



The Interpretation of Mu'āsharah bi al-Ma'rūf in the Qur'an and the Enhanced Edition of Tafsir: An Intertextual Analysis by Julia Kristeva

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ABSTRACT

This article examines how the Ministry of Religious Affairs, through the Al-Qur'an and its Tafsir – Enhanced Edition (AQT-EDS), interprets QS. al-Nisā' verse 19, particularly in emphasizing the principle of mu'āsharah bi al-ma'rūf as the basis for equality in relations between men and women. This research is qualitative in nature with a literature study method as the data collection technique. The analysis used is Julia Kristeva's intertextuality theory with the QPXT model: Q refers to direct quotations, P to meaning extraction, X to differences in emphasis, and T to meaning transformation. The results show that the P and X patterns are dominant in the interpretation of the Ministry of Religious Affairs. AQT-EDS absorbs many classical meanings regarding the prohibition of 'adl and the restoration of women's rights, but provides a new emphasis on the ethical-procedural dimension by choosing diction that is communicative and popular for the wider community. Thus, this interpretation does not only repeat *turāt*, but also emphasizes the boundaries of behavior that are in line with the values of *ma'rūf*. This study also noted the absence of a T-pattern, thus the normative direction remains consistent with mainstream interpretations without significant changes in meaning. QS. al-Nisā': 19 in the AQT-EDS is positioned as a normative and ethical basis for the Ministry of Religious Affairs' gender equality policies, including premarital education, gender mainstreaming programs, and anti-violence cultural campaigns in domestic relationships and broader social interactions.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The debate on the ethics of domestic relations in Islam often revolves around two axes: normative texts and interpretations operating in the social sphere. This article highlights these axes through the concept of “mu'āsharah bi al-ma'rūf” (QS 4:19) in the Ministry of Religious Affairs' Enhanced Edition of the Qur'an and Its Interpretation (AQT-EDS), through Julia Kristeva's intertextual lens. AQT-EDS is positioned as an institutional interpretation that mediates the normative axis (verses, hadith, *turāt*) and the Indonesian socio-contextual axis; its interpretation is both communicative and cautious within the legal realm, highlighting ethical boundaries such as *ma'rūf*, 'adl, and *iḥsān* in the issue of gender relations.

In Kristeva's framework, texts always appear as "quotational mosaics," the intersection of various textual surfaces (quotations, paraphrases, allusions, idioms, and even patterns of reasoning) that are absorbed, affirmed, or transformed; reading a text means tracing the traces of intertext beneath its surface (Kristeva, 1986) (Askar & Aziz, 2024). To make it measurable, this study utilizes the Q/P/X/T work markers: Q (direct quotation), P (absorption of meaning/reasoning patterns without quotation), X (shift of emphasis without changing the meaning), T (propositional transformation that changes the direction of meaning). This scheme allows for a clearly traceable check of accuracy (Kristeva, n.d.) (Abdurachman & Parmin, 2022).

The focus of this article is the AQT-EDS sub-chapter "The Prohibition of 'inheriting women' and mu'āsyarah bi al-ma'rūf (QS 4:19)", which interprets the verse as a firm correction to the jahiliyah practice of inheriting women, prohibiting 'aḍl (troublemaking/taking rights) on unclear grounds, and affirming mu'āsyarah bi al-ma'rūf as a binding principle in the household. The important finding of AQT-EDS here: the prohibition of coercion and taking women's rights is not merely a moral recommendation, but a protective line that restores the right to dowry (women's rights), closes the gap for manipulation in the name of culture, and encourages ishlāḥ in cases of dispute (Departemen Agama RI, 2011a).

Intertextually, the AQT-EDS configuration in QS 4:19 displays Q (the history of the causes of nuzūl to portray the social practice to be abolished), P (the absorption of the turāt pattern when explaining the prohibition of 'aḍl and the restoration of dowry rights), and X (the ethical emphasis on ma'rūf and the rejection of the permissive reading of "female inheritance as long as it is without coercion"). This reading is in line with the general pattern of AQT-EDS in other gender verses: the already rigid understanding of Islamic law (the opinion of the majority) is maintained, but the ethical-public emphasis is strengthened, representing an "emphasis" rather than a "transformation" (Departemen Agama RI, 2011a).

The aims of this article are: (i) to map the intertextual relations in the QS 4:19 segment in AQT-EDS using the Q/P/X/T scheme; (ii) to show how "ma'rūf" functions as a binding ethical fence in domestic relations; and (iii) to observe and analyze its integration with Indonesian policies such as marriage guidance and domestic violence prevention. At the policy level, the thesis demonstrates resonance with the agenda of Religious Moderation, PUG, and anti-violence services.

At the textual level, the article will demonstrate how AQT-EDS reads QS 4:19 as a correction to the practice of "inheriting women," the prohibition of 'aḍl (making it difficult to seize dowries), and the command to mu'āsyarah bi al-ma'rūf as the basis of household relations. Here the intertextual map is clearly visible: Q is a narration of the cause of nuzūl; P is an absorption of the explanatory pattern of the prohibition of 'aḍl and the restoration of dowry rights; and X as an affirmation of the ethics of ma'rūf and a rejection of the permissive interpretation "as long as there is no coercion." It then shows how "ma'rūf" works as an ethical fence that binds domestic practices: the obligation to provide adequate sustenance, the prohibition of violence, the prohibition of manipulating rights, and the encouragement of ishlāḥ when there is temporary dislike. This emphasis is not merely a moral recommendation, but an operational boundary that directs family decisions to be legitimate, appropriate, and protect vulnerable parties.

To distinguish X from T, the article asserts that in QS 4:19 the AQT-EDS does not change the direction of the law (there is no T), but consistently strengthens the ethical language & order of argumentation (X): prohibition of coercion, prohibition of 'aḍl, restoration of dowry, mu'āsyarah bi al-ma'rūf, and ishlāḥ. This pattern is in line with how the AQT-EDS reads other gender verses: the normative outcome remains, but the public emphasis (partnership, protection, accountability) is emphasized.

Therefore, the second objective of this article is to examine the strength of the ethical barrier of "ma'rūf" and also to examine the gaps in rationalization: for example, the strict prohibition of "looking for ways" to make things difficult for one's partner or to take back gifts. The article links this ethical barrier to language and procedures (order of advice, separation from bed, mediation) so that the message of patience/ishlāḥ is not distorted into justification for violence or formalism that forecloses substantive justice.

Theoretically, the hypothesis places AQT-EDS primarily in the X (emphasis) mode, not T (transformation), for QS 4:19: the understanding of the jumhūr law is maintained, but the ethical boundaries of ma'ruf are emphasized so that the space for rationalizing injustice is narrowed. The mapping per verse in this study also shows a similar pattern in other gender verse clusters.

From an implementation perspective, the emphasis on what is right and what is good is aimed at covering up the excuse of "finding a way out" often used to legitimize oppressive/complicated actions within a household. Therefore, the design of public services (SOPs, referral pathways, reporting obligations) is proposed to be

oriented toward what is right and what is good, so that interpretations are not twisted into tools that legitimize power relations for one party (Alamsyah, Abdussalam, & Rahmat, 2022).

The third objective is to examine integration with Indonesian policies, particularly Marriage Guidance (Bimwin) at the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA). Suggested indicators of Bimwin's success include the couple's ability to formulate agreements, understand the flow of assistance, and the staff's ability to differentiate between conflict and violence; to this end, QS 4:19 serves as a clear ethical reference.

Broader integration is mapped into Religious Moderation and PUG. Presidential Decree 58/2023 embeds the values of AQT-EDS, justice, safe spaces, and accountability into moderation materials; while PUG in the education/religious services sector demands equal access and the removal of barriers, in line with the ethics of ma'ruf (Tim Penyusun Kementerian Agama RI, 2019).

With the three objectives above mapping the Q/P/X/T intertext in QS 4:19, the articulation of ma'ruf as an ethical fence, and integration into policy, this article positions AQT-EDS as a node that actively relates to the horizon of policy and public services, without blurring the boundaries of the positive legal domain. The results are expected to strengthen the coherence of values-methods-policies to prevent violence and restore dignity within the family.

This research is included in qualitative research (Moleong, 2017), namely research whose presentation (focus of attention) includes an interpretive and naturalistic approach to the subject of study in related research (Samsu, 2017, hal. 86).

The research conducted here falls into the qualitative research category. According to (Moleong, 2017), qualitative research is a research approach that seeks to understand phenomena in greater depth by emphasizing the meaning, processes, and subjective understanding behind the data obtained. This research does not focus on numbers or statistical calculations as in quantitative research, but rather emphasizes in-depth analysis, interpretation, and how researchers capture the reality being studied. Therefore, qualitative research is unique because it places more emphasis on the interpretative process, namely, researchers try to interpret data not only as raw information, but also as a representation of the experiences, views, and social context of the subjects being studied. (Samsu, 2017) added that qualitative research is naturalistic, meaning the research process is conducted under natural conditions and is not manipulated by the researcher. A naturalistic approach requires researchers to go directly into the field, observe, listen, and deeply understand the phenomena occurring in their original context. Thus, researchers do not attempt to change the situation or create artificial conditions, but rather accept reality as it is. This is the main characteristic of qualitative research: capturing social reality as it is, with all its complexity and diversity.

A qualitative approach also emphasizes the importance of researcher involvement in the data collection process. The researcher acts as the key instrument, so the success of the research is greatly influenced by the researcher's ability to observe, gather information, and interpret the data found. Moleong (2017) explains that in qualitative research, researchers must be able to build good relationships with research subjects so that the data obtained is truly authentic and reflects the actual reality. The interaction between researchers and informants is the main source for gaining a deep understanding of the phenomena being studied.

Qualitative research doesn't stop at data collection; it prioritizes a continuous analysis process from the beginning to the end. The data obtained isn't immediately considered final, but rather is continually processed, reviewed, and interpreted to identify specific patterns, themes, or meanings relevant to the research focus. This differs from quantitative research, which tends to be more linear because data is collected first and then analyzed after all data has been collected. Qualitatively, analysis is dynamic and flexible, adapting to evolving findings in the field. Another advantage of qualitative research is its ability to provide a more comprehensive understanding of a phenomenon. This is because qualitative research attempts to capture details, nuances, and context that quantitative approaches may not be able to capture. In other words, qualitative research seeks to understand social reality from an insider's perspective (emic perspective), rather than simply from the perspective of the researcher as an outsider (etic perspective). Thus, qualitative research results are often richer, more in-depth, and more holistically able to describe phenomena.

Qualitative research is also known for its open and flexible nature. Research designs are not necessarily rigid from the outset, but can evolve according to the dynamics of the field. Researchers can adjust questions, techniques, and research strategies as new information emerges. This aligns with the perspective of (Moleong, 2017) which emphasizes that qualitative research prioritizes understanding the process over the end result. In other words, the primary focus is not only on the answers, but also on how a phenomenon occurs, develops, and is understood by the research subjects. Given these characteristics, this study chose a qualitative approach

because it was deemed most appropriate for understanding the phenomena being studied. The research focus, which demands interpretive explanations, contextual understanding, and in-depth interpretation, cannot be achieved through a quantitative approach that emphasizes numbers. Therefore, this research will be conducted using qualitative principles as explained by (Moleong, 2017) and (Samsu, 2017), namely the interpretive and naturalistic pressure aspects, involving researchers directly, and prioritizing a continuous analysis process. This research is expected to provide a comprehensive and in-depth picture of the phenomenon being studied. The results are not merely a description of the data, but also an interpretation of the meaning behind the data. This is what makes qualitative research relevant and significant, especially when the goal is to understand social realities in complex and diverse contexts.

The approach used in this research is Julia Kristeva's Intertextual, namely viewing a text as an inseparable part of its influence from other texts (born through intertextual dialogue), intertwined with Bakhtin's dialogism (every utterance responds to other utterances) (Zulfa, 2022), then operationalized to be measured through four work markers: Q (quotation/direct quotation), P (pattern absorption/pattern absorption), X (re-emphasis/re-emphasis without changing the proposition), and T (propositional transformation that shifts the direction of meaning). The use of Q-P-X-T is intended to maintain auditability and replicability of the analysis, so that the traces of meaning production can be traced at the level of segments, diction, and the sequence of arguments that are constructed. Procedurally, this study limited the primary corpus to AQT-EDS segments directly related to the theme, with an emphasis on QS 4:19 (mu'āsyarah bi al-ma'rūf), then compiled supporting intertexts (internal references—e.g., sabab nuzūl, hadith, dictionaries, tafsir books, or related policy documents). Each segment was coded Q-P-X-T, accompanied by a brief rationale, volume/page marker, and a one-sentence summary to prevent data selection bias. Consistency was aided by checking for repeatability (intra-coder reliability) and recording the work steps from data limitation to tracing intertextual traces. At the analysis stage, intertextuality does not replace the usual taḥlīlī interpretive framework (rihiwat, kebahasaan, munāsabah), but rather adds an operational lens to indicate when the interpreter quotes (Q), absorbs patterns (P), emphasizes ethics/diction (X), or completely transforms propositions (T). Thus, the study does not stop at collecting quotations, but moves to the mechanisms of meaning production, how interpretation manages tradition while responding to social contexts and maintaining standards of scientific transparency through replicable tables/codes.

2. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

2.1. Recite QS. al-Nisa': 19 in AQT-EDS

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَرِثُوا النِّسَاءَ كَرْهًا ۖ وَلَا تَعْضُلُوهُنَّ لِتَذْهَبُوا بِبَعْضِ مَا آتَيْنَهُنَّ إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِيَنَّ بِفَاحِشَةٍ مُبَيِّنَةٍ ۚ وَعَاشِرُوهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۚ فَإِنْ كَرِهْتُمُوهُنَّ فَعَسَى أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَيَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا

“O you who believe, it is not lawful for you to inherit a woman by force. Do not trouble them because you want to take back a portion of what you have given them, except when they commit a clear abomination. Associate them in a proper way. If you do not like them, (be patient) because it may be that you do not like something, even though God has made a lot of good in it.” (QS. al-Nisā': 19)

The Ministry of Religion gives a sub-title to this group of verses with the title “Relationship with Wife”, it does not contain verse 19 alone, it is displayed as a group of verses (19-21), first, it mentions the core vocabulary in this group of verses “Karhan, in the Qur'an it is often expressed to balance 'au ('an), the word is often interpreted as 'either willingly or unwillingly' (lih. QS. Ali 'Imran: 83), but in this verse it is interpreted as 'by force'. So the translation of this verse is: 'O you who believe! It is not lawful for you to inherit women by force' (Departemen Agama RI, 2011a).

Furthermore, the Ministry of Religion mentions the munāsabah āyat "the previous verses explain the punishment for women and men who commit heinous acts and then continue with the recommendation to repent, so this group of verses warns heirs not to inherit the former wife of a deceased family member by force" (Departemen Agama RI, 2011a).

Then, the Ministry of Religion mentions its sabāb nuzūl "as narrated by Al-Bukhārī and Abu Dāwud that initially the custom of the Jahiliyyah society was that the heir of a deceased person, in addition to inheriting his property, also had full authority over his widows. If the heir wanted, he could marry her himself, or marry someone else or not allow the widow to marry forever. The heir had more power than the widow's family itself, so this verse was revealed to abolish this bad method" (Departemen Agama RI, 2011a).

This verse leaves no room for "inheriting" women in any way. In some pre-Islamic Arab customs, when a man died, his widow was considered part of the estate: she could be married by the heir, married to another person with a dowry controlled by the heir, or even prohibited from remarriage. Islam strictly forbids such practices (Departemen Agama RI, 2011a).

Therefore, Muslims are prohibited from continuing the tradition of controlling women by force. Any action that makes things difficult or detrimental, such as pressuring a widow to return her dowry to her heirs as a "ransom" for her remarriage, is considered contrary to a woman's honor and dignity. This prohibition also extends to taking back anything a husband has given her, except in the case of fāḥṣyah mubayyinah (clear and serious violations according to certain limits in fiqh) (Departemen Agama RI, 2011a).

This verse also commands mu'āsyarah bi al-ma'rūf: husbands must interact with their wives properly, provide adequate living, avoid physical and verbal violence, not accumulate anger, and not display a prolonged gloomy face. If dislike arises due to physical defects, unpleasant traits, or even because the heart is already attached to another person, the husband is still required to be patient and not rush into divorce; perhaps, something that is disliked actually contains a lot of good (Departemen Agama RI, 2011a).

the following verses, the Ministry of Religion still discusses the same sub-theme (as the author has mentioned previously), the contents and meaning are as follows.

وَأِنْ أَرَدْتُمْ اسْتِبْدَالَ زَوْجٍ مَّكَانَ زَوْجٍ وَآتَيْتُمْ إِحْدَاهُنَّ قِنطَارًا فَلَا تَأْخُذُوا مِنْهُ شَيْئًا ۚ أَتَأْخُذُونَهُ بُهْتَانًا وَإِنَّمَا مُبِينًا وَكَيْفَ تَأْخُذُونَهُ وَقَدْ أَفْضَىٰ بَعْضُكُم إِلَىٰ بَعْضٍ وَآخَذْتُمْ مِنْهُ مِيثَاقًا غَلِيظًا

"If you want to replace one wife with another, and you have given one of them a large amount of wealth (as a dowry), do not take it back even a little. Will you take it back by means of lies and manifest sin? How will you take it back when you have had intercourse with one another (as husband and wife) and they (your wives) have made a strong covenant (of marriage) with you?"

If a husband truly can no longer tolerate the situation and chooses to separate, even though his wife has committed no wrongdoing, then he has no right to withdraw any gifts or property he has given. The principle is clear: a separation initiated by the husband without fault on the part of the wife should not burden the innocent party. In fact, the husband is encouraged to provide mut'ah (a gift of consolation) as a form of justice and respect for the existing bond. This verse also strongly warns against the practice of seeking excuses or fabricating accusations to legitimize divorce and reclaim property that has been given. Searching for such excuses is considered a sin and an abuse of power in the household (Departemen Agama RI, 2011a).

Furthermore, this verse questions the rationality of demanding the return of property after a separation driven by lust, not by God's law. Husband and wife are bound by the mīṭāqan ghalīẓa solid agreement, living together for a long time, sharing joys and sorrows, and the wife has fulfilled her obligations and properly granted her husband's rights. In such circumstances, there is no legitimate basis for the husband to demand back the gift he has given his wife. The principles of justice and the dignity of the bond serve as a boundary to prevent divorce from being accompanied by cruel practices against the more vulnerable party (Departemen Agama RI, 2011a).

QS 4:19 in AQT-EDS is read as a firm correction of the jahiliyyah practice of "inheriting women", the prohibition of 'aḍl (making it difficult to seize the dowry), and the establishment of mu'āsyarah bi al-ma'rūf as the ethical principle of household relations; this reading simultaneously rejects the permissive interpretation "as long as there is no coercion". The siyāq of the verse is explained through munāsabah and sabab nuzūl which portray the tradition of the heir controlling the widow's life decisions (marrying/marrying off/retaining), including the seizing of the dowry; here a bridge is seen from the social context to explicit prohibitions and ethical commitments.

AQT-EDS emphasizes that ma'ruf is not merely politeness, but rather a normative principle that binds domestic behavior: proper sustenance, the prohibition of violence/manipulation of rights, and an orientation

toward *iṣlāḥ* when temporary displeasure arises. This verse segment serves as the basis for the argument, marking the focus on the prohibition of forced inheritance, the prevention of 'aḍl, and the obligation of ma'ruf, opening up space for intertextual examination at the level of diction and argument sequence.

Implications integrated with policy for society: ensuring free consent on family decisions (inheritance, remarriage, joint property), non-stigmatizing language, access to information, a safe complaint channel, and mediation that maintains dignity in line with the ethical principles of the verse.

2.2. Intertext Mapping

The intertextual configuration of QS. 4:19 within the AQT-EDS framework displays a pattern that can be formulated in Q–P–X. This pattern consists of three important components: the quotation of the *nuzūl* (Q), the absorption of the *turā* pattern^{classic} regarding the prohibition of 'aḍl and the restoration of dowry rights (P), as well as the emphasis on ethical ma'ruf while rejecting permissive interpretation (X). This pattern demonstrates that the AQT-EDS approach extends beyond textual understanding, also incorporating historical, traditional, and ethical dimensions to ensure that the meaning of the verses serves as a safeguard of justice. As stated by Rahman (1982), every text of the Qur'an needs to be read by considering the context in which it was revealed, the history of its application, and the moral goals to be achieved (Islam and Modernity). Thus, the Q–P–X pattern is a hermeneutical framework that emphasizes the balance between text, tradition, and ethics.

The Q component, which relates to the causes of *nuzūl*, appears through references to the narrations narrated by al-Bukhārī and Abū Dāwūd. These narrations record the practice of forced inheritance of women in pre-Islamic times, where widows or daughters could be treated as part of the inheritance. By referring to this socio-historical reality, QS. 4:19 is interpreted as a normative correction to practices that oppress women. According to Jalaluddin al-Suyūṭī in the *Lubāb al-Nuqūl fī Asbāb al-Nuzūl*, many verses of the Qur'an were revealed in response to social practices that harm certain groups. Thus, references to the causes of *nuzūl* are not only historical but also demonstrate the Qur'an's mission as a text of liberation.

The P component appears when AQT-EDS absorbs the *turā* explanation pattern^{classic} that discusses 'aḍl (withholding of women's right to remarry) and the obligation to restore dowry rights. Classical interpretations such as the work of al-Ṭabarī and Ibn Kathīr emphasized that 'aḍl is prohibited because it hinders the woman's right to determine her choice, while also encouraging that the dowry that has been given is not withdrawn in an unfair manner (Ibn-Kaṭīr, 1978). By absorbing this classical explanation, AQT-EDS confirms that the normative direction of the verse remains within the mainstream of tradition, namely rejecting practices that harm women and upholding their rights.

However, what distinguishes AQT-EDS from the classical pattern is the presence of component X, namely the affirmation of the ethics of ma'ruf as an operational boundary. While some classical interpretations still leave room for permissive interpretations with the note that there is no coercion in the practice of "inheriting women", AQT-EDS explicitly rejects such interpretations. A critical reading of religious texts must be carried out to close the gap in legitimacy against injustice, even though classical interpretations sometimes leave room for ambiguity (Speaking in God's Name). Thus, AQT-EDS takes a firm stance that all forms of female inheritance practices, whether with or without coercion, are contrary to the principle of ma'ruf.

In this Q–P–X pattern, no propositional transformation (T) is found in the legal domain. This means that the normative result remains the same as the classical interpretation, namely the prohibition of 'aḍl and the obligation to restore dowry rights. However, a significant shift occurred in the ethical-procedural emphasis. AQT-EDS clarifies that implementing the law is not sufficient with mere textual prohibitions, but must be framed within the ethics of ma'ruf to close the space for rationalizing injustice. According to (Auda, 2008) the *maqāshid* approach emphasizes the dynamic aspects of Islamic law, where ethical principles serve as a crucial instrument to ensure that the text is not used merely in a formalistic manner. Thus, while there is no explicit legal transformation, there is a methodological transformation toward ethics.

It is important to note that the permissive interpretation that once developed in some classical literature, for example, with the requirement that there be no coercion in the practice of inheriting women, was rejected by AQT-EDS because it was considered inconsistent with the vision of justice. According to (Webb & Wadud, 2000), Many patriarchal interpretations unconsciously legitimize discriminatory practices against women, even though the spirit of the Qur'an is justice and reciprocity (Qur'an and Woman). The rejection of permissive interpretations by AQT-EDS is in line with contemporary hermeneutical efforts to revise interpretations that are not in line with the principles of *maqāshid*.

From a historical perspective, the AQT-EDS approach, which emphasizes ethical correction, can be read as an attempt to return the Qur'an to its original function: protecting vulnerable groups from harmful social practices. QS. 4:19, with its prohibition on 'aḍ and the encouragement of mu'āsyarah bi al-ma'rūf, are concrete examples of how sacred texts function as instruments of social change. (Hussin, 2010) emphasizes that sharia has historically been an arena of debate between text, tradition, and social reality, so that intertextual approaches such as AQT-EDS have important value in bridging this dynamic.

The Q–P–X configuration in the AQT-EDS also demonstrates the significance of procedural ethics in the interpretation of Islamic family law. QS. 4:19 is not only understood as a prohibition, but also as an ethical guideline that prevents legal manipulation. By making ma'ruf the operational standard, the AQT-EDS ensures that legal implementation is in line with the values of substantive justice. Nasr (2002) emphasized that the core of Islamic teachings is maintaining human dignity, so every legal practice must be measured based on how far it protects that dignity (Nasr, 2009). From here, the ethics of ma'ruf becomes a reinforcement so that the text of the Qur'an does not get caught up in rigid formalism.

The intertextual approach to QS. 4:19 with the Q–P–X pattern in AQT-EDS can be read as an attempt to unify historical, traditional, and ethical horizons in interpretation. This pattern emphasizes that Islam emphasizes not only adherence to the text but also a moral orientation that rejects all forms of injustice. By maintaining linguistic coherence, referring to classical turāt, while adding an ethical emphasis, AQT-EDS presents an interpretation that is contextual, progressive, and supports the protection of rights. This framework is relevant not only for the development of the science of interpretation but also for public policy based on contemporary Islamic values of justice..

Table 1 Intertext Mapping of QS. al-Nisā' verse 19 in AQT-EDS

Code	Elemen interteks QS 4:19 di AQT-EDS	Summary evidence from the text
Q (Quotation)	A quote from the nuzūl verses depicting the practices of ignorance (forced inheritance of widows, confiscation of dowries).	AQT-EDS links the prohibition to the narrations (al-Bukhārī, Abū Dāwūd) to explain the removed social context.
P (Pattern absorption)	Absorption of the turāt pattern of 'aḍl and restoration of dowry rights.	Explanation of the prohibition on making access difficult/impeding in order to withdraw gifts (dowries); still following the normative flow of the majority.
X (Re-emphasis)	The emphasis on the ethics of mu'āsyarah bi al-ma'rūf and the rejection of the permissive interpretation "as long as there is no coercion".	<i>Ma'ruf</i> is set as an operational limit; the interpretation emphasizes the cancellation of the practice of "inheriting women" and closes the gap for manipulation of injustice based on certain powers.
T (Transform)	Not detected in the legal domain of QS 4:19.	The normative direction of the jumhūr is maintained; what changes is the ethical/procedural emphasis.
Service implications	Operationalization of ma'rūf into service & mediation SOPs (Bimwin, complaint channel, non-stigma language).	Verification of free consent, access to information, safe passage; preventing "seeking a way" (QS 4:34) as an excuse to cause trouble.

2.3. The “emphasis” character (X) is related to other groups of verses

The general direction of AQT-EDS in the equality clause cluster moves in the realm of emphasis (X), especially in the area of law that has become rigid; moral-spiritual-social partnership is emphasized without changing its provisions in detail.

قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا فُرُوجَهُمْ ذَلِكَ أَزْكَى لَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ وَقُلْ
لِلْمُؤْمِنَاتِ يَغْضُضْنَ مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِنَّ وَيَحْفَظْنَ فُرُوجَهُنَّ وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَلْيَضْرِبْنَ
بِخُمُرِهِنَّ عَلَى جُيُوبِهِنَّ وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا لِبُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ آبَائِهِنَّ أَوْ أَبْنَائِهِنَّ أَوْ أَبْنَاؤِ
بُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ إِخْوَانِهِنَّ أَوْ بَنِي إِخْوَانِهِنَّ أَوْ نِسَائِهِنَّ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُنَّ أَوِ التَّابِعِينَ غَيْرِ
أُولَى الْأَرْبَةِ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ أَوِ الطِّفْلِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يَظْهَرُوا عَلَى عَوْرَتِ النِّسَاءِ وَلَا يَضْرِبْنَ بِأَرْجُلِهِنَّ لِيُعْلَمَ مَا
يُخْفِينَ مِنْ زِينَتِهِنَّ وَتُوبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا أَيُّهَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

"Tell the believing men that they should guard their eyes and guard their genitals. Thus it is more holy for them. Verily, Allah is very careful about what they do. Tell the believing women that they should guard their eyes, guard their genitals, and not show their ornaments (parts of their bodies), except what is (normally) visible. They should cover his chest with a veil. They should also not show their adornment (aurat), except to their husbands, their fathers, their husbands' fathers, their sons, their husbands' sons, their brothers, their brothers' sons, their sisters' sons, women (fellow Muslims), servants they have, (old) male servants who have no desire (for women), or children who do not yet understand about women's private parts. They should also not stomp their feet so that the jewelry they hide is known. Repent all of you to God, O you who believe, so that you may be successful." (QS. al-Nūr: 30-31)

In QS 24:30–31, the order of gaze and the maintenance of honor are framed by calling men first, emphasizing shared responsibility; the legal provisions do not change, but the order and diction of language strengthen the ethical standards of the public sphere (lih. Departemen Agama RI, 2011b, hal. 293–297).

الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَبِمَا أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ فَالصَّالِحَاتُ قَنَتٌ
حَفِظَتْ لِّلْغَيْبِ بِمَا حَفِظَ اللَّهُ وَالَّتِي تَخَافُونَ نُشُوزَهُنَّ فَعِظُوهُنَّ وَاهْجُرُوهُنَّ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ وَاضْرِبُوهُنَّ
فَإِنْ أَطَعْنَكُمْ فَلَا تَبْغُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيلًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا كَبِيرًا

"Men are responsible for women because Allah has made some of them excel others and because they spend out of their wealth. Righteous women are obedient and guard themselves in their husbands' absence, as Allah has protected them. As for those about whom you fear infidelity, advise them, leave them in their beds, and if necessary, beat them (in a way that is not painful). But if they obey you, do not seek to cause them harm. Indeed, Allah is Most High, Most Great" (QS. al-Nisā': 34)

Discussion about QS. an-Nisā' verse 19 and QS. an-Nisā' verse 34 shows the existence of methodological continuity in classical and contemporary interpretations. In principle, the classical interpretation defends the work flow that the pressure of the prohibition of the practice of forced heirs, resistance to the actions of 'adl (namely, preventing women from remarrying or unjustly withholding their rights), and establishing qiwāmah as a trust, not as a legitimation of absolute male power over women. Similarly, the handling of nusyūz cases is structured in stages, starting from advice, separation by death, to final efforts that are still encompassed by the ethics of ma'ruf and prohibitions on excess. This indicates that although the text of the holy book is fixed, the pattern of reading and interpretation allows for more humane social ethics and morality.

In the interpretation (Departemen Agama RI, 2011a), Both verses are read with emphasis on the limits of what is good, the prohibition against "seeking ways" (to oppress women), and the encouragement of islāh

(peace and reconciliation). This emphasis represents a shift in perspective from mere normative regulation to a more inclusive ethical orientation. Thus, this interpretation does not merely repeat classical understandings, but also strengthens the aspect of protection for women, making *qiwamah* not merely a burden on male authority, but rather a moral and social responsibility to maintain justice in the household.

From the interconnected interpretations of these two verses with similar themes, it can be concluded that the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs uses the P+X pattern. This pattern essentially combines the basic principles (P) established in classical interpretation with additional contextual interpretations (X) that adapt to the socio-cultural needs of modern society. The basic principles are maintained, for example regarding the regulation of inheritance rights, the prohibition of 'adl, up to the affirmation of *qiwamah*. However, the addition (X) in the form of an interpretation that emphasizes the equal position of men and women, as well as an inclusive-protective-procedural approach, is a characteristic of the interpretation of the Indonesian Ministry of Religion.

The equality of men and women in this interpretation does not mean eliminating differences in roles, but rather recognizing that these different roles are still based on the principle of complementarity, not domination. Thus, *qiwamah* is positioned not as a "privilege" of men, but rather as a mandate that must be carried out fairly, responsibly, and must not be abused. This goes hand in hand with an emphasis on the ethics of *ma'ruf*, namely that all actions within the household must adhere to societal moral standards that are considered good, reasonable, and not detrimental to either party.

The prohibition against "finding a way out" (*tabghū 'alayhinna sabīlā*) is also crucial. The Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs' interpretation emphasizes that this verse serves as a warning for men not to use minor mistakes as an excuse to oppress women. This also emphasizes that a household should not be run with an attitude of finding fault, but rather should be based on the spirit of *ishlāḥ*, namely efforts to improve the situation, create harmony, and resolve conflicts peacefully.

In this context, the P+X pattern is an important formulation for the interpretation of the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs. First, this pattern respects the established tradition of the majority, so it is not considered a deviation from the mainstream of classical interpretation. Second, this pattern allows for progressive space for new interpretations that are more relevant to contemporary societal conditions, particularly regarding gender relations, human rights, and the principles of social justice. Third, the P+X pattern states that Islamic law should not be understood rigidly but rather needs to be approached with a spirit of protection and inclusivity.

This interpretation approach strengthens the view that Islam, through the contextual interpretation of the Indonesian Ministry of Religion, does not allow oppressive patriarchal practices to continue under the pretext of *qiwamah*. On the other hand, *qiwamah* is understood as delaying responsibility and trust that should be carried out in a framework of reciprocity. This is in line with the Ministry's vision that focuses on social partnership, where men and women are placed in equal positions, each with rights, obligations, and responsibilities that support each other.

Methodologically, this type of interpretation is also crucial for the development of Islamic family law in Indonesia. It bridges the gap between rigid classical texts and dynamic social realities. This effort to maintain a balance between principle (P) and context (X) is what makes the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs' interpretation widely accepted and relevant to the needs of modern society. This interpretation demonstrates a facet of Islamic law that is not only normative but also ethical, humanistic, and oriented toward substantive justice.

2.4. Ma'ruf as a Binding Ethical Boundary and Closing the Justification Gap

The concept of *ma'ruf* in Islamic law cannot be understood merely as a moral recommendation or an optional ethical call. More than that, it is a binding normative principle and serves as the primary foundation for building social and family relationships. From the perspective of Thematic Qur'anic Analysis – Domestic and Social Ethics (AQT-EDS), *ma'ruf* is required to provide a decent living, serves as the basis for prohibiting violence, and serves as a bulwark against the manipulation of a spouse's rights. Furthermore, *ma'ruf* also encourages the implementation of the principle of *ishdayh* (repair) when conflict or household problems arise. This view aligns with the thinking of Fazlur Rahman, a prominent thinker in modern Islamic studies, who asserted that Islamic law truly serves as a universal ethical guideline, not merely a rigid legalistic text. Rahman, using the hermeneutical framework of "double movement," emphasizes that the Qur'an must be understood historically and relevantly for the contemporary context (Rahman, 2024). From this, it can be

understood that ma'ruf should not be reduced to a mere moral slogan, but rather a pillar that determines the quality of social interactions, family structure, and institutional structures.

The implementation of good conduct extends beyond the domestic sphere to the public sphere, particularly in social services and institutional governance. This principle can be translated into non-stigmatizing communication practices, open access to information, the provision of secure channels for complaints, and the existence of mediation mechanisms that prevent cultural domination or pressure. This emphasizes that religious values do not exist separately from social institutions but must permeate the public service system to ensure fairness and inclusiveness. And this concept is in line with the idea of maqāshid al-sharī'ah, which emphasizes substantive justice and the protection of human rights. According to (Auda, 2008), Maqāshid must be understood dynamically, placing the values of justice, freedom, and welfare as the primary orientation. In this way, ma'ruf serves as a bridge that unites religious norms with public service practices, ensuring that every institutional policy and procedure is not only legally valid but also ethical and just. Within the family, ma'ruf serves as an ethical guide for decision-making. Healthy household relationships can only be formed when decisions arise from mutual consent, not from coercion or unilateral domination. Ma'ruf also serves as an ethical boundary for communication, ensuring it remains healthy, transparent, and respects the rights of each family member.

Seyyed Hossein Nasr also emphasized that Islam fundamentally emphasizes a balance between rights and obligations. Thus, the practice of social relations must be based on willingness, not power. This demonstrates that goodness is relevant not only to the private sphere but also to the broader public sphere, as it regulates how humans relate to others within a framework of equality and mutual respect. The concluding verse, which alludes to the fact that there is "much good" in patience, demonstrates the function of goodness as a correction to momentary emotional reactions. This principle trains individuals not to act rashly but rather to create space for improving relationships (Nasr, 2009). Likewise with research (Hamdani, 2003) which emphasizes that Islamic law must be understood not as merely mechanical rules, but as a path to justice and mercy. Thus, ma'ruf has significant social implications because it encourages society to avoid being trapped in reactive attitudes that harm many parties. The principle of ma'ruf serves as a fence that closes the opportunity for unfair practices, such as forced inheritance or 'adl maneuvers to seize gifts (dowries). The history of Islamic law records that these practices often harm women and negate their rights.

Classical Islamic family law is often criticized because in practice it is often influenced by patriarchal bias, even though the initial principle is to maintain dignity and provide protection for rights (Hussin, 2010). Thus, upholding goodness means restoring the spirit of justice in Islamic law, while ensuring that women, as vulnerable individuals, receive equal protection. The prohibition against "seeking a way out" in QS 4:34 is interpreted by AQT-EDS as a warning that there is no religious justification for actions that cause distress to one's partner. Within this framework, the Qur'an teaches a mechanism for de-escalating conflict through advice, separation, and mediation. This entire sequence should be understood as ethical protocol, not a legalization of violence. As emphasized by (Ali, 2018), The family verses in the Qur'an always emphasize resolution through morals and ethics, not through physical domination. AQT-EDS also emphasized that corrective measures taken without an ethical basis are a deviation from the spirit of Islam, which is full of mercy.

AQT-EDS strongly rejects corrective measures motivated by subjugating or controlling one's partner. This view aligns with the thinking of Muslim feminists such as Amina Wadud and Gillian Webb, who reject patriarchal interpretations of QS 4:34. They emphasize that gender relations in Islam are built on mutual respect, justice, and equality (Webb & Wadud, 2000). Any form of manipulation of religious norms to strengthen power relations not only contradicts the principles of ma'ruf (goodness), but also violates maqā (objectives of righteousness). shid al-sharī'ah which places justice and welfare as the main goals of Islamic law. From an institutional perspective, the implementation of ma'ruf requires the drafting of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) that can prevent the rationalization of violence. Complaint mechanisms, referrals, and reporting systems must be directed towards ensuring that victims receive protection, not silence. Ma'ruf and ishdayh must be the primary orientation for resolving institutional conflicts. This aligns with the thinking of (Yacoob, 2018) who emphasized that the interpretation of family law must be ethical and humanistic, not formalistic, which only reinforces the status quo. Thus, the AQT-EDS framework ensures that Islamic law does not become a tool of oppression but remains an ethical barrier that protects human dignity.

The application of ma'ruf in both domestic and public spaces demonstrates that Islamic ethics remains relevant in addressing modern challenges. This principle not only serves to prevent violence based on religious legitimacy but also emphasizes that Islamic sharia values exist to build social justice and create

equal relations. This is emphasized by the (Direktur Jenderal BIMAIS Kemenag RI, 2024) who stated that religion-based public services must be grounded in an ethical and substantive approach. In other words, ma'ruf should not be viewed merely as a normative concept, but rather as a highly relevant practical framework for realizing the welfare of society at large.

2.5. Integration with Policy: Ministry of Religious Affairs Marriage Guidance, TPKS Law, Religious Moderation, and Gender Mainstreaming

The AQT-EDS's emphasis on the principles of 'adl (justice), ma'ruf (propriety), and prevention of harm makes it relevant to the policy direction of Religious Moderation, Gender Mainstreaming (PUG), the Marriage Guidance program (Bimwin), and the Law on Sexual Violence (UU TPKS). This alignment of values is important because it provides an ethical basis that can be translated into modules, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), and public service indicators. As emphasized by the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs, Religious Moderation aims to provide just and balanced religious practices and protect individual rights in family and community life (Tim Penyusun Kementerian Agama RI, 2019). Thus, the AQT-EDS provides a normative framework that facilitates the process of integrating religious values with state policy.

The Bimwin instrument at the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) covers important topics such as healthy relationships, reproductive health, and childcare. From the AQT-EDS perspective, this material can be strengthened by emphasizing mu'āsharah bi al-ma'rūf, namely living together in a good manner, as taught in the Qur'an. The goal is to prevent the practice of Domestic Violence (KDRT) and reduce the number of child marriages. The Director General of Islamic Community Guidance emphasized that this approach emphasizes not only legal aspects but also ethical transformation within the family (Direktur Jenderal BIMAIS Kemenag RI, 2024). Thus, integrating ma'rūf into the Bimwin instrument is a strategic step towards internalizing Islamic values into practical policies.

The marriage guidance program (Bimwin) itself is implemented as a two-day, approximately 16-hour briefing program. This activity involves trained practitioners from the Ministry of Religious Affairs, the health service, the National Population and Family Planning Board (BKKBN), and civil society elements. The goal is to provide a deeper understanding of the nature of marriage in Islam, help prospective couples understand themselves and their environment, and equip them with skills to maintain a harmonious household. Widiyawati, Mustaming, and Marwing (2024) note that the effectiveness of Bimwin depends heavily on the extent to which the curriculum integrates the values of mutuality, justice, and communication skills within the household (Widiyawati, Mustaming, & Marwing, 2024). In this context, the AQT-EDS can serve as a theoretical foundation that strengthens the learning direction.

Sectoral guidelines and a moderation roadmap provide a complementary policy network. Religious moderation plays a role in promoting anti-violence communication, PUG ensures equal access and participation between men and women, and Bimwin serves as an educational space for couples to prepare them for household dynamics. Agung (2023) emphasized that synergy between these programs is crucial for creating policies that are responsive to community needs, particularly regarding issues of gender equity and family protection (Tanaka, 2025). Thus, the AQT-EDS values do not stand alone but interact with various national policy instruments.

Inheritance distribution. The value of ma'ruf here encourages the use of non-stigmatizing language, open access to information, the provision of secure channels for complaints, and mediation that maintains a balanced relationship between individuals. This prevents pressure from parties considered superior in a relationship, such as husbands or extended family. According to Esposito (2011), the principle of justice in Islam emphasizes the importance of free consent and respect for human dignity in all forms of social contracts, including marriage (Esposito, 2011). Thus, the application of QS. 4:19 aligns with the goal of preventing harm in the AQT-EDS.

Domain boundaries remain firmly defined: AQT-EDS serves as a reference value, not a positive regulation. Implementation must still comply with national laws and applicable public service SOPs. This is crucial to prevent misuse of the concept of patience or ishlāḥ as an excuse to silence complaints or delay accountability for perpetrators of violence. Research by Furqoni and Thabrani (2022) found that many domestic violence cases are not handled seriously because social norms emphasize excessive patience, which actually harms victims (Furqoni & Thabrani, 2022). Therefore, the AQT-EDS emphasizes that Islamic ethical principles should not be used to cover up injustice.

The integration of the AQT-EDS with the TPKS Law also demonstrates how religious norms and positive law can reinforce each other. The TPKS Law emphasizes victim protection, recovery, and prevention of sexual-based violence. The principle of *ma'ruf* (good) in the AQT-EDS can support this legal framework by providing strong ethical justification that all forms of sexual violence are contrary to Islamic values. Islamic law consistently rejects all forms of harm, so the protection of victims of sexual violence has a clear basis in *maqā* (lawful) *shid al-sharī'ah* (Royyan, 2018).

Furthermore, PUG provides an important framework so that the implementation of the values of 'adl and *ma'ruf* (good and just) does not stop at the symbolic level but truly creates equal participation in policy formulation and public service delivery. According to Nurhaeni (2021), the PUG strategy in Indonesia faces the challenge of a still-strong patriarchal culture, so integration with inclusive religious values can help broaden social acceptance (Nurhaeni & Putri, 2025). From this perspective, AQT-EDS serves as a foundation of values that strengthens PUG with strong religious legitimacy.

And the alignment between AQT-EDS, Religious Moderation, PUG, Bimwin, and the TPKS Law forms a comprehensive policy framework. Religious values are not positioned as obstacles to legal modernization, but as a source of ethics that strengthen the protection of human rights. This concept ensures that religious interpretation does not become a tool to justify violence or discrimination, but rather an ethical fence for building healthy family and community relationships. As emphasized by the Director General of BIMAIS, Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia (2024), *ma'ruf* must be the primary orientation in public services to maintain human dignity. Thus, this integration paves the way for socio-religious policies that are more inclusive, equitable, and responsive to the needs of contemporary society.

3. CONCLUSION

This study shows that the interpretation of *mu'āsyarah bi al-ma'rūf* (QS 4:19) in AQT-EDS operates primarily in the Q–P–X mode: linking the prohibition of “inheriting women” to the cause of *nuzūl* (Q), absorbing the *turāt* pattern related to 'adl and the recovery of dowry (P), then emphasizing the ethical boundaries of *ma'rūf* (X) without shifting the legal direction in detail (no T/transformation occurs). This position maintains continuity with the understanding of the generality while minimizing the space for rationalization of practices that harm women. At the methodological level, the intertextual checking of Q/P/T/X makes the production of meaning transparent and auditable across segments; at the substantive level, *ma'rūf* is tested as an operational boundary that guides domestic decisions (adequate living, anti-manipulation of rights, *iṣlāḥ*).

The primary scientific contribution of this research lies in clarifying the mechanisms of meaning production in institutional interpretation: when interpreters quote (Q), adopt patterns (P), emphasize ethical diction/order (X), or completely transform propositions (T). Within this framework, the claim of “interpretive renewal” can be verified: in QS 4:19, the AQT-EDS does not change legal norms, but rather strengthens ethical guidelines so that interpretation does not become a pretext for formalism that silences or blocks access to justice. Its practical contribution is a bridge between text and policy: *ma'ruf* can be translated into service SOPs (verification of free consent, non-stigmatizing language, safe complaint channels, mediation that maintains dignity), the Bimwin curriculum, and public communications that reject violence and the manipulation of rights.

Limitations of the research include the corpus (focusing on QS 4:19) and the lack of acceptance data (how readers/advocates adopt the *ma'ruf* guidelines has not been tested). On the policy side, the mapping remains conceptual; Impact evaluation has not been conducted on a large scale. However, the Q/P/T/X framework has provided a readily replicable tool for related themes and provides a foundation for measuring implementation at the public policy level.

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