Wahbah al-Zuhaili's interpretation of the Qur'anic Verses that hint at nepotism in al-Tafsir al-Munir fi al-'Aqida wa al-Shari'ah wa al-Manhaj

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ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

This research discusses how Wahbah al-Zuhaili interprets verses that hint at nepotism in Al-Tafsir al-Munir fi al-'Aqida wa al-Syari'ah wa al-Manhaj. The verses discussed in this research are based on terms that are the principle of nepotism in the Qur'an such as al-Khiyanah, al-Ghill, Syafa'ah sayyi'ah, ittiba' al-Hawa, and ja'l wazir min Ahl. This research uses a qualitative method with a literature study approach to conceptually examine various matters related to nepotism from the perspective of the Qur'an. Therefore, this research is a type of qualitative and thematic research through literature review, namely by writing, reducing, presenting data, and analyzing it. The purpose of this research is to find out how the interpretation of Wahbah al-Zuhaili in Al-Tafsir al-Munir fi al-'Aqidah wa al-Syari'ah wa al-Manhaj regarding verses that hint at nepotism. The results of this research show that Wahbah al-Zuhaili views nepotism proportionally by distinguishing between negative and positive. Negative nepotism occurs if the position is given only because of proximity, without regard to qualifications, so it includes betrayal, ghulul, and intercessory sayyi'ah, ittiba' al-Hawa, and ja'l wazir min Ahl. On the other hand, nepotism is allowed if it is based on competence, honesty, good intentions, and does not violate the Sharia. Harun's appointment by Musa is an example of legitimate nepotism because it is based on preaching motivation and qualifications. For al-Zuhaili, justice, qualification, and intention are the main yardsticks in evaluating nepotism.

1. INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of nepotism has become a familiar phenomenon in Indonesian society. It occurs at nearly every level of society, from the grassroots to the highest levels of power. Sadly, the issue is no longer whether it's right or wrong, but whether the perpetrator of nepotism is popular and well-liked or unpopular and hated. When a popular person commits nepotism, various justifications emerge, while when a hated person commits it, accusations and negative rumors are often directed at them. For example, what has been widely discussed in various discussion areas in recent years is the strong nuance of nepotism that is closely related to the former President of the Republic of Indonesia, Joko Widodo, in his second term. Many have criticized it, but not a few have defended it, all of which returns to the various opinions of the public regarding the definition of nepotism and its laws. Starting from the rise of Bobby Nasution, Jokowi's son-in-law, to become mayor of Medan and then shot up to become Governor of North

Sumatra, the election of Gibran Rakabuming Raka, Jokowi's son, to become mayor of Surakarta and then shot up to become vice president of the Republic of Indonesia, the entry of Kaesang Pangarep, Jokowi's son, in the candidacy for Governor of Central Java until he was finally hampered and only occupied the position of chairman of the Indonesian Solidarity Party, as well as the acquisition of strategic state positions by Jokowi's loyalists, all of which have become endless debates.

In response to these issues, the Quran, as a holy book that serves as a guide for all humanity, contains universal values relevant in all times and places. The Quran provides answers to various human problems, both through understanding the explicit and implicit meanings of its verses. On the one hand, some guidance in the Quran is conveyed clearly, while others require in-depth interpretation. On the other hand, understanding of God's word varies greatly, influenced by the perspectives, ideological backgrounds, and personal inclinations of the interpreters (mufassir).

Regarding the issue of nepotism, the author believes that the Qur'an itself does not explain the matter of nepotism in detail, but we must believe that the Qur'an is present to respond, answer, and guide humans to overcome all their life problems. According to Malik Ben Nabi (1905-1973), the Qur'an is able to penetrate the most obscure corners of the human mind, penetrating with real power the souls of believers and even non-believers are able to feel it. Therefore, the author wants to examine the verses related to nepotism. There are several terms that are the principles of nepotism in the Qur'an, namely al-Khiyanah, al-Ghill, syafa'ah sayyi'ah, ittiba' al-Hawa and ja'l wazir min ahl. The reason the author took the book Al-Tafsir al-Munir fi al-'Aqidah wa al-Syari'ah wa al-Manhaj by Wahbah al-Zuhaili is because the book interprets the Qur'an using the tahlili method, namely interpreting the entire Qur'an from beginning to end, so that one can know the interpretation of each verse of the Qur'an. Apart from that, the book of tafsir is fiqhi oriented and in its systematic writing it always closes with the fiqh of life, which according to the author is suitable for discussing legal and social problems such as nepotism which is rooted in all levels of society.

Previous studies have revealed several research findings on the same or similar topics. Among them is Ismanto's thesis entitled "Nepotism from the Perspective of the Qur'an (A Study of M. Quraish Shihab's Thoughts in the Interpretation of Al-Misbah)" (Ismanto, 2019). In his research, Quraish Shihab's views on nepotism are discussed through the conclusions of his thoughts from various works he has written, especially Tafsir Al-Misbah.

The following research was conducted by Ellyatus Sholihah (2024) in his journal article entitled "Nepotism in the Perspective of Contemporary and Classical Interpretations" (Sholihah, 2024). This research examines the topic of nepotism in the Al-Qur'an with a focus on the approach used by Hassan Hanafi in analyzing verses related to nepotism. Using Hassan Hanafi's hermeneutics, he emphasized the importance of justice, trust and piety in Islam in interpreting the QS. an-Nisā' [4]: 135, QS. al-Maidah [5]: 8, and QS. al-Anfāl [8]: 27. In addition, Imam Ghozali (2018) wrote in his journal article entitled "Collusion and Nepotism in the Perspective of the Qur'an (A Study of the Thematic Interpretation Approach)" (Ghozali, 2018). This article focuses on discussing the meaning of collusion and nepotism using a thematic interpretation approach. The following research was conducted by Andy Hariyono (2018) in his journal article entitled "Analysis of Wahbah Zuhaili's Interpretation Method in the Book of Al-Munir" (Hariyono, 2018) . This article discusses Wahbah al-Zuhaili's tafsir method, which was applied in writing al-Munir's tafsir book.

Based on various literature sources reviewed previously, the discussion reveals similarities, but is analyzed through diverse methods and objectives. This study attempts to identify Qur'anic verses that suggest nepotism and then discusses their interpretation through the interpretation of Al-Tasir al-Munir fi al-'Aqidah wa al-Syari'ah wa al-Manhaj. Therefore, this study is presented to complement and broaden the knowledge of Islamic scholarship in relation to previous studies. This study is a qualitative study, namely presenting data from libraries to be analytically described regarding the interpretation of verses that suggest nepotism in Al-Tafsir al-Munir fi al-'Aqidah wa al-Syari'ah wa al-Manhaj. To support the primary data from our study, this study uses secondary sources such as related and supporting works on nepotism and the commentary book Al-Tafsir al-Munir fi al-'Aqidah wa al-Syari'ah wa al-Manhaj.

2.   RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

2.1. Biography of Wahbah al-Zuhaili
a.   Biography

Wahbah al-Zuhaili was born in 1932 AD / 1351 H in Dair 'Atiyah, a district in Faiha region, Damascus Province, Syria. His full name is Wahbah bin Musthafa al-Zuhaili, the son of Musthafa al-Zuhaili, a farmer who lived a simple life and was known for his piety. Al-Zuhaili is a nickname of Nisbat from the city of

Zahlah, one of the names of the area where his ancestors lived in Lebanon. His mother's name is Hajjah Fatimah binti Mustafa Sa'adah, a woman known for her *wara'* nature and her steadfastness in carrying out the religious shari'a. Wahbah received a basic Islamic education from his father. Then, he continued his education at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah in his hometown, before pursuing further formal education. Wahbah al-Zuhaili grew up in the environment of scholars of the Hanafi school, who also shaped his jurisprudence. Although he adheres to the Hanafi school of thought, he is not fanatical about that school of thought and always appreciates the opinions of other schools of thought. This attitude is reflected in the way he interprets when discussing verses of the Qur'an related to jurisprudence. Wahbah al-Zuhaili began his intellectual journey from the closest environment: his own family. He received his basic education in the field of Islam directly from his father, Musthafa al-Zuhaili, who although only a farmer, had a good understanding of religion and emphasized the importance of morality, worship, and discipline in religious life. It was from his father that little Wahbah began to know hijaiyah letters, memorizing the Qur'an, and the basic principles of monotheism and fiqh of worship.

After receiving a basic religious education at home, Wahbah continued his formal education at the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (elementary school) in his hometown of Dair 'Atiyah. This school not only taught general knowledge but also emphasized religious education, such as reading the Quran, prayer procedures, Islamic faith, and classical Arabic. This basic educational environment also strengthened his interest in Islamic studies, particularly due to the support of the religious community that respected those seeking knowledge.

During his intellectual development, Wahbah al-Zuhaili grew up in an environment strongly influenced by the Hanafi school of thought, one of the four main schools of jurisprudence in Sunni Islam. The teachers, kiai, and ulama around him were mostly affiliated with this school, so he naturally adopted an approach to Islamic law based on Hanafi principles. However, despite his Hanafi roots, Wahbah was known for his inclusive and moderate approach. He is not a blind fanatic towards only one sect. Rather, he showed a scientific attitude that was open to various views from other schools of thought, including Shafi'i, Maliki, and Hanbali. In his works, especially when discussing the verses of the Qur'an related to law (the verses of ahkam), Wahbah often presents the various opinions of scholars from various schools of thought, then conducts an objective comparative analysis before presenting the view that he considers to be the strongest based on the evidence available.

This approach reflects dynamic ijtihad, neither rigid nor haphazard. It combines the richness of classical tradition with the contextual needs of modern society. His moderate and tolerant approach to differences in schools of thought is one of al-Zuhaili's distinctive qualities as a contemporary fiqh scholar, making his work widely accepted throughout the Islamic world, both by academics and practitioners of Islamic law. Syria, the birthplace of Wahbah al-Zuhayli, is a country with a majority Muslim population. However, the political situation there is often unstable and marked by divisions among Muslims. This very complicated geo-political and social-religious condition gave a great influence on the development of Wahbah al-Zuhayli's thought. His thoughts, especially in the field of Islamic law, have spread throughout the Islamic world through his various writings. In addition, Wahbah al-Zuhayli is also known for his moderate thoughts. Thanks to his contribution, in 2014 he was included in the list of 500 most influential Muslim figures in the world.

Syria, the birthplace and home of Wahbah al-Zuhayli, is a predominantly Muslim country, particularly Sunni. However, from colonial times to the contemporary era, Syria has been known as one of the Middle East's most complex and turbulent political regions. The country has been under French occupation, experienced numerous military coups, and in recent decades has faced a protracted internal conflict that has created social and sectarian divisions within its population. In this context, political tensions and intra-Muslim divisions, both between Sunnis and Shiites and between Sunni groups themselves, became part of the reality faced by Muslim intellectuals, including Wahbah al-Zuhayli. This social environment indirectly shaped his approach to thought, particularly in Islamic jurisprudence and law, becoming more moderate, open to differences, and oriented toward the welfare of the community.

Al-Zuhayli did not view the diversity of schools of thought and differing views as a threat, but rather as an Islamic intellectual treasure that needed to be managed wisely. In his various writings, he frequently emphasized the importance of Muslim unity and rejected all forms of extremism, both in the form of violence in the name of religion and sectarian fanaticism. He sought to ground the values of tolerance, social justice, and balance in understanding Islamic texts, ensuring their relevance to the realities of the times.

His moderate thinking was not only a topic of discussion within local circles, but also spread widely throughout the Islamic world. This was possible because Wahbah al-Zuhayli was a prolific and visionary scholar, who wrote over 160 scholarly works, including books, articles, and fatwas. One of his monumental works, "al-Fiqh al-Islami wa Adillathu," is considered a primary reference in comparative fiqh studies at many Islamic universities worldwide. This work demonstrates his breadth of insight and ability to balance nash (text) with contemporary reality (waqi').

b.   Educational History

Wahbah Al-Zuhaili began his education by studying the Qur'an and going to school *Ibtida'iyah* in his village, graduating in 1946. He then continued his secondary education by enrolling in the Sharia Department in Damascus for six years. In 1952, he successfully obtained a secondary education diploma, which provided him with the necessary skills to continue his studies at the Faculty of Sharia and Arabic at Al-Azhar University, as well as the Faculty of Sharia at Ain al-Shams University simultaneously. During this period, Wahbah Al-Zuhaili successfully obtained three diplomas simultaneously, including:

1)   B.A. degree from the Faculty of Sharia, Al-Azhar University in 1956.
2)   Takhassus Education Diploma from the Faculty of Arabic Language, Al-Azhar University in 1957.
3)   B.A. degree from the Faculty of Law, Ain al-Shams University in 1957.

After earning three diplomas, Wahbah Al-Zuhaili continued his postgraduate studies at Cairo University. He completed this process over two years, and successfully earned a Master's degree (MA) with a thesis entitled "Al-Dzarai' fi al-Siyasah al-Syariah wa al-Fiqh al-Islami-Dirasah Muqaranah".

Wahbah Al-Zuhaili was not satisfied with his educational achievements, so he decided to continue to a doctoral program. In 1963, he successfully completed the program with a dissertation titled "Atsar al-Harb fi al-Fiqh al-Islami; Dirasah Muqaranah Baina al-Madzahib al-Tsamaniyah wa al-Qanun al-Duwali al-'Am" (The Influence of War in Islamic Jurisprudence, A Comparative Study of Eight Schools of Law and International Law). His dissertation was written under the guidance of Muhammad Salam Madkur and earned the highest distinction, namelysum with praise (Dignity of the Sunnah) (Al-Lahham, 2001).

Wahbah Al-Zuhaili dedicated himself as a lecturer at the Faculty of Sharia of the University of Damascus in 1963. His career developed rapidly, from deputy dean, dean, to the head of the department of Islamic Jurisprudence and Madhhab. He served for seven years and earned the title of professor in 1975. Al-Zuhaili is known as an expert in Fiqh, Tafsir, and Dirasah Islamiyah. He is also often a speaker at various international forums. Therefore, he has several times obtained important positions in the academic field, international organizations, and which is no less important to be the protector of the community where he lives (Muhammadun, 2016).

c.   Works

According to scholars Dr. Badi' As-Sayyid Al-Lahham in the biography of Sheikh Wahbah which he wrote with the title *Wahbah Az-Zuhayli al-'Alim wa al-Faqih wa al-Mufasir,* it is mentioned that Sheikh Wahbah Az-Zuhaili has produced around 199 works, in addition to journals. In addition, he also wrote more than 500 scientific papers (Al-Laham, 2001). Some of the books by Wahbah Az-Zuhaili include:

1)   *Atsar al-Harb fi al-Fiqh al-Islāmi: Dirāsah Muqāranah* – Dār al-Fikr, Damascus, 1963.
2)   *Al-Wasit fi Ushūl al-Fiqh* – Universitas Damascus, 1966.
3)   *Al-Fiqh al-Islāmi fi Uslub al-Jadid* – Maktabah al-Hadits, Damascus, 1967.
4)   *Nazāriat al-Darūrāt al-Syar'iyyah* – Maktabah al-Farabi, Damascus, 1969.
5)   *Nazāriat al-Damān* – Dār al-Fikr, Damascus, 1970.
6)   *Al-Usūl al-'Āmmah li Wahdah al-Din al-Haq* – Maktabah al-Abassiyah, Damascus, 1972.
7)   *Al-Alaqāt al-Dawliah fī al-Islām* – Muassasah al-Risālah, Beirut, 1981.
8)   *Al-Fiqh al-Islām wa Adillatuhu* (8 pages) – Dār al-Fikr, Damascus, 1984.
9)   *Ushūl al-Fiqh al-Islāmi* (2 Jilid) – Dār al-Fikr, Damascus, 1986.
10)   *Juhūd Taqnin al-Fiqh al-Islāmi* – Muassasah al-Risālah, Beirut, 1987.
11)   *Fiqh al-Mawāris fi al-Shari'ah al-Islāmiah* – Dār al-Fikr, Damascus, 1987.
12)   *Al-Wasāyā wa al-Waqaf fi al-Fiqh al-Islāmi* – Dār al-Fikr, Damascus, 1987.
13)   *Al-Islām Din al-Jihād lā al-Udwān* – Tripoli, Libya, 1990.
14)   *Al-Tafsir al-Munir fi al-Aqidah wa al-Syari'ah wa al-Manhaj* (16 Jilid) – Dār al-Fikr, Damascus, 1991.
15)   *Al-Qisah al-Qur'āniyyah Hidāyah wa Bayān* – Dār Khair, Damascus, 1992.
16)   *Al-Qur'ān al-Karim al-Bunyātuh al-Tasri'iyyah aw Khasāisuh al-Hasāriyah* – Dār al-Fikr, Damascus, 1993.

17) *Al-Ruḥsah al-Syari'ah: Aḥkāmuhu wa Dawabituhu* – Dār al-Khair, Damascus, 1994.
18) *Khasāis al-Kubra li Hūquq al-Insān fī al-Islām* – Dār al-Maktabi, Damascus, 1995.
19) *Al-Ulūm al-Syari'ah Bayān al-Wahdah wa al-Istiqlāl* – Dār al-Maktabi, Damascus, 1996.
20) *Al-Asas wa al-Masādir al-Ijtihād al-Musytarikah Bayān al-Sunah wa al-Syiah* – Dār al-Maktabi, Damascus, 1996.
21) *Al-Islām wa Tahadiyyah al-'Asr* – Dār al-Maktabi, Damascus, 1996.
22) *Muwajāhah al-Ghazu al-Taqāfi al-Sahyuni wa al-Ajnābi* – Dār al-Maktabi, Damascus, 1996.
23) *al-Taqlid fi al-Madhahib al-Islāmiah inda al-Sunah wa al-Syiah* – Dār al-Maktabi, Damascus, 1996.
24) *Al-Ijtihād al-Fiqhi al-Hadits* – Dār al-Maktabi, Damascus, 1997.
25) *Al-Urūf wa al-Adah* – Dār al-Maktabi, Damascus, 1997.
26) *Bay al-Asam* – Dār al-Maktabi, Damascus, 1997.
27) *Al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah* – Dār al-Maktabi, Damascus, 1997.
28) *Idārah al-Waqaf al-Kahiri* – Dār al-Maktabi, Damascus, 1998.
29) *Al-Mujādid Jamaluddin al-Afghani* – Dār al-Maktabi, Damascus, 1998.
30) *Taghyir al-Ijtihād* – Dār al-Maktabi, Damascus, 2000.
31) *Tatbiq al-Syari'ah al-Islāmiah* – Dār al-Maktabi, Damascus, 2000.
32) *Al-Zirā'i fi al-Siyāsah al-Syar'iyyah wa al-Fiqh al-Islāmi* – Dār al-Maktabi, Damascus, 1999.
33) *Tajdid al-Fiqh al-Islāmi* – Dār al-Fikr, Damascus, 2000.
34) *Al-Taqāfah wa al-Fikr* – Dār al-Maktabi, Damascus, 2000.
35) *Manhāj al-Da'wah fi al-Sirāh al-Nabawiyah* – Dār al-Maktabi, Damascus, 2000.
36) *Al-Qayyim al-Insāniah fi al-Qur'ān al-Karim* – Dār al-Maktabi, Damascus, 2000.
37) *Haq al-Hurriah fi al-'Alām* – Dār al-Fikr, Damascus, 2000.
38) *Al-Insān fi al-Qur'ān* – Dār al-Maktabi, Damascus, 2001.
39) *Al-Islām wa Usūl al-Hadārah al-Insāniah* – Dār al-Maktabi, Damascus, 2001.
40) *Usūl al-Fiqh al-Hanafi* – Dār al-Maktabi, Damascus, 2001.

These works cover various fields such as fiqh, ushul fiqh, interpretation, Islamic thought, and contemporary issues, showing the breadth of knowledge and the great contribution of Sheikh Wahbah Az-Zuhaili in Islamic scholarship.

2.2. Profile Book of Tafsir Al-Tafsir al-Munir fi al-'Aqidah wa al-Syari'ah wa al-Manhaj
a.   Writing Background
One of Wahbah's primary motivations for writing this masterpiece was his profound admiration and love for the Qur'an. This is clearly evident in the introduction to his commentary, where he asserts that the Qur'an is the most perfect book and capable of providing inspiration in various aspects of life. As a primary source of reference, the Qur'an is considered to never run out of information, both in the fields of science and culture. Wahbah acknowledged that he has written numerous works on the Qur'an, numbering in the hundreds. According to him, the Qur'an is closely related to the needs of modern life and guidance in culture and education (bin Musthafa al-Zuhaili, 2016).

In the introduction *The Tafsir al-Munir*, Wahbah Az-Zuhaili stated that the purpose of writing this commentary is to encourage Muslims to stick firmly to the Qur'an scientifically. In other words, he wants to create a strong scientific bond between a Muslim and the Book of Allah. Because, the noble Qur'an is the constitution of human life, both in general and specifically. Therefore, Wahbah did not only limit his explanation to the laws of jurisprudence in the narrow sense as generally understood by jurisprudents. On the contrary, it also explains the laws deduced from the verses of the Qur'an more broadly, beyond general understanding. The explanation includes aspects of belief, morals, manhaj (method), behavior, general constitution, as well as various benefits that can be quoted from the verses of the Qur'an, both explicitly and implicitly (Zuhailiy, 1998).

b.   Source of interpretation
Wahbah al-Zuhaili, in his foreword, explains that Tafsir al-Munir is a work of interpretation that combines *ma'thur* (history) and *ma'qul* (reason/*ra'yi*) sources as the basis for interpretation. On the other hand, in explaining the interpretation of the verses of the Qur'an, the thoughts and ijtihad proposed by Wahbah Zuhaili do not appear to dominate excessively. Nevertheless, his thoughts and ijtihad still play a significant role, especially in providing explanations and interpretations of the meaning of verses in certain parts. (Islamiyah, 2022). So, looking at the dominance of sources of interpretation carried out by Wahbah Al-Zuhaili, it can be said that Al-Munir's interpretation

is categorized as bi al-Ra'yi interpretation because the descriptions presented are more on language analysis, various opinions of the schools of jurisprudence and jurisprudence of life than on the narrations.

c.   Interpretation Method

Tafsir al-Munir is a book of interpretation that uses the tahlili method. The tahlili method in Quranic interpretation is a way of interpreting Quranic verses comprehensively from various aspects, according to the order of the Mushaf. This process involves examining the meaning of the words (mufradat), their content, and the purpose of the dialogue within the verse. This interpretation also utilizes various sources such as asbabun nuzul (the reasons for the revelation of the verse), the sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), the opinions of the Companions (aqwal), and the Tabi'in (followers). Furthermore, this method considers the relationship between the words in the verse and its overall context. The interpretation is then processed according to the abilities and expertise of the mufassir (interpreter) in their respective fields (Mukhtar, 2013). Although in some places Wahbah uses the maudhu'i (thematic) method in its interpretation, in general the use of the tahlili method is more dominant.

d.   Interpretation Orientation

Al-Munir's interpretation has unique characteristics when viewed from the various existing interpretations. This interpretation can be categorized as a combination of literary and social approaches (Al-Adabi Al-Ijtima'i) with an emphasis on the interpretation of Islamic law (Al-Fiqhi). This characteristic arises from Wahbah Al-Zuhaili, the author of this interpretation, having a strong scientific foundation in the field of Islamic jurisprudence. However, in presenting it, he also pays close attention to style and accuracy in writing, so that his interpretation is relevant to current developments and the needs of society.

The Al-Adabi Al-Ijtima'i interpretation is an interpretive approach that is oriented towards explaining the instructions in the verses of the Qur'an which are directly related to people's lives. This pattern seeks to provide solutions to various social problems and "diseases" that exist in society by being guided by the verses of the Qur'an. Explanations in this style are conveyed in language that is easy to understand, but still maintain beauty and clarity in the delivery (Shihab, 2007).

e.   Writing Systematics

Tafsir al-Munir begins by explaining the background and methodology (manhaj) used as guidelines in interpretation. Next, this book discusses various sciences related to the Qur'an, such as the definition of the Qur'an, other names for the Qur'an, the process of its revelation, the division of verses into Makkiyah and Madaniyah, the beginning and end of the revelation of verses, the history of the collection of the Qur'an until the codification period, the technique of writing the Qur'an, the Uthmani rasm, the science of qiraat, balaghah, and other related topics.

When entering the interpretation of the verses of the Qur'an, Wahbah al-Zuhaili first explains the features, priorities and general content of the letter to be interpreted, including the main themes contained therein. After providing a general overview, he then interpreted the verses by dividing them into groups of verses based on the theme of discussion. In interpreting each group of verses, Wahbah al-Zuhaili uses three approaches, namely:

1)   Aspects of Linguistics: Wahbah al-Zuhaili explains the interpretation of mufradat (vocabulary), balaghah (beauty of language), and i'rab (grammatical structure) which are considered important to understand in the verses of the Qur'an.
2)   Discussion of Tafsir: He gave a deep and detailed explanation of the meaning of the verses. In his explanation, Wahbah al-Zuhaili also complements with relevant authentic hadiths to strengthen the understanding of the interpreted verse.
3)   Guide to Life: After interpreting the verses, Wahbah al-Zuhaili concluded important points that can be used as guidelines or guides in daily life, so that the interpretation is not only theoretical but also practical and applicative. (Az-Zuhaili, 1991)

2.3. About Nepotism

Linguistically, the word nepotism comes from the ancient Greek words nepos and otis, meaning grandson, descendant, or cousin. In English, nepotism refers to a person's tendency to prioritize or benefit their own family in government positions. It also comes from the word nephew, which is a close relative (Shadily, 1983). This word has undergone a broadening of meaning, namely: first, behavior that shows excessive fondness for close relatives. Second, the tendency to prioritize one's own relatives, especially when it comes to positions or ranks in government circles. Third, the act of appointing one's own relatives or siblings to hold certain government positions (Departemen Pendidikan Nasional, 2008).

Meanwhile, in terms of terminology, nepotism has several definitions, including:

a. According to JW. Schoorl, nepotism is an act by a civil servant who appoints a relative to occupy a government position with the aim of raising the family's status, increasing the family's income, or helping to establish a political organization whose service should be aimed at the interests of the general public (Schoorl, 1980).

b. According to Leonard D. White, nepotism is a system of appointing relatives to occupy a public position or office, which results in the destruction of the principle of the merit system in appointing someone to office (Rahardjo, 1999).

c. According to positive law in Indonesia, nepotism is any unlawful act by a state administrator that benefits the interests of his family or cronies above the interests of society, the nation and the state (Pasal 1 Bab 1 Ayat (5) Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia No.28 Tahun 1999 Tentang Penyelenggara Negara Yang Bersih Yang Beres Ddari Korupsi, Kolusi, Dan Nepotisme, n.d.).

Talking about nepotism is not just about ethics, but also has negative impacts felt by the wider community, because nepotism is part of corruption. As explained by Amien Rais, nepotism is part of corruption, one of which is corruption in three types: First, extortive corruption, which refers to a situation where someone is forced to bribe in order to obtain something or get protection for their rights and needs. Second, manipulative corruption, which refers to dirty efforts carried out by someone to influence government policies or decisions in order to obtain the highest possible profit. Third, nepotistic corruption, which refers to preferential treatment given to children, nephews, or relatives of officials. It is hoped that this preferential treatment will only share fortune among them (Djamil, 1999).

a. The Term Nepotism in the Qur'an

The term nepotism in Arabic is al-muhaabah (المحاباة) or more specifically muhaabaatu al-Aqaarib (محاباة الأقارب) which is related to the root word hubb (حُبٌّ) which means love, compassion, and liking for something. Another term is the word al-mahsuubiyah (المحسوبية) which is a mashdar shina'i form of the word mahsuub (محسوب). In Arabic, when it is said huwa mahsuubun 'alaih (هو محسوب عليه) it means he is included in his share or is his responsibility. Another Arabic term is al-Wasithah (الواسطة), which refers to the process by which a person attains a certain position through the intermediary of another person. These three terms can be searched for online or through contemporary works, but they will be difficult to find in the Quran or various classical Islamic scholarly literature, as they are considered modern terms.

The word nepotism cannot be found in the Qur'an, but hints of the meaning of nepotism can be traced through the following principles: first, al-khiyanah (الخيانة) which means betraying or wasting a trust. Second, Al-Ittikhāż bi al-Ābā wa al-Ikhwān Auliyā (الاتخاذ بالآباء و الإخوان أولياء) which means taking family as helpers/assistants in committing kufr. Third, al-gill (الغلّ) which means the urge of lust to commit fraud in all aspects of life. Fourth, syafa'ah sayyi'ah (شفاعة سيّئة), which is the urge to be helped in mistakes. Fifth, ittiba' al-Hawa (اتّباع الهوى), which means following one's desires to prioritize loyalty to family and relatives over Allah and His Messenger. Sixth, ja'l wazir min Ahl, which is the appointment of someone from one's family to a public office.

b. Interpretation of Verses that Indicate Nepotism in the Book of Tafsir Al-Tafsir al-Munir fi al-'Aqidah wa al-Syari'ah wa al-Manhaj

1) Interpretation of QS. Al-Anfal Verse 27

<div align="center">

يَآيُّهَاالَّذِيْنَ آمَنُوْا لَاتَخُوْنُوْا اللَّهَ والرَّسُوْلَ وتَخُوْنُوْا اَمَانَاتِكُمْ وأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُوْنَ **(سورة الأنفال/8:27)**

</div>

It means: *"O you who believe, do not betray Allah and also His Messenger and (also) do not betray the trusts entrusted to you, while you know."*

Wahbah al-Zuhaili in his interpretation of the verse above explains that the reason for the revelation of the above verse is the story of Abu Lubabah. This provides an in-depth lesson on betrayal of trust, both individual, social, and national. This verse was revealed when Abu Lubabah hinted to the Bani Qurayzah that the decision that would be handed down to them was the death penalty, a secret information that he leaked due to the influence of personal feelings, namely because his property and children were still among the Bani Qurayzah. In the interpretation of this verse, treachery (الخيانة) is explained as any form of deviation from trust, either by hiding, misusing, or channeling something to unauthorized parties. While trust (الأمانات) is interpreted as all forms of sharia responsibility and social rights, including keeping secrets, fulfilling obligatory obligations, the laws of God, and the rights of others. This verse includes a strict prohibition against deviations from the instructions of God and His Messenger, both in the form of law, information, and power.

From the Abu Lubabah incident, it can be concluded that personal emotions, social ties, and family pressure can be powerful factors that drive someone to violate the principles of justice and trust, even against the commands of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). This is what God emphasized as a form of betrayal against Him and His Messenger. In this context, nepotism, namely granting privileges to family, relatives, or close people because of personal relationships, rather than due to merit, can be categorized as betrayal of trust if it harms the principles of justice and public responsibility. As in the case of Abu Lubabah, his subjective considerations due to personal ties biased his decisions and deviated from the guidance of revelation.

Despite this, the commentators did not immediately prohibit all forms of favoritism towards relatives. If the adoption or treatment of relatives is based on justice, eligibility, and does not violate the rights of others, then the action is not automatically classified as reprehensible nepotism. In other words, nepotism is not always absolutely prohibited, as long as trust is maintained and the principle of justice is upheld.

2)   Interpretation of QS. Ali 'Imran Verse 161

وَمَا كَانَ لِنَبِيٍّ اَنْ يَّغُلَّ وَمَنَ يَغْلُلْ يَأْتِ بِمَا غَلَّ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ثُمَّ تُوَفّٰى كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ وَ هُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُوْنَ (سورة

ال عمران/3 : 161)

"It is not possible for a prophet to be unfaithful in dealing with the spoils of war. Whoever is treacherous in dealing with the spoils of war, then on the Day of Judgment he will come with what he betrayed. Then, each person will be given retribution for what he did with (retribution) in proportion, while they are not persecuted."

In his interpretation of the above verse, Wahbah al-Zuhaili explains that the verse "Wa mā kāna li-nabiyyin an yaghulla" (QS. Ali 'Imran: 161) emphasizes that it is inappropriate for a prophet, especially the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, to betray or conceal anything in the matter of war booty. Such accusations arose from the concerns of some companions and hypocrites who suspected injustice or preferential treatment in the distribution of spoils. The interpreter asserts that the trait of betrayal cannot be inherent in a prophet, because Allah has protected him from all reprehensible behavior that undermines trust and justice. In this context, the act of giving benefits to certain people because of personal closeness—now known as nepotism—is implicitly rejected by this verse.

The practice of nepotism falls under the category of ghulul (treason), which is strictly forbidden in Islam, as emphasized in various hadiths, which state that the perpetrators will bear the burden of their sins on the Day of Judgment. Whether in the form of giving gifts to employees, taking rights before official distribution, or withholding the rights of others, all are classified as forms of fraud that violate the principle of collective justice. Scholars also emphasize that anyone who takes a portion of joint property without their right must return it and face ta'zir sanctions. It is clear that nepotism, as a form of injustice and abuse of authority, is completely contrary to Islamic teachings, which demand just, transparent leadership free from personal or group interests.

Nepotism in Islam is viewed as a form of betrayal of a public trust, falling under the category of ghulul, which is the taking of something that is not one's right from shared assets or affairs. Ghulul is not limited to the context of spoils of war, but encompasses all forms of abuse of power and authority, including granting positions or privileges to relatives or close associates without considering their competence and eligibility. A hadith narrated by Muslim states that anyone entrusted with a trust who hides or takes something without permission, even a needle, will have it as a burden on the Day of Judgment. This demonstrates the seriousness of this prohibition in Islam.

Nepotism also directly violates the principles of justice ('adālah) and trustworthiness, which are essential foundations of Islamic leadership. Allah SWT commands in the Qur'an that every trust be given to those who deserve it (QS. An-Nisa: 58). This means that strategic positions should not be given simply because of personal closeness or blood relations, but rather based on a person's expertise, integrity, and ability to shoulder responsibility. If someone who is unworthy is given power, not only is he sinful, but so is the leader who appointed him. Imam Al-Mawardi in Al-Ahkam As-Sulthaniyyah emphasized that a leader who appoints an official for personal reasons, knowing that the person is unworthy, has violated the principles of sharia.

Scholars also emphasize that anyone who illegally takes part in public affairs must return it and be subject to ta'zir sanctions, which are punishments determined by a judge according to the severity of the offense. These penalties can include dismissal, imprisonment, a reprimand, or educational social sanctions. The practice of

nepotism significantly undermines public trust in leadership and exacerbates social inequality, as positions and opportunities are distributed among certain groups without regard for justice and professionalism.

Islam encourages a just and transparent leadership system that prioritizes deliberation (shura) in every decision. This principle ensures that power is not used as a tool for personal or group enrichment. In Islamic history, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) even rejected Abu Dharr Al-Ghifari's request for a position because he knew that Abu Dharr lacked administrative capacity, even though he was deeply loved and respected. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said that office is a trust, and on the Day of Judgment, those who fail to fulfill it will be a source of humiliation and regret.

From these various explanations, it is clear that nepotism is a form of injustice and abuse of authority that is completely contrary to Islamic teachings. It violates moral principles, undermines social structures, and tarnishes leadership values that should be built on the foundations of honesty, competence, and responsibility. Therefore, the practice of nepotism is not only administratively unethical but also haram (forbidden according to Islamic law), and perpetrators will be held accountable in this world and the hereafter.

3) Recite QS. An-Nisa verse 85

The conclusion of Wahbah al-Zuhaili's interpretation above shows that nepotism falls into the category of ash-syafa'ah as-sayyi'ah (bad intercession) if it is used as a form of intermediary in evil, such as helping relatives or close people to obtain positions, positions or rights that do not belong to them, without considering competence and worthiness. This kind of practice is prohibited in Islam because it violates the principles of justice, harms the rights of other people, and is often accompanied by elements of risywah (bribery).

In Wahbah al-Zuhaili's view, nepotism is classified as ash-syafa'ah as-sayyi'ah (bad intercession), namely a form of intermediary used for false purposes and contrary to the principles of justice. In this context, nepotism occurs when someone takes advantage of close relationships - whether familial, friendship, or political networks to help other people obtain positions, positions or rights that should not belong to them. This kind of practice does not take into account suitability, competence, or integrity, but is based solely on personal closeness. According to Wahbah al-Zuhaili, this is a form of betrayal of the values of justice and trust that are highly valued in Islam.

Intercession in Islam itself is divided into two categories: asy-syafa'ah al-hasanah (good intercession) and asy-syafa'ah as-sayyi'ah (bad intercession). Good intercession is carried out for just and righteous purposes, such as helping those who truly deserve assistance or access to their rights. Conversely, bad intercession is intercession that actually causes injustice, harms the rights of others, and perpetuates the practice of abuse of power. In the Qur'an, Allah states that anyone who provides bad intercession will bear the sin of its consequences (QS. An-Nisa: 85), and in the hadith, the Prophet Muhammad strongly condemns practices that differentiate legal treatment or policies based on social status or personal relationships.

Nepotism is also highly susceptible to being accompanied by the practice of risywah (bribery), which is clearly forbidden in Islam. In many cases, the granting of positions or facilities is not only based on personal relationships but also involves rewards in the form of money, gifts, or political promises. The Prophet Muhammad cursed the bribe giver, the bribe taker, and their intermediaries, because these acts undermine the honesty of the system and weaken the integrity of institutions. Thus, nepotism accompanied by bribery constitutes a double violation of sharia values.

From a social perspective, Wahbah al-Zuhaili emphasized that bad intercession such as nepotism creates structural damage in society. When positions are awarded not based on merit but on proximity, public trust in the system is eroded. Competent and honest individuals are pushed aside, while those who are undeserving gain power. This results in a decline in the quality of public services, increasing social inequality, and growing apathy within society toward institutions that are supposed to carry out their mandates.

Islam strictly demands a just and meritocratic system of leadership and decision-making. Position in Islam is a trust, not a gift or a means of personal or group enrichment. In a hadith, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said that if a matter is entrusted to someone other than the expert, then expect its destruction. Therefore, anyone who gives a position to an unworthy person, especially because of personal relationships, has betrayed a trust and violated the values of justice commanded by Allah SWT.

According to Wahbah al-Zuhaili's interpretation, nepotism is not only morally and administratively unethical but also a form of ash-syafa'ah as-sayyi'ah (indifferent) which is prohibited in Islam. It undermines social justice, denies the rights of those more deserving, and opens up space for structural corruption. In a society committed to Islamic values, such practices must be firmly rejected as they contradict the principles of trust, honesty, and collective responsibility.

However, not all forms of nepotism are forbidden. If intercession or support for relatives or close friends is done in a good cause (asy-syafa'ah al-hasanah), such as helping them obtain their rights fairly, or appointing a close friend who is truly competent and qualified, then it is permissible and can even be considered an act of worship. This is in accordance with the principle of sharia that assistance in goodness and obedience is permissible, as long as it does not oppress others or violate applicable rules. Allah SWT, as al-Muqīt (The All-Guarding and All-Rewarding) will reward every form of intercession according to its intention and impact, whether in the form of rewards or sins (Az-Zuhaili, 2013).

4) Interpretation of QS. An-Nisa verse 135

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ كُونُوا۟ قَوَّٰمِينَ بِٱلْقِسْطِ شُهَدَآءَ لِلَّهِ وَلَوْ عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَوِ ٱلْوَٰلِدَيْنِ وَٱلْأَقْرَبِينَ ۚ إِن يَكُنْ غَنِيًّا أَوْ فَقِيرًا فَٱللَّهُ أَوْلَىٰ بِهِمَا ۖ فَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا۟ ٱلْهَوَىٰٓ أَن تَعْدِلُوا۟ ۚ وَإِن تَلْوُۥٓا۟ أَوْ تُعْرِضُوا۟ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا

"O you who believe, be the people who truly enforce justice, be witnesses for God even if it is against yourself or your parents and relatives. If it is rich or poor, then God knows best the benefits. So do not follow your lust because you want to deviate from the truth. And if you twist (your words) or refuse to be a witness, then indeed God is All-Knowing of everything you do."

In Wahbah al-Zuhaili's view, verse 135 of QS. An-Nisa' explicitly commands Muslims to uphold justice objectively and consistently, even if it goes against the interests of themselves, their parents, or close relatives. In the context of nepotism, this verse provides the basic principle that family ties should not be a basis for ignoring justice. Wahbah al-Zuhaili explains that justice must be upheld comprehensively in all aspects of life, including the judiciary, work, and family, without bias and without following desires. This warning against following desires is highly relevant to the practice of nepotism, where emotional or kinship ties often lead someone to take unfair sides. Even in the law of testimony, scholars have set strict limits on testimony from close relatives to prevent potential conflicts of interest and lack of neutrality.

The assertion that Allah knows better the situation of rich and poor people emphasizes that fair decisions should not be influenced by a person's social status. The story of Abdullah bin Rawahah, who continued to act fairly even towards people he hated, is a clear example of the commitment to anti-nepotism in Islamic social practice. The scholars also explained that giving false testimony or turning away from true testimony is a form of betrayal of justice and will receive retribution from Allah. Thus, nepotism is a form of deviation from the principles of justice in Islam, both morally, legally and socially. The principles of Islamic justice require that every decision be based on truth and benefit, not on personal relationships or personal gain (Az-Zuhaili, 2013).

5) Interpretation of QS. At-Taubah Verse 24

قُلْ إِن كَانَ ءَابَآؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَآؤُكُمْ وَإِخْوَٰنُكُمْ وَأَزْوَٰجُكُمْ وَعَشِيرَتُكُمْ وَأَمْوَٰلٌ ٱقْتَرَفْتُمُوهَا وَتِجَٰرَةٌ تَخْشَوْنَ كَسَادَهَا وَمَسَٰكِنُ تَرْضَوْنَهَآ أَحَبَّ إِلَيْكُم مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ وَجِهَادٍ فِى سَبِيلِهِۦ فَتَرَبَّصُوا۟ حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِىَ ٱللَّهُ بِأَمْرِهِۦ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِى ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلْفَٰسِقِينَ

It means: *Say: "if your fathers, children, brothers, wives, your relatives, the wealth that you work for, the business that you worry about losing, and the place of residence that you like, are more beloved to you than Allah and His Messenger and than striving in His way, then wait until Allah brings His decision". And God does not guide the wicked.*

Wahbah al-Zuhaili's interpretation of the above verse reflects that Islam fundamentally rejects any form of nepotism that hinders obedience to Allah and His Messenger, and prioritizes loyalty to family and worldly interests over religious ones. In this verse, Allah emphasizes that eight fundamental human needs, such as love for parents, children, siblings, spouse, wealth, trade, and home, should not be grounds for abandoning the command to migrate and wage jihad. Criticism of the behavior of those who are reluctant to migrate demonstrates that submitting to family pressure or personal convenience can be a form of spiritual nepotism that violates the principles of faith.

However, Islam does not necessarily forbid all forms of nepotism. Granting positions or responsibilities to relatives is not prohibited as long as they are based on merit, capacity, and justice. What is reprehensible is when someone prioritizes blood ties over trustworthiness, righteousness, or sacrifices religious values and justice for the benefit of family or group. Therefore, nepotism is only reprehensible if it causes injustice, disrupts order, or hinders obedience to Allah and His Messenger, as described in this verse and its interpretation. Islam builds a society based on faith, trustworthiness, and justice, not merely blood ties or social affiliation.

6) Interpretation of QS. Taha verses 29-35

وَاجْعَلْ لِّيْ وَزِيْرًا مِّنْ اَهْلِيْ ۞ هٰرُوْنَ اَخِیْ ۞ اشْدُدْ بِهٖٓ اَزْرِيْ ۞ وَاَشْرِكْهُ فِيْٓ اَمْرِيْ ۞ كَيْ نُسَبِّحَكَ كَثِيْرًا ۞ وَّنَذْكُرَكَ كَثِيْرًا ۞ اِنَّكَ كُنْتَ بِنَا بَصِيْرًا

It means: *"Make for me a helper from my family, (namely) Harun, my brother. Strengthen my strength with him, and include him in my affairs (prophecy), so that we may glorify You a lot, and remember You a lot. Indeed, You are All-Seeing (state) of us."*

In Wahbah al-Zuhailī's view, as reflected in his interpretation of the prayer of the Prophet Musa (peace be upon him) in Tafsir al-Munīr, nepotism is not necessarily considered reprehensible. When Musa requested that his brother, Harun, be appointed vizier (assistant/minister) in his prophetic mission, his request was not based solely on kinship, but rather on Harun's suitability, eloquence, and ability to support the mission of da'wah. Wahbah al-Zuhailī emphasized that the primary motive in the request was to strengthen da'wah, not to establish a ruling dynasty. Therefore, nepotism based on sincere intentions, competence, and collective benefit is not a form of deviation but can be a means of goodness. Moreover, the final decision remains in the hands of Allah, indicating that even if someone seeks help from relatives, it must remain within the framework of divine judgment and justice.

Therefore, Wahbah al-Zuhailī concluded that nepotism is reprehensible if it is carried out for personal gain, without due regard for merit, or is detrimental to justice and the public interest. However, if it is carried out with due regard for the principles of propriety, honesty, and the benefit of the community, it is permissible and can even contribute to the success of da'wah and the mandate of leadership.

3. CONCLUSION

Nepotism is the act of appointing someone from among your family, relatives, or close friends to a public office without considering their qualifications, competence, or performance. This can be through direct relatives or simply marriage, and can even lead to relationships or friends (consorts). This is important to understand because not every appointment of a relative to a certain position is considered nepotism. Appointing someone to a relative in the private sector cannot be considered nepotism, or when the appointed relative is indeed someone with the qualifications. The word nepotism cannot be found in the Qur'an, but hints of the meaning of nepotism can be traced through the following principles: first, al-khiyanah (الخيانة), which means betraying or wasting a trust. Second, Al-Ittikhāż bi al-Ābā wa al-Ikhwān Auliyā (الاتّخاذ بالآباء و الإخوان أولياء), which means taking family as helpers/assistants in committing kufr. Third, al-gill (الغلّ), which means the urge of lust to commit fraud in all aspects of life. Fourth, syafa'ah sayyi'ah (شفاعة سيّئة), which is the urge to be helped in mistakes. Fifth, ittiba' al-Hawa (اتّباع الهوى), which means following one's desires to prioritize loyalty to family and relatives over Allah and His Messenger. Sixth, ja'l wazir min Ahl, which is the appointment of someone from one's family to a public office.

Wahbah al-Zuhaili, in interpreting the verses that hint at nepotism in the Qur'an, offers a more proportional and contextual approach. He differentiates between negative nepotism and positive nepotism. Negative nepotism, according to him, occurs when someone is given a position or trust only because of personal closeness, without paying attention to appropriateness or justice, so that it is classified as a despicable form of betrayal, ghulul, and intercession. On the other hand, nepotism can be justified if it is carried out on the basis of competence, honesty, good intentions and does not violate sharia principles. The appointment of Prophet Harun by Moses was used as an example of nepotism, which was permitted because it was based on missionary motivations and valid qualifications. Thus, al-Zuhaili considers that fairness, feasibility and intention are the main benchmarks in assessing the practice of nepotism.

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