



Methods of Discovering the Objectives of the Qur'an According to Contemporary Scholars: A Descriptive and Comparative Study

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Abstract

This study explores contemporary scholars' various methodologies in uncovering the Qur'an's objectives through a descriptive and comparative approach. Its primary aim is to analyze the strategies used by modern thinkers to identify the Qur'anic objectives and to understand the contemporary perspectives surrounding these methodologies. The research focuses on two key texts: "The Mothers of the Objectives of the Qur'an and the Methods of Knowing Them" by Izz al-Din bin Sa'id Kashnit, and "The Science of the Objectives of the Noble Qur'an: An Authentic Study" by Muhammad Hamid Hasan Attia. The structure of the study comprises an introduction, a preface, three main chapters, and a conclusion. The introduction outlines the significance of the topic, the research problem and limits, relevant previous studies, methodology, and overall plan. Chapter One provides an in-depth examination of Kashnit's work, including his classification and methods for identifying Qur'anic objectives. Chapter Two presents a detailed analysis of Attia's study and his scholarly contributions to the subject. Chapter Three offers a comparative evaluation of the two works, highlighting their methodological similarities and differences. Each chapter is organized into specific sections addressing particular aspects of the research. The study concludes with several key findings. Notably, it identifies that the overarching objectives of the Qur'an encompass broad societal concerns, such as collective well-being, while more specific objectives address focused areas like family welfare. Sub-objectives pertain to particular rulings that serve these broader goals—for instance, the wisdom behind the institution of marriage within the framework of family and societal stability.

Keywords: Revelation, Objectives (Maqasid), Qur'an, Contemporaries, General Objectives, Specific Objectives.

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1. Introduction

The divine word of Allah, revealed in the Holy Qur'an, is a source of clear guidance and mercy for humanity. It directs people toward the most upright path in all aspects of life. The Qur'an encompasses a set of objectives that it calls the realization of which it commands and encourages, which range in scope from general to specific, as well as particular. Understanding these objectives requires adopting certain methods and approaches, which serve as essential tools in uncovering and realizing them. Early scholars alluded to some of these methods in their discussions on the purposes of Islamic law (Maqasid al-Sharia). In modern times, scholars have paid greater attention to the objectives embedded in the Qur'an, producing dedicated works that elaborate on both the goals and the methodologies for identifying them. This study aims to focus on two significant contemporary works that explore the objectives of the Qur'an and the techniques used to unveil them. Accordingly, the research is titled: "Methods of Uncovering the Objectives of the Qur'an According to Contemporary Scholars – A Descriptive and Comparative Study."

1.1 Research Importance

- To differentiate between the general and specific objectives outlined in the Holy Qur'an.
- To enhance proper comprehension of the Qur'an through a deeper understanding of its intended goals, thereby minimizing misinterpretation and avoiding errors.
- To highlight an aspect of the Qur'an's miraculous nature by examining its objectives.
- To contribute to the development of knowledge regarding the tools and methods that aid in a more accurate and profound understanding of the Qur'an's objectives.

1.2 Research Problem

There are various approaches to uncovering the objectives of the Qur'an, and scholars have differed in their views regarding these methods. At times, one approach may be accepted while another is dismissed. This study seeks to address several key questions:

- What are the paths and methods supported by the Qur'anic and legal texts for uncovering its objectives?
- To what extent is ijtihad (independent reasoning) permissible in identifying the objectives of the Qur'an?
- What are the reasons behind the scholarly differences concerning the methods and approaches used to uncover these objectives?
- Which contemporary most important books have focused on exploring the objectives of the Qur'an in the present era?
- What methodologies have modern scholars employed in identifying and analyzing these objectives?
- Where do contemporary scholars agree or differ in their approaches to uncovering the objectives of the Qur'an?

1.3 Research Objectives

- To examine the methods employed by contemporary scholars in uncovering the objectives of the Qur'an.
- To analyze how the two selected books address the subject of Qur'anic objectives.
- To conduct a comparative study of the two books regarding their treatment of the methodologies used to identify the Qur'an's objectives.
- To highlight the strengths of both works—generally, and specifically in their presentation of methodological approaches.
- To clarify the link between a proper understanding of the Qur'an and awareness of its intended objectives.
- To explore the contemporary scholarly perspective on the process of uncovering Qur'anic objectives.
- To propose new and insightful approaches for identifying the objectives of the Qur'an.

1.4 Research Limits

This research is confined to exploring the objectives of the Qur'an, along with the means and methods used to uncover them, through an analytical study of two specific works:

1. "The Mothers of the Qur'anic Objectives and Methods of Understanding Them" by Izz al-Din ibn Sa'id Kashnit.
2. "The Science of Qur'anic Objectives – An Authentic Study" by Muhammad Hamid Hasan Attiya.

2. Previous Studies

While numerous contemporary works have addressed the objectives of the Qur'an, I have not found any study that provides a detailed analysis, description, or comparative evaluation of these specific books.

3. Research Methodology

This research adopts a descriptive and comparative approach, supplemented by analytical methods where appropriate, particularly in exploring the meanings and dimensions of the Qur'anic objectives.

4. Research plan

- **Introduction:** This section presents the significance of the research, the research problem, key questions, objectives, limitations, previous studies, the adopted methodology, and research plan.
- **Section One:** A detailed study of the book "The Mothers of the Objectives of the Qur'an and Methods of Understanding Them." This section is divided into three demands:
 - **First demand:** An overview of the book and an analysis of the author's methodology.
 - **Second demand:** Examination of the methods used in the book to uncover the objectives of the Qur'an.
 - **Third demand:** A discussion of the book's strengths and the primary critiques it has received.

- **Section Two:** A foundational study of the book "The Science of Qur'anic Objectives – An Authentic Study." This chapter also consists of three demands:

- **First demand:** Introduction to the book and the author's approach.
- **Second demand:** Analysis of the methods presented in the book for uncovering the Qur'an's objectives.
- **Third demand:** Assessment of the book's strengths and notable criticisms.

- **Section Three:** A comparative analysis of the two books. It includes three demands:

- **First demand:** Identification of similarities and differences between the two works.
- **Second demand:** A summary of the main findings of the research.
- **Third demand:** Proposal of new methods for uncovering the objectives of the Qur'an.
- **Conclusion**
- **References**

5. Section One: A detailed study of the book "The Mothers of the Objectives of the Qur'an and Methods of Understanding Them." This section is divided into three demands

5.1 First demand: An overview of the book and an analysis of the author's methodology

The book, comprising 560 pages, seeks to identify and present as many methods as possible for understanding the overarching objectives of the Qur'an. It also aims to clarify the criteria used to classify and organize these objectives based on their scope and significance. The book is structured into three main chapters:

Chapter One serves as an introductory foundation and is itself divided into three sections. **Section One** introduces the Qur'an, highlighting its significance and offering a historical overview of its revelation, recording, and compilation. It also explains how Qur'anic texts are integrated into the book's structure in a way that supports the study of its objectives and related themes.

Section Two explores the concept of objectives in detail. It notes that the most commonly used term in the Qur'an to denote objectives is "will" or "purpose." The chapter establishes that the objectives of Islamic law (Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah) are, in fact, part of the Qur'an's objectives—particularly when referring to specific rulings. It further emphasizes the diversity of these objectives and highlights the frequent confusion or overlap between objectives, goals, and the means used to achieve them.

Section Three traces the historical development of the objectives-based approach in Qur'anic studies and underscores its significance. It explains that this approach originates from the time of the Qur'an's revelation. The study of the objectives of words is linked to the theory of textual arrangement; the objectives of verses to the science of coherence (munāsaba); the objectives of entire surahs to their thematic unity; and the general objectives of the Qur'an to various interpretative methods—ranging from interpreting the Qur'an by the Qur'an itself, to thematic exegesis, and ultimately to exploring the central themes and comprehensive aims of the Qur'anic message.

The general objectives of the Holy Qur'an can be explored within jurisprudential studies through a sequential process that begins with examining Qur'anic rulings and their underlying wisdom. This is followed by the study of jurisprudential principles, the fundamentals of Islamic jurisprudence (uṣūl al-fiqh), legal maxims, the objectives of Islamic law (maqāṣid al-sharī'ah), the principles governing those objectives, and ultimately, the comprehensive objectives of the Qur'an. The author then turns to contemporary perspectives on these objectives, highlighting the efforts of modern scholars and emphasizing the critical importance of grasping the fundamental aims of the Qur'an. He points out that a failure to reflect deeply on the Qur'anic text, an overemphasis on fragmented details, and sectarian partisanship have all contributed to a lack of clarity regarding the priorities of the religion. This, in turn, has led to confusion about the hierarchy of Qur'anic objectives and has hindered progress in understanding the broader purposes and overarching message of the Qur'an.

Chapter Two: Approaches to Understanding and Deriving the Objectives of the Holy Qur'an (Al-Jaza'iri, 2011). This chapter outlines six distinct methodologies for identifying the objectives of the Qur'an.

Section One includes: examining the Qur'an's expressions of divine intent; analyzing the reasons provided within both the Qur'an and the Sunnah; reflecting on the names and attributes of both the Sender (Allah)

and the Message (the Qur'an); studying the Qur'an's overarching characteristics; classifying its themes; and considering the human need for divine guidance.

Section Two: Identifying the Central Aims of the Qur'an

This section presents various forms of evidence that highlight the wisdom behind the Qur'an's revelation and its intended purposes. These purposes include reflecting on its meanings, applying its teachings in daily life, learning from its warnings and guidance, spreading its message, implementing its legal rulings, reminding the morally responsible, offering glad tidings to the righteous, warning those who transgress, affirming the truth of previous prophets and messengers, clarifying the path of righteousness, guiding people to follow it, and leading them from darkness into light. Additionally, the significance of specific chapters (surahs) is emphasized through hadiths that highlight their virtues—such as those concerning Surah Al-Ikhlās and Surah Al-Fatihah.

Chapter Three: Classification and Structuring of the Qur'an's General Objectives

This chapter is organized into two main sections.

Section One: Explores the principles used to categorize the overarching objectives of the Qur'an and explains the general framework for their division.

The classification of the Qur'an's major objectives is grounded in textual sources. One example is the verse in Surah Al-Imran, which presents a binary categorization—clear (definitive) and unclear (ambiguous) verses (Attia, 2023). From the Sunnah, the hadith regarding the merits of Surah Al-Ikhlās suggests a threefold division of Qur'anic aims, the first of which is monotheism, while the remaining two are derived through scholarly interpretation (Al-Wahidi, 2009).

Another basis for classification stems from rational analysis of the content of speech. In this context, the Qur'an may be viewed as addressing one of three areas: the Creator, the creation, or legal rulings. Alternatively, the division may be founded on wisdom-related themes—distinguishing between theoretical wisdom, such as imparting true knowledge, and practical wisdom, which involves guiding correct action. A further method of classification involves analyzing thematic elements in the Qur'an. This includes identifying core subject areas and dividing them into three broad categories: the science of creed ('aqīdah), the science of worship ('ibādah), and other themes, such as narratives and accounts of creation.

The author identifies nine central objectives of the Qur'an, all of which serve the broader goal of faith. These objectives include: beliefs, practical laws, theoretical knowledge, moral deterrence, spiritual excellence (iḥsān), remembrance of Allah, affirmation of truth, delivering admonition, and pure devotion to Allah. Each of these supports and flows into the comprehensive aim of nurturing true faith.

The criteria for ordering these objectives are based on two foundational considerations:

1. Priority in the Qur'anic Message: This reflects the nature of the Meccan revelations, which emphasize foundational beliefs, and the Medinan revelations, which focus on building a just and cohesive society.

2. Priority in Prophetic Missions: This includes the universal prophetic calls to monotheism, affirmation of prophethood, establishment of prayer, belief in the Last Day, and related themes.

Based on these criteria, the objectives are arranged into three hierarchical levels:

First Level: Sincere devotion to Allah.

Second Level: Faith and righteous actions.

Third Level: Belief in Allah and the Last Day.

Section Two: Introduces the primary objectives of the Qur'an.

This section also presents a detailed discussion of the Qur'an's primary objectives. The ultimate purpose is sincere worship of Allah alone. Supporting this are core goals: knowledge, belief, and good deeds. Complementary aims—which serve as essential tools for realizing these foundations—include deterrence from wrongdoing, exhortation, constant reminders, patience, and acts of kindness.

Finally, the author concludes with several recommendations. These include the need to focus on comprehensive Qur'anic studies, the importance of examining the objectives of each surah in light of its order of revelation, and the value of tracing the fundamental goals within the prophetic messages. He also emphasizes recognizing the Lawgiver's gradual approach in articulating these objectives and their respective importance, as seen throughout the Prophet's biography and the revealed verses.

5.2 Second demand: Examination of the methods used in the book to uncover the objectives of the Qur'an

In this demand, the author devotes a chapter to outlining the methods by which the objectives of the Qur'an can be understood and extracted directly from the text. This chapter is divided into two sections: the first addresses the methodologies for discerning the Qur'an's objectives, while the second focuses on identifying its principal aims. The **first section** presents six key methods:

1. Deriving Objectives through Expressions of Divine Will

This method involves analyzing explicit statements in the Qur'an that express Allah's will, as these often reflect His intended purposes. The author identifies thirteen such expressions and provides examples, including the verse: "Allah intends for you ease and does not intend for you hardship" [Al-Baqarah: 185]. Statements like these directly reveal divine intent.

2. Deriving Objectives through Qur'anic and Prophetic Justifications

This method focuses on examining the rationales and explanations found in both the Qur'an and the Sunnah. Since the cause ('illah) and justification form the basis of understanding the Lawgiver's intent, they are central to uncovering objectives. These justifications serve to highlight the intended benefit or wisdom behind a command or prohibition. Sometimes, the cause is explicitly stated in the text—for instance, the verse: "So that it will not be a perpetual distribution among the rich among you" [Al-Hashr: 7]—while in other cases, it is indicated through grammatical particles such as lam al-ta'lil, hattā, in, or bi. Scholars of Islamic legal theory (uṣūl al-fiqh) have also relied on tools like analogy (qiyās), juristic preference (istiḥsān), public interest (maṣlahah), and blocking the means (sadd al-dharā'ī) to infer divine objectives, emphasizing the link between reason and divine wisdom.

3. Deriving Objectives through Names and Attributes

The divine names and attributes of Allah, as well as those of the Qur'an, offer deep insights into its aims. Allah's names—such as The Most Merciful—invite believers to praise Him, call upon Him, and strive to embody appropriate traits like mercy. Similarly, the names of the Qur'an reflect its functions: Al-Qur'an signifies its role in recitation, while Al-Furqān highlights its ability to distinguish between truth and falsehood.

4. Deriving Objectives from the Qur'an's General Characteristics

Certain inherent features of the Qur'an point to its objectives. Its divine origin demands belief and faith, which is itself a core purpose. Other features—such as its clarity, ease of understanding, and status as the final revelation—reinforce additional objectives, including accessibility, universality, and finality of the message.

5. Deriving Objectives through Thematic Content

This approach involves identifying overarching themes by grouping verses around shared subjects, examining the themes of entire chapters (suwar), or analyzing the occasions of revelation (asbāb al-nuzūl). Scholars have also proposed classifications of the Qur'an's content into three primary categories: theology ('aqidah), legislation (sharī'ah), and ethics (akhlaq). These themes align with the major purposes of the Qur'anic message.

6. Deriving Objectives through Human Need for Revelation

This method is grounded in recognizing the essential human need for divine guidance. The Qur'an addresses fundamental existential questions, such as the origin of creation, the purpose of human life, and the reality of death and the afterlife. In doing so, it provides answers to the most profound inquiries posed by humanity, highlighting the necessity of an infallible source of knowledge and guidance.

Second Section: Methods for Extracting the Major Objectives of the Qur'an

This section is structured into three main demands:

Demand One: Extracting the Explicit Objectives Stated in the Qur'an

This demand focuses on identifying the Qur'an's objectives as directly expressed within its verses. For example, the verse: "Alif, Lam, Meem. This is the Book about which there is no doubt, a guidance for those conscious of Allah" [Al-Baqarah: 1–2] clearly identifies guidance as a central aim. Additional purposes are also highlighted throughout the Qur'an, including fostering belief, offering moral reminders, conveying the message to others, engaging in dialogue with the People of the Book, establishing laws, encouraging

adherence, serving as a source of judgment, delivering warnings and glad tidings, affirming divine truths, reinforcing monotheism, validating the final message, and promoting piety. Each of these reflects the Qur'an's overarching purpose of transforming both individual hearts and collective societies.

Demand Two: Deriving Objectives from the Prophetic Sunnah

This section explores how the Sunnah further clarifies the objectives of the Qur'an. Prophetic traditions often emphasize the significance of specific chapters and verses. For instance, the hadiths highlighting the virtues of Surah Al-Ikhlās illustrate the importance of monotheism. Scholars have inferred from such traditions that the Qur'an's key objectives encompass a broad range of themes: narratives, legal rulings, divine attributes, religious teachings, sermons, creedal beliefs, and more. Surah Al-Fatihah serves as a prime example—it is referred to as (Daraz, 2005) "Umm al-Qur'an" (the Mother of the Qur'an) because it encapsulates many of its greatest purposes, such as monotheism, devotion, trust in Allah, supplication, and remembrance. It combines praise, worship, commands, prohibitions, divine promises, and warnings—making it a microcosm of the Qur'anic message.

5.3 Third demand: A discussion of the book's strengths and the primary critiques it has received

The book possesses numerous strengths and valuable contributions, distinguishing itself through scholarly rigor and thoughtful organization. Among its notable merits is the solid foundation upon which its arguments are built, consistently anchored in the Qur'an and Sunnah. The author skillfully supports his discussions by referencing relevant verses and hadiths to extract and substantiate the Qur'an's intended objectives.

One of the book's most commendable aspects is its clear explanation of the concept of maqāṣid (objectives), along with an in-depth exploration of synonymous terms found within the Qur'an. The author emphasizes linguistic analysis, complemented by a historical review of the development of the objectives-based approach in Qur'anic studies. He traces this progression from the time of revelation, through the evolution of Islamic jurisprudence, and the stages of thematic interpretation—all in connection with uncovering the Qur'an's higher aims. The book also delves into the lexical and terminological richness of the Qur'an, skillfully analyzing textual evidence, connecting various pieces of information, and presenting well-reasoned conclusions. It surveys scholarly opinions on Qur'anic objectives, cites notable statements, and offers a thorough review of relevant literature. By distinguishing clearly between objectives and goals, the author provides an important conceptual framework that enhances the reader's ability to engage with Qur'anic texts more deeply.

Another strength lies in the structure and clarity of the work. The divisions and subcategories are meticulously presented, allowing for a comprehensive grasp of the subject. The author effectively categorizes the objectives, discusses the methods for achieving them, and differentiates between general and specific goals. The book's progression is also a highlight. The first chapter serves as a foundational introduction to the discipline, defining its scope and tracing its historical evolution. The second chapter addresses the methodologies for identifying and deriving Qur'anic objectives, while the third chapter discusses their classification, prioritization, and the criteria for such ordering.

Additionally, the author's reliance on original classical sources—such as the works of al-Ghazālī and al-Shāṭibī—alongside modern contributions by scholars like Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā and Ibn 'Āshūr, strengthens the academic integrity of the study. By integrating classical insights with contemporary thought, the author succeeds in creating a comprehensive and cohesive analysis. He synthesizes dispersed ideas found in a wide range of texts using deduction, induction, and textual analysis. Importantly, he also demonstrates how the divine wisdom behind the Qur'an's revelation connects directly to the process of identifying its overarching objectives.

The book offers a profound and thorough exploration of the objectives of the Qur'an, with particular strength in their classification, organization, and, most importantly, the methods of deriving them. While the work is free from major criticisms, a few minor observations may explain certain differences in scholarly perspective: One such observation is the repetition of "faith" and "righteous deeds" across both the second and third levels of objectives. Assigning each to a distinct level might have provided a clearer and more precise categorization. Additionally, the author occasionally diverges into extended discussions on

subsidiary issues while addressing the importance of the Qur'anic objectives, which somewhat detracts from the central theme.

The book also treats some characteristics of the Qur'an—such as the balance between fixed and flexible rulings—as if they were objectives in themselves. However, it would be more accurate to present these features as means that serve to fulfill the broader objectives of the Qur'an, rather than as ends in themselves. There is also some inconsistency in the terminology used to label the Qur'anic objectives. For instance, in the second chapter of the second section, they are referred to as “The Major Objectives of the Qur'an,” while in the third section of the same chapter, the term “The Mothers of the Objectives of the Qur'an” is used. Elsewhere, the phrase “The General Objectives of the Qur'an” appears. A consistent and unified terminology throughout the book would have enhanced clarity and cohesion.

Furthermore, the author includes a section titled “*The Status of the Qur'an Among Scholars and Non-Muslims*”. While his aim may have been to highlight the Qur'an's universal influence, a focused discussion on its standing within the Qur'an and Sunnah would have sufficed. If the intention was to showcase the Qur'an's impact on non-Muslims, it would have been more appropriate to frame this in the context of the Qur'an's miraculous nature and its effect on those who hear it. The book also delves into topics within Qur'anic sciences—such as revelation, compilation, transmission, and organization—with the aim of relating them to the Qur'an's objectives. However, the treatment of these topics fluctuates between being overly detailed and insufficiently explored. A more balanced approach—emphasizing how these sciences directly connect to the objectives—would have been beneficial. Lastly, while the book excels in theoretical analysis, it could have gone further by linking the derived objectives to contemporary realities. Illustrating how these objectives might offer solutions to present-day social challenges—even briefly—would have added a valuable practical dimension. Expanding on how understanding the Qur'an's objectives enhances comprehension, interpretation, and contextual application of its meanings would also have significantly enriched the discussion.

6. Section Two: A foundational study of the book "The Science of Qur'anic Objectives – An Authentic Study." This chapter also consists of three demands:

6.1 First demand: Introduction to the book and the author's approach

The book comprises 202 pages and aims to establish and systematize the study of Qur'anic objectives. It seeks to clearly define the science of Qur'anic objectives, examine its impact on interpretation and contemplation, determine its levels, highlight the contributions of scholars in elucidating its meaning, and address doubts or misconceptions surrounding it.

The author outlines two key contributions of his study:

1. Foundational development of this field of knowledge.
2. Comprehensive coverage of the core topics and issues related to the foundational study of Qur'anic objectives, as much as possible within a single research effort.

The book is structured into five main sections:

Section One: A General Introduction to the Study of Qur'anic Objectives

This section includes ten introductory discussions:

1. Definition of the science of Qur'anic objectives.
2. The overarching purpose of revelation: introducing creation to the truth of the Almighty.
3. Scholarly perspectives on the areas of research within the study of objectives.
4. The distinction between the objectives of the Qur'an and those of Islamic law (Sharia).
5. The fruits and effects of the science of Qur'anic objectives on Qur'anic studies.
6. The relation of this science to other disciplines—it is considered a branch of Qur'anic sciences.
7. The historical development of the science of Qur'anic objectives.
8. Terms and expressions that refer to Qur'anic objectives.
9. The sources from which this science is derived.
10. Approaches to Qur'anic objectives between excess and negligence.

Section Two: The Role of the Prophetic Sunnah in Directing Attention to Qur'anic Objectives

This section consists of three topics:

1. Hadiths highlighting the virtues of Surah Al-Fatihah and their relevance to the objectives of the Qur'an.

2. Hadiths on the virtues of Surah Al-Ikhlās (Al-Bukhari, 2001, Muslim, 1955) and their implications for understanding Qur'anic objectives, including detailed scholarly interpretations and deductions.

3. The broader influence of Prophetic traditions in emphasizing Qur'anic purposes.

Section Three: The Types and Levels of Qur'anic Objectives

This section contains two subsections:

Subsection One: Types of Qur'anic Objectives

These are categorized in several ways:

- **By meaning:**
- Goals and purposes indicated by verses explaining the wisdom behind the Qur'an's revelation (e.g., "To bring people out of darkness into light" [Ibrahim: 1]).
- Themes and overarching meanings, as reflected in Hadiths on the merits of specific surahs.
- **By scope:**
- General (universal) objectives, such as guiding humanity and establishing true belief.
- Specific (partial) objectives, such as those related to pilgrimage (Hajj).
- **By method of verification:**
- Objectives supported by explicit evidence, like the Qur'an being a guide.
- Objectives derived through scholarly reasoning, via inference or induction from texts.

Subsection Two: Levels of Consideration in Qur'anic Objectives

1. Primary/general objectives – fundamental aims like guiding creation.
2. Objectives tied to major themes – such as legal rulings, categorized into essential, necessary, and complementary objectives.
3. Objectives linked to parts of surahs – when a portion of a surah reflects a particular objective.
4. Surah-level objectives – when a surah has a central unifying aim across multiple themes; referred to by terms like: theme, axis, goal, or spirit of the surah.
5. Objectives at the passage level – specific sections within surahs.
6. Verse-level objectives – examining the purpose of a verse or part of it, and its context within the surah.

Section Four: Methods for Uncovering the Objectives of the Qur'an

This section outlines different approaches and methodologies used in identifying Qur'anic objectives (discussed in detail in the earlier portions of the book).

Section Five: Highlights from Scholarly Contributions on Qur'anic Objectives (Analysis and Review)

Subsection One: Contributions of Early Scholars

The author notes that although early writings on this subject were limited, they provided essential insights and guidance. Examples include:

- Imam Abu Hamid al-Ghazali (d. 505 AH) in *Jawahir al-Qur'an*, where he was the first to use the term *Maqasid al-Qur'an* (Objectives of the Qur'an). He categorized them into six types—three primary and three secondaries—and based his division on Hadiths like that of Surah Al-Ikhlās.
- Imam Ibn Juzayy al-Kalbi, in his *Al-Tashil li 'Ulum al-Tanzil*, outlined seven objectives for prophetic stories and addressed the general objectives of the Qur'an under the heading "The themes and sciences contained within the Qur'an." The author notes that Ibn Juzayy used terms such as meanings and sciences, and his categorization was based on induction.

Subsection Two: Contributions of Later Scholars in Explaining the Objectives of The Qur'an

- Sheikh Rashid Rida, through his *tafsir Al-Manar* and his book *Al-Wahy al-Muhammadi*, classified objectives into ten categories, which the author argues all fall under three primary areas: beliefs, ethics, and rulings.
- Sheikh Ibn Ashur, who identified eight major and subordinate objectives in the introduction to his *tafsir*, focusing particularly on reform. The author considers his approach highly practical.
- Sheikh Muhammad al-Ghazali, who discussed five major themes, with the author noting his method relied heavily on inductive reasoning. He then concluded with a conclusion, in which we summarize what he mentioned: The author concludes that Qur'anic objectives form a specialized field within the broader Qur'anic sciences. They encompass the Qur'an's goals and central themes and are broader in scope than the objectives of Sharia. Most scholars agree there are three core Qur'anic objectives, based on interpretations

of Surah Al-Ikhlās. Imam Al-Ghazali was among the first to use the term Maqasid al-Qur'an. Two key principles must be considered in studying this field:

1. Avoiding exaggeration by attributing unfounded meanings to the objectives and disregarding clear textual meanings.
2. Avoiding negligence by ignoring the objectives and their reasoning.

Qur'anic objectives vary in type and level, but they all ultimately lead back to the central aim: acquainting humanity with the One Allah, thereby guiding them and securing their well-being in this life and the next. Some objectives are explicitly stated, while others are disputed, as they are subject to independent reasoning.

Additional Topics Addressed

- **The secrets behind the distribution of objectives across verses and surahs:** This includes both the perfect arrangement of the Qur'an and the divine wisdom in how its objectives are spread throughout its text.

- **General methods for discovering Qur'anic objectives:**

- Through explicit textual evidence.
- Through scholarly reasoning using:
 - Induction
 - Deduction
 - Studying scholarly contributions and methodologies.

- **Methods for identifying surah-specific objectives:** Through independent reasoning (whether inductive or deductive), as well as consideration of elements like the surah's name, opening verse, and concluding verse.

6.2 Second demand: Analysis of the methods presented in the book for uncovering the Qur'an's objectives

In the fourth section of his book, the author focuses on the methods used to uncover the objectives of the Holy Qur'an, organizing the discussion into three main sections.

Section One explores the wisdom behind the distribution of these objectives throughout the verses and chapters (surahs) of the Qur'an. He emphasizes that the aims of the Qur'an are intricately and beautifully woven across its entirety—embedded within both its individual verses and broader surahs.

He analyzes this concept from two key perspectives:

1. The Qur'an's Remarkable Structure – The Qur'an was revealed progressively, responding to unfolding events and real-life situations, which resulted in its unique and purposeful arrangement.
2. The Wisdom Behind the Distribution of Objectives – The author outlines several insights into why the Qur'an's objectives are spread out in this manner:

- The Qur'an's rhetorical style suited the initial audience, who were more familiar with oral expression than formal instruction. Its format balances invitation, counsel, legislation, and miracle.
- The dispersal of guidance ensures that individuals—regardless of how much of the Qur'an they read or memorize—can still benefit from its teachings.
- This method encourages scholars of every era to engage in deeper analysis, drawing meanings and legal rulings from the text through study and interpretation.
- The variation in themes and styles across different surahs and verses keeps the audience engaged, preventing monotony.
- Reiterating certain objectives throughout the text acts as a reminder for believers, reinforcing essential teachings and moral guidance.
- The Qur'an's diverse approaches—ranging from legal rulings to motivational messages, warnings, and demonstrations of divine power—make its message more compelling, impactful, and transformative.

Section Two: General Approaches to Uncovering the Objectives of the Holy Qur'an

This section outlines the general methods by which the objectives of the Holy Qur'an can be identified, classifying them into two primary pathways from which other methods branch out.

The First Path: Explicit Mention of Objectives

This approach relies on the Qur'an's direct articulation of its purposes—whether major, general, partial, or thematic. One of the distinguishing features of the Qur'an is its clarity; it frequently highlights and explains its intended objectives. This form of purposeful exposition appears in several ways, the most prominent of which include:

1. Clarifying the reason for revelation—whether of the Qur'an in general, a specific ruling, or a particular subject. For instance, the association between fasting and piety illustrates that piety is a clear objective of fasting.
2. General descriptions of the Qur'an that imply its intended purposes and the wisdom behind its revelation, such as portraying it as a source of guidance and moral exhortation.
3. Expressing divine intent—clearly stating Allah's will and aim, such as guiding humanity to the paths of righteousness and faith.

The Second Path: Striving Through Interpretation (Ijtihad)

This method involves intellectual and spiritual effort to deduce the Qur'an's objectives. A qualified interpreter (mujtahid) must embody sincerity, patience, humility before Allah, and possess the necessary scholarly tools to engage in reflection and ijtihad. Several methodological approaches fall under this path:

1. **Inductive Reasoning** – This entails analyzing numerous details within a specific topic to formulate a general understanding or ruling. For example, the aim of a surah can be inferred by studying its subject matter, opening verses, and conclusion to determine a unified theme or objective.

2. **Deductive Reasoning** – A broader method than induction, deduction involves drawing general insights from particular cases, using contemplative reasoning to derive overarching meanings.

3. **Reviewing Scholarly Contributions** – Examining the work of past scholars in this field provides valuable perspectives, expands understanding, and facilitates renewal in interpretation. The study of previous scholarship serves as a foundation for contemporary ijtihad and helps illuminate the Qur'an's objectives.

Additionally, this effort to uncover the objectives of the Qur'an extends to understanding the specific aims of individual surahs. This, too, is achieved through various interpretive methods, including induction, deduction, and scholarly comparison. Several specific indicators aid in this process:

- **The Name of the Surah:** As Al-Biqā'i noted (Al-Baqā'i, 1987), understanding the meaning behind a surah's name can reveal its intended purpose. For example, the name "Al-Ikhlāṣ" (Sincerity) does not appear in the text of the surah but clearly reflects its central theme—devotion to the oneness of Allah.
- **The Surah's Opening Verses:** The beginning often sets the tone and hints at its primary focus.
- **The Surah's Conclusion:** There is often a strong connection between the beginning and ending of a surah, forming a cohesive and harmonious structure. For instance, the introduction and conclusion of Surah Al-Baqarah beautifully mirror each other, enclosing the content like two arches that complete a single, unified structure (Daraz, 2005).

The author further identifies additional pathways for discovering Qur'anic objectives, including:

- The context and timing of a surah's revelation.
- The surah's unique vocabulary and internal themes.
- The rationale behind specific commands and prohibitions.
- Explicit declarations of divine will, whether found directly in the Qur'anic text or in the sayings of the Prophet (peace be upon him).
- Thematic analysis, where multiple verses on a single topic are studied collectively to extract coherent objectives.
- Reflection on these texts to derive the underlying purposes they promote or affirm.

The author affirms the significance of scholarly efforts in uncovering the objectives of the Qur'an, recognizing them as valuable tools for deeper understanding. He especially highlights the importance of examining the aims of individual surahs, seeing them as a gateway to grasping the broader objectives of the Qur'an. Among the key methods identified are ijtihad, thematic reflection, and the analysis of surah titles, introductions, and conclusions as indicators of divine purpose.

6.3 Third demand: Assessment of the book's strengths and notable criticisms

This book serves as a significant and well-crafted introduction to the field of Qur'anic objectives. Despite its concise nature, it effectively presents and organizes the subject matter with clarity and depth. Its key strengths can be summarized as follows:

1. It offers a foundational overview of the science of Qur'anic objectives, clearly outlining its classifications and topics without excessive repetition.
2. The author conducts a thorough and well-grounded study of this field, establishing its principles and presenting essential introductory concepts.
3. The structure of the book is notable for its logical progression and coherent sequencing of ideas, demonstrating a firm command of categorization and subcategorization.
4. Qur'anic verses and prophetic traditions are consistently employed as primary evidence to support the author's arguments. Furthermore, the book integrates insights from both classical and contemporary scholars, weaving them into both theoretical discussion and practical application.
5. The author addresses various issues related to Qur'anic objectives with precision, accurately conveying scholarly opinions and critically engaging with earlier perspectives in a scholarly and purposeful manner.
6. The book employs a blend of inductive and deductive reasoning to develop the field, explain its categories and levels, and outline methods for identifying objectives.

It also adopts a descriptive-analytical approach when discussing and comparing scholarly definitions.

7. It is enriched by the author's insightful reflections, analytical deductions, and thoughtful observations, especially following his review of scholars' contributions to this field.
8. A distinctive feature of the book is its novel arrangement of the methods used to uncover Qur'anic objectives.
9. It sets forth the ten foundational principles of the science of Qur'anic objectives, offering a structured framework for its study.
10. The book concludes with valuable suggestions aimed at enhancing and advancing the development of this discipline.
11. It successfully links the identification of overarching Qur'anic objectives with the specific objectives of individual surahs.

Critique of the Book:

While the book does not present any major shortcomings, there are areas where it could benefit from further development. In particular, expanding its engagement with the views of past and present scholars—through more extensive citations and in-depth analysis—would strengthen its academic rigor. Additionally, incorporating a broader range of practical examples would enhance its applied value. Although the book organizes and reclassifies existing methods for uncovering Qur'anic objectives effectively, it does not introduce entirely new methodological approaches in this regard.

7. Section Three: A comparative analysis of the two books. It includes three demands:

7.1 First demand: Identification of similarities and differences between the two works

Both books share a common aim: uncovering the objectives of the Qur'an through an inductive approach to research. They each provide a concise historical overview of the development of the science of Qur'anic objectives—beginning with the revelation of the Qur'an and extending to contemporary scholarly contributions—without delving deeply into its historical evolution. Their primary focus lies in the theoretical domain, offering foundational discussions on the definition, significance, and scope of this emerging field.

Although primarily written for specialists, both works are accessible to a broader audience. In particular, *Qur'anic Objectives: A Fundamental Study* is tailored for undergraduate students, characterized by its simplified language and approachable format.

The book *The Mothers of the Qur'anic Objectives* distinguishes itself through its rigorous analysis of Qur'anic vocabulary and terminology, engaging with textual evidence, drawing logical connections, and substantiating its conclusions with well-supported arguments. It incorporates scholarly opinions, cites authoritative statements, reviews relevant literature on objectives, and includes a historical overview. Notably, the book delves deeply into linguistic analysis—though at times this emphasis may overshadow

the central arguments. Nonetheless, both books exhibit a comprehensive approach, combining detailed textual analysis with contextual interpretation.

The Mothers of the Qur'anic Objectives is primarily focused on analytical, linguistic, and thematic aspects, particularly the overarching objectives of the Qur'an. In contrast, The Science of the Objectives of the Qur'an places greater emphasis on both theoretical and applied dimensions, exploring both general and specific objectives.

Unlike the former, The Science of the Objectives of the Qur'an does not extensively engage in linguistic analysis. However, it uniquely addresses the objectives of individual surahs as integral components of the Qur'an's broader objectives, treating them as a pathway toward uncovering the Qur'an's overall aims. It also establishes a strong conceptual foundation for understanding objectives, incorporating scholarly perspectives, drawing evidence from the Qur'an and Sunnah, and emphasizing contextual and temporal considerations in its semantic analysis.

While both books agree on the general methods used to identify Qur'anic objectives, they differ in their manner of presentation. Common methodologies include:

1. Interpretation of Qur'anic and prophetic texts.
2. Reflection on the names and descriptors of the Qur'an.
3. Identification of divine intent as expressed in scripture.
4. Examination of scholarly efforts and viewpoints.
5. Inductive analysis of Islamic texts.

Maqāṣid Ummāt al-Qur'ān (The Objectives of the Mothers of the Qur'an) stands out for its exploration of objectives through the general traits of the Qur'an and its thematic content, such as distinguishing between Meccan and Medinan revelations and recognizing the human need for divine, infallible guidance. On the other hand, The Science of Qur'anic Objectives offers a unique contribution by employing both inductive and deductive reasoning to uncover objectives.

The relationship between these two books—and others within the broader field of Qur'anic objectives—is best described as complementary. Each focuses on different dimensions: some emphasize general objectives, others explore specific aims, while some examine the objectives of entire surahs or individual verses. Still others combine various levels of objectives, contributing collectively to the richness and diversity of the field.

7.2 Second demand: A summary of the main findings of the research

Upon analyzing the book The Mothers of the Qur'an's Objectives and the Methods of Understanding Them, it becomes evident that the author outlines several key approaches to uncovering the Qur'an's objectives. These include interpreting expressions of divine will through various channels: the justifications found in the Qur'an and Sunnah, the divine names and attributes, the general characteristics of the Qur'an, and the thematic nature of its content—such as distinguishing between Meccan and Medinan revelations. He also emphasizes understanding humanity's need for divine, infallible revelation, particularly in addressing existential and eschatological concerns.

One of the primary methods identified is the use of Qur'anic verses that explicitly state their objectives—such as the attainment of faith—as well as references from the Sunnah, like the virtues of specific surahs. In addition, the statements of scholars concerning the foundational objectives of the Qur'an play a significant role in this framework. The author highlights that the general characteristics of the Qur'an themselves serve as indicators of its objectives. For example, he refers to the Qur'an's universality as a divine book for all humanity—implying that its guidance transcends time and place. This aim is clearly affirmed in verses like: **{Alif, Lam, Meem. This is the Book about which there is no doubt, a guidance for those conscious of Allah}** [Al-Baqarah: 1–2].

In comparison, the book The Science of Qur'anic Objectives presents a slightly different set of methods. These include:

1. Direct explanation of objectives, referred to as explicit reasoning.
2. Describing the Qur'an's attributes.
3. Clarifying divine intent.

4. Striving to understand objectives through methods such as induction and deduction.
5. Examining the contributions and insights of past scholars.
6. Building on the foundational work of earlier efforts in the field.

The diversity in scholars' identification of the Qur'an's objectives can be attributed to several factors:

1. The process of deriving objectives relies heavily on *ijtihad* (independent reasoning), which naturally leads to variations in interpretation.
2. Differences in intellectual and methodological approaches.
3. Varied levels of comprehension across disciplines and differences in cognitive styles.
4. Multiple methodologies for classifying and interpreting Qur'anic verses.

In conducting research on Qur'anic objectives, several critical considerations should be observed:

1. Collecting and analyzing verses that address a single topic, while taking into account their meanings, contexts, and circumstances of revelation.
2. Recognizing that understanding objectives aids in the accurate interpretation of verses—and, conversely, that a proper grasp of verse meanings contributes to the recognition of Qur'anic and surah-level objectives.
3. A strong command of the Arabic language is essential, as it is a fundamental tool for interpretation.
4. Awareness of the historical and situational context of revelation, including the intended audience.
5. Gradual progression in discovering Qur'anic objectives—moving from verse-level aims to surah-level purposes and thematic unity.
6. Reference to the objectives of Islamic law, particularly in the context of legal verses and legislative development.
7. A deep understanding of semantic meanings and the reconciliation of apparently similar terms.
8. Objective study and analysis of Qur'anic terminology to uncover deeper conceptual goals.
9. Recognizing the critical role of context in achieving a more profound understanding of meanings and ensuring accurate interpretation aligned with Qur'anic intent.

7.3 Third demand: Proposal of new methods for uncovering the objectives of the Qur'an

Scholars have diligently explored and articulated the various methods for uncovering the objectives of the Qur'an. A careful review of the literature in this field reveals that most known methodologies have already been identified and extensively examined. It is therefore rare to encounter entirely new approaches. However, since *ijtihad* (independent reasoning) remains a vital tool for scholarly innovation, there is room to propose fresh perspectives—particularly by examining the miraculous aspects of the Qur'an as a pathway to understanding its objectives.

Among the most significant indicators of the Qur'an's objectives is its miraculous nature, especially its rhetorical inimitability (*i'jāz bayānī*). This form of miracle affirms the Qur'an's divine origin by highlighting the inability of human beings—despite their linguistic mastery—to replicate its structure, eloquence, and stylistic excellence. The Arabs of the Prophet's time, known for their unparalleled eloquence, were challenged by the Qur'an to produce something comparable, whether it be an entire Qur'an, ten chapters, or even a single chapter. Their failure to meet this challenge is captured in the verse:

"And when Our verses are recited to them, they say, 'We have heard. If we wished, we could say something like this. This is nothing but tales of the ancients.'" [Al-Anfāl: 31].

Classical scholars explained that the challenge here was to produce speech that mirrored the Qur'an's unique structure and highest level of eloquence (Al-Wahidi, 2009). Thus, the Qur'an's rhetorical miracle is intrinsically tied to its legislative origin, serving as enduring proof of its divine source. This miracle not only validates the prophethood of Muhammad (peace be upon him) but also confirms his role as the Seal of the Prophets. Establishing this truth is, in itself, a fundamental objective of the Qur'an, as seen in the verse: **"Blessed is He who sent down the Criterion upon His Servant that he may be a warner to the worlds."** [Al-Furqān: 1], and also: **"Say, 'He who knows the secret within the heavens and the earth has sent it down. Indeed, He is ever Forgiving and Merciful.'"** [Al-Furqān: 6].

Another facet of the Qur'an's miraculous nature lies in its foreknowledge of the unseen (*ghayb*), which encompasses information about past events, future occurrences, and contemporary realities unknown at

the time of revelation. Allah, the Knower of the unseen and the seen, states: **“Knower of the unseen and the witnessed, the Great, the Exalted.”** [Al-Ra’d: 9], and also: **“Knower of the unseen, and He does not disclose His unseen to anyone, except a messenger whom He has chosen.”** [Al-Jinn: 26–27].

Through divine revelation, the Prophet (peace be upon him) was informed of matters beyond human knowledge—truths of past nations, future predictions, hidden conversations, and thoughts kept in the hearts of disbelievers. As the Qur’an states: **“And it is not for Allah to inform you of the unseen, but Allah chooses from among His messengers whom He wills.”** [Āl ‘Imrān: 179].

This validates that such knowledge could only come from the All-Knowing, as affirmed in: **“He said, ‘The Knowing One has informed me—the All-Aware.’”** [At-Taḥrīm: 3].

These elements affirm the divine origin of the Qur’an, verifying the authenticity of the Prophet’s message. This, too, constitutes a central objective of the Qur’an—establishing the truth of prophethood and the divine nature of revelation. Allah says: **“And thus We have sent down to you the Book. So those to whom We gave the Scripture believe in it, and among these are those who believe in it. And none reject Our signs except the disbelievers. And you did not recite any scripture before it, nor did you write it with your right hand. Otherwise, the falsifiers would have had cause for doubt.”** [Al-‘Ankabūt: 47–48].

Among the manifestations of the Qur’an’s miraculous nature is its legislative miracle. This divine legislation is comprehensive and flawless, addressing the needs of humanity across all dimensions of life. As the Qur’an affirms: **“This day I have perfected for you your religion, completed My favor upon you, and have approved for you Islam as your religion.”** [Al-Mā’idah: 3].

It establishes the relationship between the servant and his Lord, clearly outlining the rulings related to worship and transactions. At the individual level, it purifies the soul and regulates personal conduct; at the societal level, it sets guidelines for human interactions and relationships. The preservation of the five essential human necessities—religion, life, intellect, lineage, and property—is at the heart of this legislative system. This is evident in the Qur’anic command: **“Say, ‘Come, I will recite what your Lord has prohibited to you..’ continuing with ‘Do not associate anything with Him, and be kind to parents. Do not kill your children for fear of poverty—We provide for you and for them. Do not approach immoralities—whether outward or inward. And do not kill the soul which Allah has forbidden, except by right. This He has instructed you that you may understand.”** [Al-An’ām: 151].

This divine system is entirely consistent, free from contradiction or conflict—an attribute beyond human capacity and indicative of its divine origin. As the Qur’an states: **“Do they not then reflect upon the Qur’an? Had it been from anyone other than Allah, they would have found much contradiction in it.”** [An-Nisā’: 82].

One of the major objectives conveyed by this legislative miracle is the establishment of justice. Allah declares: **“Indeed, We have sent down to you the Book in truth so that you may judge between people by what Allah has shown you.”** [An-Nisā’:105], and further: **“We certainly sent Our messengers with clear proofs, and sent with them the Scripture and the balance so that people may uphold justice. And We sent down iron, in which is great strength and benefit for mankind, and so that Allah may make evident those who support Him and His messengers, even though unseen. Indeed, Allah is Powerful and Exalted in Might.”** [Al-Ḥadīd: 25].

Another significant aspect of the Qur’anic miracle is its **moral guidance**. The Qur’an repeatedly emphasizes noble character and ethical behavior. It commends those who display self-restraint, forgiveness, and generosity: **“Those who spend in prosperity and adversity, who restrain anger and pardon others—indeed, Allah loves the doers of good.”** [Āl ‘Imrān: 134].

It consistently highlights virtuous traits, such as sincerity, humility, patience, and truthfulness, whether in a servant’s relationship with his Creator, personal character, or dealings with others. These ethical teachings are among the core objectives of the Qur’an, as illustrated in the verse: **“Righteousness is not [merely] turning your faces towards the east or the west. Rather, righteousness is in one who believes in Allah, the Last Day, the angels, the Book, and the prophets; who gives wealth, in spite of love for it, to relatives, orphans, the needy, travelers, beggars, and for freeing slaves; who establishes prayer and gives zakāh; who fulfills their promises when they make them; and who are patient in poverty,**

hardship, and in battle. Those are the ones who have been true, and they are the righteous.” [Al-Baqarah: 177].

Therefore, an in-depth study of the Qur'an's miraculous aspects offers a profound method for uncovering its objectives. This includes investigating the reasons for revelation (*asbāb al-nuzūl*), understanding the historical and social context of the verses, analyzing their linguistic structure and rhetorical style, and connecting individual verses to the overarching discourse of the Qur'anic message.

8. Conclusion

Upon completing this research, the following key conclusions have been reached:

1. General objectives represent the overarching aims of the Qur'anic message—such as promoting societal welfare—while specific objectives pertain to more focused areas, like the well-being of the family as a component of society. Partial objectives, in turn, relate to particular rulings within those specific aims, such as the wisdom behind the institution of marriage.
2. It is an error to derive legal rulings solely from objectives while disregarding explicit and authoritative textual evidence from the Qur'an and Sunnah.
3. Qur'anic objectives are not confined to a single verse; rather, they are supported and reinforced by multiple verses across the Qur'anic text.
4. A distinctive feature of Qur'anic objectives is their permanence and universality—they remain relevant and unchanged across time and context.
5. The science of Qur'anic objectives is integrally connected to other Qur'anic sciences, particularly the principles of interpretation (*uṣūl al-tafsīr*) and thematic interpretation (*al-tafsīr al-mawḍūʿī*).
6. The methods for uncovering Qur'anic objectives include those explicitly indicated by the Qur'anic and Prophetic texts, as well as those that are deduced through *ijtihād* (independent reasoning) and scholarly inference.
7. Deep reflection on the meanings of words, their connotations, and the deliberate selection of Qur'anic expressions is essential in uncovering the objectives of both individual verses and entire surahs, enhancing our understanding of the Qur'an's intended guidance.

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