

The Ijmali Tafsir Method: Its History, Importance, Steps, Benefits, and Drawbacks in the Interpretation of the Qur'an

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Abstract:

This research comprehensively discusses the method of ijmali interpretation in interpreting the Qur'an. With a focus on history, urgency, steps, as well as its strengths and weaknesses, this research explores the method of interpretation that emerged at the beginning of the revelation of the Qur'an, when the Muslim community at that time had a profound understanding of the Arabic language and directly witnessed the events of the revelation. The ijmali interpretation method is analyzed as a global, practical, and easily understandable approach, revealing synonyms, asbabun nuzul, and the core message of the verses briefly. Although this method is simple and needs more opinions of interpreters, its weakness lies in the limitation of providing in-depth explanations. This research utilizes a literature review study to detail the key aspects of the ijmali interpretation method, providing a deeper understanding of this approach in uncovering the meanings of the Qur'an.

Keywords: hermeneutics; interpretation method; Islamic knowledge; Qur'an interpretation; textual analysis.

INTRODUCTION

Islam, as the last religion brought by the Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.), has a holy book that was revealed as the main guide in the lives of its people, namely the Qur'an (Warraq, 2010; Zulaiha et al., 2024). Al-Qur'an is considered as a complementary and perfecting holy book from the previous books (Hashim, 2020). The main purpose of the revelation of the Qur'an is to perfect and guide people in all aspects of life, as well as invite them to draw closer to Allah, believe with all their hearts, and uphold the truth (Islamiyyah, 2020). The process of the gradual revelation of the Al-Qur'an was accompanied by bringing in contextual sharia, depending on events and the needs of society at a certain time (Arifin, 2015). This gave rise to efforts to understand it, and over time, various scientific disciplines such as language, Islam, religion, philosophy, and others developed to support understanding of the Qur'an (Shihab, 2013).

The importance of understanding the content of the Qur'an prompts the birth of the science of interpretation as the key to opening the storehouse of knowledge contained in the Qur'an. Many scholars have tried to interpret the verses of the Qur'an by providing appropriate word matches, explaining the asbabun nuzul, and conveying their personal opinions as commentators (Arifin, 2015). In an effort to explain the meaning of tafsir, Muslim scholars offer various methods of interpretation, one of which is the tafsir ijmali method. This method became the focus of research, with the aim of exploring the history of its emergence, its urgency and purpose, the steps of interpretation, as well as its advantages and disadvantages (Syukur, 2020).

This research aims to explore the ijmali exegesis method as an approach to understanding the Qur'an. The main focus involves historical investigation, urgency, interpretive steps, as well as the advantages and disadvantages of the ijmali exegetical method. Through a literature review study, this research aims to provide

a deeper understanding regarding the contribution of this method in the context of interpreting the Al-Qur'an. Research on the *ijmali* exegesis method has significant relevance in the context of understanding the Qur'an. *First*, An in-depth understanding of the history of the emergence of this method provides a basis for exploring how global approaches to interpreting the Qur'an have developed over time. *Second*, understanding the urgency and purpose of the *ijmali* method clarifies its contribution in meeting the needs of society at that time, making it relevant and contextual. *Third*, The exploration of the interpretation steps of the *ijmali* method gives a concrete picture of how scholars use this approach to convey the meaning of the Qur'an in a short and practical way. Finally, an analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of the *ijmali* interpretation method provides a critical insight into its contribution to understanding the Qur'an, thus providing a more holistic and detailed understanding of this method. Overall, this research is able to contribute in the context of Al-Qur'an studies and the science of interpretation as well as complement the understanding of consensus interpretation methods as an important tool in approaching the meaning of the Al-Qur'an.

METHOD

This research uses a study approach *literature review* to investigate the *ijmali* exegesis method in interpreting the Qur'an (Maxwell, 2008). Primary and secondary data analysis was carried out by collecting information from various related literature sources, including books, articles and scientific publications that discuss the *ijmali* interpretation method. The first step of this research is to identify and collect primary sources that provide information on the history of the emergence of the *ijmali* interpretation method (Mustari & Rahman, 2012). Analysis of the urgency and purpose of the *ijmali* method is carried out by detailing the understanding of these concepts from various relevant works. Next, the steps in interpreting the *ijmali* method are explained by detailing the global, practical and easy-to-understand approach applied by ulama at that time. Apart from that, this research also focuses on analyzing the advantages and disadvantages of the *ijmali* interpretation method. These data are taken from various literary sources which provide critical views regarding the contribution of the *ijmali* method in approaching the meaning of the Al-Qur'an (Yunus, 2019). All the analysis and understanding is then arranged systematically in order to present a comprehensive picture of the *ijmali* interpretation method. It is hoped that the results of this research will be.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

History of Tafsir *Ijmali*

Al-Qur'an, as the last holy book revealed to the Prophet Muhammad, contains the beauty of Arabic, which was the language of his people at that time (Mutawali, 2021). Even though the majority of people at that time were not proficient in reading and writing, they had extraordinary literary powers, making the profession of poet something expensive and highly valued (Akhdia & Abdul, 2022). In this context, the Qur'an was revealed using Arabic, taking advantage of the beauty of their language and literature. Even though the majority of people are not good at reading and writing, the existence of poets who are proficient in Arabic makes them able to understand and accept the Al-Qur'an easily (Amaliya, 2018).

The importance of the environmental context at that time, where literary skills became an integral part of society, enabled the Prophet Muhammad. as the main interpreter or *mubayyin* (Mubarok & Barkia, 2021). At that time, there were no other significant interpreters after the Prophet's death, and interpretation was carried out globally or *ijmali* (Khamid, 2020). The Prophet Muhammad's explanation of the Al-Qur'an was not detailed, considering that people at that time did not need long explanations to understand the verses of the Al-Qur'an. Over time, after the death of the Prophet, the companions who were the successors of the Rashidun, such as Ibnu Abbas, Ubay bin Ka'ab, Zaid bin Thabit, and Aisha, tried to understand the Qur'an through *ijtihad*. They did not use the terms of interpretation, because at that time there was no discipline of interpretation yet formed. Despite this, their profound Arabic language skills make their interpretations of high quality and truth. The *ijmali* method remains a fertile interpretation pattern among friends (Amaliya, 2018).

The development of this interpretive method was then followed by scholars such as As-Suyuthi and Al-Mahalli in the book of *Jalalain*, as well as Al-Mirghani in the book of *Taj al-Tafasir*. As-Suyuthi, for example, classified tafsir into two types, namely *bi al-ma'thur* and *bi al-ra'yi*, which later developed into various branches of tafsir methodology. However, as society develops increasingly dynamically, the demands of the times make the science of interpretation a process that continues to develop. Abdul Mustaqim (2015) quotes Fazlur Rahman and Azyumardi, that the Al-Qur'an is universal and is the basis for answering socio-religious problems. Therefore,

the science of interpretation must continue to progress as time goes by. In subsequent developments, there was a shift in the method of interpreting the Al-Qur'an. The tahlili method, which took the form of al-ma'thur, became dominant, and then developed to include al-rayi or mufassir opinions. This development reflects a response to the dynamics of society which are increasingly complex and very different from the time of the Prophet Muhammad and his companions (Izzan, 2011).

The Basis and Urgency of Ijmali Interpretation

Every method of interpretation recognized by Islamic scholars has a certain basis and urgency. In the context of ijmali interpretation, an explanation of the basis and urgency of this method is very important to understand.

Etymologically, the term "ijmali" comes from words that mean summary, overview, global, and general. In the term tafsir, tafsir ijmali is defined as an interpretation of the Qur'an that conveys the content briefly, globally, and without explaining at length. Al-Farmawi gives the definition of tafsir ijmali as an explanation of the verses of the Qur'an by presenting their meaning globally in accordance with the reading order and arrangement in the mushaf (Yahya & Yusuf, 2022).

According to Nasharudin Baidan, tafsir ijmali is a method of interpretation that explains the verses of the Qur'an in a simple way, including its meaning in popular, easy-to-understand, and easy-to-read language. The systematics follows the order of the verses in the Qur'an, and the presentation is not too far from the style of the Qur'an (Nasrudin, 2002).

Tafsir ijmali has a significant urgency, especially in the context of understanding the Qur'an and its application in everyday life.

First, This method provides ease of understanding for the general public. With a short and global presentation, tafsir ijmali can be accessed and understood easily by individuals whose level of understanding is limited. This makes the Qur'an more open to all circles. *Second*, Tafsir ijmali has an important role in learning and knowing the meaning of Allah. The explanation given involves the order of the mushaf and the meaning of the sentence, thus helping Muslims to better understand the commands and prohibitions of Allah.

The urgency of tafsir ijmali is also reflected in its function as a tool to understand Islamic teachings. By being the main source of law in Islam, the Qur'an becomes a guide for life, and tafsir ijmali helps the community to approach and understand the meaning of the verses in a practical way.

Thus, a deep understanding of the basis and urgency of tafsir ijmali is the key to uncovering its contribution in bringing the message of the Qur'an to all levels of society in a simple, concise way, and still conveying the essence of God's teachings.

Steps of Tafsir Ijmali

The ijmali exegesis method follows the overall interpretation system of the Qur'an, namely by discussing surah by surah and dividing the surahs into groups of verses. The interpreter then explains the general meaning of the verse, highlights its purpose, explains the meaning briefly, and uses some of the words in the verse as a link between the text and the interpretation. Interpreters of the ijmali method do not deviate far from the context of the Qur'anic text and do not ignore the words and expressions. All verses are interpreted in a concise, concise and global form, without leaving room for interpreters to include their opinions in detail (Hasibuan et al., 2020).

Here are the general steps in doing tafsir ijmali (Abdul & Ani, 2020; Rosadisastra, 2012):

1. Displaying Letter Information. The interpreter begins by providing general information about the letter to be discussed.
2. Explaining the Verses in Order. The interpreter interprets and discusses the verses one by one according to the order found in the Qur'anic mushaf (tartib ayah wa suwar).
3. Expressing the General Meaning of the Verse. The interpreter explains the general meaning intended by each verse.
4. Explaining the Meaning of Vocabulary. The interpreter explains the meaning of mufradat (individual words) with simple and easy-to-understand language.
5. Application of Arabic Language Rules. Explaining the meaning of the verse by applying Arabic language rules, such as explaining what i'rab (word inflections) are contained in the verse.
6. Placement of Meaning Between Sentences. The explained meaning is placed between the chain of verses, with the interpretation flanked by the mufradat of the Qur'an.

7. Selection of Diction that is Similar to the Al-Qur'an. Interpreters use diction choices that are similar or even the same as the lafadz used in the Qur'an, often in the form of synonyms.
8. Reasonable Mention and the Background of the Verse. Mention reasonableness (relationship or connection) as well as the background of the interpretation of the verse, if any.
9. Additional References. The interpreter briefly lists the hadith, atsar (tradition), or other interpreter's opinions.

To differentiate each interpretation method used in a commentary book, you can find out by looking at the way the commentary itself is prepared. Each of these methods can be known by seeing whether the arrangement is based on verses and letters (*tartib al-ayah wa al-suwar*) or not. If an interpretation product is written based on *ontartib al-ayah wa al-suwar*, then it can be seen that the method used in this interpretation is *ijmali* or *tahlili*. To differentiate between the two methods, you can look at the length and shortness of the explanations contained in them. If the explanation is explained in general, briefly, not at length then the method used is *ijmali*. Meanwhile, if the explanation in it is explained at length, explaining various aspects, then the method used is method *tahlili*.

Among the tafsir books that use the tafsir method *ijmali* is an interpretation *Jalalayn* works by Jalaluddin As-Suyuthi and Jalaludin Al-Mahalli *Shafwah Al Bayan Li Ma'ani Al-Qur'an* by Husnain Muhammad Makhlut, *At-Tafsir Al-Wadhih* by Muhammad Mahmud Hijazi, *Kalam Al-Mannan* karya Abdurrahman Bin Sa'ady, *At-Taisir Fii Ahadith At-Tafsir* the work of Muhammad Al-Makhy An-Nashary, and others (Ar-Rumi, 2017, p. 73).

Among the books of interpretation that use methods *ijmali isal-farid li Al-Qur'an al-madjud* which only emphasizes the meaning of words (*mufradah*), asbabun nuzul, and a brief explanation. There are also tafsir books that only emphasize the meaning of synonyms, such as *tafsiral-jalalayn* works by Jalaluddin As-Suyuti (1989) and *tafsirijmal* Muhammad Mahmud Hijazi's work which only presents mufradat, ma'na (clarifier), and asbabun nuzul. This interpreter directly explains the meaning of the verse in general and the wisdom contained in it, so this interpretation product is very suitable to be read by the general public whose understanding is limited. As an example in the interpretation of the book *Jalalayn* in QS. Al-Baqarah verses 1 to 5, the interpretation only includes synonyms or equivalent words for each verse, without explaining it at length. The interpretation of these 5 verses only takes up 1 to 2 pages. Meanwhile, in the tafsir book using the *tahlili* method, the interpretation of the first 5 verses of QS. Al-Baqarah could spend several pages explaining its meaning from various aspects. Another example of the interpretation of QS. Al-Fatihah in the book of tafsir *Kalam al-Manan* also only explains globally, not long-winded and in detail, only taking up 2 pages.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Tafsir Ijmali

The *ijmali* interpretation method, like every other interpretation method, has a number of advantages and disadvantages that need to be noted (Akhdiat & Abdul, 2022).

Advantages of Tafsir Ijmali:

1. Simple and Practical. The *ijmali* method has advantages in its simplicity, convenience, and practicality. Short and easy-to-understand explanations allow the messages of the Qur'an to be conveyed quickly and without complications, making them accessible to various circles, including the beginner community.
2. Free from Israiliyyat. Disadvantages related to speculative or additional thoughts from non-Islamic sources, such as *israiliyyat*, can be minimized in the *ijmali* method. The limitations of the interpretation conveyed tend to make it purer and free from adding inappropriate interpretations.
3. Close to the language of the Al-Qur'an. The choice of concise and concise language makes this method feel close to the language of the Al-Qur'an itself. Readers feel as if they are not reading a tafsir, but rather reading the Al-Qur'an directly, making it easier to understand the vocabulary of the verses.

Shortcomings of Tafsir Ijmali (Ar-Rumi, 2017):

1. Less Deep. One of the main weaknesses of tafsir *ijmali* is the lack of space to provide an in-depth analysis. The short and global explanation makes this method less suitable for those who want to deepen their understanding of the verses of the Qur'an in detail. The absence of an in-depth explanation can be an obstacle for a more comprehensive understanding.
2. Partial Nature. The *ijmali* method tends to make the guidance of the Qur'an partial, because it does not always delve into the details of the meaning of a verse. The integrity and unity of the Qur'an can sometimes be lost in an overly simplistic interpretation.

3. A Simple Analysis. Analysis that is too simple and superficial can be a shortcoming of the ijmalī method. Limitations in vision and understanding that are too focused can make this method look narrow and less comprehensive.

In interpreting the Qur'an, the choice of interpretation method should be adjusted to the needs and level of understanding of the reader. Although ijmalī tafsīr has advantages in ease of understanding, its use may be more effective for initial understanding or for people with a limited level of understanding. On the other hand, for in-depth study and more comprehensive understanding, more detailed and detailed methods of interpretation may be more appropriate.

CONCLUSION

The method of tafsīr ijmalī at the beginning of the revelation of the Qur'an reflects an intelligent adaptation to the surrounding environment and the high Arabic language ability among Muslims at that time. The superiority of this method lies in its ability to present an interpretation that is global, practical, and easy to understand, in accordance with the level of understanding of the community at the beginning of the revelation of the Qur'an. This method utilizes a series of strategies, including word equivalents, asbabun nuzul, as well as short explanations in highly condensed language. This provides clarity and efficient readability, making the messages of the Qur'an accessible to various levels of society. The simplicity of the ijmalī method is also reflected in the absence of mufasssīr opinions and israiliyyat stories, making it a pure approach and free from speculative interpretation. However, the simplistic nature of the ijmalī method also brings limitations, especially in terms of accuracy and depth of analysis. In this context, this method can be considered less capable of providing detailed explanations, and the study is sometimes too shallow. Nevertheless, the continued influence of the ijmalī method in the history of the science of interpretation shows a valuable contribution to the evolution of understanding of the Qur'an. As a method rooted in the early period of Islam, ijmalī tafsīr plays an important role in delivering the holy messages of the Qur'an to the people in a simple and digestible way. The continued study and development of the science of tafsīr reflects the relevance and significance of the ijmalī method in the intellectual heritage of Muslims to this day.

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