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The Methodology of the Holy Quran in Establishing Gender Identity and Preventing Sexual Deviation - An Objective Exegetical Study of the Story of the People of Lot, as a Model

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the Quranic methodology in defining and preserving gender identity and preventing sexual deviation, with a focus on the story of Prophet Lut (peace be upon him) as a model. It seeks to explore how the Quran establishes the natural gender order and provides moral and legal frameworks to counter contemporary deviations such as homosexuality and gender fluidity. A thematic and objective exegetical approach was adopted, analysing key Quranic verses alongside classical tafsir sources, including Al-Tabari, Al-Qurtubi, and Ibn Kathir. The study also incorporates modern interpretations to link traditional exegesis with current societal issues related to gender and sexuality. The analysis reveals that the Qur'an promotes a divinely ordained binary gender structure (male and female) and condemns all forms of sexual deviance that contradict natural human instincts. It demonstrates that the Quranic discourse integrates moral, psychological, and societal reform, emphasizing education, modesty, and faith-based deterrence as tools to prevent sexual immorality. This study contributes to contemporary discussions on gender and sexuality by offering a Quranic framework that integrates classical scholarship with modern realities. It highlights the enduring relevance of divine guidance in preserving human dignity and moral order in an age of growing gender confusion and ethical relativism.

Keywords:

Gender identity, homosexuality, LGBTQ+, People of Lot, Quranic approach.

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Introduction

Homosexual relationships are no longer rare or seldom discussed in gatherings, media outlets, or forums. Instead, they have become a widespread phenomenon, asserting their existence and demanding legalization, while fiercely defending their identity through every available means. Anyone observing the current state of societies will notice the rapid advancements made by activists of homosexual movements, who have gained considerable legislative support and protections. International institutions, such as human rights organizations, United Nations agencies for women and children, and various LGBTQ+ advocacy groups, have become staunch defenders of homosexuals, opposing any attempt to demean or harm them. These organizations have successfully lobbied for laws that demand acceptance, support, and integration of homosexuals into societies across cultures, portraying them as a marginalized group that has been oppressed, deprived of rights, and subjected to bullying and discrimination for many years. Human Rights Watch has clearly expressed its stance in support of LGBTQ+ individuals, stating:

"Human Rights Watch works for the rights of lesbians, gays, bisexuals, and transgender people, along with activists representing a plurality of identities and issues. We document and expose abuses based on sexual orientation and gender identity worldwide, including torture, killings, executions, arrests under unjust laws, unequal treatment, medical abuses, discrimination in health, employment, and housing, domestic violence, child abuse, and deprivation of family rights and recognition. We also advocate for laws and policies that protect everyone's dignity and work toward a world where all people enjoy their full rights." (Human Rights Watch: LGBT Rights, n.d.).

This shift is significant, as homosexuality was diagnosed as a psychological disorder as recently as 1952 (LGBTQ Rights Milestones Fast Facts | CNN). In fact, during the early 1950s, homosexuals were prohibited from working in government sectors as they were considered a threat to public security. However, societal norms shifted drastically over time. In the *Encyclopedia of Jews, Judaism, and Zionism*, it states:

Until the 1960s, Western discourse recognized a certain norm and deviations from it, which led to the concept of abnormality and deviance. However, with the disappearance of this norm, the concept of deviance gradually eroded. Over time, deviance became a form of asserting absolute individual freedom (which transcends any social norms) and an expression of the individual's right to choose the gender identity they prefer, allowing them to achieve self-fulfillment in the best possible way. Thus, sexual deviance shifted from being seen as abnormal to being a mark of individuality and an exemplary form of expression (Omar, 1429).

This transformation emerged from the dominant cultural and moral framework of society, which is centered around self-interest and pleasure (and shows little concern for religious or social values or any fundamental human principles). Acceptance of sexual deviance became a sign of progress, open-mindedness, and pluralism, while rejecting it became clear evidence of a person's rigidity and extremism, even labeling them as 'fundamentalist' (El-Messiri, 1999).

As time progressed, laws once prohibiting homosexual behavior were replaced with new legislation. Homosexuality was no longer classified as a disorder, and mental health professionals are now expected to support and nurture individuals in accepting their inclinations, leading to gender reassignment surgeries replacing corrective treatments (Al-Safri Al-Harbi, 2017). Year after year, new laws have been enacted, allowing homosexuals to marry, adopt children, and work across all sectors, with protections criminalizing any form of discrimination against them.

The situation has escalated beyond mere acceptance of homosexuality, with various forms of sexual deviance including sodomy, lesbianism, pedophilia, bestiality, and necrophilia emerging under the umbrella of individual freedoms. This wave of sexual deviance has led to confusion surrounding gender identity, as organizations advocate for the right of individuals, even minors, to choose their gender. Under the guise of false freedoms, pornography has spread, and sexual

education curricula have become mandatory in schools, further fueling the media's role in promoting immorality.

The media, along with political and educational institutions, has played a major role in normalizing homosexuality and influencing natural instincts under the banner of defending human rights and freedom. In the United States, multiple states have passed LGBTQ-inclusive curriculum legislation, teaching children in kindergarten about diverse family structures, including those with two fathers or two mothers. These teachings encourage children to embrace sexual freedom and suppress any negative feelings toward homosexuals, while criminalizing opposition or dissent. (*Six States Have Now Passed LGBTQ+ Inclusive Curriculum Legislation—Each with a Different Definition of 'Inclusion,'* n.d.)

This transformation has also introduced the concept of gender identity disorder, where individuals are allowed to alter their gender identity at will, often without parental consent. These developments, framed under the ideals of equality and human rights, have enabled the LGBTQ+ community to expand and gain unprecedented influence. Their symbols and flags are now displayed on schools and public institutions, while the media tirelessly promotes their cause.

This erosion of moral boundaries aligns with findings by (Yucel & Whyte, 2023), who observed that Muslim identity formation in pluralist societies faces continuous tension between secular ideologies and divine moral order. Such cultural pressures further necessitate revisiting the Quranic framework as a guide for preserving ethical and gender integrity.

Amid this global transformation, the Quran offers a distinct and timeless methodology for regulating gender identity and addressing sexual deviance. Through its divine guidance, the Quran preserves natural human instincts (*fitrah*), emphasizes the male-female binary as a foundation of human society, and warns against behaviours that corrupt moral order. The story of the People of Lut (peace be upon him) serves as a primary example of how the Quran confronts sexual deviation, highlighting both its moral condemnation and social consequences.

Despite the growing body of literature on sexuality, gender, and Islamic ethics, there remains a noticeable gap in exegetical studies that specifically analyse the Quran's methodology in addressing gender identity and sexual deviation through a focused narrative lens. Existing research often approaches the topic from legal, sociological, or psychological perspectives but does not systematically explore how the Quran itself constructs the moral and spiritual framework for understanding and regulating gender identity. Therefore, this study fills that gap by conducting an objective exegetical analysis of the story of Prophet Lut (peace be upon him) to uncover the Quranic methodology in defining gender identity and preventing sexual deviance.

The research adopts a thematic interpretive method to analyse the Quranic texts, focusing on verses related to gender identity, creation, and sexual morality. It aims to demonstrate the Quran's clear stance on these issues and to present divine guidance as a framework for moral and social reform. This study is not only relevant to scholars of Islamic jurisprudence and theology but also to those engaged in modern debates on gender, sexuality, and moral philosophy in contemporary Muslim societies.

Methodology

This research employs a thematic and objective exegetical method to explore Quranic perspectives on gender identity and sexual deviance. Thematic exegesis enables the integration of related verses across different chapters of the Quran under a unified concept.

The Quranic verses were selected based on their direct or contextual relevance to human creation, gender relations, morality, and the story of the People of Lot. Verses such as *Al-Nisa* 4: 1, *Al-Hujurat* 49: 13, *Al-A'raf* 7: 80–81, and *Al-Shu'ara* 26: 165–166 were prioritized because they explicitly address human sexuality, divine creation, and the moral consequences of sexual transgression.

The study primarily relied on classical Sunni tafsir works, including Al-Tabari's *Jāmi` al-Bayan*, Al-Qurtubi's *Al-Jami` li-Ahkam al-Qur'an*, and Ibn Kathir's *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azim*, due to their linguistic precision, authenticity, and acceptance among major Islamic scholars. Secondary support was drawn from Al-Andalusi, Al-Nawawi, and Ibn al-Qayyim for jurisprudential and

moral reasoning. Modern exegetical insights were included to connect classical interpretations with contemporary social challenges.

Each verse was analysed thematically according to its moral, linguistic, and theological dimensions. Comparative insights were then drawn between Quranic principles and modern social movements to evaluate the Quran's relevance to present-day gender identity debates.

Quranic Regulation of Gender Identity

The Quran provides clear guidance on regulating gender identity, emphasizing the natural binary classification of male and female. This understanding is rooted in several Quranic verses that highlight the creation of humanity from a single soul, which leads to the formation of male and female counterparts: *"O mankind, fear your Lord, who created you from one soul and created from it its mate and dispersed from both of them many men and women"* (Al-Quran, Al-Nisa 4: 1). This verse establishes the fundamental binary nature of gender as a divine creation, a concept that regulates individual identity in Islamic law.

Scholars such as Al-Qurtubi have extensively discussed this verse, noting that humanity's progeny is limited to two types: male and female. He emphasizes that even individuals with ambiguous physical characteristics, such as hermaphrodites, are classified within this binary framework. Hermaphrodites, according to Al-Qurtubi, are not a separate gender but are understood within the context of either male or female, depending on their dominant physical characteristics (Al-Qurtubi, 1384). Additionally, Allah says:

O mankind, indeed, We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted (Al-Quran, Al-Hujurat 49: 13).

This verse explicitly indicates that Islamic law defines gender identity. Al-Qayrawani commented on the creation of humanity, stating, "He created you from Adam and Eve, meaning from the water of a male and a female" (Al-Dhahabi, 1417). Mujahid also noted: "Allah created the child from the water of both the man and the woman." (Al-Qurtubi, 1384)

This illustrates the shared origin of all humans, emphasizing that all people are descendants of the same pair, thus reinforcing gender identity regulation. The human creation stems from both male and female, ensuring the consistent acknowledgment of these two fundamental genders across humanity. This divine framework ensures that humans are inherently connected through their origins, reinforcing the natural gender binary in society. Recent empirical research reinforces this divine framework by examining how Muslim women internalize ethical roles aligned with their natural dispositions. Moos & Shaikh (2024) found that maternal identity in Islam embodies moral responsibility and spiritual dignity, illustrating how Quranic teachings shape gendered ethics in practice.

In addition to the explicit reference to gender in the Quran, classical scholars also discuss the proper conduct toward individuals who experience confusion or deviance in their gender identity. For instance, the concept of gender identity disorder, understood as a state of confusion about one's biological gender, is not new. It has been addressed in the Islamic tradition, with scholars highlighting the importance of accepting the gender assigned by Allah. As explained in developmental psychology, the acceptance of one's gender is crucial to forming a coherent self-identity (Al-Ashwal, n.d.).

Islamic texts also make distinctions between biological conditions such as hermaphroditism and behavioral deviance. The concept of a *'mukhannath'* (effeminate man) is discussed extensively in hadith literature. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) differentiated between those naturally effeminate and those who deliberately imitate the opposite gender. Effeminate behavior by choice was condemned, and individuals engaging in such practices were cursed in authentic hadiths (M. ibn I. Al-Bukhari, n.d.).

Additionally, classical scholars such as Imam Al-Nawawi highlight how early Islamic communities dealt with individuals exhibiting effeminate behavior. In one instance, the Prophet (Peace be upon him) prohibited a *'mukhannath'* from entering the homes of women after observing that he possessed knowledge about women's bodies that indicated he was not harmless, as initially thought (Al-Nawawi, 1392)

The Quranic discourse, paired with hadith and scholarly interpretation, clearly establishes the regulation of gender identity within a binary framework. This regulation not only preserves the natural order but also protects societal norms from the influence of deviant ideologies. As modern movements advocating for alternative gender identities proliferate, the need to return to Quranic guidance becomes more pressing. By adhering to the natural gender binary outlined in the Quran, Islamic societies can safeguard the principles of gender identity that align with divine will.

The Distinction of the Islamic Approach in Preventing Sexual Deviance and Regulating Sexual Identity

The Islamic approach is distinguished by many features that make it suitable for all times and places. It is the true and complete religion that Allah has chosen for humanity until the Day of Judgment, as He says: *"This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favor upon you and have approved for you Islam as religion"* (Al-Quran, Al-Ma'idah 5: 3).

Allah described the religion He chose as perfect and His blessing as complete, indicating that the religion has no flaws, defects, or shortcomings. Nothing in it deviates from wisdom in any way; rather, it is perfect in its beauty and grandeur.

Ibn al-Qayyim said: "No law has ever come to the world that is more complete, noble, or greater than it. It stands as a witness, and what is witnessed for, a proof, and what is proven for, a claim, and a demonstration. Even if the Messenger had not come with evidence for it, the law itself would have been sufficient as proof, a sign, and a witness that it is from Allah. Everything in it bears witness to Allah's perfect knowledge, wisdom, vast mercy, goodness, and His knowledge of both the seen and the unseen, as well as the knowledge of beginnings and outcomes." (Ibn al-Qayyim, n.d.).

Allah Almighty did not hasten the punishment for this nation but instead established the law of reprieve instead of the immediate destruction of sinners, because this message is the final message, and Muhammad (peace be upon him) is the last of the prophets.

Since Allah's law for this nation is reprieve rather than destruction, the Quran addressed the spread of homosexuality, limiting it, and the Islamic Shariah set a punishment for it, as well as preventive measures against sexual deviance, which are discussed in this section as follows:

1. The repeated mention of the story of Lot in different places in the Quran and the sending of a specific prophet to address this sin indicates the importance Islam places on combating and preventing its spread, as well as warning against its ugliness. This shows the distinction of the Islamic methodology in its care to balance between internal conscience and external supervision. Islamic Shariah, in dealing with societal problems including sexual deviance does not rely solely on enacting laws, rights, punishments, and regulations. Rather, it emphasizes cultivating and refining the internal conscience of the individual, focusing on moral integrity, and fostering it from childhood so that a person grows up with virtuous morals. It ties all of this to the promise of the Hereafter, promising those who do good with success and warning wrongdoers of a bad outcome. Thus, it stirs the conscience, helping to keep a person away from deviance, out of belief in Allah, desire for His mercy, fear of His punishment, commitment to noble morals, love for others, kindness toward them, and avoidance of harm.
2. The Islamic Shariah is also distinguished by a balanced view of the relationship between the individual and the community. It is evident in the fact that while Shariah protects

society by legislating punishments and preventing deviance, it does not sacrifice the individual for the sake of the community. Rather, it protects the individual first, safeguarding all of their freedoms and rights, and provides all the guarantees necessary to ensure that resorting to deviance is unjustified. Punishment is only applied after creating conditions that offer the individual a dignified and fulfilling life. This is clearly seen in all the laws of Islam, starting with the rights of the child, ensuring care, proper upbringing, instilling religious values, and satisfying all psychological needs so that the child does not deviate from their natural disposition. Additionally, the strong family bonds in Muslim households, which are rarely found elsewhere, and the values, principles, and morals that characterize them, help create an environment where deviance is less likely to occur.

3. The sacred law has warned against the consequences of the emergence and spread of immoral acts and has guided the community on their societal, health, and psychological harms. Among these warnings is the verse: *“And do not approach unlawful sexual intercourse. Indeed, it is ever an immorality and is evil as a way”* (Al-Quran, Al-Isra 17:320). It was also reported by Abdullah ibn Umar that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: *“O Muhajirin, there are five things with which you will be tested, and I seek refuge with Allah that you should live to see them: immorality never appears among a people until they publicize it, but plagues and diseases that were never known among their predecessors will spread among them...”* (Ibn Majah, 1952).

This narration highlights the grave societal consequences of sexual deviance. There is no doubt that the immoral act of homosexuality is an assault on the natural disposition and a corruption of the youth, as they turn away from lawful marriage and immerse themselves in this immoral practice.

4. The sacred law is distinguished by the permanence and firmness of its rulings, without wavering or changing, no matter the pressures from deviant groups or changes in man-made laws. Allah Almighty says: *“Indeed, it is We who sent down the Quran and indeed, We will be its guardian”* (Al-Quran, Al-Hijr 15: 9). Distancing from the Quranic methodology, Islamic teachings, and attempting to distort or alter them to please people’s desires and cater to their whims is among the greatest causes of societal downfall.
5. One of the distinguishing features of the Islamic methodology is its focus on establishing rules and guidelines to prevent falling into sexual deviance. This includes rulings on the exposure of private parts between individuals of the same gender, rulings on looking at young boys, and ways to address the psychological and social causes and motivations behind sexual deviance. Islam confronts deviance before it occurs by addressing its underlying causes and eliminating the social drivers, along with anything that may affect the balance of the individual and society.
6. Islamic law is distinguished by its emphasis on teaching individuals to control their instincts, manage their desires, and direct them within legitimate boundaries. Allah describes the believers: ‘
7. And those who guard their private parts, except from their wives or those their right hands possess, for they are not to be blamed. But whoever seeks beyond that, then those are the transgressors (Al-Quran, Al-Mu’minun 23: 5-7).
8. This also involves raising people from a young age on values of modesty, piety, chastity, and fear of Allah, avoiding imitation of the West, and strengthening the faith-driven motivation in oneself. This has an effective role in refraining from what is forbidden. Allah

says: "And let those who find not the means to marry keep themselves chaste until Allah enriches them of His bounty" (Al-Quran, Al-Nur 24: 33).

9. Additionally, society is encouraged to marry off the unmarried: "And marry the unmarried among you and the righteous among your male and female slaves" (Al-Quran, Al-Nur 24: 32). Included in this command to marry is the provision of financial assistance to those whose incomes fall short of covering the costs of marriage due to high dowries and other expenses.
10. One of the characteristics of Islamic law is the emphasis on building society on the foundations of virtue, moral values, modesty, and the avoidance of indecency. It prohibits immorality in the media and elsewhere and prevents anything that incites desires or spreads immorality in society. Allah says: "Indeed, those who like that immorality should be spread [or publicized] among those who have believed will have a painful punishment in this world and the Hereafter. And Allah knows, and you do not know" (Al-Quran, Al-Nur, 24: 19).
11. Among the solutions is to keep youth occupied with beneficial and productive activities that help channel sexual energy, such as seeking knowledge, engaging in sports, and participating in social work. Additionally, guiding them to resolve their problems, including frequent fasting for those unable to marry due to financial constraints.

The Story of the People of Prophet Lot (PBUH) as a Case Study

The story of the People of Prophet Lot (peace be upon him) is central to understanding the Quranic approach to addressing homosexuality and deviant sexual behavior. This narrative serves as a case study illustrating the consequences of societal deviation from the natural order of gender relations. The Quran explicitly recounts the immorality of the People of Lot, who were the first to engage in same-sex relations: "*And [mention] Lot, when he said to his people, 'Do you commit such immorality as no one has preceded you with from among the worlds? Indeed, you approach men with desire, instead of women. Rather, you are a transgressing people'.*" (Al-Quran, Al-A'raf 7: 80-81).

In his commentary on this verse, Al-Tabari notes that no previous community had engaged in such behavior, emphasizing the unprecedented nature of their sin (Al-Tabari, n.d.-b). The Quran condemns the actions of Prophet Lot's people not only for engaging in homosexual acts but also for their defiance and lack of repentance, which ultimately led to their destruction.

The Quran details the interaction between Lot and his people, where he repeatedly calls them to reform and abandon their deviant practices: "*Do you approach males among the worlds and leave what your Lord has created for you as mates? But you are a people transgressing*" (Al-Quran, Al-Shu'ara' 26: 165-166). Lot (peace be upon him) condemned their vile deeds, reminding them of Allah's grace upon them, as the lawful and pure were sufficient for all. The circle of lawful actions was wide, yet they chose the path of deviation and perversion. They were the first to commit such an act, thus leading the way in corruption, crime, immorality, and disgrace.

He reproached them for engaging in such a detestable vice that no one before them had ever done, indicating their extreme corruption and indulgence in sin and depravity. The use of the word "vice" emphasizes the ugliness and reprehensibility of the act, marking it as one of the gravest and most heinous sins because it violates nature, goes against human instinct, and brings about harm and corruption. He also rebuked them for being the first to innovate such immorality. Lot (peace be upon him) repeatedly condemned this sin in various ways and expressions, aiming to awaken their dormant natural instincts. "*Do you commit such immorality as no one has preceded you with from among the worlds?*" (Al-Quran, Al-A'raf 7: 80-81), and "*Do you indeed approach men lustfully rather than women? Nay, you are a people behaving ignorantly.*" (Al-Quran, Al-Naml 27:

54-55). In another place: “Do you approach indecency with eyes wide open?” (Al-Quran, Al-Ankabut 29: 28).

Abu Hayyan Al-Andalusi remarked: “Lot’s condemnation was frequent and repeated, with prohibition, admonishment, and warning.” (Al-Andalusi, 1420). His condemnation in the form of rhetorical questions is one of the methods of rebuke that helps make the one being called feel aversion to their actions, become disgusted by them, and abandon them. The repetition of condemnation also emphasizes the seriousness of their sin.

Allah punished the people of Lot in a way unmatched by any other nation. This was due to the gravity of their crime, which was more abominable than adultery and a violation of natural human instincts. Allah blinded their eyes (Al-Baghawi, 1417), sending a devastating cry that deafened them (Al-Tabari, n.d.-a), flipped their towns upside down (Al-Asqalani, 1379), and sent stones upon them from the sky (Ibn Kathir, 1420). Their actions reversed the natural moral order, considering purity a crime and pridefully flaunting their immoral deeds. Thus, they hastened their own destruction instead of seeking salvation. Their rejection of Lot’s warnings and their mockery of his guests resulted in their severe punishment.

The way Prophet Lot (peace be upon him) addressed his people provides a model for how contemporary societies should approach sexual deviance. Despite knowing the extent of their immoral behavior, Lot did not immediately call for punishment. Instead, he first attempted to guide them through reason and moral appeal. He reminded them of the natural relationships that Allah had ordained for them, but they responded with threats and continued in their deviant behavior: “They said, ‘If you do not desist, O Lot, you will surely be of those evicted’” (Al-Quran, Al-Shu’ara’ 26: 167).

This reaction mirrors the challenges faced by those who today speak out against sexual deviance and promote adherence to natural sexual relationships. The People of Lot were not only deviant in their actions but were also actively hostile toward any efforts to reform them. They sought to normalize their behavior within their society, much like modern LGBTQ+ movements seek societal acceptance and legislative protection.

Lot’s method of engagement, focusing first on moral reasoning and the divine order of creation, offers an approach for addressing such issues in contemporary settings. He demonstrated patience and persistence in calling his people to repent. This model aligns with Islamic principles of da’wah (inviting others to Islam), where compassion and reasoning are used before any punitive measures are considered.

The modern movements promoting homosexuality bear similarities to the defiance of Lot’s people. Today, there is a widespread push for the normalization and legalization of homosexual relationships, often under the guise of human rights and individual freedom. International organizations, educational systems, and the media have played significant roles in promoting these movements, encouraging societies to accept behaviors that go against traditional religious and moral values.

The People of Lot similarly sought to normalize their deviant behavior, and when Lot opposed them, they attempted to silence him by threatening his expulsion. In modern times, those who oppose homosexuality often face social and legal repercussions, including accusations of discrimination or extremism. However, the Quranic account of the People of Lot serves as a timeless reminder that no matter how much societal pressure exists, deviation from Allah’s natural order will ultimately lead to consequences.

The story of Lot emphasizes that while individuals may choose to defy divine commands, such actions do not alter the inherent truth of gender identity as defined by Allah. The Quranic narrative offers both a warning and guidance, urging societies to uphold the natural order and reject deviance while also providing a compassionate model for addressing those who stray from these principles.

Understanding Sexual Deviance in the Context of LGBTQ+ Identities

Sexual deviance, as discussed in Islamic thought, extends to various forms of behavior that deviate from the natural sexual order and moral guidelines prescribed by religious teachings. The Quranic verses "*And those who guard their private parts, except from their wives or those their right hands possess, for indeed, they are not to be blamed. But whoever seeks beyond that, then those are the transgressors*" (Al-Quran, Al-Mu'minun 23: 5-7), provide a framework for understanding the boundaries of lawful sexual behavior.

The meaning of the verse encompasses anyone who oversteps Allah's boundaries, including adulterers, those who engage with their wives during menstruation or postpartum bleeding, anal intercourse, the enjoyment of a slave with her mistress, temporary marriage (Nikah al-Mut'ah), and incest. Scholars have cited this verse to prohibit temporary marriage, and some have used it to argue against masturbation, considering it to be one of the prohibited acts mentioned (Al-Qurtubi, 1384).

In modern terms, these deviations are reflected in what is categorized today under the LGBTQ+ umbrella, which represents various sexual orientations and gender identities that challenge traditional views of gender and sexuality.

The LGBTQ+ movement encompasses lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer identities, with the "+" sign symbolizing inclusivity for additional sexual and gender identities, such as asexual, pansexual, gender fluid, and others. From an Islamic perspective, many of the practices associated with LGBTQ+ identities fall under what is traditionally defined as sexual deviance, as they involve engaging in same-sex relationships (homosexuality), questioning gender norms (transgender identity), or embracing a fluidity in sexual orientation (bisexuality and sexual fluidity).

In particular, homosexuality, or same-sex attraction, is explicitly mentioned in Islamic texts. The story of the people of Lot, who engaged in same-sex relations, is repeatedly cited in the Quran as an example of deviance that led to divine punishment. In this context, sodomy (male homosexual intercourse) and lesbianism (female homosexual intercourse) are seen as a violation of the natural sexual order established by Allah. The explicit nature of these prohibitions aligns with the rejection of homosexuality in traditional Islamic law.

Bisexuality, where individuals experience attraction to both genders, and sexual fluidity, where individuals refuse to adhere to a specific sexual orientation, further complicate traditional views of gender and sexual relations. These orientations challenge the binary concept of male-female relationships, which is central to Islamic family structure and sexual ethics.

Transgender identities, where individuals seek to alter or reject their biological sex to align with their gender identity, also contrast with Islamic teachings on the sanctity of the natural human form. Islamic thought emphasizes the acceptance of one's divinely ordained body, as tampering with gender identity is seen as a form of dissatisfaction with Allah's creation.

The inclusion of the "+" sign in LGBTQ+ also reflects the evolving and expanding nature of sexual and gender identities. These identities often involve behaviors or orientations that are viewed as deviant in Islamic jurisprudence, such as gender fluidity, asexuality (the absence of sexual attraction), and pansexuality (attraction to individuals regardless of gender). The continuous addition of new identities under the LGBTQ+ umbrella underscores the belief in fluidity and diversity in sexual orientations, which is at odds with the fixed and clearly defined moral framework in Islamic law.

In Islamic teachings, the comprehensive nature of the Quranic message covers all forms of sexual deviance, whether they existed in the past or emerge in the future. As seen in the verses of Surah Al-Mu'minun, Islam sets a clear boundary for lawful sexual relations, confining them to marriage between a man and a woman. Any deviation from this, whether it be homosexuality, bisexuality, transgender behavior, or other identities represented in the LGBTQ+ spectrum, is considered transgressive and harmful to both individual morality and the fabric of society.

The growing acceptance and legal protection of LGBTQ+ rights in Western societies contrasts sharply with Islamic principles. Recent studies on Muslim gender minorities reaffirm

this tension between modern identity politics and Islamic moral values. For instance, a meta-synthesis of Malay-Muslim natal females revealed that internal conflicts often stem from attempts to reconcile self-perception with the immutable divine framework of gender identity prescribed in Islam (Jaapar et al., 2023). Such findings highlight the sociopsychological dimension of sexual deviation, emphasizing the enduring relevance of Quranic teachings in maintaining natural human balance (*fitrah*). Islamic law prioritizes the preservation of moral values, the protection of family structure, and the avoidance of behaviors that are seen as harmful to the soul and society. The protection of sexual deviance under Western law, as noted earlier in discussions of prostitution and homosexuality, can lead to the normalization and proliferation of behaviors that Islamic law seeks to prevent.

Thus, the rise of the LGBTQ+ movement, with its emphasis on redefining gender and sexuality, represents a modern-day challenge to the fixed moral and ethical boundaries established in Islamic law. This challenge requires a thoughtful response that emphasizes the importance of maintaining a balance between personal rights and societal well-being, as outlined in the comprehensive and eternal guidance of the Quran.

Comparative Perspectives from Modern Muslim Scholars

While the Quran provides a clear and comprehensive framework for regulating gender identity and preventing sexual deviation, it is equally valuable to engage with the insights of modern Muslim scholars who have approached Quranic interpretation through contemporary hermeneutical lenses. Examining their views enriches the discussion and highlights how the enduring message of the Quran continues to interact with the evolving moral and intellectual landscape of modern society.

Khaled Abou El Fadl advocates an ethical and moral reading of Islamic texts that emphasizes justice, dignity, and beauty (*ihsan*). He proposes that interpretation (*ta'wil*) must not only rely on textual fidelity but also align with the Quran's overarching moral objectives. According to him, "reasonable interpretation" requires balancing textual meaning with the interpreter's moral conscience and awareness of divine justice (Abou El Fadl, 2021).

Abou El Fadl cautions against rigid literalism that neglects the Quran's ethical trajectory. He stresses that while the text remains immutable, its interpretation must engage with universal moral values. Applied to sexual ethics, his approach implies that prohibitions must be upheld within an ethical framework rooted in mercy and human dignity. His view therefore complements rather than replaces traditional exegetical positions by insisting that application of divine law should reflect both justice and compassion (Misbah, 2025).

Also, Nasr Abu Zayd approaches Quranic interpretation through a contextual and historical lens, emphasizing that the Quran's message, while divine, was revealed in a specific linguistic and cultural setting. He argues that meaning develops through the interaction between the text (*nass*) and its reader, making interpretation a dynamic process (Khasanah et al., 2025).

Abu Zayd's methodology seeks to distinguish between the eternal divine message and the historical context of revelation. In gender discourse, this allows for a re-examination of verses often interpreted through patriarchal or cultural filters. His hermeneutics promotes the idea that Qur'anic ethics evolve as human understanding of justice evolves. However, critics argue that excessive historicization risks relativizing divine commandments, particularly those concerning moral boundaries (Moch, 2022). In the context of sexual ethics, Abu Zayd's framework could lead to more flexible interpretations, but such flexibility must remain consistent with the Quran's holistic moral order.

Mohammad Hashim Kamali's approach centers on *maqasid al-shari'ah*; the higher objectives of Islamic law. He emphasizes that all legal and moral rulings must serve essential purposes such as the preservation of faith (*din*), life (*nafs*), intellect (*'aql*), lineage (*nasl*), and dignity (*karamah*). According to Kamali, interpretation should prioritize these objectives to ensure that rulings promote social harmony and human welfare (Kamali, 1999).

When applied to gender identity and sexual behavior, Kamali's framework supports the Quranic model that preserves the integrity of family and lineage while protecting individual dignity. His reasoning reinforces the principle that divine guidance seeks to balance justice with mercy, emphasizing that rulings on sexuality must maintain both moral discipline and human compassion. In this sense, his perspective harmonizes well with the Quran's approach to upholding chastity and natural order.

Engaging with these modern thinkers reveals both convergence and divergence in interpretive approaches. While Abou El Fadl emphasizes ethical sensitivity, Abu Zayd highlights contextual dynamism, and Kamali focuses on teleological objectives, all three seek to uphold the Quran's moral spirit. Their works demonstrate that Islamic hermeneutics remains a living tradition capable of addressing modern challenges without compromising divine principles.

This study's approach aligns with that balance; maintaining fidelity to classical exegesis while recognizing the need for contextual understanding. The Quranic methodology, as revealed through the story of the People of Lot (peace be upon him), remains an enduring moral paradigm that transcends time. By integrating ethical reflection, contextual awareness, and *maqasid*-based reasoning, Muslim scholarship can continue to defend the integrity of divine guidance against moral relativism while remaining responsive to the evolving challenges of modern societies.

Modern Applications of Quranic Teachings

In modern times, the challenge of preserving the natural gender order as defined by the Quran has intensified due to global movements advocating for the acceptance and normalization of homosexuality and non-binary gender identities. The Quranic teachings, particularly through the story of the People of Lot (peace be upon him), provide a comprehensive framework for addressing these challenges in contemporary societies. This section explores how Quranic principles can be applied to current social, legal, and educational systems to combat the spread of deviant ideologies, while preserving the natural human instincts emphasized in the Quran.

Role of Media and Legislation in Normalizing Deviance

One of the most pervasive forces promoting homosexuality and alternative gender identities today is the media. Television, movies, and social media platforms have played an instrumental role in shaping public opinion on gender identity, presenting deviant behavior as normal and even commendable. The widespread portrayal of same-sex relationships in mainstream media mirrors the defiance exhibited by the People of Lot, who sought to normalize their behavior despite being warned by their prophet.

In response, Islamic teachings stress the importance of using media as a tool to promote righteousness and uphold moral values. The Quran frequently warns against following those who spread corruption, as seen in the verse: "*And do not obey the order of the transgressors, who cause corruption in the land and do not reform*" (Al-Shu'ara 26: 151-152).

The media's role in promoting deviance is closely linked to legislative changes that protect and legalize homosexual behavior. International organizations such as the United Nations and Human Rights Watch advocate for LGBTQ+ rights, often framing opposition to such movements as discrimination. This legal support mirrors the legislative protections the People of Lot demanded, which allowed them to continue their deviant practices. Islamic law, however, firmly rejects the legalization of any behavior that contradicts the natural order established by Allah.

Education and the Indoctrination of Deviant Ideologies

The education system has also become a battleground for the promotion of gender fluidity and homosexuality. In many Western countries, curricula that include LGBTQ+ content are now mandatory in public schools, with children being taught that gender is fluid and that same-sex relationships are normal and acceptable. This mirrors the societal indoctrination faced by the

People of Lot, where deviant behavior was not only practiced but actively promoted and defended.

The Quran emphasizes the importance of education in shaping an individual's moral character, and Islamic teachings advocate for curricula that align with divine guidance. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) emphasized the significance of instilling moral values from a young age, saying: *"Each of you is a shepherd and each of you is responsible for his flock. The ruler is a shepherd and is responsible for his subjects..."* (A. A. M. bin I. Al-Bukhari, 1414). This hadith stresses the responsibility of educators and leaders to guide the next generation toward righteousness.

Contemporary Islamic educational institutions have the responsibility to counter the spread of deviant ideologies by promoting the Quranic teachings on gender and sexuality. Educational curricula should focus on the preservation of the natural human instincts, as described in the Quran, and emphasize the consequences of deviating from these divine principles.

Returning to Quranic Guidance to Address Modern Challenges

In the face of the widespread acceptance of homosexuality and alternative gender identities, the need for a return to Quranic guidance has never been more critical. The Quran provides a holistic approach to addressing deviant behavior by combining moral teachings with a clear framework for societal reform. The story of Lot (peace be upon him) serves as a timeless reminder that deviating from the natural order leads to moral and societal decay.

One of the key Quranic principles in addressing such issues is the promotion of *amr bil ma'ruf wa nahi anil munkar* (enjoining good and forbidding evil). This principle, outlined in the verse: *"Let there arise from among you a group inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong"* (Al-Quran, Ali-Imran 3: 104), emphasizes the collective responsibility of the Muslim community to promote righteous behavior and prevent societal deviance.

In practical terms, this means that Muslim leaders, educators, and media influencers must work together to combat the spread of deviant ideologies. Communities should foster environments where the natural human instincts, as ordained by Allah, are respected and protected. Islamic organizations and scholars must also engage in public discourse, providing counter-narratives to the arguments used by modern LGBTQ+ movements. This can be achieved through media campaigns, educational seminars, and the publication of research that highlights the harms of deviating from the natural order.

The Importance of Community Reform and Guidance

The Quranic model for societal reform is built upon the foundation of individual and communal guidance. Just as Prophet Lot (peace be upon him) called his people to reform, Muslim communities today are called to address the spread of immoral behavior through compassionate but firm guidance. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) stated: *"Whoever among you sees an evil, let him change it with his hand. If he is unable to do so, then with his tongue. And if he is unable to do so, then with his heart – and that is the weakest level of faith"* (Muslim, 1374). This hadith emphasizes the responsibility of every Muslim to take action against societal deviance, starting with direct intervention, followed by speaking out, and finally, condemning it internally if no other options are available.

The Prophet Lot (peace be upon him) serves as an example of steadfastness in calling his people to the natural path, even when faced with hostility. His method of reasoning with his people, reminding them of divine law, and refusing to accept their deviance, remains a model for how Muslim communities can address similar issues today. The importance of patient and persistent guidance is crucial in the face of resistance, much like the hostility Lot faced when his people threatened him with expulsion if he did not cease his warnings: *"They said, 'If you do not desist, O Lot, you will surely be of those evicted'"* (Al-Quran, Al-Shu'ara' 26: 167).

Applying the Quranic approach to regulating gender identity and addressing homosexuality in today's context requires a multifaceted strategy that incorporates media, education, legislation, and community reform. By adhering to the divine teachings outlined in the Quran and the prophetic model, Muslim communities can preserve the natural order and protect themselves from the moral corruption that afflicted the People of Lot. Returning to Quranic guidance is essential for addressing the challenges posed by modern LGBTQ+ movements, ensuring that society remains aligned with the principles of Islamic morality and ethics.

Conclusion

The Quranic approach to regulating gender identity and addressing homosexuality offers timeless guidance, rooted in the natural order established by divine decree. Through the thematic analysis of the story of the People of Lot (peace be upon him), this study has demonstrated how the Quran not only condemns deviant behavior but also provides a structured methodology for reforming individuals and communities. The case of Lot's people serves as a powerful reminder of the consequences of defying Allah's laws, both morally and socially. Their destruction exemplifies the serious implications of abandoning natural human instincts and divine commandments in favor of societal deviance.

In today's world, where movements promoting alternative gender identities and homosexuality are gaining traction globally, it is imperative to return to Quranic teachings. The media, legal systems, and educational institutions have played significant roles in normalizing behavior that contradicts Islamic values. However, the Quran's principles of preserving the male-female binary, enjoining good, and forbidding evil provide a strong framework for resisting these challenges. Muslim communities, scholars, and leaders must proactively engage with contemporary discourse, offering Quranic-based solutions and moral guidance that counteract the spread of deviant ideologies.

This research also highlights the importance of adopting a compassionate but firm approach, as demonstrated by Prophet Lot. His persistent calls for reform, even in the face of hostility, offer a model for addressing moral decline in modern societies. Islamic leaders today must similarly strive to guide their communities, using reason and divine wisdom to navigate the complexities of the current sociopolitical landscape.

Given the complexity of modern challenges surrounding gender identity and sexual orientation, further interdisciplinary research is encouraged. Specialists in psychology, jurisprudence, health sciences, and linguistics can contribute valuable insights into the broader implications of gender identity regulation and moral reform. Future research should also explore the impacts of digital media and global policy changes on the promotion of alternative gender ideologies and their reception within Muslim communities.

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Conflict of Interest Statement

The author declares no conflict of interest related to the publication of this article.

Author's Contribution Statement

1. **Raimah Ali Altalhi:** Conceptualization of the research idea, Qur'anic analysis, data interpretation, and preparation of the original draft.
 2. **Abdallah Mohammed Mahmoud:** Literature review, validation of exegetical sources, methodological structuring, and critical revision of the manuscript.
 3. **Omar Yousef Hammad:** Comparative analysis of classical and modern tafsir, review of scholarly sources, and final editing for intellectual content.
- All authors have read and approved the final version of the manuscript.

Ethics Statement

This research was carried out in accordance with the ethical standards of academic integrity and the institutional policies of the Islamic University of Minnesota (IUM) and Al-Isra University. The study did not involve human or animal subjects; it is based solely on textual and interpretive analysis of Qur'anic and scholarly sources. All references were cited appropriately, and the research adheres to the principles of honesty, transparency, and respect for Islamic scholarly tradition.

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