

The Semantics of *Mukhtāl* and *Fakhūr* in the Qur'an: Perspectives from Indonesian Tafsir Scholarship

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Abstract

This study addresses a gap in Qur'anic semantic studies regarding the relational meanings of the terms *mukhtāl* and *fakhūr*, which are often treated as interchangeable synonyms of arrogance. Previous studies tend to focus on individual verses or on a single term, leaving the semantic interaction embedded in the phrase *mukhtālan fakhūran* underexplored. This study employs a qualitative method combining linguistic analysis (covering morphology, forms of hyperbole (*ṣīghah mubālaghah*), and syntagmatic relations) and empirical data obtained from interviews with Indonesian Quranic scholars. The results reveal that *mukhtāl* primarily denotes embodied or performative arrogance manifested in actions, while *fakhūr* signifies verbal and discursive arrogance expressed through self-glorifying speech. The phrase *mukhtālan fakhūran* thus represents a complementary semantic unit rather than a redundant expression. This distinction is further contextualized through contemporary social phenomena such as digital narcissism and flexing, where verbal exhibitionism and performative self-display intensify classical forms of arrogance. The study contributes both theoretically, by refining Qur'anic semantic analysis of near-synonyms, and practically, by offering an ethical framework for understanding modern social behavior.

Keywords: Contemporary Relevance; *Fakhūr*; *Mukhtāl*; Qur'anic semantics; Syntax of Arrogance

Abstrak

Penelitian ini membahas celah dalam kajian semantik Al-Qur'an mengenai makna relasional dari istilah *mukhtāl* dan *fakhūr*, yang sering kali dianggap sebagai sinonim yang saling menggantikan untuk kata kesombongan. Penelitian terdahulu cenderung berfokus pada ayat-ayat individual atau hanya pada salah satu istilah saja, sehingga interaksi semantik yang terkandung dalam frasa *mukhtālan fakhūran* belum banyak dieksplorasi. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif yang menggabungkan analisis linguistik (mencakup morfologi, bentuk hiperbola (*ṣīghah mubālaghah*), dan relasi sintagmatik) serta data empiris yang diperoleh dari wawancara dengan para pakar tafsir Al-Qur'an di Indonesia. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa *mukhtāl* pada dasarnya merujuk pada kesombongan ragawi atau performatif yang dimanifestasikan dalam tindakan, sedangkan *fakhūr* menandakan kesombongan verbal dan diskursif yang diekspresikan melalui ucapan yang mengagungkan diri sendiri. Dengan demikian, frasa *mukhtālan fakhūran* mewakili unit semantik yang saling melengkapi, alih-alih ekspresi yang redundan. Perbedaan ini lebih lanjut dikontekstualisasikan melalui fenomena sosial kontemporer seperti narsisme digital dan flexing, di mana ekshibisionisme verbal dan tampilan diri performatif memperkuat bentuk-bentuk kesombongan klasik. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi baik secara teoritis, dengan menyempurnakan analisis semantik

Al-Qur'an terhadap kata yang hampir mirip (near-synonyms), maupun secara praktis, dengan menawarkan kerangka kerja etis untuk memahami perilaku sosial modern.

Kata Kunci: Relevansi Kontemporer, Fakhūr, Mukhtāl, Semantik Al-Qur'an, Kesombongan

A. Introduction

The variations of terms and meaning in the Qur'an are crucial aspects that remain relevant to study in depth, because each term does not always represent a single meaning. Some terms in Arabic can contain more than one meaning, a phenomenon that Arabic linguistic experts call *musytarak*.¹ On the other hand, there are also a number of different terms that refer to the same basic meaning, which are known as *mutarādif*.² Even though they are often referred to as synonyms, it is important to note that the similarity in meaning is limited to the basic meaning only. Each synonym still has a distinctive nuance of meaning that differentiates it from the others.³

Al-Quran with its richness of language expresses the nature of arrogance in several terms, among them is *mukhtāl* and *fakhūr*. This research focuses on the analysis of *mukhtāl* and *fakhūr* in the Qur'an. The reason for choosing these two terms is that; *First*, both are suspected to be *mutarādif* or contain the same basic meaning, namely arrogance. This raises questions regarding the specific meaning of each of these terms;⁴ *second*, in the Qur'an, *mukhtāl* always appears together displayed hand in hand with *fakhūr*, in a phrase of *mukhtālan fakhūran*. This indicates the presence of meaning implications within the phrase. Because, combining two *mutarādif* terms will have implications for its meaning.⁵

After doing a deep search in *al-Mu'jam al-Mufahras li Alfāz al-Qur'ān al-Karīm* by Muḥammad Fu'ad 'Abd al-Bāqī (d. 1968), it shows that *mukhtāl* is repeated three times in the Qur'an, namely in (QS. al-Nisā': 36), (QS. Luqmān: 18), and (QS. al-Ḥadīd: 23). As for *fakhūr* and its derivations are mentioned five times in the Qur'an, three of which are adjacent with *mukhtāl* in the verses that have been mentioned, and the other two verses are found in (QS. Hūd: 10) and (QS. al-Ḥadīd: 20).⁶ Therefore, the main object of this research is all the verses of the Qur'an that contain *mukhtāl* and *fakhūr*.

Al-Qur'an with its nature *ṣāliḥ li kulli zamān wa makān*, has an impact on the flexibility of the meaning and understanding of the verses, including understanding *mukhtāl* and *fakhūr*. The aim is to maintain and make it relevant in all situations and

¹ Juan Cole, 'Infidel or Paganus? The Polysemy of Kafara in the Quran', *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 140.3 (2020), doi:<https://doi.org/10.7817/jameroriesoci.140.3.0615>. p. 615-616.

² Fadhli and Agustiar, 'Kaidah Muradhif Wal Musytarak Dalam Al-Quran', *Al-Yasini: Jurnal Keislaman, Sosial, Hukum Dan Pendidikan*, 9.1 (2024), pp. 11–12.

³ Hishomudin Ahmad and Norfarhana Ahmad Ghafar, 'Stylistic an Linguistic Variation in the Quran: Toward an Integrative Framework', *Quantum Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 6.3 (2025), pp. 424–33 (p. 424), doi:[10.55197/qjssh.v6i3.705](https://doi.org/10.55197/qjssh.v6i3.705).

⁴ Khoirun Nisa, Nancy Mursalati Aini, and Putri Dian Khairani, 'Analisis Semantik Tiga Relasi Makna (Al-Musytarak Al-Lafzi, Al-Taraduf, Dan Al-Tadhad) Dalam Al-Qur'an Surah Al-Mulk', *Siyaqiy: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Bahasa Arab*, 2.2 (2025), pp. 96–106 (p. 96), doi:<https://doi.org/10.61341/siyaqiy/v2i2.020>.

⁵ Salman Harun and dkk, *Kaidah-Kaidah Tafsir: Bekal Mendasar Untuk Memahami Makna al-Qur'an Dan Mengurangi Kesalahan Pemahaman* (Qaf, 2017), p. 455.

⁶ Muhammad Fu'ad 'Abd al-Baqī, *Mu'Jam al-Mufahras Li Alfāz al-Qur'ān al-Karīm* (Dār al-Fikr, 1987), p. 513.

conditions.⁷ Therefore, this study aims to reveal the correlation of *mukhtāl* and *fakhūr* in the Qur'an and its relevance in contemporary life.

To clarify the position and originality of this research, previous studies on *mukhtāl*, *fakhūr*, and Qur'anic arrogance-related terminology can be mapped as follows.

Table 1. Review of Previous Studies

Author / Year	Focus of Study	Methodology	Main Findings	Research Gap
Mujliati (2016) ⁸	QS. al-Nisā':36 (<i>mukhtālan fakhūran</i>)	Thematic tafsir	Identifies arrogance as moral vice but treats the phrase as rhetorical emphasis	No linguistic distinction between the two terms
Amali (2022) ⁹	Term <i>fakhūr</i> in the Qur'an	Thematic–descriptive	<i>Fakhūr</i> associated with boastful speech	Does not analyze <i>mukhtāl</i> nor relational meaning
Rahmah (2023)	Semantic study of <i>fakhūr</i>	Izutsu's semantic approach	Contextual meanings of <i>fakhūr</i> vary across verses	Focus limited to one term
Zaini (2023) ¹⁰	Synonyms of arrogance	Comparative thematic tafsir	Each term has contextual nuance	Lacks syntagmatic phrase analysis
Shehzadi, O. (2018) ¹¹	Concept of arrogance (<i>kibr</i>) in the Qur'an	Thematic Qur'anic study	Arrogance is portrayed as a moral and spiritual disease manifested in words, actions, and lifestyle; Qur'an strongly condemns it with worldly and eschatological consequences	Treats <i>kibr</i> as a single moral category; does not distinguish semantic nuances between related Qur'anic terms such as <i>mukhtāl</i> and <i>fakhūr</i>
Nurrohi m et al. (2024) ¹²	Arrogance-related roots	Linguistic–thematic	Notes etymology of <i>mukhtāl</i> and <i>fakhūr</i>	No comprehensive verse-by-verse analysis

⁷ Muhammad Hasbiyallah, 'Paradigma Tafsir Kontekstual: Upaya Membumikan Nilai-Nilai al-Quran', *Al-Dzikra: Jurnal Studi Ilmu Al-Qur'an dan Al-Hadits*, 12.1 (2018), p. 30, doi:10.24042/al-dzikra.v12i1.2924.

⁸ Yuni Mujliati, 'Mukhtālan Fakhūran Makna Dan Cakupannya (Suatu Kajian Tafsir Tahlili Terhadap (QS. al-Nisā': 36))"', Skripsi Fakultas Ushuluddin, Filsafat dan Politik, Universitas Islam Negeri Alauddin Makassar, 2016.

⁹ Mohd. Asro Amali, 'Fakhūr Dalam Perspektif Al-Qur'an (Kajian Tafsir Tematik)', Skripsi Fakultas Ushuluddin, Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau, 2022.

¹⁰ Muhammad Zaini, 'Variety of Expressions of Arrogance in The Qur'an', *Jurnal Ilmiah Al-Mu Ashirah*, 20.1 (2023), p. 39, doi:10.22373/jim.v20i1.16434.

¹¹ Imrana Shehzadi, 'Anti Arrogance in Holy Quran' in The Islamic Culture', *Islamic Culture*, 40.2 (2018).

¹² Ahmad Nurrohim, Hanik Ma'rifah, and Obydur Rahman, 'Qur'anic Semantics of Arrogance: A Synonymity Study of Istikbar Mukhtalan Fakhur and Marahan', *Solo International Collaboration and Publication of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 2 (2024), pp. 355–68, doi:10.61455/sicopus.v2i03.293.

As shown above, previous studies tend to focus either on a single term, a single verse, or general arrogance-related vocabulary. None systematically examine all Qur'anic occurrences of *mukhtāl* and *fakhūr* together, nor analyze their semantic interaction within the phrase *mukhtālan fakhūran*. This study addresses that gap by combining linguistic–semantic analysis with thematic exegesis.

The Qur'an frequently employs terms that appear synonymous yet carry distinct semantic nuances,¹³ a phenomenon widely discussed in studies of *musytarak*¹⁴ and *mutarādif*.¹⁵ Linguistic sensitivity to such nuances is crucial, as subtle lexical differences often shape ethical and theological meanings.¹⁶ Among these terms are *mukhtāl* and *fakhūr*, commonly translated as forms of arrogance or pride. While exegetical works acknowledge their negative connotations, they often gloss over the specific semantic boundaries between them, particularly when both appear together in the phrase *mukhtālan fakhūran* (QS. al-Nisā': 36).

Existing studies have examined arrogance-related terminology in the Qur'an either by focusing on single verses, isolating one term (especially *fakhūr*), or discussing arrogance in general without systematic linguistic comparison. Consequently, the relational meaning between *mukhtāl* and *fakhūr* across Qur'anic contexts remains insufficiently explored. This constitutes a clear research gap, particularly within linguistic–thematic Qur'anic studies.

Based on this gap, the present study seeks to answer the following questions: (1) How are the terms *mukhtāl* and *fakhūr* linguistically and contextually distinguished in the Qur'an? (2) What semantic implications arise from the combined phrase *mukhtālan fakhūran*? (3) How can these concepts be meaningfully related to contemporary social phenomena?

This study contributes academically by enriching Qur'anic semantic analysis through a nuanced examination of near-synonyms and their syntagmatic relations. Practically, it offers a religious-ethical lens for interpreting modern manifestations of arrogance, such as digital narcissism and flexing, which are increasingly relevant in contemporary Muslim societies.

This research employs a qualitative approach by integrating library research and semi-structured interviews with Indonesian tafsir scholars. The primary data sources consist of classical and contemporary Qur'anic commentaries that emphasize linguistic analysis, including *Tafsīr Fī Zilāl al-Qur'ān* by Sayyid Quṭb, *Tafsīr al-Munīr* by Wahbah Muṣṭafā al-Zuhailī, and *Tafsīr al-Misbāḥ* by M. Quraish Shihab. In addition, authoritative Arabic lexicons such as *Lisān al-'Arab* by Ibn Manẓūr, *Al-Mufradāt fī Gharīb al-Qur'ān* by al-Rāghib al-Aṣfahānī, and *Mu'jam Maqāyīs al-Lughah* by Ibn Fāris are utilized to examine the semantic foundations of the studied terms. Secondary sources include relevant

¹³ Asmaa Alduhaim, 'Translating Near-Synonyms in the Quran: A Semantic Analysis of Three Near-Synonyms and Their English Translations', 3L *The Southeast Asian Journal of English Language Studies*, 27.1 (2021), pp. 76–89, doi:10.17576/3L-2021-2701-06. P. 80.

¹⁴ Hussein Fahim Abdalhussein and Huda Falah Jawad, 'Meanings of the Polysemous Qur'ānic Word Raḥmah (Mercy) and Its English Translation', *GEMA Online® Journal of Language Studies*, 24.4 (2024), pp. 133–48, doi:10.17576/gema-2024-2404-08. P. 133-134. Saida Gani and Berti Arsyad, 'Fenomena al-Istirak al-lafz dalam al-Quran', *al-Jamiy: Jurnal Bahasa dan Sastra Arab*, 6.1 (2017), p. 1.

¹⁵ Muhammad Syarif Hasyim, 'Al-Taraduf (Sinonim) dan Kaidah Penerapannya dalam al-Quran', *Rausyan Fikr: Jurnal Studi Ilmu Ushuluddin dan Filsafat*, 17.2 (2021), pp. 179–201 (p. 179), doi:10.24239/rsy.v17i2.778.

¹⁶ Salman Faris, 'Exploring The Divine Message: Quranic Studies in The Context of Islamic Scholarship', *Dirasah International Journal of Islamic Studies*, 1.2 (2023), pp. 111–25 (p. 111), doi:10.59373/drs.v1i2.16.

academic books and peer-reviewed journal articles related to Qur'anic semantics and thematic interpretation. Alongside textual analysis, interviews with Indonesian scholars of Qur'anic studies are incorporated to explore their interpretive perspectives. This methodological combination is adopted to maintain the primacy of Qur'anic semantic analysis while providing contemporary scholarly validation from the Indonesian tafsir tradition.

Regarding data collection and analysis, this study follows the procedural steps of the *tafsīr mauḍū'ī* (thematic interpretation) method.¹⁷ First, the research problem is determined, focusing on the semantic analysis of *mukhtāl* and *fakhūr* in the Qur'an. Second, Qur'anic verses containing these terms are identified. Third, the verses are arranged according to *tartīb al-nuzūl*, namely (QS. Hūd: 10), (QS. Luqmān [31]: 18, (QS. al-Nisā': 36), (QS. Al-Ḥadīd: 20), and (QS. Al-Ḥadīd: 23).¹⁸ Fourth, the verses are examined through linguistic analysis,¹⁹ contextual interpretation,²⁰ *munāsabah*, and *asbāb al-nuzūl* where available. Fifth, a systematic analytical framework is developed, followed by the integration of relevant ḥadīth when necessary, and finally, conclusions are drawn based on the overall analysis.

The linguistic analysis focuses on: (1) *dalālah lughawiyyah*, by tracing root meanings and lexical developments; (2) morphological features, particularly the use of *ṣīghah mubālaghah* to identify semantic intensity; (3) syntactic relations (*i'rāb*) and the syntagmatic pairing of *mukhtālan fakhūran*; and (4) contextual exegesis, including *siyāq al-āyah* and inter-verse relations. To enrich and critically engage the textual findings, semi-structured interviews were conducted with four Indonesian tafsir scholars selected based on academic expertise and teaching or research experience in Qur'anic exegesis.²¹ The interview data function as expert perspectives rather than independent empirical claims and are integrated at the interpretive stage to assess convergence, reinforcement, or nuance in relation to the linguistic–semantic findings. This approach ensures methodological coherence while preserving the centrality of textual analysis.

B. Result and Discussion

Mukhtāl is *isim fā'il* of *ikhtāla - yakhtālu* which contains the meaning of pride, arrogance, and feeling proud. Ibnu Manẓūr (d. 1312), as quoting the opinion of Abu Ishāq (d. 1083), mentioned that *mukhtāl* is a person who is arrogant, haughty, ignorant, and likes

¹⁷ 'Abd al-Ḥayy al-Farmawī, *Metode Tafsir Mauḍū'ī*, translated from Arabic by Suryan A. Jamrah (PT. Raja Grafindo Persada, 1996).

¹⁸ Sajuti Thalib, 'Urutan Turun Surah-Surah Al-Qur-An', *Jurnal Hukum Dan Pembangunan UI*, 1.3 (1971), pp. 22–27 <<https://scholarhub.ui.ac.id/jhp/vol1/iss2/3/>>.

¹⁹ Rules of language are needed as an effort to minimize mistakes in studying Al-Quran. Ahmad Faqihudin, 'Kedudukan dan Fungsi Kaidah Tafsir dalam Penafsiran Al-Qur'an', *Ulumul Qur'an: Jurnal Kajian Ilmu Al-Qur'an dan Tafsir*, 1.1 (2021), pp. 88–94 (pp. 90–92), doi:10.58404/uq.v1i1.15.

²⁰ By employing a contextual methodology, this research avoids literal rigidity and seeks the deeper significance (*maghza*) of the terms *mukhtāl* and *fakhūr*. Anwar Mujahidin, Muhammad Shohibul Itmam, and Ahmad Choirul Rofiq, 'The Dynamic of Contextualization in Indonesian Qur'anic Tafsirs: A Comparative Study of Tafsir Al-Azhar and Tafsir Al-Mishbāh on The Story of The Prophet Moses', *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Hadis*, 25.2 (2024), pp. 221–46, doi:10.14421/qh.v25i2.5397. p. 227-228. Abdul Muiz Amir and Ghufroon Hamzah, 'Dinamika dan Terapan Metodologi Tafsir Kontekstual', *Al-Izzah: Jurnal Hasil-Penelitian*, 14.1 (2019), p. 1 (p. 2), doi:10.31332/ai.v14i1.1177. Taufan Anggoro, 'Tafsir Alquran Kontemporer: Kajian atas Tafsir Tematik-Kontekstual Ziauddin Ziauddin Sardar', *AL QUDS: Jurnal Studi Alquran dan Hadis*, 3.2 (2019), p. 214, doi:10.29240/alquds.v3i2.1049.

²¹ The interview data are cited in the article using anonymized codes (e.g., Informant 1, Informant 2) to maintain ethical standards. Detailed information regarding the interviewees' academic background and institutional affiliation is provided in the appendix.

to criticize other people, to the point of mistreating them.²² *Mukhtāl* does not only have connotations of arrogance, but also includes elements of falsehood and ignorance.²³ Etymologically, this term comes from the root word *khayala*, which shows the activity of imagining or forming a mental image.²⁴ In semantic studies, *mukhtāl* refers to individuals who have an exaggerated perception of themselves, where their arrogant attitude is built not on empirical facts or real qualities, but on illusions or subjective constructions that do not correspond to objective reality.²⁵ This definition is in line with the opinion of al-Aṣḥānī (d. 1108) in *Al-Mufradāt fī Garīb al-Qur'ān*, namely that *al-khaylā'u*, which is also a derivation of the word *khayala*, contains the meaning of arrogant attitude caused by a person's delusion about the priority that he has.²⁶

Mukhtāl also comes from the same root word as *khayl*, which means horse. Among the Arabs in ancient times, horses were a symbol of gallantry and arrogance.²⁷ On the other hand, the horse's straight, galloping gait makes it seem arrogant. So it can be said that *mukhtāl* is arrogance that appears in a person's behavior and actions in their daily life.²⁸ As in QS. Luqmān [31]: 18, *mukhtāl* interpreted as a person who walks arrogantly.²⁹

After doing a deep search in *al-Mu'jam al-Mufahras li Alfāz al-Qur'ān al-Karīm* the work of Muḥammad Fu'ad 'Abd al-Bāqī (d. 1968), we found that *mukhtāl* is only shown in one derivation form and is repeated three times in the Qur'an, namely in (QS. Luqmān: 18), QS. Al-Nisā' [4]: 36, and (QS. Al-Ḥadīd: 23).

As well as *mukhtāl*, *fakhūr* is also translated as arrogant and proud. Basically, *fakhūr* comes from the word *fakhr* which means big and precious. *fakhr* is also interpreted as *tafdhīl*, that is, prioritizing. Some derivations of *fakhr* sometimes are also used to express something of high value, as in a sentence *nakhlatun fakhūrun* which means a palm tree that is superior because it has a large trunk and thick leaves, or *tsaubun fākhīrun* which means expensive clothes. As for *fakhkhār* interpreted as pottery, and *fakhkhara* means water jug, because when it is hit it makes a loud sound like an arrogant person. Whereas *fakhūr* and *fakhīr* used to show a person who is very excessive in his pride, as contained in the expression *rajulun fākhīrun* which means an arrogant man.³⁰

Al-Aṣḥānī (d. 1108) argued that *fakhūr* is boasting about things that exist outside of humans, such as wealth, children, and positions.³¹ In a similar vein, *fakhūr* is understood as an attitude of arrogance, showing off, or boasting to others by mentioning the favors or

²² Ibnu Manẓūr al-Ifrīqī al-Miṣri, *Lisān Al-'Arab* (Adab al-Hauzah, 1984), XI, p. 228.

²³ Abu Ishāq Ibrahim al-Sarrī, *Ma'anī al-Qur'an Wa I'rābuh* ('Aalim al-Kitab, 1988), II, p. 51.

²⁴ Mohammad Hadi Yadollahpur, Eftekhār Barzgar Ebrahimi, and Fatemeh Hasannejad, 'Cognitive Analysis of Divine Traditions in "Arrogance" with a Qur'anic Approach (Based on the Imaginary Schemas)', *Researches of Quran and Hadith Sciences*, 21.2 (2024), p. 200, doi:10.22051/tqh.2024.43986.3910.

²⁵ al-Miṣri, *Lisān Al-'Arab*, XI, p. 228; M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbāḥ: Pesan, Kesan Dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an* (Lentera Hati, 2002), VI, p. 53.

²⁶ Abi al-Qāsim al-Husain bin Muhammad al-Ma'ruf bin al-Rāgib al-Aṣḥānī, *Al Mufradāt Fī Garīb Al-Qur'an*, translated from Arabic by Ahmad Zaini Dahlan (Khazanah Fawa'id Library, n.d.), I, p. 710.

²⁷ Sajjad Ali Memon and Zain-ul-Abdin Arijo, 'The Concept an Meaning of Pride and Arrogance in the Light of Divine Teachings', *The Scholar Islamic Academic Research Journal*, 9.1 (2023), p. 109, doi:10.29370/siarj/issue16ar3.

²⁸ Wahbah al-Zuhailī, *Tafsir Al-Munīr*, translated from Arabic by Abdul Hayyie al-Kattani. (Gema Insani, 2013), I, p. 91.

²⁹ al-Zuhailī, *Tafsir Al-Munīr*, I, p. 165.

³⁰ Ibn Fāris Zakariyyā, *Mu'jam Maqāyis al-Lughah* (Dār al-Fikr, 1994), IV, p. 480. al-Aṣḥānī, *Al Mufradāt Fī Garīb Al-Qur'an*, I, p. 33.

³¹ al-Aṣḥānī, *Al Mufradāt Fī Garīb Al-Qur'an*, I, p. 418.

advantages one possesses.³² In this case, the blessings referred to are generally related to worldly things, such as property, work, wealth, position, position, good children, health, a sense of security, good deeds, or even ancestors, as is done by ignorant people.³³ In a simpler way, Wahbah al-Zuhailī (d. 2015) also thinks that *fakhūr* is telling yourself to others with a feeling of pride.³⁴

Apart from mentioning one's own strengths, in other histories it is also stated that *fakhūr* is numerating one's favors before others, without being accompanied by gratitude to God.³⁵ The advantage or favor can be in the form of ease and spaciousness in worldly affairs, or even bragging about something that he does not have in reality.

Muhammad Husain al-Ṭabaṭaba'i (d. 1981) explained that usually *fakhūr* aimed at people who are arrogant and proud of themselves because of the wealth and position that God has entrusted to them. This arrogance then makes the person love those things so much, that his heart and soul become far from God. In the Quran, *fakhūr* which is related to arrogance is found in two forms of derivation, namely *fakhūr* and *tafakhūr*. Derivations of *fakhūr* can be found in (QS. Hūd: 10), (QS. Luqmān: 18), QS. Al-Nisā' [4]: 36, and (QS. Al-Ḥadīd: 23). Whereas *tafakhūr* is found in (QS. Al-Ḥadīd: 20).³⁶

Association of Terms with Same Core Meaning as Arrogance

Among the terms in the Qur'an that convey the basic meaning of arrogance is *kibr*. This term is derived from the same root as *kabura*, which consists of the letters *kaf*, *ba*, and *ra*, meaning "great" or "majestic." *Kibr* is also interpreted as the opposite of smallness and *ṣifr* (blankness or absence).³⁷ From this basic meaning, the term developed broader connotations, including greatness, majesty, honor, glory, pride, and arrogance.³⁸ Similarly, *takabbur* fundamentally denotes greatness, as opposed to smallness. In usage, however, *takabbur* is commonly translated as arrogance, self-exaltation, or considering oneself superior to others. Some scholars also argue that the original meaning of this term implies reluctance and refusal to submit.

Takabbur is also understood as rejecting the truth, characterized by a failure to acknowledge its validity, a refusal to submit to it, and the manifestation of contempt toward others.³⁹ This interpretation is in line with the view of Al-Aṣfahānī, who described *takabbur* as the highest form of arrogance, namely pride directed against God. In this sense, a servant becomes unwilling to accept the truth and refuses to worship Him.⁴⁰ An

³² Izatul Muhidah Maulidiyah, 'The Semiotic Structure of Tafākhurin the Qur'an: A Structuralist Perspective on Modern Flexing Phenomena', *Jurnal Ulunnuha*, 14.1 (2025), p. 90.

³³ Wahbah al-Zuhailī, *Tafsir Al-Munir*, translated from Arabic by Abdul Hayyie al-Kattani. (Gema Insani, 2013), XI, p. 165; Wahbah al-Zuhailī, *Tafsir Al-Munir*, translated from Arabic by Abdul Hayyie al-Kattani. (Gema Insani, 2013), VI, p. 295;

³⁴ Wahbah al-Zuhailī, *Tafsir Al-Munir*, translated from Arabic by Abdul Hayyie al-Kattani. (Gema Insani, 2013), III, pp. 94–95.

³⁵ Hamidullah Mahmud, 'Konsep-Konsep al-Quran dalam Penanggulangan Patologi Sosial', *Alasma: Jurnal Media Informasi dan Komunikasi Ilmiah*, 2.2 (2020), p. 190.

³⁶ Muhammad Fuad Abd al-Baqi, *Al-Mu'jam al-Mufahras Li Alfāz al-Qur'ān al-Karīm* (Dar al-Hadith, 2001), p. 513. Ahmad Syawal and others, 'Hedonisme Perspektif Mufassir Kontemporer (Kajian Tafsir QS al-Ḥadīd [57]: 20)', *At-Tahbir: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Quran dan Tafsir*, 3.2 (2025), p. 1 <<https://ejournal.mahadalyirboyo.ac.id/index.php/attahbir/article/view/171>>.

³⁷ Ibn Fāris Zakariyyā, *Mu'jam Maqāyis al-Lughah* (Dār al-Fikr, 1994), v, pp. 153–54.

³⁸ Memon and Arijō, 'The Consept an Meaning of Pride and Arrogance in the Light of Divine Teachings', p. 114.

³⁹ Hasiah, 'Mengintip Prilaku Sombong Dalam Al-Qur'an', *Jurnal el-Qanuniy: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Kesyariahan dan Pranata Sosial*, 4.2 (2018), pp. 185–200 (p. 187), doi:10.24952/el-qanuniy.v4i2.2387.

⁴⁰ al-Aṣfahānī, *Al Mufradāt Fi Garīb Al-Qur'an*, I, p. 276.

arrogant person believes that no one is more special than himself and therefore feels no need to submit to the truth as others do. *Istakbar*, according to M. Quraish Shihab, is formed through the addition of the letters *sin* and *ta* to *kabura*, producing *istikbār*, which emphasizes the intensity and firmness of arrogance.⁴¹ Meanwhile, Al-Aṣṣfahānī explained that *istikbār* may carry either a positive or negative meaning depending on the context. Positively, it may describe greatness, excellence, and goodness when expressed appropriately and in the proper context. Therefore, the positive use of *istikbār* is only appropriate when attributed to God as an expression of glorification toward Him. Negatively, however, *istikbār* refers to pride and self-satisfaction over things that do not justify such attitudes.⁴² *Maraḥan* is derived from *mariḥa-yamraḥu-maraḥan*, which means being extremely cheerful, joyful, or delighted. *Mariḥan* is also interpreted as *fariḥa*, meaning happiness.⁴³ However, *maraḥa-marḥan* may also signify arrogance or walking arrogantly, since excessive pleasure and self-admiration can lead a person to become arrogant. *Baṭar*, which consists of the letters *ba*, *ṭa*, and *ra*, refers to exceeding proper limits in enjoyment and deviating from what is right.⁴⁴ According to Al-Aṣṣfahānī, *al-baṭar* is a form of arrogance that occurs when a person receives blessings yet denies them and fails to fulfill their proper obligations, thereby misusing those blessings in inappropriate ways.⁴⁵

Linguistic and Grammatical Analysis of *Mukhtāl* and *Fakhūr*

QS. Hūd: 10

QS. Hūd: 10 contains a sentence *innahū lafariḥun fakhūrun* which is the closing sentence of the verse. *Isim inna* of this sentence is *ḍamir mutṭaṣil huwa*, which goes back to term *al-insān* that contained in the previous verse, namely (QS. Hūd: 9). As for *lafariḥun* is *khavar* of *inna*. *Lam* in this term is *lam inna*, that is *lam taḥkid* whose job is to emphasize its *khavar*, as *inna* itself emphasizes the structure of the sentence. So in this verse, *inna* emphasize the *isim* or its *mubtada'*, that is *ḍamir mutṭaṣil huwa*, at a time as its *khavar*, that is *lafariḥun fakhūrun*. As for the *lam inna* meant to emphasize the *khavar*, that is *fariḥun fakhūrun*.⁴⁶ Thus *innahū lafariḥun fakhūrun* meaning is "indeed that man is really (feeling) happy who likes to be proud of himself." *I'rab rafa'* on *fakhūrun* is *khavar tsāni* from *inna*, and at the same time is *na'at* for *fariḥun*.

As for its *sharaf*, *fakhūr* is *ṣīghah mubālālagah* from *fi'il tsulatsi mujarrad* of *fakhara - yafkharu - fakhran*. Its *wazan ṣīghah mubālālagah* is following *wazan fa'ul*, so that the *taṣrif* became *fakhūr*. *Ṣīghah mubālālagah* is a formulation or arrangement of words that shows an exaggeration or an increase in the properties of the described word (*mauṣūf*). The addition can mean a lot, more, or very. In this sentence, which becomes *mauṣūf* from *fakhūr* is *lafariḥun* which is formed from *fariḥa - yafraḥu* with the addition of *lam inna*.

⁴¹ M. Quraish Shihab, *Ensiklopedia Al-Qur'an: Kajian Kosakata* (Lentera Hati, 2007), I, p. 154 in Emi Suhemi, 'Takabbur dalam Perspektif Al-Quran dan Hadits', *Jurnal Ilmiah Al-Mu'ashirah*, 16.2 (2019), pp. 199–209 (p. 202), doi:10.22373/jim.v16i2.6568.

⁴² M. Quraish Shihab, *Ensiklopedia Al-Qur'an: Kajian Kosakata* (Lentera Hati, 2007), I, p. 154 in Emi Suhemi, 'Takabbur dalam Perspektif Al-Quran dan Hadits', *Jurnal Ilmiah Al-Mu'ashirah*, 16.2 (2019), pp. 199–209 (p. 202), doi:10.22373/jim.v16i2.6568.

⁴³ M. Quraish Shihab, *Ensiklopedia Al-Qur'an: Kajian Kosakata* (Lentera Hati, 2007), I, p. 154 in Emi Suhemi, 'Takabbur dalam Perspektif Al-Quran dan Hadits', *Jurnal Ilmiah Al-Mu'ashirah*, 16.2 (2019), pp. 199–209 (p. 202), doi:10.22373/jim.v16i2.6568.

⁴⁴ Zakariyyā, *Mu'jam Maqāyis al-Lughah*, IV, p. 262.

⁴⁵ al-Aṣṣfahānī, *Al Mufradāt Fī Garīb Al-Qur'an*, I, p. 201.

⁴⁶ Muḥyī al-Dīn al-Darwīsy, *I'rāb al-Qur'an al-Karīm Wa Bayānuh* (Dār al-Irsyād, 1992), IV, p. 211.

Fariḥun itself is also *ṣīgah mubalāgah* by following *wazan fa'ilun*. So, if *fariḥa - yafrāḥu* means happy or joy, then the joy contained in the term *fariḥun* is as much or more excitement than is included in the *fariḥa - yafrāḥu*. Based on these rules, it can be said that *fariḥun fakhūrun* means feeling very happy and likes to boast.

QS. Luqmān: 18

Mukhtālin on this sentence is *muḍāf ilaih* of the term *kulla*, which *manshub* because of the position as *maḍ'ul bih* of *fi'il yuḥibbu*. As for its *fa'il* is *ḍamir mustatir huwa* which returns to the term *Allah* in sentences *innallāha la yuḥibbu*. Apart from that, the term *Allah* is also *isim inna* in that sentence. Because it becomes *iḍāfah*, so that *i'rab* of *mukhtālin* is *majrūr* with signs *jar* in the form of a final vow *kasrah*. As for *fakhūrin*, it is *ṣifāh* or *na'at* for the term of *mukhtālin*. So therefore, the *i'rab* of *fakhūrin* is *majrūr* with a sign *jar* in the form of a final vow *kasrah*, because of following its *man'ut*. So the meaning of *mukhtālan fakhūran*, based on rules, is a proud person who is very or likes to be proud of himself.

Mukhtāl is *isim fa'il* which is formed from *fi'il khumasi mazīd* of *ikhtāla - yakhtālu*. The usage of *isim fa'il* in Arabic linguistic rules shows the stability of the characteristics inherent in the perpetrator. However, it cannot be denied that there are times when this trait can still escape.⁴⁷ Thus, in *mukhtāl*, the arrogance is something that is often done by the perpetrator, so that it then becomes a trait that is truly inherent in him. However, there is still a possibility that this characteristic can be separated from the perpetrator.

In (QS. Luqmān: 18), *mukhtāl* is paired with *fakhūr*, which is *ṣīgah mubalāgah* of the *fi'il fakhara - yaḥkharu - fakhran*. Its *wazan ṣīgah mubalāgah* follows *wazan fa'ul*, so that its *taṣrif* became *fakhūr*. The noun being described (*mawṣūf*) is the term *mukhtāl*, which directly precedes the term *fakhūr*.

QS. Al-Nisā' [4]: 36

Mukhtālan in this sentence is *khabar kāna*, so that its *i'rab* is *manṣūb* with signs *naṣb* by *fathah*. As for its *isim* is *man mauṣūlah* with its *i'rab mabni 'ala sukun*, *manṣūb* because it is *maḍ'ul bih* of *fi'il lā yuḥibbu*. The *fā'il* of *fi'il lā yuḥibbu* is *ḍamir mustatir huwa* which goes back to *Allah's* term of the sentence *innallāha lā yuḥibbu*.⁴⁸ As in QS. Luqmān [31]: 18, in QS. Al-Nisā' [4]: 36, the term *mukhtālan* is paired again with the term *fakhūran*. As for the term *fakhūran* domiciled as *khabar tsāni* of *huwa*, at a time *na'at* of the term *mukhtālan*.

Fakhūr is *ṣīgah mubalāgah* from *fi'il tsulatsi mujarrad* of *fakhara - yaḥkharu - fakhran*. Thus, if *fakhara - yaḥkharu* means to boast or brag about oneself, hence the term *fakhūr* doesn't just mean those who brag about themselves, but those who often brag about themselves. Because, *fakhūr* which followed *wazan ṣīgah mubalāgah* shows a characteristic that is more than its original form.⁴⁹ As for *mawṣūf* of the term *fakhūr* in this sentence is the term *mukhtāl*, which is located right before the term *fakhūr*. So therefore, *mukhtālan fakhūran* means an arrogant person who likes to boast.

QS. Al-Ḥadīd: 20

On the (QS. Al-Ḥadīd: 20), there is term *tafākhurun* which is still another form of term *fakhūr*. Its *i'rab* is *ma'ṭūf* on term *la'ibun* because there is *waw 'aṭaf*. As for *la'ibun* domiciled as *khabar* of term *al-ḥayāh* so that its *i'rab* is *marfū'* with signs *rafa'* in the

⁴⁷ Annisa Eka Putri Aulia, Chairun Nisa, and Rofiqo Hasanah Saragih, 'The Fa'il Principle in the Morals and Ethics of a Muslima', *Recoms: Jurnal Penelitian Dan Pengabdian*, 2.1 (2025), pp. 90–102 (p. 93), doi:10.59548/rc.v2i1.435.

⁴⁸ al-Darwisy, *I'rāb al-Qur'an al-Karīm Wa Bayānuh*, IV, p. 213; 'Abd al-Raḥmān bin Muḥammad al-Qamasyī, 'Al-Ḥawī Fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān.', n.d. <<http://www.al-eman.com>>.

⁴⁹ al-Darwisy, *I'rāb al-Qur'an al-Karīm Wa Bayānuh*, IV, p. 213.

form of a final vow *ḍammah*. For *i'rab* of term *tafākhurun* also become *khavar*, *marfū'* with signs *rafa'* in the form of a final vow *ḍammah*, because *ma'tūf* with waw on term *la'ibun*.⁵⁰

Term *tafākhurun* is *isim musytaq* of *maṣdar gairu mim* from term *tafākhara* - *yatafākhuru* - *tafakhūran*. *Tafākhara* follows *wazan fi'il khumasi mazid* with the addition of letters *ta* and *alif*. Its *wazan* is *tafā'ala* - *yatafā'alu* - *tafā'ulan*. Among its functions, this *wazan* indicates a reciprocal meaning. Hence, the term *tafakhūr* interpreted as mutual boasting or mutual boasting. The root of the term is still a derivation from the term *fakhara* - *yafkhuru* - *fakhuran*, which then experienced the addition of *ziyadah's* letters.

QS. Al-Ḥadīd: 23

Mukhtālin is *muḍāf ilaih* of term *kulla* which is *maḍ'ul bih* from *fi'il lā yuḥibbu*. As *muḍāf ilaih*, the *i'rab* of *mukhtālin* is *majrūr* with signs *jar* in the form of a final vow *kasrah*. As for *fakhūrin*, become *ṣifah* or *na'at* of the term *mukhtālin*. Its *i'rab* is the same as *mukhtālin*, that is *majrūr* with signs *jar* in the form of a final vow *kasrah*.⁵¹ In this verse, *mukhtāl* once again characterized by *fakhūr*, that is *isim musytaq* of *ṣīghah mubalālagah* from *fi'il tsulatsi mujarrad fakhara* - *yafkhuru* - *fakhuran*. Its form of *ṣīghah mubalālagah* followed *wazan fa'ūl*, so that its *taṣrīf* became *fakhūr*. Therefore, *fakhūr* means someone who likes to boast or who is very proud of themselves.

Contextual Analysis of Key Verses

QS. Hūd: 10

Based on the context of the verse, (QS. Hūd: 10) contains a description of the spiritual condition of humans when faced with ease and difficulty. When God gives a favor to man, then the favor is taken back, or God imposes a difficulty, then man does not face it with patience and effort but gives up on asking for God's help. In fact, in his redaction, God uses the term *al-dzauq* which means tasting and *al-mass* which means to touch.⁵² The meaning of these terms is that even though the difficulties experienced by humans are only mild or merely "touched" temporarily, the response shown is often deep despair. This attitude of despair not only shows spiritual weakness but can also lead a person to disbelief, namely by forgetting the blessings of Allah that have been bestowed previously and denying the wisdom behind the test.

On the other hand, if after experiencing a disaster Allah bestows His blessings and help again, then the response that arises from disobedient people is often excessive joy. This expression of joy is not accompanied by gratitude, but instead gives birth to an attitude of disbelief and arrogance, because they interpret these blessings as the result of their own superiority, not as a gift from Allah. While in the previous verse, the form of human disbelief was reflected in their ingratitude for the blessings of Allah granted in the past, then in this verse this disbelief is manifested in the form of denying the source of the blessing itself.⁵³ Humans forget that all the pleasures they obtain are essentially divine decrees and part of the sustenance that God has bestowed. In fact, God only gives a small portion of this pleasure as a form of test, but humans have shown an excessive response in the form of excessive joy and an attitude of arrogance. Their arrogance can be clearly seen from their words, which said, "*Those evil things have gone from me.*" They tend to believe

⁵⁰ al-Darwīsy, *I'rāb al-Qur'an al-Karīm Wa Bayānuh*, IV, p. 310.

⁵¹ al-Darwīsy, *I'rāb al-Qur'an al-Karīm Wa Bayānuh*, IV, p. 315.

⁵² al-Zuhaili, *Tafsir Al-Munir*, VI, p. 296.

⁵³ Abd Wahid and Andri Nirwana AN, 'The Role of Qur'anic Entrepreneurship Courses in Advancing Entrepreneurial Movement Initiatives among University Students in Indonesia', *Al Muashirah*, 21.2 (2024), pp. 283–283.

that all the pleasures obtained or the passing of the difficulties they previously experienced were the result of personal effort and ability alone. Accompanied by arrogance, they think as if this disaster or evil will not happen to them again, as if they are beyond the reach of God's tests and decrees.⁵⁴

QS. Luqmān: 18

Based on the editorial of the verse, QS. Luqmān [31]: 18-19 emphasizes the prohibition of being arrogant. There are several terms in these two verses that represent this bad behavior. First of all, this verse opens with a prohibition on turning your face away from people. term *al-sha'ru* Basically it is a disease that usually attacks the neck of camels. Generally, camels affected by this disease will turn their heads so as not to cause pain due to pressure placed on their necks. Other opinions also say that *al-sha'ru* is a disease that attacks the head and hump of a camel, so that the head bends with the hump. The purpose of using this term in this verse is to encourage people to stay away from anything that resembles movement *al-sha'ru*. Among them is looking away when meeting or talking to other people, based on feelings of arrogance and condescension.⁵⁵

Furthermore, the verse also conveys a prohibition of walking on the earth arrogantly. This is a gait that shows arrogance, such as puffing out your chest or acting indifferent toward others.⁵⁶ Linguistically, *marāḥan* means cheerful or very happy.⁵⁷ However, the joy in question is joy that goes beyond limits and is not accompanied by gratitude, thus causing arrogance.⁵⁸

To emphasize the prohibition against being arrogant, Allah closes this verse by stating His dislike for 'every' *mukhtālin fakhūrin*, that is, which literally means, an arrogant person who likes to boast.⁵⁹ This expression also begins with a particle of emphasis *inna* which shows the affirmation of the inner meaning *innallāha lā yuḥibu kulla mukhtālin fakhūrin*. The conjunction of the word *kullu* with an *ism nakirah* that follows it conveys the meaning of universality 'every'. Accordingly, the intended meaning of the sentence is that Allah does not love any arrogant person who boasts about himself

QS. Al-Nisā': 36

On (QS. al-Nisā': 36), God begins His word with the command to worship God alone, accompanied by the prohibition of polytheism, both *zahiriyah* nor *baṭiniyah*. These two things are God's basic rights for His servants, as well as the initial and main foundation of religion.⁶⁰ After explaining the obligations of a servant to his God, then the command to do good to fellow humans is also mentioned. Starting from the closest people, namely

⁵⁴ Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbāḥ: Pesan, Kesan Dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an*, VI, pp. 201–202.

⁵⁵ Dian Islamiati, Hamnah, and Sri Sunantri, 'Konsep Sombong dalam Al-Qur'an: Analisis Surah Luqman Ayat 18 dalam Tafsir Jalalain', *JURNAL ILMIAH FALSAFAH: Jurnal Kajian Filsafat, Teologi dan Humaniora*, 10.1 (2023), pp. 48–62 (p. 50), doi:10.37567/jif.v10i1.2467.

⁵⁶ Sayyid Qutb, *Fī Zilāl Al-Qur'an*, Translated from Arabic by As'ad Yasin (Gema Insani, 2004), IX, p. 177.

⁵⁷ al-Aṣfahāni, *Al Mufradāt Fī Garīb Al-Qur'an*, III, p. 491.

⁵⁸ al-Zuhailī, *Tafsir Al-Munīr*, XI, pp. 171–72; Ibnu Rawandhy N. Hula, 'Tafsir Tarbawi: Analisis Bahasa dan Sastra al-Qur'an dalam Surah Luqman', *Jurnal Ilmiah AL-Jauhari: Jurnal Studi Islam dan Interdisipliner*, 5.1 (2020), pp. 121–46 (p. 136), doi:10.30603/jiaj.v5i1.1355.

⁵⁹ Abdul Wahid Arsyad, 'STUDI TERHADAP ASPEK KEUNGGULAN KITAB SAHIH MUSLIM TERHADAP SHAHIH BUKHARI', *Jurnal Ilmiah Islam Futura*, 17.2 (2019), p. 312, doi:10.22373/jiif.v17i2.2454.

⁶⁰ al-Zuhailī, *Tafsir Al-Munīr*, III, pp. 87–88.

parents, relatives and close friends, orphans, poor people, close and distant neighbors, colleagues, *Ibn Sabil*, and slaves owned.⁶¹

At the end of the verse, Allah once again emphasizes His disapproval of the *mukhtālan fakhūran*. The use of a *fi'l nafi* in this context serves as a more subtle expression compared to its antonymic affirmative form. In other words, the phrase 'Allah does not love' effectively conveys the same meaning as 'Allah hates' the subject in question, namely the arrogant and boastful individual which is *mukhtālan fakhūran*.

Within the same sentence, Allah also employs the word *kāna* in the phrase *man kāna mukhtālan fakhūran*. Linguistically, *kāna* is classified as one of the *amīl nāwaṣikh*, that is, a verb that alters the syntactic relationship between the *muḥtada'* and *khābar*. Moreover, *kāna* is typically used to indicate a state or condition that originated in the past and continues into the present. In this verse, the state being referred to is that of being *mukhtālan fakhūran* (arrogant and boastful).

Moreover, this expression of disapproval is introduced with the emphatic particle *inna*, which reinforces the entire structure of the sentence. Thus, at the conclusion of this verse, it is stated that Allah indeed does not love the *mukhtālan fakhūran*. Furthermore, the *mukhtālan fakhūran* mentioned in this verse refers to a characteristic that has existed since a past time and continues to persist in the present.

In the next verse, God describes the characteristics of arrogant people. That is, those who are miserly and tell others to do the same, and hide the gifts that God has given them. According to al-Zuhailī, a miser in this verse is miserly and reluctant to spend his wealth on things commanded by God, such as in doing good to both parents, close relatives, orphans, the poor, neighbors, and others as stated in QS. al-Nisā' [4]: 36 ago.⁶² The stinginess can be seen from the behavior and speech of the perpetrator which often aims to incite others not to donate their wealth.⁶³ Apart from that, it also includes concealing blessing of hiding the blessings or gifts that God has given, whether in the form of knowledge, wealth, or even the truth.⁶⁴

If viewed from that perspective *asbāb al-nuzūl*, these verses are addressed to the Jews of Medina, who lived alongside Muslims at the time. In historical records, the Jewish nation has long been known as a nation with high tribal fanaticism. They often pride themselves as Israelis, even though at that time they had long settled and lived in Arab lands. In addition, they are also known as people who like to act arrogant, like to spread news of lies and damage, and like to pit the various tribes around them, even to the point of causing wars between the Arab tribes in Medina.⁶⁵

QS. Al-Ḥadīd: 20

This verse is still closely related to the theme of *infaq* which is the main theme of surah al-Ḥadīd. Previously, Allah had said that those who give charity in this world and believe in Allah and His Messenger, will receive double rewards, namely in the form of

⁶¹ Muhammad Ali Irfan, 'Fostering Moral Education in Children: A Study Based on the Moral Values Contained in Surah An-Nisa Verse 36', *Tadibia Islamika*, 2.1 (2022), pp. 34–43 (pp. 38–41), doi:10.28918/tadibia.v2i1.5605.

⁶² al-Zuhailī, *Tafsir Al-Munīr*, III, p. 91.

⁶³ M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbāḥ: Pesan, Kesan Dan Keserasian al-Qur'an* (Lentera Hati, 2002), II, p. 532.

⁶⁴ al-Zuhailī, *Tafsir Al-Munīr*, III, p. 91.

⁶⁵ Ṣāfiyyurrahmān al-Mubarakfuri, *Sirah Nabawiyah, Translated from Arabic by Kathur Suhardi*, (Pustaka al-Kautsar, n.d.), pp. 204–205.

reward and glory.⁶⁶ As for those who disbelieve, they will be made into the inhabitants of hell. Therefore, Allah then gives an illustration of how trivial the life of this world, and how harsh the punishment of the hereafter is for people who are complacent about the world.⁶⁷

According to Sayyid Qutb, these verses really represent the condition of the Muslims at that time, namely around the fourth year of the Hijriyah until after the conquest of Mecca. At that time, the *Muhajirin* and *Anṣar*, as groups who had already embraced Islam, already had a solid foundation of faith, so they were not easily shaken by the difficulties of the world. They also no longer hesitate to invest their wealth and souls for the religion of Allah. As for people who only converted to Islam afterwards, they still had difficulty in freeing themselves from the temptations of the world.⁶⁸ Therefore, to strengthen their hearts, Allah reminds them that the world is something ephemeral and temporary. Only then ordered to be serious in pursuing the afterlife by trying to obtain His forgiveness and grace.

More broadly, (QS. Al-Ḥadīd: 20) is also addressed to believers, in all ages, whose souls still have excessive love for the world. In fact, the world is just games and decoration, namely things that only provide momentary pleasure and beauty, but have no useful value. Meanwhile, people are proud of each other and compete in it.⁶⁹

Then, Allah gave a parable about how short and fake worldly life is, like rainwater that amazed farmers because their plants grew. The plants grew vigorously until they became fresh green and finally turned yellow, then withered and fell apart, as if nothing had ever happened before.⁷⁰ Therefore, prioritize the afterlife. Because there is a harsh punishment for those who drown in the cradle of the world, and Allah's forgiveness and pleasure for those whom He wills. To emphasize these things, Allah SWT closes this verse with the statement that worldly life is nothing more than pleasure that is ephemeral and quickly disappears.

QS. Al-Ḥadīd: 23

The last occurrence of *mukhtāl* in the Qur'an is (QS. Al-Ḥadīd: 23). This time, the use of *mukhtāl*, which is again characterized *fakhūr*, placed in the context of the disasters that befell humans throughout the world. Previously, Allah had announced that everything that happens on earth, whether in the form of ease or difficulty, has been written in *lauh mahfuz*.⁷¹ The purpose is that when faced with various situations and conditions, the human heart can be calm, because it understands that everything that happens on earth is by the will of Allah.

Accordingly, Allah instructs believers not to be excessive sadness and happiness. This verse does not prohibit people from feeling sad or happy. However, both of these

⁶⁶ Abd Wahid and others, 'ANALYSIS OF THE SCOPE OF HUMAN RIGHTS BASED ON THE HADITHS', *PETITA: JURNAL KAJIAN ILMU HUKUM DAN SYARIAH*, 9.1 (2024), pp. 164–83, doi:10.22373/petita.v9i1.282.

⁶⁷ Sidik Amirulloh, 'Kajian Munasabah QS. al-Hadid Ayat 20-24 Sebagai Solusi Qurani terhadap Fenomena FOMO', *Halaqah: Journal of Multidisciplinary Islamic Studies*, 2.2 (2025), p. 275 <<https://jurnal.stikkendal.ac.id/index.php/halaqah/index>>.

⁶⁸ Sayyid Qutb, *Fī Zilāl Al-Qur'an*, Translated from Arabic by: As'ad Yasin (Gema Insani, 2004), XI, p. 153.

⁶⁹ Abdurrahman bin Naṣir As-Sa'dī, *Taisīr Al-Karīm Ar-Raḥmān Fī Tafsīr Kalām Al-Mannān* (Darul Haq, 2016), VII, p. 696 in Syawal and others, 'Hedonisme Perspektif Mufasssir Kontemporer (Kajian Tafsir QS al-Ḥadīd [57]: 20)', p. 7.

⁷⁰ Fauzi Saleh, 'Hadith Ahkam and the Qualifications for Fiqh Development', *El-Sunan: Journal of Hadith and Religious Studies*, 2.1 (2024), pp. 46–55, doi:10.22373/el-sunan.v2i1.5438.

⁷¹ Abdul Wahid and others, 'Sexual Violence Prevention Strategies Based on Hadith Guidance', *Ulumuna*, 27.2 (2023), pp. 573–97, doi:10.20414/ujis.v27i2.678.

things are natural, because humans are gifted with hearts and feelings by Allah. What is prohibited is exceeding the limits in both cases. Excessive sadness is sadness that drags on until it sinks into regret and despair. In fact, a person will always escape something that is not destined for him, and will get something that is destined for him.⁷²

Excessive joy is joy that brings pride in the blessings obtained. In fact, this blessing is basically something that has been decreed by Allah, not the result of human efforts themselves. So, make happiness into gratitude, and difficulties into patience.⁷³ Because Allah does not like every arrogant person who likes to boast.

Then, in the next verse, Allah again explains the characteristics of arrogant people, namely being arrogant and inviting other people to do evil. If interpreted generally, then the term *bakhil* can be interpreted as doing evil. *Bakhil* can also mean hiding knowledge about the characteristics of the prophet as stated in the Torah and Gospel.⁷⁴ However, when viewed in the context of the preceding verses, the miserliness referred to here pertains specifically to worldly matters—such as wealth, power, or various material conveniences.

Contemporary Relevance: From Qur'anic Concept to Modern Social Phenomena

In the context of modern life, the term *fakhūr* perfectly illustrates the phenomenon of digital narcissism. Digital narcissism is a contemporary form of classic narcissism that has emerged in the context of social media culture. It refers to an individual's tendency to continuously create, control, and display an ideal self-image on digital platforms in order to gain social validation, such as praise, number of followers, or online interactions. This phenomenon is characterized by an obsession with a perfect self-image and a high need for public recognition of personal achievements or lifestyle.⁷⁵ In practice, digital narcissism is often seen through posts containing luxury, physical beauty, or social status, accompanied by an urge to openly and consistently demonstrate personal advantages.⁷⁶

Regarding the phrase *mukhtālan fakhūran*, Among the relevant contemporary phenomena is practice *flexing* which is widespread in society.⁷⁷ *Flexing* is a popular term in contemporary culture that refers to the behavior of showing off or asserting oneself through external attributes such as wealth, achievements, a luxurious lifestyle, or social connections, with the aim of gaining recognition and validation from others. Sociologically, *flexing* reflects a phenomenon where self-worth and identity are determined

⁷² Dwi Dasa Suryantoro, 'Transformation of Islamic Law in Responding to the Challenges of Modernity by Integrating Classical Fiqh and Contemporary Fiqh', *Al-Rasikh: Jurnal Hukum Islam*, XX.XX (2025), pp. 1–14, doi:10.38073/rasikh.2747.

⁷³ Amirulloh, 'Kajian Munasabah QS. al-Hadid Ayat 20-24 Sebagai Solusi Qurani terhadap Fenomena FOMO', p. 276.

⁷⁴ Qutb, *Fī Zilāl Al-Qur'an*, XI, p. 174. M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbāḥ: Pesan, Kesan Dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an* (Lentera Hati, 2002), XIII, p. 447.

⁷⁵ Laura E. Buffardi and W. Keith Campbell, 'Narcissism and Social Networking Web Sites', *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 34.10 (2008), pp. 1303–14 (pp. 1302–14), doi:10.1177/0146167208320061.

⁷⁶ A. Maftei and Pătrăușanu A. M., 'Digital Reflections: Narcissism, Stress, Social Media Addiction, and Nomophobia', *The Journal of Psychology*, 158.2 (2024), doi:https://doi.org/10.1080/00223980.2023.2256453. Ofir Turel and Alexander Serenko, 'The Benefits and Dangers of Enjoyment with Social Networking Websites', *European Journal of Information Systems*, 21.5 (2012), pp. 512–28 (pp. 512–20), doi:10.1057/ejis.2012.1. Memon and Arijio, 'The Concept and Meaning of Pride and Arrogance in the Light of Divine Teachings', p. 104.

⁷⁷ Layyinat Sifa and Muhammad Syachrofi, 'Flexing Culture from the Quranic Perspective: Between Lifestyle And The Principle Of Tauhid', *Tajdid*, 22.2 (n.d.), p. 575.

by the ability to display status symbols prominently in public spaces, both online and offline.⁷⁸

Indonesian Tafsir Scholars Perspectives on *Mukhtāl* and *Fakhūr*

Building upon the linguistic and contextual analysis of Qur'anic verses discussed above, this study incorporates qualitative data from semi-structured interviews with Indonesian scholars specializing in Qur'anic exegesis. The interview findings are not treated as independent interpretations, but as scholarly validations that reinforce and contextualize the semantic distinctions identified in the textual analysis.

Semantic Distinction between *Mukhtāl* and *Fakhūr*

All interviewed scholars consistently emphasized that *mukhtāl* and *fakhūr* are not interchangeable synonyms, despite their shared association with arrogance. According to the informants, *mukhtāl* primarily denotes an internal and psychological disposition of arrogance, characterized by an inflated self-perception and a sense of superiority over others. In contrast, *fakhūr* refers to the outward and social manifestation of arrogance, which becomes visible through speech, behavior, and symbolic self-display.

This scholarly interpretation aligns closely with the Qur'anic syntagmatic structure, where the phrase *mukhtālan fakhūran* suggests a progression from inner arrogance to its external expression. One informant explicitly noted that the phrase should not be understood as mere rhetorical repetition, but as a deliberate semantic pairing that captures two interrelated dimensions of arrogance. This scholarly consensus directly supports the earlier linguistic finding that *mukhtāl* primarily denotes an internalized psychological posture of arrogance, whereas *fakhūr* refers to its verbal and performative manifestation.

“The expression *mukhtālan fakhūran* represents two stages of arrogance: the internal mental state and its expressive social form.”⁷⁹

Interpreting the Phrase *Mukhtālan Fakhūran*

Regarding the Qur'anic deployment of *mukhtāl* and *fakhūr* within a single phrase, the informants agreed that this construction serves a semantic and ethical function, rather than simple emphasis. In their view, the Qur'an intentionally links the two terms to highlight the continuity between internal disposition and external conduct.

Within verses such as Q. 4:36, Q. 31:18, and Q. 57:23, scholars argued that arrogance condemned by the Qur'an is not limited to visible behavior alone. Instead, it originates in a deeply rooted mental orientation (*mukhtāl*), which subsequently materializes as verbal or performative arrogance (*fakhūr*). This insight reinforces the linguistic finding that *mukhtāl* precedes *fakhūr* both grammatically and conceptually.

“Arrogance in the Qur'anic sense begins in the heart before it manifests in speech and social behavior.”⁸⁰

Contemporary Relevance: Flexing in Digital Spaces

The interview data significantly enrich the discussion of contemporary relevance by situating *mukhtāl* and *fakhūr* within present-day social dynamics, particularly in the Indonesian context. Most informants identified digital exhibitionism and lifestyle display, commonly referred to as *flexing*, as a modern manifestation of *fakhūr*, insofar as such practices rely on public validation and symbolic self-elevation.

⁷⁸ Abdul Rahman, ““Flexing” and Its Implications for Religious and Social Life Among Indonesian Muslim Millennials”, *Cakrawala: Jurnal Studi Islam*, 19.2 (2024), p. 64.

⁷⁹ Interview with Informant I2 (lecturer in Interdisciplinary Islamic Studies), 2025.

⁸⁰ Interview with Informant I4 (lecturer in Qur'anic Studies), 2025.

Several scholars further noted that displays of academic credentials, social status, or even religious performance may also constitute *fakhūr* when they are motivated by a desire for recognition rather than gratitude or ethical responsibility. Importantly, the informants emphasized that the Qur'anic critique does not target possession or achievement itself, but rather the orientation of the self toward superiority and public admiration. In this sense, contemporary phenomena such as digital flexing may be understood as a modern extension of *fakhūr*, while the underlying desire for superiority and recognition reflects the enduring presence of *mukhtāl* as an internal disposition.

“Flexing becomes *fakhūr* when its underlying intention is social validation rather than gratitude toward God.”⁸¹

Moral and Social Implications

Beyond individual ethics, the scholars highlighted the broader social consequences of *mukhtālan fakhūran* when such attitudes dominate public life. According to the informants, internal arrogance (*mukhtāl*) that evolves into overt self-glorification (*fakhūr*) can undermine social cohesion, weaken empathy, and reinforce unjust social hierarchies.

In religious contexts, the danger is more pronounced when symbolic religiosity is instrumentalized for social distinction. Informants warned that such practices risk transforming religious discourse into a tool of exclusion, thereby contradicting the Qur'anic vision of humility and moral equality.

“When the social elite, public figures, or religious figures exhibit attitudes of *mukhtālan fakhūran*, public trust and exemplary conduct are eroded. Society becomes cynical about moral advice, role models lose their authority, and moral relativism emerges, assuming that all parties are equal. This directly undermines the moral authority that underpins social life.”⁸²

Synthesis of Interview Findings

Overall, the interview findings do not introduce a competing interpretive framework, but rather consolidate the linguistic-semantic analysis by demonstrating that contemporary tafsir scholars intuitively preserve the Qur'anic distinction between internal arrogance (*mukhtāl*) and its outward articulation (*fakhūr*). Moreover, the perspectives of Indonesian tafsir scholars demonstrate that these Qur'anic concepts remain analytically productive for interpreting contemporary social phenomena, particularly in digital and performative spaces.

By integrating expert perspectives into the discussion, this mixed-methods approach strengthens the article's argument that the Qur'anic prohibition of arrogance is not merely doctrinal, but deeply connected to enduring psychological and social dynamics.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that *mukhtāl* and *fakhūr* in the Qur'an are not redundant or interchangeable terms, but semantically distinct concepts that function in a complementary relationship. Linguistic and morphological analysis reveals that *mukhtāl* primarily denotes an internal and psychological disposition of arrogance, characterized by an inflated self-perception and a delusional sense of superiority that becomes a relatively stable personal trait. In contrast, *fakhūr*, as a form of *ṣīghah mubālaghah*, refers to the outward and expressive manifestation of arrogance, particularly through boastful speech, self-

⁸¹ Interview with Informant I3 (lecturer in Qur'anic Studies), 2025.

⁸² Interview with Informant I1 (lecturer in Qur'anic Studies), 2025.

glorification, and the public display of perceived advantages such as wealth, status, lineage, or achievements.

The Qur'anic construction *mukhtālan fakhūran* thus reflects a deliberate semantic pairing that captures the continuity between inner disposition and external behaviour. Arrogance condemned by the Qur'an is not limited to visible conduct alone, but originates in an internal orientation of the self (*mukhtāl*) that subsequently materializes in verbal and performative expressions (*fakhūr*). This syntagmatic relationship is consistently reinforced across multiple verses (Q. 4:36; Q. 31:18; Q. 57:23), supported by grammatical structure, contextual analysis, and thematic coherence.

Furthermore, the integration of perspectives from Indonesian tafsir scholars further confirms these findings. The scholars consistently interpret *mukhtāl* as an inward psychological state and *fakhūr* as its outward social articulation, emphasizing that the Qur'an critiques arrogance as a holistic moral problem encompassing both intention and expression. This scholarly convergence demonstrates that the Qur'anic semantic distinction remains intuitively preserved within contemporary exegetical discourse.

In terms of contemporary relevance, the concepts of *mukhtāl* and *fakhūr* offer a productive ethical framework for understanding modern social phenomena. Practices such as digital narcissism and flexing represent contemporary manifestations of *fakhūr*, where self-worth is constructed through public validation, symbolic display, and performative self-exaltation, particularly in digital spaces. These practices often originate from an internal desire for superiority and recognition, reflecting the enduring presence of *mukhtāl* as a psychological disposition.

Overall, this study contributes to Qur'anic semantic scholarship by refining the analysis of near-synonyms through linguistic, contextual, and syntagmatic approaches. It also demonstrates the continued relevance of Qur'anic moral concepts in interpreting contemporary social behavior. The Qur'anic critique of *mukhtālan fakhūran* ultimately underscores the inseparable relationship between inner humility and ethical social conduct, offering a timeless moral insight for both individual spirituality and collective social life.

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