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Bakhs and the Violation of Material Rights in the Qur'ān: A Thematic and Contextual Analysis

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Abstract

Bakhs, as defined in the Qur'ān, is typically seen as the act of giving insufficient measure or weight in trade. A thematic analysis of the Qur'ān shows that *Bakhs* pertains not only to dishonest commercial practices but also to any act that illegally diminishes, conceals, or takes away one's lawful rights in the material domain. In this article, the author examines material rights as an important element of *Bakhs* through a thematic analysis of related verses in the Qur'ān. The objective of the study is to show how the Qur'ān guarantees the protection of material rights through establishing principles of justice, visibility, accountability, and fairness in the economy and finance. With reference to the thematic analysis method, the author considers the Qur'ān concerning safeguarding property rights, rights in commerce, rights in finance, rights in inheritance, and the rights of vulnerable populations based on the Qur'ān. The study also includes relevant Hadiths, classical commentaries, and current literature to provide a scientific understanding of the topic. The results obtained show that the Qur'ān describes the complete system of material rights protection and treats any illegal deprivation of these rights as *Bakhs*. The conclusion of this study indicates that *Bakhs* should be viewed as a multifaceted ethical and legal term rather than merely a measure of inadequate weights and measures. This wider perspective contributes to modern Qur'ānic studies by showing that the teachings of the Qur'ān are still relevant to the question of protecting property rights and promoting justice, honesty, and accountability in our time.

Keywords: *Bakhs*, Material Rights, Economic Justice, Property Rights, Financial Rights.

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Introduction

The Qur'ān sets forth justice (*Adl*), fairness (*Qisṭ*), honesty, and accountability as key rules regulating inter-human conduct and social order. This is most noticeably visible in the Qur'ān's regulation of the sphere of material affairs in which wealth is regarded not only as an individual possession but also as a trust (*Amānah*) given to people by Allah. Hence, people are obliged to obtain, manage, and allocate wealth in accordance with divine instructions (See: Qur'ān 4:58, 16:90, 57:7).

Material rights take a prominent place among the rights recognized by Islam, as they have bearing not only on the welfare of an individual but also on collective stability. Material rights include legal ownership of property, commercial dealings, debts, inheritance, and other forms of economic activity. The Qur'ān asserts that every person has the right to enjoy these rights without any unlawful interference and denounces economic exploitation, fraud, and injustice that lead to deprivation of lawful possessions (See: Qur'ān 2:188, 4:29).

One of the important Qur'ānic ideas supporting these rights is *Bakhs*. The term is generally understood to mean the use of defective measures and weights in business transactions. However, based on the interpretation of the Qur'ān, *Bakhs* refers to acts that unlawfully take away the rights of other persons, including acts that may diminish the rights, conceal them, or hold them back. Hence, *Bakhs* is regarded as a basic moral and legal principle that forbids any form of material injustice rather than only being a commercial offense concerning measurements and weights (Izutsu, 2002).

This wider understanding of *Bakhs* reflects the objective of the Qur'ān regarding justice in all fields of economic life. Material rights are a basis of personal security, economic stability, and social balance. Hence, the Qur'ān provides detailed instructions about ownership, trade relations, contracts, financial activities, inheritance, and assistance to needy communities. Overall, these rules form a unified legal system based on justice, transparency, accountability, honesty, and mutual trust and justice, making sure that wealth circulates according to the law and the rights of all societies are protected (Auda, 2008, p.41). The relevance of the principles of the Qur'ān in our times is becoming more and more apparent. Today's society is still plagued by numerous forms of material injustice, such as financial corruption, commercial fraud, illegal occupation of property, breach of agreements, delays in the repayment of debts, denial of inheritance, exploitation of consumers, and embezzlement of assets of vulnerable people. Even though various forms of economic activity have changed, the ethical issues raised by the Qur'ān remain the same (Chapra, 1992, pp.199-201). Thus, we can conclude that the concept of *Bakhs* given in the Qur'ān is still relevant and performs an important function in regard to social justice.

There has been a lot of research done on Islamic economics, commercial ethics, and trade fraud in existing literature; however, very little research has been conducted in relation to *Bakhs* as a Qur'ānic element which covers the aspect of the preservation of the right to ownership. The analysis that has been done considers *Bakhs* only in the context of trade that involves a lack of measuring or unethical commercial activities. At the same time, no research assesses this phenomenon in terms of property rights, financial rights, inheritance, contracts, and the protection of those members of society who need protection. The lack of information on *Bakhs* in this context forms the basis of the current research.

As a result, this study utilizes the thematic approach (*Al-Tafsīr Al-Mawḍūʿī*) to investigate the appropriate Qur'ān verses on material rights along with relevant Prophetic sayings, classical Qur'ān commentaries, and modern academic works. The analysis illustrates the role of the Qur'ān in protecting material rights through the doctrine of justice, transparency, accountability, and honesty. In particular, attention is paid to property rights, commercial rights, financial rights, inheritance rights, and the rights of less fortunate individuals. Consequently, the author highlights that the Qur'ānic understanding of the concept of *Bakhs* is a robust scheme for the protection of material rights and remains timely for dealing with contemporary problems of financial justice and ethical governance.

Concept of Material Rights

Material rights refer to the rights that are acknowledged by law and ethics and granted to persons in respect of their wealth, property, capital, and other tangible forms of economic interests. These rights are composed of the legitimate acquisition, ownership, possession, use, transfer, and protection of property and the right to make profit from lawful economic activities without any interference or deprivation. In both the legal and ethical traditions, material rights play a vital role in ensuring human welfare as they provide people the necessary economic security to satisfy their own, family, and social needs.

Nonetheless, from an Islamic point of view, material rights are more than legal rights; they are moral obligations rooted in the system of divine guidance. The Qur'ān mentions private property ownership while simultaneously stating that ownership of all property belongs to Allah, who has given humankind wealth as an *amānah* (trust). This means that people have a legitimate property right but must account for their actions with regard to property ownership before Allah. This understanding of the concept of property ownership in the Qur'ān makes Islamic property rights different from purely secular ones, as it combines the legal aspect of ownership with the issue of moral obligations.

Islam recognizes many legally protected economic rights which together form an entire set of economic rights. They consist of the right to possess private property, to carry out lawful trade, to get fair payment for work done, to retrieve honest debts, to inherit things in accordance with God-prescribed quotas, to enter into legally binding contracts, and to be protected from stealing, cheating, abuse, or any other type of illegal acquisition of wealth (See: Qur'ān, 57:7, 2:284). Altogether these rights form an economic system based on justice, trust, transparency and mutual obligation, not based on unlimited individuality.

A balanced conception reveals an important feature of the economic system according to the Qur'ān. It allows a person to earn and possess wealth rightfully, but it prohibits exploitation of other individuals. Thus, material rights are perceived not as absolute rights, but as rights that must be used under ethical limitations intended to protect the common good and

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social justice. Thus, making a profit shall be compliant with honesty and fairness (See: Qur'ān, 2:188, 4:29, 4:32, 4:58, 5:1).

The close link between material rights and objectives of Islam (*Maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah*) demonstrates their importance. Classical Muslim jurists have established the notion of the protection of wealth *(ḥifẓ al-māl*) as one of the five main goals of the Shariah. The protection of wealth involves not only protecting private property, but also legal and ethical measures against practices such as fraud, corruption, unlawful gains, and exploitation that violate economic justice in a broader sense. Thus, the protection of property supports the economic well-being of individuals as well as the stability, economic advancement, and justice of society (Al-Zuḥaylī ,1989,p.47).

Material rights, when examined from a wider angle, indicate a whole ethical system regarding rights and duties. Having the right to own wealth entails having the duty to acquire it lawfully, protect the rights of others, fulfill one's financial duties, as well as perform the social responsibilities of *zakat*, charitable donations, and equitable distribution of wealth. Consequently, Islamic principles reject any separation of property rights from one's responsibility to be accountable for the property before Allah (Kamali, 2008).

This holistic knowledge of material rights sets the ground for understanding the idea of *Bakhs* in the Qur'ān. *Bakhs* directly opposes Islamic principles of protecting material rights as it deals with unlawful reduction, denial, and deprivation of someone's lawful entitlement. Accordingly, this paper will discuss how the Qur'ān protects material rights through various legal and moral methods used in property relations, trade, finance, inheritance, and regarding vulnerable members of society.

Protection of Material Rights in the Qur'ān

The Qur'ān gives a thorough legal and ethical framework for protecting material rights by regulating the acquisition, ownership, use, transference, and distribution of riches. While secular legal systems view property from the standpoint of its economic value, the Qur'ān describes wealth in the form of *amānah* (trust) provided to human beings by Allah. As a result, each individual is responsible to Allah for the actions performed to acquire, use, and spend the riches (Qur'an 57:7, 2:284). The theological basis changes the character of the protection of material rights from a legal duty into a religious and moral obligation to promote justice and avoid exploitation.

The security of material rights is a key component of the Qur'ānic concept of justice. Instead of focusing on specific economic transactions, the Qur'ān presents a complete program for managing such transactions through a set of principles such as justice (*ʿAdl*), fairness (*qisṭ*), honesty (*Ṣidq*), transparency, and accountability. Together, these principles help to ensure that wealth is distributed fairly and that individuals have access to their rightful economic rights (Al-Shāṭibī, Vol. 2, pp. 17–20; Auda, 2008, pp. 45–47).

This extensive framework also offers the larger framework for comprehending the Qur'ān ic idea of *Bakhs*. The word may be used in specific trade contexts, but its basic ethical notion can be applied to any action that unlawfully diminishes the right of someone else.

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Therefore, any act that lessens, hides, delays, changes, or unjustly takes material rights can be classified into the broader conceptual framework of *Bakhs* since it breaches the principles of justice and fairness of the Qur'ān (Al-Iṣfahānī, 2009, "بخس").

The thematic analysis of relevant verses of the Qur'ān shows that there are many categories of safeguarding material rights. One of them is property rights that prohibit illegal seizure of property; another one is commercial rights, regulating fair trade and an honest market; thirdly, financial rights, ensuring the performance of monetary obligations; fourth, inheritance rights, guaranteeing the proper distribution of the estate. Then, there is the right of the weak members of the community, including orphans and those who cannot protect their property effectively. Thus, altogether these categories make it clear that the concept of *Bakhs* discussed in Qur'ān is not limited only to commercial activity (See: Qur'ān, 2:188, 4:29, 2:282, 4:7, 4:2, 7:85, 11:85).

In light of this, the following discussion starts by analyzing these categories one by one using the thematic analysis method on the related Qur'ānic verses, along with relevant Prophetic traditions, classic works of exegesis, and modern scientific literature. Through this methodology, one can see how the Qur'ān integrates prescriptions for legal matters with ethical norms to formulate a cohesive and all-encompassing system of material rights protection.

According to its teachings, the Qur'ān presents a comprehensive legal and ethical structure that governs the safeguarding of material rights through rules related to the possession, ownership, utilization, and distribution of wealth. Although countless legal and economic systems understand wealth as an object and an asset of economic activity, the Qur'ān sees it as a fee (*Amānah*) received from God and that people have a fiduciary responsibility for. As such, they will be made accountable to God for the way they earn, manage, and use wealth. Responsibility for upholding material rights becomes not only a legal duty but also a religious and moral one, which implies the need to do justice, avoid exploitation, and contribute to the good of society. This system of ethics helps understand the way in which the Qur'ān protects material rights with the help of a variety of legal and moral mechanisms. Rather than treating economic rights as independent issues, the Qur'ān depicts them as the interdependent sides of justice, where each of them contributes to preventing *Bakhs* in the broader meaning of the word.

The present discussion focuses on the main aspects through which the Qur'ān preserves material rights, as well as illustrating how the illegal infringement of every single category of these rights can be observed in the light of *Bakhs*.

Property Rights

The Qur'ān has a great number of doctrines about the protection of property rights, one of which is the condemnation of unlawful acquisition of property. It explicitly forbids the followers of Islam from misappropriating the property of their co-religionists by means of falsehood, fraud, bribery, coercion, or other unlawful methods. The above prohibition forms one of the basic tenets of the theory of property justice in the Qur'ān. It means that one cannot illegally deprive another person of their rightful property.

Allah says:

وَلَا تَأْكُلُوٓا۟ أَمْوَٰلَكُم بَيْنَكُم بِٱلْبَٰطِلِ وَتُدْلُوا۟ بِهَآ إِلَى ٱلْحُكَّامِ لِتَأْكُلُوا۟ فَرِيقًا مِّنْ أَمْوَٰلِ ٱلنَّاسِ بِٱلْإِثْمِ وَأَنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

(Al-Qur'ān, 2:188) .

"Do not consume one another's wealth unjustly, nor deliberately bribe authorities to devour a portion of others' property, knowing that it is a sin."

Classical scholar, Imam Al-Qurṭubī (2012) mentions, while explaining, that the whole Ummah of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) is addressed in this passage. The implication is that no one should unfairly take advantage of the affluence of another. The profits of a prostitute, the fees of a soothsayer, or the revenues from the sale of alcohol and pork are examples of items that are prohibited under Sharia, even if the owner voluntarily agrees to donate them. However, if the seller reveals the genuine nature of the object being sold, a transaction involving an inflated price (*ghabn*) is exempt from this ban; in this scenario, the excess amount is essentially viewed as a gift, a topic that will be further addressed. In Surah An-Nisa. Since each of them is both the one being restricted and the one from whom the conduct is being prohibited, the wealth is credited to the same people that the restriction is targeting.

It is highlighted in *Ahsan al-Bayan fi Tafsir al-Qur'ān that* making a fraudulent claim to someone's riches is known as "eating wealth through falsehood." Taking someone's wealth, robbing, stealing, betraying, taking money through gambling, taking interest, taking money for a living, taking money for a singer, giving something to a soothsayer, bearing false witness, denying someone's truth and swearing by him, etc. Falsehood encompasses all of these issues. According to Hazrat Ibn Abbas, this passage describes a person who is in charge of certain riches, denies it, and has no witnesses against him. Additionally, he makes false swearing when this disagreement gets before the judge. Al-Kalbi states that this is the instance of a person who delivers false testimony (Fazlur Rahman, 2002, Vol. 1, p. 325).

According to the exegetical discussion, Qur'ān 2:188 prohibits all sorts of illicit acquisition of wealth, establishing a comprehensive basis for the preservation of material rights. This Qur'ānic principle is violated, and economic justice is undermined by any action that denies people their just financial entitlements.

The sunnah of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) further reinforces this Qur'ānic principle. The Messenger of Allah said; Narrated 'Ikrima: Ibn Abbas said: "Allah's Apostle delivered a sermon on the Day of Nahr, and said, 'O people! (Tell me) what is the day today?' The people replied, 'It is the forbidden (sacred) day.' He asked again, 'What town is this?' They replied, 'It is the forbidden (Sacred) town.' He asked, 'Which month is this?' They replied, 'It is the forbidden (Sacred) month.' He said, 'No doubt! Your blood, your properties, and your honor are sacred to one another like the sanctity of this day of yours, in this (sacred) town (Mecca) of yours, in this month of your'(Sahih Bukhārī, Book 26, Hadith 795).

This hadith affirms the principle of respect for the property of individuals in relation to life and honor. As wealth is sacred and cannot be taken away or treated unjustly, this hadith reinforces the commandment regarding unlawful acquisition of property given in the Qur'ān in verse 2:188 of Surah Al-*Baqarah*. Both the Qur'ān 's directive and the Sunnah show that

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respect for property rights is both a legal obligation and a moral obligation, and violating the rights of others would be contrary to Islam's teachings of justice.

Discussions in contemporary studies have presented the opinion that while Islam grants private property rights, it cannot ignore the notion of ethical responsibility. Ownership in Islam is protected by law, but at the same time it is treated as an amānah entrusted by God, which means that persons must ensure the proper use of their wealth in a highly ethical manner. Therefore, appropriation that is illegal in nature would not merely be legally valid, but it would also negate the ethical principles that ought to be followed in respect to concrete material rights (Salam et al., 2025).

Commercial dealings, where people are engaged in selling, buying, and exchanging, must also be protected in every way possible when property rights are concerned. Given this, the Qur'ān pays much attention to the way transactions occur commercially to avoid being cheated, exploited, or any other kind of *Bakhs*.

Commercial Rights

The commercial rights are essential in the concept of economic justice in the Qur'ān. The Qur'ān mentions specific rules related to trade in order to prevent cheating and dishonesty in trade. These include forbidding dishonest practices of trade such as cheating, false measures, lying, and the use of any other method of violation of the rights of consumers and sellers in the market. These rules promote the idea of carrying out economic transactions in a fair and just manner. Since trading is one of the most typical ways of economic interaction of individuals, the Qur'ān emphasizes the need for protecting commercial rights from all kinds of fraud.

In this context, the injunction on *Bakhs* represents a significant ethical value that preserves fairness in the economy and defends the legitimate rights of all parties concerned.

Stated in the Qur'ān;

وَإِلَىٰ مَدۡيَنَ أَخَاهُمۡ شُعَيۡبٗاۚ قَالَ يَٰقَوۡمِ ٱعۡبُدُواْ ٱللَّهَ مَا لَكُم مِّنۡ إِلَٰهٍ غَيۡرُهُۥۖ قَدۡ جَآءَتۡكُم بَيِّنَةٞ مِّن رَّبِّكُمۡۖ فَأَوۡفُواْ ٱلۡكَيۡلَ وَٱلۡمِيزَانَ وَلَا تَبۡخَسُواْ ٱلنَّاسَ أَشۡيَآءَهُمۡ وَلَا تُفۡسِدُواْ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ بَعۡدَ إِصۡلَٰحِهَاۚ ذَٰلِكُمۡ خَيۡرٞ لَّكُمۡ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤۡمِنِينَ (Al-Qur'ān, 7:85)

Al Qurṭubī states in his Tafseer while explaining that Hazrat Shuaib was sent to his nation and instructed them to give full measures and weights with justice. Therefore, it creates a global duty of fairness between buyers and sellers and investors and principals in every situation.

It is highlighted in Ahsan Bayan that Hazrat Shuaib was sent to his nation, and he commanded them to give full weights and measures without any discrimination. He also instructed them that manipulation in weights and measures is prohibited. Likewise, to deprive others of their basic human rights is also prohibited (Rahman, 1996, Vol. 3, p. 369).

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Huraira that the Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) said:

"He who took up arms against us is not of us, and he who acted dishonestly towards us is not of us." (Sahih Muslim Book 1, Hadith 182).

This Prophetic statement clearly indicates that dishonesty in commercial transactions is not only a legal wrongdoing but also an ethical crime that goes against the principles of Islam.

Honesty in business is an integral part of faith and righteousness, while dishonesty violates the injunctions of the Qur'ān regarding fairness in economic dealings. According to both Qur'ānic injunctions and the Prophet's teachings, commercial rights have to be upheld by way of justice, honesty, transparency, and mutual agreement. Any other form of cheating, influencing, hiding defects, or inadequacy in the trade is assumed to violate commercial rights. Such dishonest acts lead to an unlawful loss of belongingness of other people and thus imply the broader Qur'ān ic notion of *Bakhs*. Maintaining commercial rights is therefore necessary for the establishment of public trust, market stability, and economic justice.

The concept that has been put forth by classical scholars remains supported by modern academic contributions on the subject of Islamic commercial ethics. According to the aforementioned scholars, the principles of Islamic commercial ethics are based primarily on principles of justice, honesty and transparency, mutual consent, and the abolition of fraud and exploitation. They believe that the implementation of Qur'ānic principles will be beneficial to both buyers and sellers, will strengthen consumer confidence, ensure justice within the different markets, and contribute to the sustainable development of the economy. Moreover, the authors advance the argument that implementation of Islamic commercial ethics can serve as a good ethical background for solving different commercial issues that contemporary society is facing (Rehman & Khattak, 2026).

Once the Qur'ān 's establishment of protection of commercial rights is examined, the discussion about financial rights can be taken up, where the topic shifts from fairness in exchange to performing financial obligations involved in contracts, loans, and other financial commitments.

Financial Rights

Monetary rights represent a key component of financial rights in Islam, which covers all the allowed rights related to money that derive from credits, financial terms and agreements, and contractual obligations. Thus, following the Qur'ān, monetary rights must be observed, since one of its aspects is the budgetary matter that provides fair transactions based on such principles as justice, transparency, and responsibility. While the commercial rights deal with the justice of transactions only, financial rights concern the observance of rights and responsibilities that persist after the transaction. Therefore, the realization of these rights is vital for society in terms of trust and stability.

Financial rights represent a significant aspect of material rights in Islam, encompassing various lawful money rights accruing from debt and financial commitments. The Qur'ān emphasizes protecting these rights by promoting fair dealings guided by the principles of justice, transparency, and accountability.

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يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِذَا تَدَايَنتُم بِدَيْنٍ إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى فَٱكْتُبُوهُ ۚ وَلْيَكْتُب بَّيْنَكُمْ كَاتِبٌۢ بِٱلْعَدْلِ ۚ وَلَا يَأْبَ كَاتِبٌ أَن يَكْتُبَ كَمَا عَلَّمَهُ ٱللَّهُ ۚ فَلْيَكْتُبْ وَلْيُمْلِلِ ٱلَّذِى عَلَيْهِ ٱلْحَقُّ وَلْيَتَّقِ ٱللَّهَ رَبَّهُۥ وَلَا يَبْخَسْ مِنْهُ شَيْـًٔا (Al-Qur'ān, 2:282)

"O believers! When you contract a loan for a fixed period of time, commit it to writing. Let the scribe maintain justice between the parties. The scribe should not refuse to write as Allah has taught them to write. They will write what the debtor dictates, bearing Allah in mind and not defrauding the debt…"

To ensure clarity and openness, this verse of the Qur'ān primarily instructs believers to record debt-based transactions, including the amount and the time frame for repayment. In essence, the goal of giving this instruction is to avoid disagreements and the denial of rights between the two parties (Rahman, 1992, Vol. 1, pp. 438–442).

Tafsir ibn Kathīr essentially specifies that this verse is mostly in relation to debt-based transactions. To prevent disagreements between all parties that might result from manipulation, denial of rights, or forgetfulness, the significance of documentation that is essentially connected to debt-based agreements is stressed (Ibn Kathīr, 2000, Vol. 1, pp. 85–87).

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) said; Narrated Abu Hurairah: Allah's Apostle said, "Procrastination (delay) in repaying debts by a wealthy person is injustice." (Sahih Bukhārī, Book 41, Hadith 585).

This hadith illustrates an idea we find in the Qur'ān, that is, the fulfilling of financial obligations promptly and without delay. In fact, there is an unjust delay in payments which denies others their lawful entitlements. With reference to *Bakhs*, such behavior would represent an example of *Bakhs*, since it means keeping something which should rightly be given to a person.

The Qur'ān and the Sunnah provide guidelines for financial rights, which are important types of material rights. The Qur'ān adheres to the principles of the enforcement of an agreement, keeping the debt records, and completing financial obligations on time. Recent studies point out that these principles are relevant in the modern world too. Hence, if someone deliberately damages, postpones, refuses, or manipulates the lawful rights of another person, it infringes upon their material rights and can be defined within the larger *Bakhs* concept of the Qur'ān.

Once the financial rights were made secure, the topic of inheritance rights follows. The Qur'ān makes sure that wealth is transferred correctly after a person's death by indicating just how much wealth will go to which heirs, with the added prohibition of taking that wealth from the rightful heirs. The protection of financial rights thus has implications beyond the life of a person to life after death. This is why the Qur'ān lays out a complete system of inheritance to protect the financial rights of those who are legally entitled to inherit wealth as opposed to distributing the wealth as per the whims and fancies of individuals. With this system in place, the Qur'ān ensures that the transfer of wealth is done fairly and according to divine laws.

Inheritance Rights

The rights of inheritance are one of the key elements of material rights in Islam. The Qur'ān establishes very clear regulations regarding inheritance to ensure that the estate of the deceased individual is divided among the eligible heirs in a fair manner. This is distinct from pre-Islamic customs, as women, children, and other weak family members lost their rightful portions many times. The Qur'ān completely removes arbitrary customs regarding inheritance by fixing portions of inheritance, and inheritance rights now belong to material rights rather than being seen as an aristocratic privilege.

Allah Almighty states:

لِّلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ ٱلْوَٰلِدَانِ وَٱلْأَقْرَبُونَ وَلِلنِّسَآءِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ ٱلْوَٰلِدَانِ وَٱلْأَقْرَبُونَ مِمَّا قَلَّ مِنْهُ أَوْ كَثُرَ ۚ نَصِيبًا مَّفْرُوضًا. (AlQur'ān, 4:7).

"For men there is a share in what their parents and close relatives leave, and for women there is a share in what their parents and close relatives leave—whether it is little or much. 'These are' obligatory shares."

As reported by Said ibn Jubayr and Qatādah, the people of Jāhiliyyah denied women and children any rights to inherit and instead distributed all property only among male relatives. This verse put an end to this practice by establishing that all heirs have a birthright to their shares of inheritance determined by their relation to the decedent (Ibn Kathīr, 2000, Vol. 4, p. 383).

In the same manner, *Aḥsan al-Bayān* elucidates that the parts of inheritance have been specified in the Qur'ān by Allah Himself. These indicative modes are not subject to modifications on the account of subjective opinions, pressure from family members, or customs. Since a decree of Allah determines these shares, no one shall be able to exclude a legitimate heir from their rightful share (Raḥmān, 1993, Vol. 2, p. 233).

The commentary undeniably asserts that any illegal reduction or denial of the prescribed share of the heir is a direct violation of the material rights of the heir and falls under the general prohibition of *Bakhs*.

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) lays great emphasis on the fair distribution of the inheritance. As narrated by Ibn Abbas (R.A), the Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) said:" Give the *Fara'id* (the shares of the inheritance that are prescribed in the Qur'ān) to those who are entitled to receive it. Then whatever remains should be given to the closest male relative of the deceased." (Sahih Bukhārī, Book 80, Hadith 724).

The true meaning of this hadith is in emphasizing the legislative principle contained in the Qur'ān, with the emphasis on the fact that inheritance must be distributed strictly in accordance with the divine dictates.

Modern scholarly studies of the inheritance structure in the Qur'ān have strengthened the viewpoint of the classical exegetes. Aḥsan (2021), for instance, states that the Qur'ānic inheritance law represents a complete mechanism for wealth transfer. The author explains that fixed shares established in the Qur'ān represent the means of presentation of the laws of

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inheritance that guarantee fairness in the distribution of estate between heirs and uphold distributive justice. Thus, along with guarantees of material rights of entitled heirs from the Qur'ān perspective, the law of inheritance eliminates any possibility of economic injustice in families.

Thus, the Qur'ān shows that the right to inherit is important in protecting the property rights of people. Evidence from classical texts and contemporary scholarship presents the notion that divinely given inheritance shares serve to guarantee wealth for heirs, ensure just treatment of heirs, and protect the rights of other lawful beneficiaries. Therefore, when any heir is deprived of his/her rightful share by force, deceit, wrongful influence, or illegal possession of inherited property, this is clearly an act of *Bakhs* since it violates a validly protected property right.

Even though inheritance protects lawful heirs after death, the Qur'ān also ensures protection to vulnerable individuals. The next section will provide insight into the protection of property rights of orphans and other groups of vulnerable individuals as reflected in the content of the Qur'ān.

Protection of rights in Islam concerning property matters does not limit itself to ordinary economy and money circulation but also includes all vulnerable elements of society. It includes, for example, the cases of children, orphans, and groups that do not possess the opportunity to protect their own interests. The Qur'ān specifies a number of ways to ensure justice and safeguard the property of certain individuals.

Wealth of Vulnerable Members of Society

The safeguarding of the property of the vulnerable groups in society is one of the crucial aspects of material rights in the Qur'ān. The Qur'ān points out that some people, particularly orphans and minors, are more susceptible to economic losses and losses of material rights of other kinds. That is why the Qur'ān provides a set of rules and ethical standards that make it possible to understand how to protect the property of such people and manage it with honesty and fairness. The ideas of the Qur'ān concerning the methods of protecting the material rights of those who are not able to do it by themselves prove that the Qur'ān prohibits *Bakhs* strictly. Therefore, the views of the Qur'ān are extended to cover every illegal deprivation of material rights regardless of the position of the victim.

Thus, according to the Qur'ān, the responsibility to protect the property of the orphaned people lies on every believer.

وَءَاتُوا۟ ٱلْيَتَـٰمَىٰٓ أَمْوَٰلَهُمْ ۖ وَلَا تَتَبَدَّلُوا۟ ٱلْخَبِيثَ بِٱلطَّيِّبِ ۖ وَلَا تَأْكُلُوٓا۟ أَمْوَٰلَهُمْ إِلَىٰٓ أَمْوَٰلِكُمْ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ حُوبًا كَبِيرًا (Al-Qur'ān, 4:2)

"And give unto orphans their property and do not exchange (your) bad things for (their) good ones and devour not their substance (by adding it) to your substance. Surely, this is a great sin."

Ibn Kathīr states the verse urges the guardians to restore the wealth of the orphans when they come of age and strictly forbids spending or swapping any valuable wealth of the orphans with possessions of lesser value. He tells of the cases noted by the previous scholars in which some guardians would swap their superior cattle and valuable possessions of orphans for their own inferior property while pretending that the bargain they made was fair. The Holy Book speaks against these actions as serious injustices since they unlawfully infringe on the rights of property of people who are unable to defend themselves (Ibn Kathīr, 2000, Vol. 4, pp. 371–372).

In the same way, Aḥsan al-Bayān illustrates that there were instances where guardians misused the assets belonging to orphans for their own advantage by blending them with their own property. The commentary highlights that all such activities were not accepted in the social structure since they were done with the motive of exploiting and misappropriating someone else’s property (Ahmad, 2010, Vol. 2, p. 59).

These examples indicate that *Bakhs* might be carried out not only by means of direct robbery, but also through other indirect ways of behavioral manipulation, fraud, concealment, and misuse of trust. Moreover, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) underscored the significance of disobeying the rights of people who are in vulnerable positions:

Abu Hurairah reported that the Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) stated that: “Avoid the seven great destructive sins." The people enquire, "O Allah's Messenger (S.A.W.)! What are they? "He said, "To join others in worship along with Allah, to practice sorcery, to kill the life which Allah has forbidden except for a just cause, to eat up Riba, to eat up an orphan's wealth, to give back to the enemy and fleeing from the battlefield at the time of fighting, and to accuse, chaste women, who never even think of anything touching chastity and are good believers (Sahih Bukhārī, Book 51, Hadith 28).

According to this hadith, it is very sinful to consume orphan property without permission. This hadith places illegal consumption of orphan property among the biggest sins of Islam, next to such offenses as shirk and murder. The mention of illegal consumption of orphan property in the same breath with some of the most vicious crimes shows how much Islam values the protection of the material possessions of people who are unable to defend their rights.

Contemporary scholarship continues to support ethical concepts arising from the Qur’ān and Prophetic traditions. Salam et al. (2025) offer a thematic interpretation stating that what the Qur’ān says about property ownership involves two elements: rights and responsibilities. The Qur’ān establishes people's rights to own, possess, and use property; however, property has to be understood as a trust given by God and to be dealt with in accordance with justice, responsibility, and social benefit principles. The authors contend that property in Islam is not owned but implies certain ethical requirements such as charitable giving (zakat) and prohibition of saving money.

By protecting the interests of those who cannot protect their own rights, the Qur’ān demonstrates material justice whereby individuals are granted their rightful ownership of materials regardless of their age, wealth, or social status. It follows that through every unlawful act involving the taking, hiding, manipulating, or using of property of vulnerable people, the principle of infringing the rights of such people is violated according to the definition of *Bakhs* in general.

As shown in the sections above, the Qur'ān provides for the protection of people's rights through a multitude of closely connected concepts that include property rights, business rights, financial rights, inheritance rights, and rights of vulnerable members of society. The next section summarizes these ideas and shows how these concepts lead to the comprehension of *Bakhs* as a universal ethical and legislative principle in reference to material justice in the Qur'ān.

Findings and Discussions

The analysis of the relevant Qur'ānic verses shows that *Bakhs*, or providing a deficient measure/weight, goes far beyond this simplistic idea. When the relevant Qur'ān ic verses are looked at together, it can be seen that there is a more general ethical and legal principle that forbids every sort of unlawful deprivation, misrepresentation, concealment, or denial of the lawful property rights of a person. Hence, this aspect gives evidence about the thesis of the current work and allows us to denote *Bakhs* as a universal concept of Qur'ān regarding material justice rather than dishonest trading.

More so, the analysis demonstrates that the Qur'ān defends material rights in a unified system of protection that includes property rights, commercial rights, rights lying in banking and finance, inheritance rights, as well as rights about those people who are on the margin. Although these different groups have varied roles and objectives in economic life, they still are tied to the similar aim of defending legitimate claims and preventing injustices.

In the case of property rights, the Qur'ān forbids any illegal means of taking someone's property or wealth by illegal methods such as deceiving, stealing, getting bribes, bringing false claims, and breaching a trust. Understanding the verse Qur'ān 2:188, traditional scholars of Islam acknowledged it as an important principle prohibiting unlawful acquisition of wealth instead of restricting its use only to the specific issue. Thus, any act of taking someone's property is a violation of the Qur'ānic prohibition of *Bakhs*.

The second aspect of the principle of *Bakhs* involves the notion of making good the rights of others. The Qur'ānic discussion of the rights to business provides ample evidence that the principle of *Bakhs* manifests itself in dealings involving exchanges of goods as well as the dealings that do not involve physical transactions. Thus, the Qur'ānic guidance provided to people of Madyan stipulates that honesty, transparency, and fairness are essential qualities that govern commercial transactions. Therefore, signs of dishonesty in commercial relations such as deceit to the consumers in the course of a transaction, hiding of information from them regarding the quality of goods, and other activities of the same kind are included in the concept of *Bakhs*, since they deprive someone of the right to have a legitimate transaction. The concept of *Bakhs* also includes the violations of financial entitlements. The financial arrangements made in accordance with the provisions of the Qur'ān provide a good example of how the law protects a person lawfully allowed to have certain entitlements not only in the course of a transaction but also after all conditions of the transaction are met.

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Furthermore, Qur'ānic laws regarding inheritance guarantee fixed portions to legal heirs and abolish customs that deny women, children, and other weaker members of the family. The results of the research indicate that the Qur'ānic system of inheritance plays an important legal role in protecting people from economic injustice by ensuring that any rightful heir will receive what is due to them from Allah. Failure or refusal to give anyone their fixed share or not revealing their share is thus considered to violate *Bakhs* under the Qur'ān.

The research shows that the Qur'ān has a special attitude towards protecting the property of weak members of society, such as orphans. The repeated prohibition of entering into possession of the money of those who are unable to defend themselves means that the concept of justice according to the Qur'ān is much greater than that of justice in the ordinary judicial process and involves ethical issues.

Overall, this study provides evidence to show that the principle of *Bakhs* in the Qur'ān is not limited only to the situation of unethical business conduct but provides a general ethical and legal principle that protects other people's rights to property and wealth. The connection between the issues studied here proves the Qur'ān to prohibit the action that diminishes the valid claim of the other person in any manner, irrespective of whether the appropriation occurs through trade, finance, inheritance, property disputes, or exploitation of helpless people.

Moreover, the presented findings closely correlate with *Maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah*, especially the issue of preserving wealth (*Ḥifẓ al-māl*). Thus, it is possible to interpret the ban of *Bakhs* as the way the Qur'ān provides for achieving the goal of preserving wealth. The protection of ownership through the ban of *Bakhs* influences the advantages of the entities as well as the general situation of society.

The findings show the relevance of the Qur'ānic theory of *Bakhs* in modern times. This phenomenon refers to different modern problems such as financial crimes, unlawful activities in contracts, fraud, illegal seizure of property, denial of inheritance, and exploitation of helpless people. As a result, the Qur'ānic framework that was constructed in this study is still beneficial in promoting justice, responsibility, and morality in contemporary economic life.

Conclusion

Analysis of the relevant verses of the Qur'ān leads us to conclude that the notion of *Bakhs* should not be limited to the traditional meaning related to giving less quantity or less weight in trade. As a matter of fact, the Qur'ān portrays *Bakhs* as a general ethical and legal concept that prohibits any illegal decrease, denial, concealment, or deprivation of the lawful material rights of others. This wider scope can be understood from the theme of the Qur'ān in general instead of treating the particular verses in an isolated way.

From the analysis of the verses, it follows that the Qur'ān protects the material rights through a complete system of property rights, rights of commerce, rights to property, rights of inheritance, and rights of the marginalized section of society. Even though these categories cover different areas of economics, their unifying point is their aim to safeguard the lawful rights and to prevent economic injustice. Using the concept of *Bakhs* helps to unify various aspects of material rights. The results also show that protection of material rights in the Qur'ān

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is in line with the higher aims of Shari'ah, particularly that of the protection of wealth (Hifz al-mal). In forbidding acts of deceit, betrayal of trust, illegal seizure of property, distortion of inheritance, unjust delay of payments, and exploitation of the poor, the Qur'ān has set forth a mechanism, which is aimed at providing justice, accountability, and welfare for the people.

Thus, material rights are not just an economic issue but an integral part of the Qur'ānic idea of a just and moral society. Moreover, the study shows the relevance of the idea of *Bakhs* as it helps solve today's problems. Corruption, fraud, illegal appropriation of property, breaches of contract, deprivation of inheritance, and misuse of the property of the needy still cause injustice in many societies.

In conclusion, the research advances Qur'ānic studies by expanding the concept of *Bakhs* from a limited commercial idea to a broad principle for the protection of material rights. It is expected that this theme will encourage more scholars to explore *Bakhs* and its broader ethical implications.

Recommendations

1. To ensure the security of economic rights and control of economic injustice, public institutions, businesses, and financial institutions should uphold the values of the Qur'ān, such as honesty, transparency, fulfillment of the contract, and accountability.
2. Future research might investigate other aspects of *Bakhs* such as moral rights, social rights, political rights, and environmental duties, thus coming up with a more holistic conception of the term within the larger context of Qur'ānic ethics.

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