesian government's main efforts to address population issues is the establishment of the National Population and Family Planning Agency (*Badan Kependudukan dan Keluarga Berencana Nasional* or BKKBN). Third, the article concludes that the legal status of family planning practices in Islam depends on their purpose. If the objective is to space births (*tanzhim al-nasl*), it is permissible; however, if the goal is to restrict the number of births (*taḥdīd al-nasl*), it is prohibited. Contraceptive methods in Islam are evaluated based on their benefits and potential harms, with preference given to those that minimize harm, such as traditional methods. Nevertheless, if traditional methods prove ineffective or may result in greater harm during childbirth, the use of alternative methods is permissible, provided that they remain in accordance with Islamic law [4].

Overall, this article makes a significant contribution by providing a comprehensive exposition of the concept of family planning from the perspective of Islamic law, while also offering practical guidance in selecting contraceptive methods that align with the principles of sharia.

The second article, entitled "Family Planning Education in Islamic Families: A Living Hadith Study in Strengthening Family Well-Being" by Syamsu Rijal (2023), presents findings that identify 'azl as the oldest and one of the most effective contraceptive methods in the world for preventing pregnancy. Compared to the modern Family Planning (*Keluarga Berencana* or KB) program, 'azl has undergone a shift in meaning and purpose, now being specifically aimed at preventing conception or fertilization. In contrast, family planning seeks to regulate the number of births through the use of contraceptive tools such as pills or injections. Although both 'azl and modern family planning share the same fundamental goal of preventing pregnancy, the primary distinction lies in their methods—'azl relies on a natural, non-instrumental approach, whereas family planning employs medical or mechanical contraceptives. Nonetheless, both methods are essentially intended to prevent the fertilization between sperm and ovum [5].

The distinctive feature of this article lies in its approach, which employs the living hadith methodology by examining the Prophet's practice of 'azl as the oldest natural contraceptive method and comparing it with modern family planning programs that utilize medical contraceptives such as pills or injections. Overall, the article makes a valuable contribution to enriching the discourse on family planning in Islam by exploring it through the lens of living hadith—the practical traditions of the Prophet concerning 'azl.

The third article, titled "Family Planning (*Keluarga Berencana*/KB) in the Perspective of Maqashid al-Shariah" by Mahmudin Hasibuan, Akhir Saleh Pulungan, Nur Hakima Akhirani Nasution, and Mhd Romadhoni (2024), asserts that the Family

Planning (KB) program is permissible in Islam, as indicated by several Qur'anic verses such as Al-Baqarah (2:233), Luqman (31:14), and An-Nisa (4:9). These verses emphasize the importance of safeguarding maternal and child health by spacing births, preventing economic hardship, and ensuring adequate nutrition for children. The permissibility of family planning is also derived through *qiyas* (analogical reasoning) from the practice of 'azl (coitus interruptus), which serves as an early form of birth regulation. Prominent Islamic scholars such as Imam al-Ghazali, Imam Ramli, Shaykh al-Hariri, and Shaykh Shaltut have endorsed family planning on the grounds of protecting maternal health, preventing maternal hardship, and allowing sufficient intervals between births. The family planning program aligns with the *maqashid al-shariah* (the higher objectives of Islamic law), particularly in preserving lineage (*hifz al-nasl*) by ensuring optimal birth spacing for the well-being and education of children. It also upholds the protection of life (*hifz al-nafs*) by maintaining maternal health, and the preservation of religion (*hifz al-din*) by preventing life difficulties arising from excessive family size. The benefits and advantages of family planning, therefore, must be prioritized over its potential harms [6].

The primary contribution of this article lies in its clear and detailed explanation of the legal foundations of the Family Planning (KB) program in Islam. It serves as a valuable reference for Muslims seeking a deeper understanding of Islamic perspectives on family planning. Furthermore, the article reinforces the argument that the Family Planning program is consistent with the fundamental objectives of Islamic law (*maqashid al-shariah*), particularly in promoting human welfare and maintaining balance within family life.

After reviewing and analyzing various previous studies, the researcher introduces a new breakthrough by expanding upon earlier research through a more innovative approach. This advancement involves discussing the topic of family planning within the context of *Tafsir Ilmi Seksualitas dalam Perspektif Al-Qur'an dan Sains*, an official exegesis published by the Government of the Republic of Indonesia. By employing this state-sanctioned interpretation as the primary reference, this study aims to provide a new and more authoritative perspective on family planning, integrating Qur'anic principles with contemporary scientific findings in a systematic and interdisciplinary manner.

Method

Essentially, this section outlines the research methods and analytical approaches employed in the discussion of the article. In quantitative research, it is crucial to specify the population and sample, as well as the techniques and development of instruments in detail. For qualitative research, it is necessary to describe the presence of the researcher, the research subjects, and the key informants involved in data collection, along with an explanation of how the validity of the findings is verified. Meanwhile, in literature-based studies, the inclusion of primary references supported by the most recent literature is essential to strengthen the research findings and ensure scholarly relevance.

The method employed in this study is qualitative, meaning that the researcher first gathered both primary and secondary data to serve as references, then examined and analyzed the data to generate narrative-based interpretations rather than numerical results in response to the research questions. This qualitative approach allows for a deeper and more contextual understanding of the phenomena under study, particularly in the interpretation of textual and conceptual materials related to family planning within the Islamic framework [7].

The primary data source for this research is *Tafsir Ilmi Seksualitas dalam Perspektif Al-Qur'an dan Sains*, while the secondary data sources include relevant journals, undergraduate theses, and postgraduate dissertations that are thematically related to the research topic. The data collection technique utilized is library research (Library Research), supported by a content analysis approach aimed at identifying, interpreting, and synthesizing textual meanings and patterns that correspond to the objectives of the study.

Result and Discussion

Before examining the theme of Family Planning in *Tafsir Ilmi Seksualitas dalam Perspektif Al-Qur'an dan Sains*, it is essential to first understand the epistemology or the scientific foundation upon which this exegesis is built. Comprehending this epistemological framework is crucial to ensure that the research rests on a solid foundation and remains consistent with the intellectual framework and methodological orientation employed within the interpretation itself.

1. Profile of *Tafsir Ilmi Seksualitas dalam Perspektif Al-Qur'an dan Sains*

a. Brief History of Lajnah Pentashihan

As part of efforts to preserve the authenticity and accuracy of the Qur'an in Indonesia, the Indonesian government established the Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Qur'an with the primary objective of verifying and validating all printed Qur'anic manuscripts. The government formalized a standardized version of the Qur'an through the Minister of Religious Affairs Decree No. 25 of 1984, which was the outcome of a consultative meeting involving Qur'anic scholars from across Indonesia. In addition to governmental initiatives, the Muslim community has also played a significant role in safeguarding the Qur'an's integrity through various means, including Islamic boarding schools (*pondok pesantren*), Qur'anic study circles, and memorization programs (*tahfizh al-Qur'an*) [8].

This Qur'anic manuscript is categorized into three types based on its intended user segments: (1) the Standard Uthmani Mushaf, designed for sighted readers; (2) the Standard Bahriyyah Mushaf, specifically developed for Qur'an memorizers (*huffaz*); and (3) the Standard Braille Mushaf, intended for individuals with visual impairments [9].

The Lajnah Pentashih Mushaf Al-Qur'an (Qur'anic Manuscript Verification Board) in Indonesia was established in 1959 and was officially legitimized through the Decree of the Deputy Minister of Religious Affairs No. 11 of 1959 concerning the establishment of the Lajnah Pentashih Mushaf Al-Qur'an. Its duties and functions are further outlined in the Minister of Religious Affairs Regulation No. 1 of 1982, which mandates the following responsibilities: first, to examine and preserve the authenticity of the Qur'anic manuscripts, recordings, recitations, translations, and interpretations—both through preventive and corrective measures; second, to review and verify the accuracy of Qur'anic manuscripts for the visually impaired (Braille Qur'an), as well as Qur'anic recitations in the form of cassettes, vinyl records, and other electronic media circulated in Indonesia; and third, to suspend the distribution of any Qur'anic manuscripts that have not been verified or approved by the Lajnah Pentashih Mushaf Al-Qur'an[8].

Until 2007, the duties of the Lajnah Pentashih Mushaf Al-Qur'an were primarily limited to verifying and editing Qur'anic manuscripts. However, over time, the scope of its responsibilities expanded significantly. Consequently, the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia issued Regulation No. 3 of 2006 concerning the Organization and Work Procedures of the Ministry of Religious Affairs. This regulation aimed to enhance the quality, efficiency, and effectiveness of the Lajnah's verification process. Subsequently, the Ministry issued Regulation No. 3 of 2007 on the Organization and Work Procedures of the Lajnah Pentashih Mushaf Al-Qur'an, which provided further elaboration on its increasingly comprehensive duties and functions, extending beyond the mere verification of Qur'anic manuscripts.

According to Chapter I, Article 1 of the Ministry of Religious Affairs Regulation No. 3 of 2007, the Lajnah Pentashih Mushaf Al-Qur'an is defined as a technical implementing unit under the Agency for Research, Development, Education, and Training of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia. Since the issuance of this regulation, the duties related to the verification of Qur'anic manuscripts have evolved in accordance with the broader roles and functions formally assigned to the institution.

The organizational structure of the Lajnah comprises three main divisions, namely:

- 1) The Verification Division, responsible for verifying and editing Qur'anic manuscripts;
- 2) The Bayt al-Qur'an and Documentation Division, which manages exhibitions, the museum, and the documentation of Qur'anic manuscripts; and
- 3) The Qur'anic Studies Division, which conducts research and scholarly studies related to the Qur'an.

With this new organizational structure, the scope of the Lajnah's duties has expanded beyond the verification of Qur'anic manuscripts to also include documentation, the management of Bayt al-Qur'an, as well as research and scholarly studies related to the Qur'an [10].

There exists a shared objective between the Ministry of Religious Affairs and the Indonesian Institute of Sciences (Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia or LIPI), namely, to elucidate the kauniyah verses (verses concerning natural phenomena) in order to enhance the comprehension of the Qur'an and its exegesis, as reflected in the Tafsir al-Qur'an dan Tafsirnya revised edition published by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia in 2012 [10]. Owing to this common objective, a constructive and collaborative relationship was established between the two institutions. As a result, several thematic studies on kauniyah verses were produced using a scientific approach and published in 2012. The themes include:

- 1) The Stories of Pre-Abrahamic Prophets in the Perspective of the Qur'an and Science, covering the following topics: (1) Introduction; (2) The Existence of Prophets and Messengers; (3) Narratives of the Pre-Abrahamic Prophets; (4) Chronology of the Pre-Abrahamic Prophets and Their Relation to Human Cultural History; (5) Conclusion.
- 2) Sexuality in the Perspective of the Qur'an and Science, encompassing discussions on: (1) Introduction; (2) Gender; (3) Maturity; (4) Marriage; (5) Sexual Relations; (6) Deviant Sexual Behavior; (7) Progeny.
- 3) Animals in the Perspective of the Qur'an and Science, discussing: (1) The Islamic View on Animals; (2) Animals in the Qur'an; (3) The Life of Animals; (4) Rights and Ethics Concerning Animals.
- 4) The Benefits of Celestial Bodies in the Perspective of the Qur'an and Science, with topics including: (1) Introduction; (2) The Perfection of God's Creation; (3) The Benefits of the Sun; (4) The Benefits of the Moon; (5) The Benefits of Planets, Meteors, and Stars; (6) The Benefits of Constellations [11].

b. The Background of the Emergence of the Scientific Exegesis by the Ministry of Religious Affairs

The Scientific Exegesis of the Ministry of Religious Affairs represents a collaborative endeavor between the Qur'an and modern scientific knowledge, initiated by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia through the Research and Development and Training Division (Litbang dan Diklat), under the leadership of the Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf al-Qur'an (LPMA) in cooperation with the Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI). This work can be regarded as the first governmental initiative in Indonesia to produce a Qur'anic exegesis that adopts a scientific approach [12].

The emergence of the Scientific Exegesis by the Ministry of Religious Affairs involved a multidisciplinary teamwork structure comprising two primary groups: the shar'i (religious) team and the kawuni (scientific) team. In terms of expertise, the writing process was dominated by two major domains of knowledge. First, scholars with a profound understanding of linguistic aspects of the Qur'an and other exegetical disciplines such as asbāb al-nuzūl (occasions of revelation), munāsabah al-āyāt (interrelation of verses), exegetical traditions, and other related elements. Second, experts in various scientific fields including physics, chemistry, biology, astronomy, and other branches of modern science [13].

The idea behind the development of this exegesis originated from the Ministry's commitment to respond to the needs of

Indonesian society for a comprehensive Qur'anic commentary. The preparation of the Scientific Exegesis involved the collaboration of numerous experts, including prominent ulama (Islamic scholars), scientists, and researchers from LPMA, LIPI, LAPAN, the Bosscha Observatory, as well as academics from various universities and research institutions [14].

c. Characteristics of the Scientific Exegesis on Sexuality in the Perspective of the Qur'an and Science

Scientific Exegesis (Tafsir Ilmi) is derived from two terms: tafsir, which follows the morphological pattern tafīl and means to explain, uncover, or clarify meanings rationally, and 'ilmī, which denotes knowledge or science [15]. Thus, Tafsir Ilmi refers to the interpretation of the Qur'an through a scientific approach, representing one of the many dimensions of understanding embedded within the Qur'anic teachings [16]. It involves interpreting the Qur'anic verses using various branches of knowledge, including the natural sciences, linguistics, social sciences, political sciences, and other academic disciplines. Accordingly, Tafsir Ilmi can be defined as the interpretation of Qur'anic verses through a systematic and empirical scientific perspective. The verses interpreted in Tafsir Ilmi primarily consist of ayat kauniyyah [17]—verses that pertain to natural phenomena and the laws governing the universe. Husain Adz-Dzahabi defines Tafsir Ilmi as follows:

التفسير الذي يحكم الإصطلاحات العلمية في عبارات القرآن ويجتهد في استخراج مختلف العلوم والأراء الفلسفية منها

The exegesis that establishes scientific terminology within the discourse of the Qur'an is known as scientific exegesis (tafsir 'ilmī). This approach seeks to explore the scientific dimensions embedded in the Qur'an and to uncover various philosophical and intellectual perspectives contained therein. Scientific exegesis does not merely interpret the text theologically but also attempts to harmonize Qur'anic revelations with the principles of rational and empirical knowledge, thereby demonstrating the compatibility between divine revelation and human intellect.

Sources of Qur'anic exegesis are generally classified into three categories: first, tafsir bi al-ma'tsūr (interpretation based on transmitted reports); second, tafsir bi al-ra'y (interpretation based on reasoned opinion); and third, tafsir al-iqtirānī (a combined or comparative approach). The scientific exegesis developed by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia employs the iqtirānī method, which integrates both bi al-ma'tsūr and bi al-ra'y approaches. This is evident in its interpretive process, wherein Qur'anic verses are elucidated through cross-references with other verses, hadiths, and the opinions of the ṣaḥābah and tābi'īn. The interpretive orientation emphasizes ra'y (reason), which linguistically connotes al-ī'tiqād (conviction), al-'aql (intellect), and al-tadbīr (reflection). Consequently, tafsir bi al-ra'y is also referred to as tafsir bi al-'aql or tafsir bi al-ijtihād.

In terms of methodology, the Scientific Exegesis of the Ministry of Religious Affairs adopts the mawḍū'ī (thematic) method, which interprets Qur'anic verses through a topic-based analytical approach. This method involves collecting and examining all relevant verses pertaining to a particular theme, analyzing them systematically, and deriving a coherent conceptual understanding in light of both classical and contemporary scholarship.

Viewed from the perspective of lawnu al-tafsir (the exegetical tendency or style), the scientific exegesis of the Ministry of Religious Affairs clearly belongs to the 'ilmī orientation. This exegetical style is characterized by its emphasis on scientific theories and terminology as interpretive tools to elucidate the āyāt kawniyyah (verses related to natural phenomena). Such an approach not only reinforces the harmony between revelation and scientific inquiry but also underscores the Qur'an's role as a source of intellectual inspiration for the advancement of human knowledge.

The Systematic Structure of the Scientific Exegesis Book by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia on the Urgency of Family Planning is as follows:

- Title of the Book: Scientific Exegesis of Sexuality in the Perspective of the Qur'an and Science.
- Publisher: Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Qur'an, Research and Development and Training Agency of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, in collaboration with the Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI).
- Place of Publication: Jakarta.
- Year of Publication: 2012.
- Number of Pages: 107.

The first twelve pages contain introductory remarks and forewords from several prominent figures, including the Minister of Religious Affairs, Drs. Suryadharma Ali, M.Si.; the Director General of Islamic Community Guidance of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, Prof. Dr. H. Abdul Jamil, M.A.; the Head of the Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Qur'an of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, Drs. H. Muhammad Shohib, M.A.; and the Head of the Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI), Prof. Dr. Umar Anggara Jenie, Apt., M.Sc. These introductory sections serve to provide institutional context and emphasize the scholarly collaboration between the Ministry of Religious Affairs and LIPI in developing a scientific approach to the exegesis of the Qur'an.

The remaining ninety-three pages comprise the main content of the book, which is divided into seven chapters: Chapter I (Introduction), Chapter II (Gender), Chapter III (Al-Bulugh or Maturity), Chapter IV (Marriage), Chapter V (Sexual Relations), Chapter VI (Deviations in Sexual Behavior), and Chapter VII (Progeny). Each chapter systematically explores the intersection of Qur'anic teachings and scientific knowledge, offering a thematic analysis that integrates theological insights with empirical understanding in the study of human sexuality.

2. Family Planning in the Perspective of the Official State Exegesis

When an individual begins seeking a life partner for marriage, they are, in essence, initiating the process of planning a family. This stage involves preparing a place of residence and anticipating the arrival of new family members should they be blessed with children. The birth of a child entails numerous responsibilities, ranging from caregiving to ensuring proper education for their future. All these aspects require careful planning to ensure that the children grow into a generation of quality—physically and mentally prosperous, capable, and a source of pride for the community [18].

a. The Basic Concept of Family Planning

Sexual relations between husband and wife are not always intended solely for the purpose of having children. This notion aligns with religious teachings, as stated in the Qur'anic verse Surah Ar-Rum (30:21):

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

Among His signs is that He created for you spouses from among yourselves so that you may find tranquility in them, and He placed between you affection and mercy. Indeed, in this are signs for those who reflect. This verse illustrates that intimate relations between husband and wife are intended not only for procreation but also as an expression of serenity and compassion within marriage [19].

Therefore, the prevention of pregnancy within marital relations is permitted and holds significant importance in the context of the national Family Planning (FP) program. The FP initiative aims to promote family welfare by reducing or spacing childbirths, a principle that finds its theological foundation in the divine teachings of the Qur'an [11].

In Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 233, Allah Almighty says:

وَالْوَالِدَتُ يُرْضِعْنَ أَوْلَادَهُنَّ حَوْلَيْنِ كَامِلَيْنِ لِمَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُنِيمَ الرِّضَاعَةَ وَعَلَى الْمَوْلُودِ لَهُ رِزْقُهُنَّ وَكِسْوَتُهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ لَا تُكَلَّفُ نَفْسٌ إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا لَا تُضَارَّ وَالِدَةٌ بَوْلِهَا وَلَا مَوْلُودٌ لَهُ بَوْلُهُ وَعَلَى الْوَارِثِ مِثْلُ ذَلِكَ قَدْ أَرَادَ فَصَالًا عَنْ تَرَاضٍ مِنْهُمَا وَتَشَاوُرٍ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا إِنْ أَرَدْتُمْ أَنْ تَسْتَرْضِعُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذَا سَلَّمْتُمْ مَا آتَيْتُم بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ

"Mothers shall breastfeed their children for two complete years, for those who wish to complete the nursing period. It is the father's duty to provide for the mother's food and clothing in a fair and appropriate manner. No one is burdened beyond their capacity. A mother shall not be made to suffer because of her child, nor shall a father be made to suffer because of his child; and the same applies to the heirs. If both parents decide, by mutual consent and consultation, to wean the child before two years, there is no sin upon them. Likewise, if you wish to have your children nursed by another woman, there is no sin upon you, provided you pay her fairly. And fear Allah, and know that Allah is All-Seeing of what you do" (The Holy Qur'an and Its Translation) [19].

This verse has a correlation with Surah An-Nisaa, verse 9.

وَلْيَخْشَ الَّذِينَ لَوْ تَرَكَوْا مِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّةً ضِعَفًا خَافُوا عَلَيْهِمْ فَلْيَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْيَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا

Let those who fear that they will leave behind weak offspring whom they are concerned about feel afraid. So fear Allah and speak with truthful words (in regard to protecting the rights of their offspring). [19].

The interpretation of this verse implies that Allah reminds humankind not to leave behind a weak generation after them.

The interpretation of these verses suggests several important points related to family planning and the regulation of childbirth:

1. The birth of a child should not cause parents to suffer or render them unable to ensure the well-being of their children.
2. Parents must possess adequate capabilities—whether in terms of economics, health, or other aspects—to properly nurture their children, ensuring both their welfare and education.
3. It is necessary to plan the number of children to be born so that parents are able to meet their children's needs optimally.
4. Allah provides guidance to breastfeed children for a full two years (Qur'an, Surah Al-Baqarah: 233). This breastfeeding period, aside from being beneficial for the child, also serves to space pregnancies by temporarily reducing the mother's fertility [11].

Concerns regarding the future well-being of children and the health of the mother may serve as valid reasons for spacing or avoiding pregnancies resulting from closely spaced births, as indicated in the passage of Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 185.

يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ

Allah intends ease for you and does not intend hardship for you.

And in the excerpt of Surah Al-Ma'idah (5:6);

رِيْدُ اللّٰهِ لِيَجْعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ حَرَجٍ

Allah does not wish to make things difficult for you.

In the concept of family planning, there are four high-risk conditions for pregnant and postpartum mothers, commonly referred to as the “4Ts,” namely: (1) Too old, (2) Too young, (3) Too frequent in giving birth, and (4) Too many children. Among these, the most critical factor to emphasize is the third—too frequent childbirth. Research indicates that mothers with an interbirth interval of less than two years face a mortality risk nearly twice as high as those who space their pregnancies by more than two years, regardless of the other “4T” conditions. An interpregnancy interval of less than two years significantly increases the likelihood of maternal mortality or complications during childbirth. Giving birth within 24 months of the previous delivery places the mother in a high-risk category for postpartum hemorrhage, morbidity, and even death. Therefore, the recommended minimum interval between pregnancies is generally two years, allowing the mother's body adequate time to recover from the physical demands of the previous pregnancy and breastfeeding, both of which require substantial energy expenditure [20].

Based on empirical experience and the scientific studies previously discussed, several important conclusions can be drawn:

1. For a mother, giving birth too frequently and repeatedly within a short period poses serious health risks and may even endanger her life.
2. For poor or economically disadvantaged families, having too many children can create significant challenges in meeting the essential needs of their children, particularly in terms of healthcare, welfare, and education.
3. Therefore, spacing or regulating childbirth serves as the most effective solution, allowing mothers to recover their health while enabling families to provide proper care and support for their children.

Hence, birth spacing or family planning represents the most appropriate course of action that does not contravene the commandments of Allah [11].

The verse does not specify the method, as the Qur'an is not a scientific treatise on sexual matters. However, in certain aspects, the following Hadith of the Prophet provides an explanation of the practices that existed at that time.

كُنَّا نَعْرِزُ عَلَى عَهْدِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، فَبَلَغَ ذَلِكَ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، فَأَلْهَمَهُمُ يَنْهَنَا. (رواه مسلم عن جابر)

“We practiced ‘azl (coitus interruptus) during the time of the Messenger of Allah, and the news of it reached him, yet he did not forbid us.” (Narrated by Muslim from Jābir).

‘Azl refers to the method of preventing pregnancy in which a man withdraws and ejaculates outside the vagina when he feels ejaculation approaching. The Prophet—during whose time revelation was still being sent down—did not prohibit this practice. This indicates that preventing pregnancy through the method of ‘azl is not forbidden in Islam.

Then, in another hadith narrated by Ahmad, Abu Dawud, and An-Nasa'i.

أَنَّ رَجُلًا قَالَ : يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، إِنَّ لِي جَارِيَةً وَأَنَا أَغْزَلُ عَنْهَا ، وَأَنَا أُرِيدُ مَا يُرِيدُ الرِّجَالُ، وَإِنَّ الْيَهُودَ تَحَدَّثُ أَنَّ الْعَزْلَ الْمَوْدَّةُ الصُّغْرَى. قَالَ : كَذَبَتْ يَهُودُ، لَوْ أَرَادَ اللَّهُ أَنْ يَخْلُقَهُ مَا اسْتَطَاعَتْ أَنْ تَصْرِفَهُ (رواه أحمد وأبو داود والنسائي عن أبي سعيد الخدري)

A man once said, “O Messenger of Allah, I have a slave woman with whom I practice ‘azl. I do not want her to become pregnant, but I still desire what men normally desire. Meanwhile, the Jews claim that ‘azl is a minor form of killing (infanticide).” The Messenger of Allah replied, “The Jews have lied. If Allah had willed to create a child from that union, you would not have been able to prevent it.” (Narrated by Ahmad, Abū Dāwūd, and an-Nasā'ī from Abū Sa'īd al-Khudri).

This hadith demonstrates that the practice of ‘azl, which the Jews equated with infanticide, was refuted by the Prophet, thereby affirming that ‘azl is not an act of killing but rather a permissible form of contraception. During the time of the Companions, this practice was also approved by figures such as ‘Umar ibn al-Khattāb and ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib [21]. This indicates that Islam allows the prevention of pregnancy, although the methods employed may vary according to time and circumstance.

b. Techniques of Pregnancy Prevention

Humans have utilized various methods to control pregnancy, ranging from the most basic techniques without any tools to the use of specialized instruments designed for that purpose.

1) The 'Azal (Withdrawal) Technique

One of the methods practiced since ancient times up to the present is the 'azal or coitus interruptus technique. In this method, semen is ejaculated outside the vagina to prevent fertilization of the ovum. This simple and natural approach does not require any specific tools or materials; however, its effectiveness largely depends on the couple's experience and control during sexual intercourse [11].

As previously discussed, there is a hadith narrated by Imam Muslim that permits the practice of 'azal or coitus interruptus. Nevertheless, there are also other hadiths that do not allow the use of this method.

عَنْ جَدَامَةَ بِنْتِ وَهْبٍ أُخْتِ عُكَّاشَةَ قَالَتْ حَضَرْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِي أَنَاسٍ وَهُوَ يَقُولُ لَقَدْ هَمَمْتُ أَنْ أَنْهِيَ عَنْ الْغِيَلَةِ فَنَظَرْتُ فِي الرُّومِ وَفَارِسَ فَإِذَا هُمْ يُغَيِّلُونَ أَوْلَادَهُمْ فَلَا يَضُرُّ أَوْلَادَهُمْ ذَلِكَ شَيْئًا ثُمَّ سَأَلُوهُ عَنِ الْعَزْلِ فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ذَلِكَ الْوَأْدُ الْخَفِيُّ — رواه مسلم

"From Judamah bint Wahb, the sister of 'Ukkashah, she said: I was present when the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) was among the people, and he said, 'Indeed, I intended to prohibit ghilah (engaging in sexual intercourse with a nursing woman), but then I observed that the Romans and the Persians practiced ghilah and it did not cause any harm to their children.' Thereafter, they asked about 'azl, and the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, 'That is a form of hidden infanticide.'" (HR. Muslim).

In response to the seemingly contradictory hadiths concerning the permissibility of the 'azl practice, Imam al-Nawawi, in his *Sharh Sahih Muslim*, sought a moderate and reconciliatory interpretation by harmonizing the two narrations. According to Imam al-Nawawi, the essence of the hadith that prohibits 'azl (coitus interruptus) indicates a ruling of *makruh tanzih*—an act that is discouraged but not sinful. Conversely, the hadith permitting 'azl implies that such a practice is not unlawful. Nevertheless, this interpretation does not negate the *makruh* status of 'azl as a less preferred act within Islamic ethics [22].

Based on this legal perspective, which considers 'azl (ejaculating outside the vagina) as an undesirable though not prohibited act (*makruh tanzih*), it is recommended that couples who wish to conceive avoid this practice. The rationale is that ejaculation within the vagina allows both partners to experience greater physical and emotional satisfaction, thereby fostering a sense of harmony, tranquility, and affection within the marital relationship. Such intimacy contributes to the establishment of a peaceful and loving family life, which aligns with the broader objectives of Islamic marital ethics [23] [24].

2) Special Sheath (Condom)

The condom is one of the oldest known contraceptive devices, with its use dating back to ancient civilizations such as those of the Pharaohs, Greeks, and Romans. Initially, condoms were utilized by women as a vaginal barrier to cover the cervix, thereby preventing the meeting of sperm and ovum. The use of condoms by men began only in the 15th century, when they were designed to cover merely the tip of the penis. Over time, the male condom evolved into a pouch-like form similar to that used today. In ancient times, condoms were made from animal intestines, but modern versions are typically manufactured from synthetic materials such as latex. In addition to preventing pregnancy by blocking the fusion of sperm and ovum, condoms also serve to reduce the risk of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) during sexual intercourse. Thus, condoms possess two primary functions—contraceptive efficacy and protection against infectious diseases [25].

3) Calendar Method

The fundamental principle of the calendar method in preventing pregnancy lies in understanding a woman's fertile period and the lifespan of sperm. First, ovulation occurs approximately 14 days before menstruation, and the ovum survives for only about 24 hours, with a fertilization window of roughly 10 hours after its release from the ovary. Sexual intercourse conducted outside this fertile period carries a relatively low risk of pregnancy. Second, sperm can survive within the vaginal environment for approximately four days. This implies that sexual intercourse prior to ovulation may still result in conception, as viable sperm may fertilize the ovum once the fertile period begins. Conversely, intercourse conducted after ovulation is generally considered safer, as the ovum is no longer present and fertilization is therefore unlikely [26].

The effectiveness of this method largely depends on the couple's ability to control sexual desire and abstain from intercourse during the fertile period. Moreover, the uncertainty in determining the exact timing of ovulation increases the likelihood of failure in preventing pregnancy. Therefore, couples must carefully monitor the menstrual cycle to accurately identify the fertile window [27].

4) Anti-Fertility Drugs

Contraceptive drugs, available in the form of pills or injections, contain hormones that function to inhibit the release of eggs from the ovaries. These hormones suppress ovarian activity, preventing the release of ova that could potentially be fertilized by male sperm [11]. Consequently, couples can engage in sexual intercourse at any time without the risk of pregnancy, as no ovum is available for fertilization. These hormonal contraceptives effectively prevent conception by blocking the ovulation process in women, thereby allowing sexual activity to occur without the concern of unintended pregnancy [28].

5) Use of Intrauterine Devices (IUDs)

The Intrauterine Device (IUD), commonly known as the spiral, is one of the most effective physical contraceptive methods. The IUD is a small, spiral-shaped device specifically designed to be inserted into the uterine cavity [29]. This method, classified as an intrauterine contraceptive device (IUCD), is typically made from copper alloyed with silver and can remain in place for approximately ten years. The mechanism of the IUD works by preventing sperm from entering the uterus, reducing female fertility, and obstructing the meeting of sperm and ovum, thereby preventing fertilization.

Conclusion

Based on the comprehensive explanation presented in the Tafsir Resmi Negara, neither the Qur'an nor the Hadith explicitly prohibit or declare family planning (contraception) as unlawful; rather, they provide implicit guidance on the importance of regulating childbirth to preserve maternal health and family well-being. Several verses, such as Surah Al-Baqarah (2:233), An-Nisa (4:9), and Ar-Rum (30:21), emphasize the necessity of preventing mothers and children from experiencing hardship due to excessively frequent pregnancies or having too many offspring. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) permitted the practice of 'azl (coitus interruptus) as a natural method of birth regulation during his time, although certain Hadith categorize the practice as makruh (discouraged but not prohibited). This interpretation elaborates on various family planning methods—including 'azl, condom use, the calendar system, hormonal contraceptives, and intrauterine devices (IUDs)—which are deemed permissible as long as they do not result in harm (mudarat).

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