Mauriduna Journal of Islamic Studies
E-ISSN: 2797-0876
http://ejournal.mc.ac.id
Open Access
Mauriduna: Journal of Islamic Studies, Vol. 7, No. 1, 2026 Pages 136-154
DOI: 10.37274/mauriduna.v7i1.162

Taqdīm-Ta'khīr in Qur'anic Discourse: A Maqāṣidic Analysis of al-Baqarah 45 and 153

Asrizal Mustofa[1], Nurul Wahidah Fauzi[2], Fayiz Yan Avicena[3], Fransischa Nayla Puteri[4]
[1.3.4] Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta, Surakarta, Indonesia
[2] Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia, Nilai, Malaysia
E-mail: asrizal.mustofa@ums.ac.id[1], wahidah@usim.edu.my[2], g100220073@student.ums.ac.id[3], g100240016@student.ums.ac.id[4]

Submission: 21-11-2025	*Revised: 26-12-2025*	*Accepted: 19-01-2026*	*Published: 27-02-2026*

Abstract

This study examined the function of taqdīm-ta'khīr (foregrounding and postponement) in Qur'ānic discourse through a maqāṣidī analysis of Q.S. al-Baqarah [2]: 45 and 153. The study was grounded in the importance of linguistic structure as an integral component of Qur'anic objectives, particularly in shaping ritual and ethical orientations. It aimed to explain why ṣabr (patience) is consistently positioned before ṣalāh (prayer) and to identify the higher objectives reflected in this syntactic arrangement. This research employed a qualitative library-based method using textual analysis rooted in Qur'anic rhetoric (balāghah) and maqāṣidī tafsīr, with attention to syntactic structure, discursive context, and objective orientation. The findings demonstrated that the precedence of ṣabr over ṣalāh is not merely rhetorical emphasis but a deliberate Qur'anic strategy for structuring religious priorities. In Q.S. al-Baqarah [2]: 45, ṣabr functions as an inner discipline that enables meaningful prayer and supports the preservation of religion (ḥifẓ al-dīn). In Q.S. al-Baqarah [2]: 153, ṣabr represents spiritual resilience during trials, oriented toward preserving human life and communal stability (ḥifẓ al-nafs). This study contributed to maqāṣidī Qur'anic studies by demonstrating that linguistic structure functions as an internal indicator of al-Qur'ān's higher objectives.

Keywords: Balāghah, Maqāṣid al-Qur'ān, Ṣabr, Ṣalāh, Taqdīm–Ta'khīr

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji fungsi taqdīm-ta'khīr dalam wacana al-Qur'ān melalui analisis maqāṣidī terhadap Q.S. al-Baqarah [2]: 45 dan 153. Kajian ini berangkat dari pentingnya struktur kebahasaan sebagai bagian integral dari tujuan al-Qur'ān, khususnya dalam pembentukan orientasi ibadah dan etika keagamaan. Penelitian ini bertujuan menjelaskan alasan pendahuluan lafaz sabar atas salat serta mengidentifikasi tujuan-tujuan Qur'ani yang tercermin dalam susunan sintaksis tersebut. Metode yang digunakan adalah penelitian kualitatif berbasis kepustakaan dengan analisis teks yang berlandaskan ilmu balāghah dan tafsir maqāṣidī, dengan fokus pada struktur sintaksis, konteks diskursif, dan orientasi tujuan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pendahuluan sabar atas salat bukan sekadar penekanan retoris, melainkan strategi Qur'ani yang disengaja dalam menyusun prioritas keagamaan. Pada Q.S. al-Baqarah [2]: 45, sabar berfungsi sebagai disiplin batin yang memungkinkan pelaksanaan salat secara bermakna dan mendukung pemeliharaan agama (ḥifẓ al-dīn). Sementara itu, Q.S. al-Baqarah [2]: 153 menegaskan sabar sebagai ketahanan spiritual dalam menghadapi ujian yang berorientasi pada pemeliharaan jiwa dan stabilitas sosial (ḥifẓ al-nafs). Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa struktur kebahasaan al-Qur'ān berfungsi sebagai indikator internal tujuan-tujuan maqāṣidī.

***Kata kunci**: Balāghah, Maqāṣid al-Qur'ān, Sabar, Salat, Taqdīm-Ta'khīr*

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A. INTRODUCTION

The study of the Qur'an as a divine text cannot be separated from the linguistic and discursive dimensions that constitute its semantic structure. Revealed in the Arabic language with an exceptionally high level of eloquence (*balāghah*), the Qur'an employs specific arrangements of words, patterns of word order, and syntactic structures that carry decisive semantic and rhetorical functions in shaping the meaning of its verses. One of the central aspects of Qur'anic *balāghah* that has long attracted the attention of classical scholars and contemporary researchers alike is the phenomenon of *taqdīm* and *ta'khīr*, namely the precedence and postponement of sentence elements that are grammatically permissible yet rhetorically loaded with deliberate semantic intentions (Nur Rochim et al., 2023; Nurlaily & Abidin, 2024). Linguistic studies have demonstrated that *taqdīm-ta'khīr* is not merely a stylistic variation but rather a discursive strategy through which the Qur'anic text affirms value priorities, specifies meanings, and constructs a hierarchy of normative messages within its verses (Rohimatil Umah & Hartono, 2024; Shahirah Zolkanain & Nor Abdullah, 2019).

In both classical and contemporary exegetical traditions, discussions of *taqdīm-ta'khīr* are generally situated within the framework of *balāghah* and *'ilm al-ma'ānī*, with a primary emphasis on linguistic elegance, semantic emphasis, and their relationship to syntactic (*naḥwī*) structures (Akbar & Maulana, 2022). A number of studies have demonstrated that variations in word order in the Qur'an are often intended to indicate superiority, particular emphasis, or the urgency of one concept over another that is semantically related (Idris, 2022; Thahir, 2020). Nevertheless, the dominant tendency in such studies remains confined mainly to descriptive-linguistic analysis. As a result, the interpretive significance of *taqdīm-ta'khīr* frequently terminates at the level of rhetorical aesthetics, without being fully connected to the broader normative and ethical objectives of the Qur'anic message.

On the other hand, developments in contemporary exegetical methodology have led to the emergence of the *maqāṣidī* approach as a response to the limitations of overly literal and fragmented textual readings. *Maqāṣidī* exegesis emphasizes that the Qur'an was revealed with specific objectives (*maqāṣid*) that operate at the individual, social, and civilizational levels. Accordingly, interpretation should not be confined to the literal

meanings of lexical units, but should extend to the purposes and underlying wisdom embedded within the structure of the text (Chirzin et al., 2024; Hasan, 2017; Mustaqim, 2019). Within this framework, the linguistic architecture of the Qur'an, including the phenomenon of *taqdīm-ta'khīr*, is regarded as a crucial medium for uncovering the value priorities and the hierarchy of ethical messages intended by divine revelation (Setyawati et al., 2024).

The significance of this study lay in its attempt to bridge two strands of scholarship that have often developed in parallel yet were rarely integrated systematically, namely the rhetorical analysis of *taqdīm-ta'khīr* and *maqāṣidī* exegesis. A number of *maqāṣidī* studies have affirmed that the Qur'an's purposive orientation encompasses the preservation of fundamental values such as individual piety, moral resilience, and the cultivation of sustainable social ethics. However, research that employs the structural analysis of *taqdīm-ta'khīr* explicitly as an analytical entry point for discerning the hierarchy of *maqāṣid* within particular verses remains limited, especially in relation to verses thematically associated with the ethics of patience (*ṣabr*) and acts of worship.

Surah al-Baqarah verses 45 and 153 represent significant examples of this phenomenon. Both verses juxtapose the concepts of patience (*ṣabr*) and prayer (*ṣalāh*) as means of seeking divine assistance. However, they do so through a pattern of taqdīm-ta'khīr that carries distinct semantic implications. From a quantitative perspective, the importance of these two concepts is reflected in their frequency of occurrence in the Qur'an (Luthfiani et al., 2024): the term *ṣabr* and its derivatives appear more than ninety times (Al-Jawziyyah, 1989), while *ṣalāh* and its related forms occur more than one hundred times, indicating their status as two dominant ethical-ritual pillars within Qur'anic discourse (Auda, 2025). Previous thematic studies have tended to emphasize the moral content of patience and prayer as normative teachings, or to associate them with the psychological and spiritual dimensions of Muslim life (Mughni & Marzuk, 2022; Rangkuti & Pasaribu, 2023). Nevertheless, analyses that relate differences in lexical arrangement to the hierarchy of values and ethical objectives of the Qur'an remain relatively scarce and have yet to be developed comprehensively.

This study engaged with the existing literature in both critical and constructive ways. it built upon the established tradition of *balāghah* studies on *taqdīm-ta'khīr* developed within Qur'anic linguistic scholarship, encompassing both theoretical and applied analyses (Rohimatil Umah & Hartono, 2024; Shahirah Zolkanain & Nor Abdullah, 2019; Wardah & Fikri, 2023). These studies have generally adopted a descriptive-analytical method, concentrating on syntactic arrangement and rhetorical function within individual verses, with limited extension toward systematic normative or *maqāṣid-oriented* interpretation. As a result, while the rhetorical sophistication of *taqdīm-ta'khīr* has been extensively examined, its potential role in articulating hierarchical ethical priorities has not been fully explored.

On the other hand, this research integrated the *maqāṣidī* exegetical framework as articulated in contemporary studies, which conceptualize textual structure as a means of uncovering the objectives of revelation rather than as a mere linguistic ornament (Chirzin et al., 2024; Hasan, 2017; Syamsir, 2024). However, most *maqāṣidī-oriented* scholarship addressed Qur'anic objectives through thematic, legal, or socio-ethical analysis, often neglecting detailed structural-linguistic examination of specific rhetorical devices such as *taqdīm-ta'khīr*. Consequently, the integration of close rhetorical analysis with purposive interpretation remains methodologically underdeveloped.

Accordingly, this study aimed to address an essential gap in the literature by bridging structural linguistic analysis and the normative-ethical reading of the Qur'an. By situating *taqdīm-ta'khīr* as an analytical entry point for tracing hierarchical ethical priorities within selected verses, the present research proposed a more integrative methodological model that systematically connects rhetorical structure to the higher objectives *(maqāṣid)* of revelation. In this way, the study situated itself at the intersection of linguistic analysis and purposive exegesis, offering a focused case-based contribution to contemporary Qur'anic studies.

Building on this background, this study undertook an in-depth analysis of the function of *taqdīm-ta'khīr* in Qur'anic Surah al-Baqarah, verses 45 and 153, using a *maqāṣidī* exegetical approach, in order to uncover the hierarchy of ethical values embedded in these verses. Specifically, the study examined how the arrangement of lexical elements in both verses reflects the prioritization of patience (*ṣabr*) and prayer

(*ṣalāh*), and how this rhetorical structure contributed to a deeper understanding of the Qur'an's normative objectives in fostering spiritual resilience and shaping the social ethics of the Muslim community.

The selection of Surah al-Baqarah verses 45 and 153 as the objects of *taqdīm-ta'khīr* analysis was grounded in structural linguistic-rhetorical considerations rather than purely thematic ones. Previous studies on *taqdīm-ta'khīr* within Qur'anic discourse have predominantly focused on its function as a stylistic device within the framework of classical *balāghah*, emphasizing aspects such as emphasis *(ta'kīd)*, specification *(takhsīs)*, and rhetorical beautification. Likewise, exegetical discussions on *ṣabr* and *ṣalāh* in these verses have largely approached them either from a thematic perspective, which highlights their spiritual virtues, or from a jurisprudential and ethical angle, without systematically examining the significance of their syntactic ordering. Although certain contemporary studies have attempted to contextualize *taqdīm-ta'khīr* within broader hermeneutical frameworks, the integration of structural linguistic analysis with a *maqāṣidī* exegetical orientation remained underdeveloped.

Both verses exhibited a consistent syntactic pattern in which the lexeme *ṣabr* precedes *ṣalāh*, despite the normative positioning of prayer as a central pillar of Islamic worship. This apparent discrepancy between linguistic ordering and established normative hierarchy suggested the presence of a deliberate rhetorical intention embedded within the Qur'anic linguistic structure. Accordingly, the precedence of ṣabr cannot be understood as a neutral stylistic variation, but rather as a semantic strategy that represents ethical and psychological prioritization in contexts of faith-based trials and social pressure. By integrating *taqdīm-ta'khīr* analysis with a *maqāṣidī* exegetical approach, this study advanced beyond purely grammatical description to articulate the purposive logic underlying the Qur'anic arrangement, thereby contributing to an interpretive model that bridgef linguistic structure and the higher objectives *(maqāṣid)* of divine revelation.

This study was guided by the following research questions: (1) how is the pattern of *taqdīm-ta'khīr* manifested in the linguistic structure of Surah al-Baqarah verses 45 and 153 from the perspective of Qur'anic *balāghah*; (2) how does this structural arrangement reflect a hierarchy of meanings and ethical values within a

maqāṣidī exegetical framework; and (3) what are the ethical implications of interpreting *taqdīm-ta'khīr* in these verses for the development of a purposive and contextual Qur'anic ethics.

B. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a qualitative research design based on in library research, employing a textual-discursive analytical approach to Qur'anic verses, with a particular focus on Surah al-Baqarah, verses 45 and 153. In qualitative research, library-based method were recognized as an appropriate methodological orientation for studies centered on textual interpretation and conceptual analysis, particularly when the primary data consist of authoritative written sources rather than field-generated empirical data (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2015). This design was adopted because the object of inquiry consists of revelatory texts that require in-depth examination of linguistic structure, lexical arrangement, and semantic orientation, rather than statistical measurement or experimental methods. The analytical framework integrated the discipline of *balāghah*-specifically the analysis of *taqdīm-ta'khīr* within *'ilm al-ma'ānī*-with a *maqāṣidī* exegetical approach, as developed in Qur'anic rhetorical studies and contemporary *maqāṣidī tafsir* scholarship (Rohimatil Umah & Hartono, 2024; Wardah & Fikri, 2023).

In this study, *maqāṣid* is understood as a purposive interpretive framework aimed at identifying the hierarchical objectives embedded within the Qur'anic discourse, including essential *(ḍarūriyyāt)*, complementary *(ḥājiyyāt)*, and embellishing *(taḥsīniyyāt)* levels of meaning. Methodologically, the *maqāṣidī* approach is operationalized by examining how linguistic structures, particularly patterns of precedence *(taqdīm)*, indicate prioritization among ethical values within the verse. The analysis involved by identifying the rhetorical function of *taqdīm-ta'khīr*, then interpreting its semantic implications, and finally situating these implications within the broader hierarchy of Qur'anic objectives, such as *ḥifẓ al-dīn* and *ḥifẓ al-nafs*. Through this design, the study sought to reconstruct the meanings and normative objectives of the verses by examining linguistic structures in relation to the purposive orientation of divine revelation.

The subject of this study was the Qur'anic text, specifically two purposively selected verses: Surah al-Baqarah, verses 45 and 153. The selection of these verses was based on their shared thematic focus on patience (*ṣabr*) and prayer (*ṣalāh*), alongside a significant variation in their *taqdīm-ta'khīr* arrangement, which allows for a comparative analysis of the hierarchy of values and ethical priorities embedded within the text. The research instrument consisted of a textual analysis guideline structured around categories derived from *balāghah*-specifically the functions of *taqdīm-ta'khīr,* such as emphasis, specification, and semantic prioritization, as well as *maqāṣidī* categories, including the ethical, normative, and pedagogical objectives of the verses, as formulated in relevant *balāghah* literature and *maqāṣidī* exegetical studies (Shahirah Zolkanain & Nor Abdullah, 2019; Syamsir, 2024).

Data collection was conducted through systematic inventorying and intensive reading of the selected Qur'anic verses, classical and contemporary tafsir works, as well as *balāghah* studies addressing *taqdīm-ta'khīr* and the *maqāṣid* of the Qur'an. The data comprised the lexical and syntactic structure of the verses, forms of *taqdīm-ta'khīr*, semantic explanations, and interpretations of ethical objectives articulated in the relevant literature (Idris, 2022; Thahir, 2020). Subsequently, the data were analyzed using qualitative content analysis, following the stages of data reduction (categorization) and inferential synthesis. In line with Miles and Huberman's formulation of qualitative data analysis, data reduction was undertaken as a process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming textual data to identify meaningful patterns and thematic relationships within the verses (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The analysis was carried out in an integrative manner by relating *balāghah* findings to the *maqāṣidī* exegetical framework in order to systematically uncover the hierarchy of values and normative objectives embedded in the verses. This analytical procedure is designed to ensure transparency and replicability for future research (Mustaqim, 2019; Rangkuti & Pasaribu, 2023).

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The analysis revealed that the use of *uslūb taqdīm-ta'khīr* in Surah al-Baqarah (2:45 and 2:153) reflects a deliberate pattern of lexical prioritization in which *ṣabr* consistently precedes *ṣalāh*. This structural arrangement generates distinct semantic implications when examined in relation to each verse's discursive context. In both cases, the precedence of ṣabr establishes a hierarchy of ethical emphasis that differs according to the intended audience and situational background of the verse. The linguistic configuration thus functions not merely as a rhetorical device, but as an indicator of purposive orientation within the Qur'anic discourse.

This interpretive observation is based on a detail examination of the syntactic construction of the verses. Structurally, both verses employ the *fi'l amr* construction *ista'īnū*, followed by two instruments of *isti'ānah*, namely *al-ṣabr* and *al-ṣalāh*. According to Arabic syntax, these two elements allow for a reversible order without altering the basic meaning of seeking assistance. However, the textual data indicated that the Qur'an consistently places *ṣabr* before *ṣalāh* in both verses. This consistency points to a deliberate linguistic pattern. Within *balāghah* studies, *taqdīm* is understood as a marker of semantic prioritization and message structuring. Accordingly, the lexical ordering in these verses cannot be interpreted as a mere stylistic variation. Instead, the linguistic structure in this context guided the reader's interpretive focus. These findings affirmed that the ordering of linguistic elements carried significant semantic implications (Al-Jurjāni, 2004; Al-Maṣīrī, 2010; Nayef & Wahab, 2018).

In Surah al-Baqarah [2]: 45, Allah explicitly commands believers, stating:

﴿ وَاسْتَعِيْنُوْا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلٰوةِ ۗ وَاِنَّهَا لَكَبِيْرَةٌ اِلَّا عَلَى الْخٰشِعِيْنَۙ ﴾

> "And seek help through patience and prayer, and indeed, it is difficult except for the humbly submissive [to Allah]".

The command of *isti'ānah* is delivered within the context of an admonition addressed to the *Banī Isrā'īl* (Al-Wāḥidī, 1992). The closing clause of the verse, *wa innahā la-kabīratun illā 'alā al-khāshi'īn*, constitutes an essential datum for understanding the orientation of the verse's message(Al-Ṭabarī, 2001; Ibn 'Āshūr,

1984). This clause indicates that the audience's difficulty in responding to the divine command does not stem from the absence of ritual practice. Rather, it originates from a weakened inner disposition and a deficient religious attitude. Empirically, the *taqdīm* of *ṣabr* in this verse signifies that the cultivation of patience and humility constitutes a primary prerequisite for the proper performance of *ṣalāh*. The structure of the verse directs interpretive attention toward the subject's internal readiness. Accordingly, the discernible *maqāṣid* orientation of the verse is *tazkiyat al-nafs* as an intermediate objective. This objective, in turn, supports the realization of *ḥifẓ al-dīn* in an authentic and meaningful manner (Ibn 'Āshūr, 1997; Shihab, 2021).

In contrast, Surah al-Baqarah [2]: 153, Allah addresses the believers, stating:

﴿ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا اسْتَعِيْنُوْا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلٰوةِ ۗاِنَّ اللّٰهَ مَعَ الصّٰبِرِيْنَ ﴾

"O you who have believed, seek help through patience and prayer. Indeed, Allah is with the patient,".

This formulation revealed in the context of collective trials and social pressure (Al-Wāḥidī, 1992; Siregar, 2023). This verse employs the same imperative formulation as Surah al-Baqarah [2]: 45; however, the intended audience and the discursive situation differ significantly. The closing clause, *inna Allāha ma'a al-ṣābirīn*, indicates that *ṣabr* is positioned as a primary quality through which divine *ma'iyyah* is attained. The textual data demonstrated that *ṣabr* in this verse functions as a form of collective spiritual resilience. This function extends beyond the individual dimension and contributes to the stability of the believing community. Classical exegetical readings underline that divine *ma'iyyah* in this context signifies not merely metaphysical proximity, but active support, guidance, and reinforcement granted to those who remain steadfast amid trials (Al-Ṭabarī, 2001; Ibn 'Āshūr, 1984). Thus, *ṣabr* emerges as an operative ethical disposition that sustains both psychological endurance and communal cohesion during periods of collective adversity. Accordingly, the *taqdīm* of *ṣabr* in this verse points toward a *maqāṣid* orientation centered on *ḥifẓ al-nafs*.

Within the *maqāṣid* framework, *ḥifẓ al-nafs* extends beyond the preservation of physical life; it also safeguards moral agency, emotional stability, and social cohesion. The preservation of life *(ḥifẓ al-nafs)* as a core *maqāṣid* not only undergirds the ethical

orientation of communal resilience but also extends to the preservation of the continuity of collective worship, health, and spiritual sustenance (Dahlan et al., 2021). The prioritization of *ṣabr* thus reflects a strategic ethical ordering in which inner fortitude becomes a necessary foundation for preserving personal integrity and communal resilience. In this sense, the syntactic precedence of *ṣabr* signals an intermediate objective that secures the continuity of faith commitment and ultimately supports the authentic realization of *ḥifẓ al-dīn* (Abdurrahman & Putri, 2025; Auda, 2025).

The differences in context and audience between the two verses indicated that the shared *taqdīm-ta'khīr* structure does not yield an identical *maqāṣidī* orientation. Rather, the same linguistic structure operates variably in accordance with the discursive situation of each verse. This finding demonstrated the functional flexibility of *taqdīm* within the Qur'anic text. Linguistic structure plays a role in adapting the message to the condition of its audience. Such contextual variability resonates with contemporary Qur'anic lexical studies that demonstrate how semantic orientation is shaped by the relationship between speaker and addressee within specific discursive settings (Azizah & Nabil, 2022). Accordingly, the meaning of a verse cannot be detached from its communicative context. These findings affirmed that the linguistic structure of the Qur'an conveys significant information regarding the prioritization of the objectives of revelation. Such information is not always expressed explicitly in the form of normative injunctions. Therefore, the analysis of linguistic structure constitutes a crucial instrument for tracing the *maqāṣid* of the Qur'an (Islam, 2022).

To clarify the similarities and differences in the empirical findings, the results of this study were summarized in the following comparative table. The table was designed to present the data systematically and concisely. Each variable was selected based on its relevance to the analysis of *taqdīm-ta'khīr* and *maqāṣid*. The comparison focused on aspects of audience, context, and the purposive orientation of the verses. This tabular presentation was intended to facilitate the reader's comprehension of the findings. In addition, the table functioned as a visual summary of the preceding descriptive analysis. The data presented in the table were derived directly from the textual analysis of the verses. Accordingly, the table reinforced the objectivity of the research findings:

Table 1. A Comparative Analysis of QS. al-Baqarah [2]: 45 and 153 from the Perspective of *Taqdīm-Ta'khīr* and the *Maqāṣid* of the Qur'an

Analytical Variable	QS. al-Baqarah [2]: 45	QS. al-Baqarah [2]: 153
Audience	*Banī Isrā'īl*	Believers
Discursive Context	Moral admonition and correction	Collective trials and social pressure
Asbāb al-nuzūl	Resistance to divine command	Situations of testing and conflict
Preceded Element (*taqdīm*)	*Ṣabr* (patience)	*Ṣabr* (patience)
Rhetorical Function (*balāghah*)	Prerequisite for inner readiness	Spiritual resilience
Ṣabr-Ṣalāh Relationship	*Ṣabr* as a condition for the meaningful performance of *ṣalāh*	*Ṣabr* as the foundation for the sustainability of *ṣalāh*
Dominant *maqāṣid* orientation	*Tazkiyat al-nafs* → *ḥifẓ al-dīn*	*Ḥifẓ al-nafs* → *sustainability of ḥifẓ al-dīn*

Sources: Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī, al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr, and Asbāb al-Nuzūl.

Overall, the findings demonstrated that *taqdīm-ta'khīr* in Surah al-Baqarah [2]: 45 and 153 functions as a Qur'anic mechanism for directing *maqāṣid* priorities in accordance with the audience and the discursive context of each verse (Březina & Gablasová, 2013). This mechanism operated through the linguistic structure of the verses, which guided the reader's attention to the conveyed values. The analysis of linguistic structure thus significantly contributed to understanding the objectives of revelation. These findings reinforced *balāghah's* position as a normative-analytical instrument and further affirmed the close interrelationship between language and purpose in the Qur'an. Therefore, a structural reading was highly relevant to *maqāṣidī* exegetical studies. This Results section provided an empirical foundation for the more interpretative discussion developed in the following section.

Discussion

The findings of this study indicated that *taqdīm-ta'khīr* in Surah al-Baqarah [2]: 45 and 153 cannot be adequately understood if confined solely to the framework of classical *balāghah* that emphasizes rhetorical aspects alone. While *balāghah* elucidates *taqdīm* as a means of *ta'ẓīm* (magnification), *ikhtiṣāṣ* (specification), and *ta'kīd* (emphasis), limiting the analysis to these dimensions is insufficient to account for the structural function of the verses. The results of this study demonstrated that, within the *isti'ānah* verses, *taqdīm-ta'khīr* operates as a mechanism for organizing the *maqāṣid* of the Qur'an. This function extended beyond linguistic aesthetics, as linguistic structure plays an active role in shaping the orientation of purposive meaning. Accordingly, *balāghah* analysis needs to be integrated with a *maqāṣidī* approach. Such integration enables a more comprehensive and purposive reading of the Qur'anic text (Al-Jurjāni, 2004; Al-Maṣīrī, 2010).

The *maqāṣidī* exegetical approach developed by Jasser Auda offered a relevant analytical framework for interpreting these findings. Auda emphasized that the *maqāṣid* of the Qur'an are not confined to the thematic level, but are also distributed across linguistic structures and the interrelations among textual elements. Thus, the structure of a verse constitutes an integral component of the objectives of revelation (Auda, 2025). Within this framework, the precedence of *ṣabr* over *ṣalāh* may be understood as an indicator of the staged orientation of Qur'anic objectives, progressing from the cultivation of inner disposition toward ritual and social expression. This mode of reading shifts the analysis away from a binary, black-and-white perspective (Auda, 2017) that juxtaposes the superiority of patience and prayer, toward an interpretive approach that emphasizes the functional role and intended purpose of precedence within specific contexts.

In Surah al-Baqarah [2]: 45, the *taqdīm* of *ṣabr* reflects the *maqṣad* of *tazkiyat al-nafs* as an initial objective of revelation. The cultivation of the inner self thus becomes the verse's primary focus. Without the realization of this objective, *ṣalāh* risks being reduced to a merely formal practice-one that may be legally valid yet weak in its transformative impact. This finding was consistent with the perspective of Ibn 'Āshūr, who places the cultivation of the soul as a foundational *maqāṣid* before the normative

demands of religion. Accordingly, *ḥifẓ al-dīn* does not stand independently; rather, it is contingent upon the successful internal formation of the religious subject (Ibn Ashur, 1984, 1997).

By contrast, Surah al-Baqarah [2]: 153 exhibits a different *maqāṣid* configuration. Within the context of social and psychological trials, *ṣabr* is given precedence as a means of preserving inner stability. Such stability also plays a crucial role in maintaining communal cohesion. This finding indicated that *ṣabr* functions as a sustaining force for the continuity of religious life (Whissell, 2004). Its role is not confined to the individual dimension; rather, it extends to social and collective spheres. This observation reinforces scholarly discussions on the dynamics of *taqdīm-ta'khīr* between *ḥifẓ al-dīn* and *ḥifẓ al-nafs* (Usman et al., 2022), which emphasized that the preservation of human life and psychological integrity often constitutes a prerequisite for the endurance of religion itself (Azmi et al., 2019; Mujib & Hamim, 2021).

Furthermore, the findings of this study indicated that the precedence of *ṣabr* over *ṣalāh* does not merely represent partial *maqāṣid*, such as *tazkiyat al-nafs* and *ḥifẓ al-nafs*. Instead, these findings also pointed to a structural *maqṣad kullī*. This overarching objective is to position *ṣabr* as a *maqāṣidī* entry point (*madkhal maqāṣidī*) for the entirety of ritual worship. Within this framework, *ṣabr* is not treated as an ancillary attitude accompanying ritual practice; rather, it is understood as an epistemic and ethical condition that enables worship to be performed holistically and with impact. Without *ṣabr*, ritual practice risks remaining at the level of formal compliance, natively valid, yet limited in its capacity for spiritual and social transformation. Thus, the placement of *ṣabr* before *ṣalāh* may be interpreted as a Qur'anic strategy that guides its audience to enter the full spectrum of devotional practice through inner preparedness, moral resilience, and purposive awareness. In this way, worship is not only performed, but also rendered effective in *maqāṣidī* terms (Al-Jurjāni, 2004; Al-Maṣīrī, 2010; Auda, 2025).

The findings further showed that *taqdīm-ta'khīr* functions not merely as a rhetorical device but also as an internal structural indicator that helps identify hierarchical ethical priorities within the Qur'anic discourse. In this respect, the ordering of lexical elements directly reveals the purposive orientation embedded in the verses.

As a result, the structural composition of the text thus acquires epistemic relevance, as the identification of *maqāṣid* is informed not only by thematic generalization but also by syntactic configuration. Through this perspective, rhetorical analysis becomes an integral component of purposive interpretation.

These results carried out significant theoretical implications for the development of *maqāṣid* discourse. The identification of hierarchical ethical prioritization through linguistic structure suggests the possibility of extending *maqāṣid* analysis beyond classical formulations of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* toward a broader conception of the *maqāṣid* of the Qur'an (Auda, 2013). In this view, the Qur'an emerges not only as a source of legal objectives but also as a self-articulating discourse in which linguistic composition participates in expressing divine purposiveness. Practically, this insight aids in understanding the prioritization of Qur'anic ethics in contexts marked by psychological and social pressure. In such circumstances, inner resilience assumes a foundational role in sustaining religious commitment, thereby positioning ṣabr as a strategic component within the architecture of Qur'anic religiosity (Islam, 2022).

D. CONCLUSION

This study concluded that the use of the *uslūb taqdīm-ta'khīr* in Surah al-Baqarah [2]: 45 and 153 constitutes a linguistic mechanism that strategically directs the Qur'an's *maqāṣid* priorities. The precedence of *ṣabr* over *ṣalāh* in both verses is neither a coincidental linguistic arrangement nor merely a rhetorical device; rather, it reflects a purposive organization of revelation that is attuned to the audience and the discursive context of each verse. Thus, the linguistic structure of the Qur'an is shown to convey normative information about the hierarchy of values and objectives, which is not always explicitly articulated in the form of direct commands or prohibitions.

Specifically, the findings indicated that in Surah al-Baqarah [2]: 45, the *taqdīm* of *ṣabr* represents an orientation toward *tazkiyat al-nafs* as a prerequisite for the meaningful performance of worship, particularly *ṣalāh*. Within the context of admonition addressed to the *Banī Isrā'īl*, inner readiness and humility are positioned as internal foundations prior to the enactment of ritual practice. By contrast, Surah al-Baqarah [2]: 153 reveals a different *maqāṣid* configuration, in which *ṣabr* is given

precedence as a means of preserving psychological stability and sustaining the resilience of the believing community in situations of trial. Collectively, these findings affirmed that identical *taqdīm-ta'khīr* structures do not necessarily yield identical *maqāṣidī* orientations; rather, they operate in a context- and adaptively.

The principal contribution of this study lay in affirming that *ṣabr* in both verses functions not merely as a partial ethical value, but as a *maqāṣidī* entry point (*madkhal maqāṣidī*) for the entirety of ritual worship. By positioning *ṣabr* as the gateway to religious practice, the Qur'an directs its audience to approach worship through inner preparedness, moral resilience, and purposive awareness, so that devotional acts do not remain at the level of formal compliance but instead generate transformative spiritual and social effects. These findings extended the study of *taqdīm-ta'khīr* from a descriptively rhetorical domain toward a more integrative *maqāṣidī* exegetical approach, and further strengthen the argument that the linguistic structure of Qur'anic verses can serve as an internal indicator for tracing the *maqāṣid* of the Qur'an.

This study was limited to two verses addressing the theme of *isti'ānah*. Future research should expand the scope of analysis to other Qur'anic verses that exhibit *taqdīm-ta'khīr* patterns in the contexts such as ritual worship, *mu'āmalāt*, or social ethics, to examine the consistency of the *madkhal maqāṣidī* function within the linguistic structure of the Qur'an. In addition, comparative studies between classical *tafsir* and contemporary *maqāṣidī* exegesis are highly recommended to map epistemological shifts in understanding the relationship between linguistic structure and the objectives of revelation. An interdisciplinary approach that integrates *balāghah*, *maqāṣid*, and Qur'anic pragmatics also holds significant potential to enrich scholarly understanding of how the Qur'an shapes religious consciousness in a more holistic manner.

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