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# REFRAMING ADDICTION THROUGH QUR'ANIC NARRATIVES: A CONCEPTUAL SYNTHESIS OF TAFSĪR AND PSYCHOLOGY

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*Abstrak*

> *Kecanduan telah menjadi persoalan laten dalam kehidupan manusia yang terus berkembang hingga saat ini. Umat Islam perlu memahami persoalan ini secara komprehensif agar dapat menanganinya secara efektif. Salah satu langkah penting adalah merujuk kepada sumber utama ajaran Islam, yaitu Al-Qur'an, untuk memperoleh petunjuk.Kajian ini bertujuan untuk menelaah perspektif Al-Qur'an tentang kecanduan secara spesifik dan sistematis. Dengan menggunakan desain penelitian kualitatif, studi ini menerapkan pendekatan tafsir tematik (tafsīr mawdhū'ī) yang diperkaya dengan elaborasi sintesis antara penafsiran klasik dan kontemporer serta konteks psikologis kecanduan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan adanya sejumlah narasi Al-Qur'an yang mengandung indikasi proses adiktif, antara lain matā' al-ghurūr (kenikmatan yang menipu), la'ibun wa lahwun (permainan dan kelalaian), al-tazyīn wa al-ighwā' (penghiasan dan penyesatan), al-khaṭa' wa al-nisyān (kesalahan dan kelupaan), serta*

*ittakhadha ilāhahū hawāhu (menjadikan hawa nafsunya sebagai tuhan). Narasi-narasi ini selaras dengan konsep distorsi kognitif, keyakinan inti, penguatan berbasis dopamin, hilangnya kontrol diri, dan hilangnya otonomi dalam kerangka psikologi kecanduan. Artikel ini memberikan kontribusi secara teoretis dengan menjelaskan perspektif Al-Qur'an mengenai kecanduan, serta secara praktis dengan menawarkan panduan tentang pola pikir dan kekuatan personal yang perlu dikembangkan oleh individu Muslim.*

**Kata Kunci**: *Kecanduan, Narasi Qur'ani, Sintesis Konseptual, Tafsir, Psikologi*

**Abstract**

*Addiction has become a latent human problem that continues to evolve to this day. Muslims need to understand this issue comprehensively to address it effectively. One essential step is to seek guidance from the foundational source of Islamic teachings, the Qur'an. This study aims to explore the Qur'anic perspective on addiction in a specific and systematic manner. Employing a qualitative design, the research uses a thematic exegesis (tafsīr mawdhū'ī) approach enriched by a synthetic elaboration between classical and contemporary exegetical interpretations and the psychological context of addiction. The study reveals several Qur'anic narratives that contain indications related to addictive processes, including matā' al-ghurūr (deceptive gratification), la'ibun wa lahwun (play and diversion), al-tazyīn wa al-ighwā' (adornment and seduction), al-khaṭa' wa al-nisyān (error and forgetfulness), and ittakhadha ilāhahū hawāhu (following one's desires as a deity). These narratives correspond to cognitive distortion, core beliefs, dopamine-driven reinforcement, loss of control, and loss of autonomy within the psychological framework of addiction. The article contributes theoretically by elucidating the Qur'anic perspective on addiction and practically by offering guidance on the mindset and personal strengths that Muslim individuals need to develop.*

**Keywords:** *Addiction, Qur'anic Narration, Conceptual Synthesis, Tafsīr, Psychology*

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## INTRODUCTION

Throughout human history, addiction has emerged as a persistent and evolving challenge to individual and collective well-

being. Addiction constitutes a chronic human problem that has traversed historical eras and continues to shape contemporary mental health discourse. In earlier periods, this phenomenon remained obscure behind various forms of dependence on particular substances. Initially, such dependence was often regarded as a common and even socially acceptable practice, at times symbolizing prestige and luxury due to the pleasurable effects it produced and the illusion of happiness it conveyed. This was evident in the consumption of certain foods and fermented beverages, as well as in the widespread use of gin in Europe, which eventually triggered a severe public health crisis in England known as *the Gin Craze* (approximately 1729–1751).[1]

This was followed by the widespread use of opium and tobacco in the nineteenth century. These newly popular addictive substances once again became global commodities of high demand. Beyond their function as objects of consumption, they evolved into lucrative economic assets in the eyes of political authorities. Major powers competed for hegemony, culminating in the Opium Wars between Chinese elites and the British Empire. These developments led to another serious public health crisis, resulting in massive mortality. At this historical juncture, Sigmund Freud identified addiction as an internal human problem arising from the consumption of dependence-inducing substances such as alcohol, tobacco, and opium. He observed that what initially stemmed from desire gradually transformed into a compulsive drive that appeared coercive and irresistible to the individual.[2]

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[1] Dillon, *Gin: The Much Lamented Death of Madam Geneva The Eighteen Century Gin Craze.*, p. 207.

[2] Levine, "The Discovery of Addiction.", p. 143.

Subsequently, Patrick Carnes introduced the identification of a new category of addiction, namely non-substance addiction, which refers to a series of repetitive behaviors or habits with the potential to become addictive, commonly termed behavioral addiction. These behaviors include various activities that generate pleasure, provide comfort, or serve as a means of avoiding psychological pain, while simultaneously possessing a strong appeal that encourages repeated engagement. One prominent example is sexual addiction, which inherently attracts human attention and may develop into a specific form of addiction. [3] Based on these two broad categories—substance and non-substance addiction—the concept of addiction has continued to expand in scope, encompassing increasingly diverse forms in line with the development of addictive substances and behaviors in contemporary society.

Etymologically, the term *addiction* derives from the Latin *addictus*, a derivative of *addicere*, meaning "to give over" or "to assign to," implying submission or bondage. With the addition of the suffix *-ion*, the term denotes an action, process, or state. Conceptually, addiction refers to a condition in which an individual is unable to cease engaging in a harmful habitual behavior.[4] It also denotes a state of psychological or physical dependence that compels continued engagement despite negative consequences.[5] More specifically, it may involve physiological dependence characterized by the need for increasing doses to achieve a desired

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[3] Carnes, *Out of the Shadows: Understanding Sexual Addiction*., p. 97.

[4] Colman, *Oxford Dictionary of Psychology*., p. 522.

[5] APA, *American Psychological Association Dictionary of Psychology*., p. 19.

effect and the emergence of unpleasant withdrawal symptoms upon cessation.[6]

The American Psychological Association (APA) categorizes addiction as a form of dependence on certain drugs or substances that produce pleasurable effects or alleviate distress, while simultaneously carrying a significant risk of negative consequences in the future. In its lexicographical usage, the term *addiction* is predominantly associated with alcoholism or employed to describe dependency-related symptoms linked to specific substances.[7] Meanwhile, the World Health Organization (WHO) defines addiction as a group of disorders characterized by impaired control over a behavior, marked by increasing priority given to that behavior over others, and persistent continuation despite adverse consequences.[8]

Several Muslim scholars have also undertaken theoretical and practical efforts to address the growing and increasingly diverse threat of addiction by integrating Islamic values as a foundational framework alongside principles of modern psychology. Benaouda Bensaid and colleagues, for instance, propose Islamic spirituality as an alternative approach to addiction treatment and recovery. Spirituality is positioned as a foundation for managing inner states, constructing personal meaning, exploring life purpose, and cultivating self-discipline, while also serving as a source of motivational drive. [9] Dian L. Izwar offers an integrative model of Islamic psychotherapy in managing addiction,

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[6] Herie and Skinner, *Fundamentals of Addiction A Practical Guide for Counsellors*., p. 5.

[7] Association, "Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorder 5th Edition.", p. 483.

[8] Organization, "International Classification of Diseases 11th Edition.",p. 6.

[9] Bensaid, Machouche, and Tekke, "An Islamic Spiritual Alternative to Addiction Treatment and Recovery.", p. 127.

specifically in cases of online gambling addiction, through active intervention in four fundamental human capacities—sensing, reasoning, empathy, and conscience—implemented via practical religious activities such as prayer, remembrance (*dhikr*), Qur'anic recitation, and charitable giving over six months.[10] Meanwhile, Defiana Mukti and Satriana Handayani focus on the trend of integrating spiritual dimensions within Islamic psychotherapy, demonstrating that psychologically based addiction treatment infused with spiritual elements is particularly effective for Muslim patients, as it aligns with their belief structures, especially in cases of illicit drug addiction, and contributes to a more holistic intervention model.[11]

Based on a review of existing studies on addiction treatment that integrate Islamic values and psychological principles, the author observes a notable lack of direct exploration of addiction within the primary source of Islamic teachings, namely the Qur'an. In fact, this latent human problem has not escaped the attention of the Qur'an, which serves as guidance for humanity. Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap by conducting a Qur'anic investigation to examine the extent to which the Qur'an engages with the issue of addiction, particularly within the framework of addiction as a form of human mental disorder or mental illness.

## METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research design using the *tafsīr mawḍū'ī* (thematic exegesis) approach. The methodological procedure consists of several systematic stages: first, the

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[10] Izwar, "Psychotherapy and Addiction Management : A Single Case Study of a Client with Online Gambling Addiction.", p. 44.

[11] Mukti and Handayani, "Trends in Islamic Psychotherapy for Enhancing Spiritual Well-Being in Drug Addiction Recovery.", p. 93.

determination of the central research theme; second, the identification and tracing of Qur'anic verses relevant to the theme; third, the compilation of these verses into a coherent corpus; and fourth, the narrative analysis of the selected verses through the lens of three authoritative Qur'anic commentaries.

The exegetical sources utilized in this study are *Marāḥ Labīd* by Nawawī al-Jāwī al-Bantanī, which reflects a Sufi-oriented interpretive approach; *al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr* by Ibn ʿĀshūr, characterized by its maqāṣid-oriented (objectives-based) framework; and *Tafsīr al-Shaʿrāwī* by Muḥammad Mutawallī al-Shaʿrāwī, which emphasizes a guidance-oriented (*hidāʾī*) perspective.

Subsequently, the meanings of the verses are discussed based on their general semantic implications, enriched by the elaborative interpretations of the aforementioned scholars, and then synthesized with contemporary conceptualizations of addiction. This integrative analysis aims to establish a coherent dialogue between Qur'anic discourse and the phenomenon of addiction within a modern psychological framework.

## QUR'ANIC INDICATIONS OF ADDICTION

### *Matāʿ al-Ghurūr*

One of the terms employed by the Qur'an to provide a concise depiction of worldly life is its characterization as a form of pleasure or alluring adornment that is inherently deceptive. In at least two passages, the Qur'an explicitly states that worldly life is nothing but *matāʿ al-ghurūr*, namely in Q. Āl ʿImrān [3]: 185 and Q. al-Ḥadīd [57]: 20, both employing the identical phrasing: *wa mā al-ḥayātu al-dunyā illā matāʿ al-ghurūr*. This depiction is encapsulated in two key terms: *al-matāʿ* and *al-ghurūr*.

Etymologically, the term *matā'* derives from the triliteral root *mīm–tā'–'ayn*. In its specific usage, *matā'* is closely associated with the expression *amti'at al-bayt* (household furnishings), referring to objects utilized by human beings to fulfill their needs. More broadly, it may also denote an opportunity for enjoyment—namely, the ability to derive benefit or pleasurable satisfaction from something desirable.[12] By contrast, *ghurūr* originates from the triliteral root *ghayn–rā'–rā'*, which conveys the meaning of *khada'a wa aṭma'a bi al-bāṭil*—to deceive and to entice through falsehood or illusion.[13]

Exegetical elaborations by Qur'anic commentators on the expression *matā' al-ghurūr* reveal a diversity of interpretive nuances that nevertheless converge upon a shared core meaning. In general, these interpretations emphasize the transient, illusory, and misleading nature of worldly pleasures, which captivate human desire while obscuring their ultimate consequences. The distribution of interpretations among classical and modern exegetes may be summarized as follows:

| *Marâẖ Labîd* | *Al-Taẖrîr wa al-Tanwîr* | *Tafsîr Sya'râwî* |
|---|---|---|
| *(matâ') Al-na'îm fi al-dunyâ ka matâ'i al-baît fî baqâ'ihî*[14] | *Fa kaunuhâ (matâ'an) amrun muththaridun wa kaûn al-matâ' mudhâfan ilâ al-ghurûri amrun ghâlibun*[15] | *(matâ') syaî'un yutamatta'u bihî wa yantahî, fa al-dunyâ matâ'un mauqûtun bilahdzhatin*[16] |

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[12] Faris, *Mu'jam Muqayis Al-Lughah*. Vol. V, p. 392.
[13] Manzur, *Lisān Al-ʿArab*. Vol. V., p. 12.
[14] Al-Jâwî, *Marâẖ Labîd Li Kasyfi Ma'nâ Al-Qur'âni Al-Majîd*. Vol. I, p. 172.
[15] 'Âsyûr, *Tafsîr Al-Tahrîr Wa Al-Tanwîr*. Vol. XXVII, p. 407.
[16] Sya'râwî, *Tafsîr Al-Sya'râwî*. Vol. XIII, p. 7765.

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|---|---|---|
| (al-ghurûr) li annahâ tughirru bi badzli al-maḫbûb, wa takhayyala al-insânu annahû yadûmu wa laysa bi dâ'imin[17] | (al-ghurûru) al-khadî'ah ay idzhâru al-amr al-dhârr al-ladzî min sya'nihî an yahtariza al-'âqilu minhu fî shûrati al-nâfi'I al-ladzî yarghabu fîhi.[18] | (al-ghurûr) ma'khûdzatun min al-ithmâ' fî mâ lâ yashihhu wa lâ yahshulu. Li dzâlika sammâ Allâhu al-syaithâna al-ghurûr li annahû yathma'unâ bi asyâ'a lâ tashihhu wa lâ tahdutsu.[19] |

The diction employed by the Qur'an in this context consists of the paired terms *matā'* and *ghurūr*. About *matā'*, all three exegetes emphasize the notion of pleasure or enjoyment that is temporary and inherently short-lived. This meaning is illustrated through the analogy of household furnishings, which remain beneficial only as long as they are properly placed and continue to function as intended. Once such objects are displaced or their function altered, their utility inevitably disappears. In a parallel manner, though articulated through different imagery, the exegetes stress that *matā'* denotes a form of pleasure or enjoyment that can indeed be experienced, yet is certain to come to an end in due course. Some descriptions even suggest that its duration is exceedingly brief, characterized as *bi-laḥẓatin* (in an instant). The convergence of these interpretations regarding the finitude of worldly life embedded in the term *matā'* leaves little room for substantive divergence among the three commentators, with differences arising only in their respective emphases and modes of elaboration.

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[17] Al-Jâwî, *Marâh Labîd Li Kasyfi Ma'nâ Al-Qur'âni Al-Majîd*. Vol. I, p. 172.

[18] 'Âsyûr, *Tafsîr Al-Tahrîr Wa Al-Tanwîr*. Vol. XXVII, p. 407.

[19] Sya'râwî, *Tafsîr Al-Sya'râwî*. Vol. III, p. 1389.

As for the term *ghurūr*, all three exegetes associate it with deception that generates a distorted perception of reality. Within the context of these verses, worldly life is portrayed as something alluring that leads human beings to misjudge its true nature—namely, to assume that it is enduring, when in fact it is fragile and destined to perish. Nevertheless, each exegete underscores a distinct dimension of this deception. Nawawī al-Jāwī highlights a form of deception that ensnares human beings to the extent that they are willing to expend all their efforts, even sacrificing what they hold most dear. Ibn ʿĀshūr locates deception at the level of perceived benefit and harm, whereby something that is intrinsically harmful (*maḍārrah*) is instead misconstrued as beneficial. By contrast, Mutawallī al-Shaʿrāwī emphasizes deception at the level of permissibility and perceived possibility, suggesting that individuals are led to believe that a given act is permissible and realistically attainable when in fact it is neither legitimately allowed nor ultimately realizable. One Qurʾanic narrative reflecting this notion is the designation of Iblīs as *al-ghurūr*, as he invites human beings toward actions that are neither permissible nor truly attainable in the manner he promises.

### La'ibun wa Lahwun

The Qurʾan portrays worldly life through various narrative depictions, among which are *la'ibun* (play) and *lahwun* (idle or frivolous activity). Such characterizations recur three times in the Qurʾan: in Q. al-Anʿām [6]: 32, *wa mā al-ḥayātu al-dunyā illā la'ibun wa lahwun*; in Q. Muḥammad [47]: 36, *innamā al-ḥayātu al-dunyā la'ibun wa lahwun*; and in Q. al-Ḥadīd [57]: 20, *i'lamū annamā al-ḥayātu al-dunyā la'ibun wa lahwun*. The term *la'ibun* derives from the triliteral root *lām–ʿayn–bā'* and semantically stands in opposition to *al-jidd* (seriousness or earnestness). It is commonly associated with

actions performed without seriousness or sincere intent and may also encompass behaviors that yield no meaningful benefit. By contrast, *lahwun* originates from the verb *lahā*, derived from the triliteral root *lām–ḥā'–wāw*. While it is semantically related to *al-la'b*, its emphasis lies in the aspect of distraction—namely, activities that captivate one's attention to the extent that more important matters are neglected. [20] With respect to these two terms, Qur'anic exegetes have offered a range of interpretive elaborations, which may be outlined as follows:

| *Marâ<u>h</u> Labîd* | *Al-Ta<u>h</u>rîr wa al-Tanwîr* | *Tafsîr Sya'râwî* |
|---|---|---|
| (la'ibun) fari<u>h</u>un yusyghil al-nafsa 'an mâ tantafi'u bihî, ay a'mâl musyghilatun 'an thâ'atillâh ta'âlâ.[21] | (al-la'ibu) 'amalun aw qawlun fî khiffatin wa sur'atin wa thaysyin laysat lahû ghâyatun mufîdatun bal ghâyatuhû irâ<u>h</u>at al-bâl wa taqshîr al-waqt wa aktsaruhû a'mâl al-shibyân.[22] | (al-la'ibu) an tusyghila nafsaka bi'amalin lâ qashda fîhi li ghâyatin.[23] |
| (lahwun) bâthilun yushrif al-nafsa 'an al-jidd fî al-umûr ilâ al-hazl, ay dhâ'i'atun 'an thâ'atillâh ta'âlâ.[24] | (al-lahwu) mâ yasytaghilu bihî al-insânu min mâ tartâ<u>h</u>u ilayhi nafsuhû wa lâ yat'abu fî al-isytighâli bihî 'aqluhû. | (al-lahwu) huwa 'amalun maqshûdun li ghâyatin immâ tadha'uhâ anta li nafsika aw ghayruka min man yurîdu an |

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[20] Manzur, *Lisān Al-ʿArab*. Vol. I, p. 739.

[21] Al-Jâwî, *Marâ<u>h</u> Labîd Li Kasyfi Ma'nâ Al-Qur'âni Al-Majîd*. Vol. I., p. 314.

[22] ʿÂsyûr, *Tafsîr Al-Ta<u>h</u>rîr Wa Al-Tanwîr*. Vol. VII, p. 193.

[23] Sya'râwî, *Tafsîr Al-Sya'râwî*. Vol. XV, p. 9479.

[24] Al-Jâwî, *Marâ<u>h</u> Labîd Li Kasyfi Ma'nâ Al-Qur'âni Al-Majîd*. Vol. I., p. 314.

|  | *Fayuthlaqu 'alâ mâ fîhi istimtâ'un wa ladzdzatun wa mulâ'imatun li al-syahwati.*[25] | *yufsidaka bihâ. Wa al-a'mâl al-nâfi' al-ladzî yanbagî an yansyaghila al-insânu bihî yadha'uhû man huwa a'lâ minka wahuwa al-Ilâh. Wa kullu mâ yulhîka 'an mâ yadha'uhû laka Ilâhuka fahuwa lahwun.*[26] |
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Nawāwī al-Jāwī elaborates the first term in this sequence, *la'ibun*, as something that brings about joy, expressed through the diction *fariḥun*. Nevertheless, it denotes an activity that occupies the individual in a manner that diverts attention from what is truly beneficial, including obedience to Allah SWT. More specifically, Ibn 'Āshūr explains that *la'ib* may take the form of bodily actions—whether partial or involving the whole body—as well as speech that is relatively simple and brief. Such actions or utterances, which lack substantive benefit beyond momentarily easing the mind or filling time, are characteristically associated with the behavior or speech of children. Al-Sha'rāwī, employing a more emphatic formulation, defines *la'ib* as preoccupation with actions that possess no purpose or meaningful benefit whatsoever.

Concerning the second term in this sequence, *lahwun*, Nawāwī al-Jāwī directly interprets it as something that falls within

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[25] 'Âsyûr, *Tafsîr Al-Tahrîr Wa Al-Tanwîr*. Vol. VII, p. 193.
[26] Sya'râwî, *Tafsîr Al-Sya'râwî*. Vol. XV, p. 9479.

the realm of *bāṭil*, insofar as it diverts attention from earnest engagement in meaningful pursuits and reduces them to a merely superficial or careless level, particularly in matters of obedience to Allah SWT. Ibn 'Āshūr articulates this notion in a more moderate tone, describing *lahw* as occupying oneself with pleasurable activities that require minimal exertion of effort or thought—essentially *having fun* by following the inclinations of desire (*shahwah*). Al-Sha'rāwī, by contrast, places stronger emphasis on the underlying tendency inherent in *lahw*. He argues that it essentially refers to actions undertaken with an intention to cause corruption or harm, whether initiated by the individual or instigated by others. Accordingly, anything that diverts or distracts human beings from what Allah has prescribed in terms of commands and prohibitions constitutes *lahwun* in its substantive sense.

### Al-Tazyīn and Al-Ighwā'

One fundamental Qur'anic perspective that underpins Islamic creed is the existence of *shayṭān*, whose leader is known as Iblīs, as an avowed enemy of humankind. This figure occupies a distinct and substantive position within the Qur'anic discourse, where he is explicitly portrayed as misguided and accursed due to his arrogance and defiance of Allah's command—an episode intrinsically connected to the primordial narrative of Adam AS and Ḥawwā'. Whether motivated by enmity or a desire for retribution, Iblīs petitions Allah SWT for extended respite, enabling him to mislead the progeny of Adam and thereby render them subject to trial. The explicit articulation of Iblīs's resolve is clearly recorded in Q. al-Ḥijr [15]: 39: *qāla Rabbī bi mā aghwaytanī la uzayyinanna lahum fī al-arḍi wa la ughwiyannahum ajma'īn*. A similar declaration appears in Q. al-A'rāf [7]: 16: *qāla fa bi mā aghwaytanī la aq'udanna lahum ṣirāṭaka al-mustaqīm*. The verb *zayyana* derives from the nominal root

composed of the letters *zāy–yā'–nūn*, signifying *ḥusn al-shay' wa taḥsīnuhū*—the inherent beauty of a thing and the act of rendering it attractive or embellished. [27]

The exegetical elaborations of this narrative by the three commentators reveal a range of interpretive emphases, which may be outlined as follows:

| *Marâḫ Labîd* | *Al-Taḫrîr wa al-Tanwîr* | *Tafsîr Sya'râwî* |
|---|---|---|
| *La (uzayyinanna) li dzurriyat âdama al-ma'âshî fî al-dunyâ[28]* | *La (uzayyinanna) lahum al-syarra wa al-sayyi'âti fa yaraunahâ hasanatan, wa uzayyina lahum al-iqbâla 'alâ al-malâdzdzi al-latî tasyghaluhum 'an al-wâjibâti.[29]* | *La (uzayyinanna) îdhâḫun anna kulla waswasatin li al-syaythân taqtashiru faqath 'alâ al-hayâti al-mutrafah, wa fî al-asyâ'i al-latî tudammiru al-'âfiyah, aw yattajihu ilâ kulli mâ yughdhibu Allâh bi al-inḫirâfi.[30]* |
| *La (ughwiyanna) bima'nâ usyakkikahum fî shiḫḫati al-ba'tsi wa al-qiyâmati wa al-ḫisâbi. Ulqî ilayhim* | *(Al-ighwâ'u) ay ja'luhum ghâwîn wa al-ghawâyatu al-dhalâlu ay la udhillannahum[32]* | *(Al-ighwâ'u) huwa manhaju wa tharîqatu al-Syaythâni, fahuwa yatarabbashu li ashḫâbi al-istiqâmati wa laisa fî hâjatin* |

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[27] Faris, *Mu'jam Muqayis Al-Lughah*. Vol. III, p. 41.

[28] Al-Jâwî, *Marâh Labîd Li Kasyfi Ma'nâ Al-Qur'âni Al-Majîd*. Vol. I, p. 580.

[29] 'Âsyûr, *Tafsîr Al-Tahrîr Wa Al-Tanwîr*. Vol. XIV, p. 50.

[30] Sya'râwî, *Tafsîr Al-Sya'râwî*. Vol. XII, p. 7703.

[32] 'Âsyûr, *Tafsîr Al-Tahrîr Wa Al-Tanwîr*. Vol. XIV, p. 50.

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|---|---|---|
| *anna al-dunyâ qadîmatun lâ tafnâ. Ityânihim min jânib al-arba'i kullâ shabâḫin bi al-targhîbi fî al-syahawâti bi al-waswasati fî al-qalbi.*[31] | | *idhlâli ashḫâbi al-a'waji. Wa al-shirâ'u laysa baina al-syaithân wa Rabbihî ta'âlâ bal baina al-syaithâni wa al-insâni.*[33] |

At minimum, the first term—*al-tazyīn* (embellishment)—as employed in the Qur'anic narrative, centers on the efforts undertaken by Iblīs to deceive humankind. Nawāwī al-Jāwī understands the object of this act of embellishment to be acts of disobedience (*ma'ṣiyah*) committed in worldly life. In their original state, such acts are naturally detested and avoided by people; however, through the process of *tazyīn*, they are made to appear attractive or, at the very least, perceived as permissible or tolerable. Ibn 'Āshūr emphasizes that the objects of embellishment include not only moral evils rendered attractive, but also pleasurable matters that preoccupy individuals and divert them from their obligations. Al-Sha'rāwī underlines that *tazyīn* operates selectively, targeting particular matters that ultimately undermine genuine human happiness, disturb inner balance, and propel individuals toward deviation that may lead them into Allah's wrath.

Deceptive embellishment alone is insufficient to ensure misdirection; rather, it is followed by a further stage undertaken by Iblīs—namely, deliberate misguidance (*al-ighwā'*). Nawāwī al-Jāwī elaborates this process in more concrete terms, describing efforts to

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[31] Al-Jâwî, *Marâh Labîd Li Kasyfi Ma'nâ Al-Qur'âni Al-Majîd*. Vol. I, p. 364.
[33] Sya'râwî, *Tafsîr Al-Sya'râwî*. Vol. XIII, p. 8206.

obscure human belief in resurrection, reckoning, and the reality of reward and punishment. In addition, Iblīs fosters the illusion of the permanence of worldly life, as though it were the ultimate reality. These disturbances are intensified without respite, thereby compelling individuals to follow their desires (*shahwah*). Ibn ʿĀshūr explains this more succinctly, asserting that the essence of Iblīs's endeavor lies in misguiding humankind through every means and capacity at his disposal. Al-Shaʿrāwī further emphasizes that Iblīs's misguidance primarily targets those who are situated upon the path of righteous action and remain steadfast (*istiqāmah*), with the intention of causing them to slip into error. Those who are already misguided are not his primary concern, as they have deviated on their own accord. He also clarifies that the enmity at stake in this context is between human beings and Satan, not between Satan and God.

**Error and Forgetfulness**

In line with the well-known maxim that "to err and to forget are intrinsic to human nature," the Qurʾan affirms that human beings are not exempt from error and forgetfulness. This assertion is stated explicitly in Q. al-Baqarah [2]: 286: *Rabbanā lā tuʾākhidhnā in nasīnā aw akhṭaʾnā*. The term *nasiya* derives from a triliteral root composed of the letters *nūn–sīn–yāʾ* and denotes forgetfulness, functioning as the antonym of *al-dhikr* (remembrance) and *al-ḥifẓ* (retention or memorization). In addition to this primary meaning, it may also signify *al-tark* (abandonment or neglect), as reflected in Q. Ṭāhā [20]: 126: *fa nasītahā wa kadhālika al-yawma tunsā*. By contrast, *akhṭaʾa* originates from the noun *al-khaṭaʾ*, derived from the root letters *khāʾ–ṭāʾ–hamzah*, which denotes error and serves as the antonym of *al-ṣawāb* (correctness or truth). Within this semantic field, *al-khaṭaʾ* typically conveys the notion of an unintentional

mistake, whereas *al-khiṭ'u* carries the connotation of an error committed deliberately. The corresponding verbal forms likewise reflect this distinction: *khaṭi'a* refers to committing an error intentionally, while *akhṭa'a* signifies making a mistake without deliberate intent. This latter usage also encompasses situations in which an individual aims at a particular objective but inadvertently performs an act that leads to a different and unintended outcome.[34]

The exegetical explanations offered by Qur'anic commentators regarding this supplication in the verse exhibit a range of emphases, which may be outlined as follows:

| *Marâ<u>h</u> Labîd* | *Al-Ta<u>h</u>rîr wa al-Tanwîr* | *Tafsîr Sya'râwî* |
|---|---|---|
| *Rabbanâ lâ tu'âqibnâ in (nasînâ) thâ'atuka*[35] *Aw (akhtha'nâ) fî amrika. Wa ('ashâ) Âdamu Rabbahû ay khâlafa Âdamu nahya Rabbihî.*[38] | *Wa yajûzu an yakûna talqînan min jânib Allâhi ta'âlâ iyyâhum bi an yaqûlû hâdzâ al-du'â'a mitsla mâ luqqinû al-ta<u>h</u>mîda fî sûrat al-fâti<u>h</u>ah. Wa qawlu al-Nabiyy S.A.W. rufi'a 'an ummatî al-khatha'u wa al-nisyânu wa mâ ukrihû 'alaîh.*[36] | *Laqad kâna al-nisyânu bi al-nisbati li Âdama ma'shiyatan, wa lâkinna Allâha akrama ummata Muhammadin fa rafa'a anhâ al-nisyâna. Bi al-nisbati li ummati Muhammadin fahînamâ naqûlu "lâ tu'âkhidznâ in nasînâ aw akhtha'nâ" wa in 'ashaynâ fa innamâ yakûnu al-'ishyânu* |

[34] Manzur. Vol. I, p. 66.

[35] Al-Jâwî, *Marâh Labîd Li Kasyfi Ma'nâ Al-Qur'âni Al-Majîd.* Vol. I, p. 108.

[36] 'Âsyûr, *Tafsîr Al-Tahrîr Wa Al-Tanwîr.*Vol. III, p. 139.

[38] Al-Jâwî, *Marâh Labîd Li Kasyfi Ma'nâ Al-Qur'âni Al-Majîd.* Vol. II, p. 41.

| | | *nisyânan        aw khatha'an.*[37] |
|---|---|---|

One of the principal vulnerabilities of human fallibility highlighted in the Qur'anic narrative is error and forgetfulness. This is clearly articulated in a relatively extensive verse of the Qur'an, namely Q. al-Baqarah [2]: 286. In this verse, a supplicatory expression is presented in which human beings petition Allah SWT not to hold them accountable for mistakes that arise from these two conditions.

Nawāwī al-Jāwī elaborates on the meaning of forgetfulness in this verse as negligence in fulfilling obedience to Allah SWT. Ibn ʿĀshūr reinforces a similar interpretation by citing a narration attributed to the Prophet Muḥammad SAW, which states that the community of Muḥammad is exempted from accountability for actions arising from error and forgetfulness. This supplicatory formula is, moreover, directly taught by Allah SWT to humankind, encouraging them to adopt it as a means of seeking divine mercy and magnanimity toward His servants. This pedagogical pattern mirrors Allah's instruction in Sūrat al-Fātiḥah, wherein specific expressions are taught to enable human beings to articulate proper *taḥmīd* (praise) toward Allah.

By contrast, al-Sha'rāwī adopts a perspective rooted in the earliest phase of human history, namely the era of Adam AS, for whom forgetfulness constituted a form of disobedience (*ma'ṣiyah*). However, due to the special honor bestowed by Allah SWT upon Muḥammad SAW and his community, the supplication to be exempted from accountability for errors stemming from mistakes and forgetfulness is accepted by Allah when it is sincerely invoked.

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[37] Sya'râwî, *Tafsîr Al-Sya'râwî*. Vol. II, p. 1246.

**Enslavement to Desire**

In contrast to the preceding narratives, this section does not focus on a single specific term, but rather on the composite meaning conveyed by a particular Qur'anic expression. The relevant text appears in two locations in the Qur'an: Q. al-Furqān [25]: 43, *ara'ayta man ittakhadha ilāhahū hawāhu*, and Q. al-Jāthiyah [45]: 23, *a fa ra'ayta man ittakhadha ilāhahū hawāhu*.

The range of exegetical interpretations offered by Qur'anic commentators regarding this expression may be outlined as follows:

| *Marâ<u>h</u> Labîd* | *Al-Ta<u>h</u>rîr wa al-Tanwîr* | *Tafsîr Sya'râwî* |
|---|---|---|
| *Hâdzâ amrun li rasûli Allâhi bi al-ta'ajjubi min syanâ'ati <u>h</u>âlihim al-ladzî ja'ala ma'bûdahû mâ yahwâhu. a nadzharta man taraka mutâba'ata al-hudâ wa aqbala 'alâ mutâba'ata al-hawâ fakâna ya'budu al-hawâ fadzâlika min al-'ajab.*[39] | *Ja'ala ilâhahû al-syai'a al-ladzî yahwâ 'ibâdatahû ay mâ yu<u>h</u>ibbu an yakûna ilâhan lahû limujarradi al-syahwati lâ li annahû musta<u>h</u>iqqun li al-ilâhiyah. Man ittakhadza hawâhu qudwatan lahû fî a'mâlihî faka'anna hawâhu ilâhuhû.*[40] | *An takûna fîhi qadhiyyatun dzhâhirun fîhâ wajhu al-<u>h</u>aqq illâ annaka tamîlu 'anhu wa anta ta'rifuhû lâ annaka tajhaluhû. Âfatu al-ra'yi al-hawâ. Fa al-ra'yu qad yakûnu shâ'iban, lâkin yamîlu bihî al-hawâ <u>h</u>aytsu yurîdu al-insânu.*[41] |

The contextual emphasis of these verses is strongly highlighted by the exegetes. Nawāwī al-Jāwī explains that the narrative functions as a directive to the Prophet to observe the

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[39] Al-Jâwî. Vol. II, p.134.
[40] 'Âsyûr, *Tafsîr Al-Tahrîr Wa Al-Tanwîr*. Vol. XIX, p.35.
[41] Sya'râwî, *Tafsîr Al-Sya'râwî*. Vol. XVII, p. 10451.

peculiarity of those who take their own desires as objects of worship. Such individuals disregard the clear guidance conveyed by the Prophet in favor of submitting to the dictates of their passions. Ibn 'Āshūr further clarifies that their inclination to worship is driven solely by desire, supported by *shahwah*, without due consideration of whether the object in question is truly worthy or deserving of worship. In this regard, they effectively adopt their desires as the guiding principle for their actions, which is tantamount to deifying their own inclinations.

In a similar vein, though articulated differently, al-Sha'rāwī provides a more nuanced elaboration. He illustrates this phenomenon through situations in which Allah SWT has established clear truths and definitive guidance, yet individuals deliberately turn away from them—not due to ignorance, but simply because they do not wish to accept them. According to al-Sha'rāwī, the ultimate source of intellectual ruin in human beings lies in their desires. While human reason (*'aql*) is inherently capable of directing individuals toward truth, it is frequently overridden by desire, which diverts them toward error.

### Synthetic Elaboration of Tafsīr and Psychology

The various Qur'anic narratives identified as indications of addiction cannot be readily or fully comprehended by all readers without further analytical clarification. Therefore, to more effectively approach this objective, a synthetic elaborative step is undertaken by aligning the identified Qur'anic indications with the psychological dimensions of addiction. The proposed framework of this alignment is presented as follows

| Synthetic Mapping between Qur'anic Narratives and the Psychological Context of Addiction | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Qur'anic Narrative** | **Indicative Meaning** | **Psychological Context of Addiction** |
| *Matā' al-ghurūr* in Q. Āl 'Imrān [3]: 185 and Q. al-Ḥadīd [57]: 20 | Illusory and deceptive attraction, resembling a false illusion that appears enduring but is in fact transient, akin to a mirage. | Disruption of the brain's reward system and distorted perception are shaped by cognitive distortion. |
| *La'ibun wa lahwun* in Q. al-An'ām [6]: 32; Q. Muḥammad [47]: 36; and Q. al-Ḥadīd [57]: 20 | Inclination toward purposeless and trivial activities, undertaken merely to fill time without direction or responsibility. | Addictive substances or behaviors share similar characteristics, namely triggering dopamine release in the brain, resulting in pleasurable sensations. |
| *Al-tazyīn wa al-ighwā'* in Q. al-Ḥijr [15]: 39 and Q. al-A'rāf [7]: 16 | Inherently harmful actions appear attractive due to deception and embellishment, concealing their true negative nature. | Addiction often arises from distorted core beliefs and cognitive distortions that lead individuals to misjudge and tolerate harmful behaviors. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *Al-khaṭa' wa al-nisyān* in Q. al-Baqarah [2]: 286 | Human error and forgetfulness receive divine tolerance, yet certain mistakes and lapses still entail personal accountability. | The initial stage of addiction often emerges from repeated tolerance of mistakes or negligence that should have been curtailed early on. |
| *Ittakhadha ilāhahū hawāhu* in Q. al-Furqān [25]: 43 and Q. al-Jāthiyah [45]: 23 | Enslavement to desire, prioritizing the fulfillment of impulses over adherence to divine guidance. | Severe addiction is marked by loss of autonomy, where individuals feel compelled to engage in addictive behaviors despite the desire to stop. |

Viewing addiction as a form of mental illness grounded in *core beliefs* and *cognitive distortions*, whereby individuals become deceived by various addictive substances or behaviors perceived as normal or acceptable—despite concealing inherent harm—reveals a strong correspondence with the Qur'anic narrative of *matā' al-ghurūr*.[42] Indeed, the Qur'anic depiction extends beyond the conventional psychological assumption that addiction is limited to specific substances or behaviors. Rather, it asserts that worldly life in its entirety possesses an alluring potential which, when indulged excessively, may culminate in addiction.

More specifically, the semantic connotation of *matā' al-ghurūr* points to an illusory attraction that presents itself as beneficial or

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[42] Birchard, *Overcoming Sex Addiction A Self-Help Guide.*, p. 113.

pleasurable, even enticing, while in reality offering something deceptive and inauthentic. In modern psychology, addiction disrupts the reward system, wherein satisfaction that was originally attained through sustained effort, challenging processes, and personal sacrifice is replaced by an instant shortcut. Suddenly, simple stimuli function as immediate conduits to gratification— whether through substance consumption or particular behaviors— serving merely as a false façade of pleasure that ultimately damages the brain's hormonal regulation systems.[43]

Both substance-related and behavioral addictions are neurologically intertwined and exert significant effects on the brain. Repetitive behaviors that generate pleasurable sensations stimulate the natural production of reward-related hormones. Over time, repeated engagement establishes new neurotransmitter pathways that increasingly dominate neural functioning. The pleasurable effects reinforce repetition, eventually leading to impairment of the brain's reward system. Satisfaction that once required effort and perseverance is transformed into an instant experience. Excessive stimulation of pleasure-related hormones may inundate the prefrontal cortex (PFC), which serves as the center of executive function and focus. Such overstimulation disrupts its regulatory capacity, causing individuals to become fixated on immediate gratification and unable to maintain sustained attention or self-control.[44]

The Qur'anic narrative of *la'ibun wa lahwun* emphasizes forms of activity devoid of meaning and purpose, frequently pursued for superficial pleasure. When applied to the context of

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[43] Koob, "The Neurobiology of Addiction: A Neuroadaptational View Relevant for Diagnosis.", p. 24.

[44] Doidge, *The Brain That Changes Itself: Stories of Personal Triumph from The Prontiers of Brain Science*., p. 30.

addiction as a mental disorder, this narrative resonates with patterns in which individuals become trapped in cycles of substance use or behaviors that merely fill empty time, generating fleeting pleasure while consuming time and energy without clear goals or constructive direction.

Beyond this, *la'ibun wa lahwun* further denotes a casual and careless utilization of time that distances individuals from the substance of real life, diverting them from awareness and responsibility. In the context of addiction, a similar dynamic is evident: substance use or addictive behaviors function primarily as mechanisms of escape from reality, redirecting individuals away from confronting life's demands and the responsibilities they are meant to uphold.

One particularly significant implication of *la'ibun wa lahwun* is its potential to induce a state of *ghaflah* (heedlessness)—not only toward the meaning of life, but also toward Allah SWT. This closely parallels the manner in which addiction binds individuals into states of immersion and detachment from lived reality, severing meaningful connections within family and society. As a result, social responsibilities and spiritual values—intended as foundational guiding principles—are neglected or abandoned.[45]

Through the narratives of *al-tazyīn* and *al-ighwā'*, the Qur'an underscores patterns of illusion and false perception, wherein appearances diverge sharply from underlying realities. What initially seems beneficial or advantageous is, in truth, harmful and potentially destructive, yet remains unnoticed due to deliberate embellishment by Iblīs. When viewed through the lens of addiction, this dynamic aligns closely with *cognitive distortion* and *reward*

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[45] Organization, "International Classification of Diseases 11th Edition.", p. 65.

*illusion*, wherein individuals repeatedly arrive at flawed conclusions that contradict the actual consequences of addictive behaviors.[46]

Another connotation of *al-tazyīn* and *al-ighwā'* lies in the tendency toward denial, whereby individuals externalize blame and attribute responsibility for their recognized failures to external factors or other parties. In addiction contexts, this manifests as self-justification or rationalization, with individuals framing others as the root cause of their addictive condition, while deflecting responsibility away from the self.

The Qur'anic narrative of *al-khaṭa' wa al-nisyān* encompasses a broad range of meanings, one of which highlights an initial gateway through which addiction may emerge—namely, errors and forgetfulness, whether intentional or unintentional. This narrative is followed by a divinely taught supplication seeking forgiveness for such lapses. In the context of addiction, early encounters with substances or addictive behaviors often feel unfamiliar, taboo, confusing, or even repulsive. However, repeated self-tolerance gradually erodes internal resistance, weakening initial avoidance mechanisms and opening pathways to repetition with increasing intensity until a new habit is formed. Over time, such behaviors are enacted seemingly beyond conscious control, operating almost automatically within the individual.

The experience of being trapped within an unwanted routine—one that feels inescapable—can eventually culminate in a moment of awareness. This awareness may serve as a critical turning point for acknowledgment and self-admission, becoming the foundational capital for seeking recovery and transformation.

Nevertheless, this perspective does not serve to legitimize all forms of error unconditionally. Clear distinctions remain between

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[46] Birchard, *Overcoming Sex Addiction A Self-Help Guide*., p. 113.

excusable lapses and actions that warrant accountability. The essential message is that individuals must never exhaust their internal reserves of hope for self-improvement and redemption. After exerting sincere effort toward correction, one ultimately entrusts the outcome to divine will.

Within the framework of addiction, this narrative corresponds to states of acute dependency characterized by *loss of autonomy*, wherein individuals no longer act according to values or long-term goals, but are driven solely by the pursuit of immediate pleasure. Such individuals engage in persistent *pleasure-seeking* through substances or behaviors that stimulate dopamine release. This condition may evolve into what can be described as *idolization of desire*, whereby pleasure itself becomes deified, regardless of the medium or method employed. Spiritual values lose their vitality and significance, leaving desire-driven logic as the sole guiding principle.[47]

**CONCLUSION**

This study demonstrates that addiction, when examined through a Qur'anic lens, is not a foreign or purely modern psychological phenomenon, but rather a latent human condition that has been implicitly addressed through diverse Qur'anic narratives. By employing a thematic exegesis approach and synthesizing classical and contemporary tafsīr with modern psychological theories of addiction, this article reveals that the Qur'an offers a coherent moral–cognitive framework for understanding addictive processes.

The identified Qur'anic narratives—*matā' al-ghurūr*, *la'ibun wa lahwun*, *al-tazyīn wa al-ighwā'*, *al-khaṭa' wa al-nisyān*, and *ittakhadha*

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[47] Bergamin et al., "Defining Autonomy in Psychiatry.", p.4.

*ilāhahū hawāhu*—collectively depict progressive stages of human vulnerability that closely correspond to psychological mechanisms underlying addiction. These include cognitive distortion, deceptive reward perception, dopamine-driven reinforcement, gradual loss of self-regulation, and ultimately the erosion of personal autonomy. Rather than framing addiction solely as pathological behavior, the Qur'anic discourse situates it within a broader moral anthropology, emphasizing how distorted desire, heedlessness, and misperception can enslave human agency.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the growing field of Islamic psychology by articulating a conceptual bridge between Qur'anic anthropology and contemporary addiction science. It challenges reductionist models that confine addiction to neurochemical imbalance or behavioral compulsion alone, proposing instead an integrated perspective that acknowledges cognitive, spiritual, and ethical dimensions. The Qur'anic portrayal of addiction-like tendencies underscores that loss of autonomy is not merely a clinical outcome but also a moral and existential crisis rooted in the deification of desire.

Practically, the findings suggest that Qur'anic narratives may serve as valuable cognitive–spiritual resources in preventive and rehabilitative interventions for Muslim populations. By fostering awareness of deception, self-reflection, accountability, and hope for restoration, these narratives can reinforce resilience, self-control, and meaning-oriented recovery. Such an approach complements existing psychological treatments by addressing the internal belief structures that sustain addictive behavior.

Nevertheless, this study remains conceptual in nature and does not claim empirical validation. Future research may expand this framework through clinical studies, therapeutic model

development, or empirical testing of Qur'an-informed self-help and intervention strategies. Further interdisciplinary exploration is also needed to assess how these Qur'anic constructs may be operationalized within evidence-based addiction treatment while maintaining scientific rigor.

In sum, the Qur'an presents a nuanced and holistic understanding of addiction that transcends time and disciplinary boundaries, offering not only a diagnosis of human vulnerability but also a moral compass for reclaiming autonomy, balance, and purpose.

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