



## Dalalah al-Alfazh in Hanafi Legal Theory: An Analysis of Explicit and Implicit Textual Indications

Mulyadi<sup>1✉</sup>, Nofik Afriko<sup>2</sup>, Mursal<sup>3</sup>, Abdul Halim Hanafi<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1234</sup>Pascasarjana Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Barat, Padang, Indonesia

Email: bangyadhiee@gmail.com<sup>1</sup>, mursalrambe8@gmail.com<sup>3</sup>, ahalimhanafi@gmail.com<sup>4</sup>

Corresponding author: bangyadhiee@gmail.com

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### ABSTRACT

This study examines the concept of *Dalalah al-Alfazh* within the framework of Hanafi *usul al-fiqh*, focusing on the four principal forms of textual indication: *al-Ibarat al-Nash*, *al-Iyyarat al-Nash*, *Dalalah al-Nash*, and *al-Iqtida' al-Nash*. The study aims to analyze the conceptual foundations, methodological characteristics, and legal implications of these categories in the process of Islamic legal derivation (*istinbat al-ahkam*). Employing a qualitative approach through descriptive-analytical library research, the study explores classical and contemporary works of Islamic legal theory to examine how Hanafi jurists interpret scriptural texts through linguistic and rational methodologies. The findings reveal that *al-Ibarat al-Nash* represents explicit textual meaning, while *al-Iyyarat al-Nash* reflects implicit meanings derived from linguistic structure and logical implication. *Dalalah al-Nash* extends legal rulings to analogous cases based on shared legal causes (*'illah*), whereas *al-Iqtida' al-Nash* identifies implied meanings required for the coherence and operability of legal texts. These categories demonstrate the methodological sophistication of the Hanafi school in integrating textual interpretation, rational analysis, and the objectives of Islamic law (*maqasid al-shari'ah*). The study further argues that the theory of *Dalalah al-Alfazh* remains highly relevant in addressing contemporary legal issues, particularly in contexts requiring adaptive and contextual Islamic legal reasoning. Therefore, understanding the various forms of textual indication is essential for developing a comprehensive, dynamic, and methodologically accountable approach to contemporary Islamic jurisprudence.

## INTRODUCTION

Usul al-fiqh occupies a central position in the construction of Islamic legal thought because it provides the methodological foundation for interpreting the textual sources of Islamic law. As a discipline concerned with the principles and methods of legal derivation, usul al-fiqh not only formulates the procedures for extracting rulings from the Qur'an and Sunnah, but also establishes a systematic epistemological framework for understanding the

intended meanings of legal texts. Within this framework, the concept of *dalalah al-alfazh* the indication of words toward meaning emerges as a fundamental instrument in ensuring that the process of *istinbat al-ahkam* (legal deduction) remains valid, coherent, and methodologically accountable. Through linguistic analysis and logical reasoning, Muslim jurists examine the relationship between textual expressions and the legal meanings embedded within them (Zuhaili, 1997).

One of the fundamental issues in *usul al-fiqh* concerns how a particular expression (*lafazh*) contained in the revealed texts should be accurately interpreted in order to derive legal rulings. Not all legal texts communicate meaning explicitly; many contain implicit indications that require deeper semantic and rational examination. Consequently, the study of *dalalah al-alfazh* becomes highly significant because it functions as a bridge between sacred texts and the legal realities constructed from them. In classical *usul al-fiqh* literature, this discussion encompasses linguistic, semantic, and *maqasid*-oriented dimensions. Wahbah al-Zuhaili (2004) defines *dalalah* as the method through which a textual expression indicates a meaning, whether directly stated or implicitly implied. This definition demonstrates that legal interpretation in Islam extends beyond literal textualism and involves layered processes of understanding guided by language, context, and legal objectives.

Among the various schools of Islamic jurisprudence, the Hanafi school is particularly recognized for its rational and analytical approach to legal methodology. Hanafi jurists developed a sophisticated classification of textual indication by dividing *dalalah al-alfazh* into four principal categories: *al-Ibarat al-Nash* (explicit textual indication), *al-Iyyarat al-Nash* (implicit textual indication), *Dalalah al-Nash* (indicative extension based on shared legal reasoning), and *al-Iqtida' al-Nash* (necessary implied meaning). These categories reflect not only the richness of linguistic analysis within Islamic legal theory but also the systematic effort of Hanafi scholars to connect textual expressions with broader legal implications across varying contexts (Hasballah, 1996; Syarifuddin, 2001).

The urgency of studying *dalalah al-alfazh* lies in its contribution to expanding the applicability of scriptural texts to contemporary legal issues. In modern contexts, where social realities continue to evolve and legal problems become increasingly complex, understanding the structures and functions of textual indications is essential for ensuring that Islamic legal rulings remain rooted in revelation while avoiding rigid literalism. In this regard, the Hanafi methodological framework offers a comprehensive approach to textual interpretation by integrating linguistic precision, rational inquiry, and the objectives of the Shari'ah (*maqasid al-shari'ah*). As emphasized by Kamali (2006), the interpretation of legal texts cannot rely solely on literal wording, but must also consider the underlying intent and purpose of the Lawgiver.

One of the distinctive features of the Hanafi approach is its extensive use of analogy (*qiyas*) and legal reasoning grounded in effective legal causes (*'illah*). Within this framework, *Dalalah al-Nash* and *al-Iqtida' al-Nash* play crucial roles in extending legal rulings beyond the explicit wording of the text without departing from its normative boundaries. Abdul Wahab Khallaf (1978) explains that these methods provide jurists with the intellectual space necessary to uncover the hidden implications of legal texts through disciplined reasoning. Thus, *dalalah al-alfazh* functions not merely as a linguistic device, but as a methodological instrument that embodies both philosophical depth and legal rationality.

The study of *al-Ibarat al-Nash*, for example, demonstrates how explicit textual formulations directly convey legal rulings without requiring additional interpretive mediation. This reflects the definitive nature of fundamental Islamic obligations and prohibitions, such as prayer, fasting, and the prohibition of usury. In contrast, *al-Iyyarat al-Nash* reveals that legal texts also contain implicit meanings derived from contextual harmony and logical implications. Such interpretive flexibility enables jurists to grasp deeper dimensions of the

textual message while remaining faithful to the linguistic structure of revelation (Syarifuddin, 2001).

Similarly, *Dalalah al-Nash* refers to the extension of legal meaning to matters not explicitly mentioned in the text but sharing the same legal rationale. A classical example is the Qur'anic prohibition against saying "uff" to one's parents, which jurists extended to all forms of harmful behavior toward them because of the shared underlying cause of causing harm or disrespect. Meanwhile, *al-Iqtida' al-Nash* concerns meanings that are not explicitly stated but are logically or legally necessary for the coherence of the text. For instance, the Qur'anic prohibition of carrion is understood as a prohibition against consuming carrion, since the act of consumption is implicitly required for the ruling to be meaningful. These examples demonstrate that understanding *dalalah* is essential for ensuring the validity and consistency of legal rulings derived from scriptural sources.

The fourfold classification of textual indication illustrates that legal interpretation in Islam is neither simplistic nor purely literalistic. Rather, it is constructed upon linguistic analysis, logical reasoning, and the broader objectives of Islamic law. Consequently, scholars and practitioners of Islamic jurisprudence must possess a deep understanding of these forms of textual indication in order to formulate legal rulings that are both textually legitimate and socially relevant. In this sense, Islamic legal products are expected not only to conform to scriptural authority but also to address the evolving needs of contemporary Muslim societies (Zallum, 2003).

Based on this background, the present study aims to: (1) conceptually explain the meaning of *dalalah al-alfazh* within the Hanafi school of *usul al-fiqh*; (2) systematically analyze the four forms of textual indication, namely *al-Ibarat al-Nash*, *al-Iyyarat al-Nash*, *Dalalah al-Nash*, and *al-Iqtida' al-Nash*; and (3) evaluate the legal authority and methodological implications of each category in the process of Islamic legal deduction. This study is expected to contribute to the enrichment of *usul al-fiqh* literature and to strengthen the development of contextual and adaptive methodologies in Islamic legal studies.

Grounded in strong theoretical and historical foundations, this article seeks to provide a comprehensive academic understanding of *dalalah* as a methodological basis for interpreting Islamic legal texts. Furthermore, this study remains relevant in responding to contemporary legal challenges that require careful textual interpretation in order to maintain harmony between the objectives of the Shari'ah and the dynamic realities of modern Muslim societies.

## METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive-analytical design and a normative juridical perspective. A qualitative method was selected because the research focuses on conceptual interpretation, textual analysis, and the exploration of legal reasoning within the framework of Islamic jurisprudence rather than statistical measurement or empirical experimentation. In the field of *usul al-fiqh*, qualitative inquiry is considered appropriate for examining the epistemological dimensions of legal interpretation and the methodological structure underlying the derivation of Islamic law (Kamali, 2008).

The research primarily utilizes a library research method (*library-based study*), which involves the systematic collection and critical examination of classical and contemporary literature related to *dalalah al-alfazh* and Hanafi legal theory. Primary data sources consist of authoritative works in *usul al-fiqh*, including *Ushul al-Fiqh al-Islami* by Wahbah al-Zuhaili (2004), *Ilm Ushul al-Fiqh* by Abdul Wahab Khallaf (1978), *Ushul al-Tasyri' al-Islami* by Ali Hasballah (1996), and *Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence* by Mohammad Hashim Kamali (2008). In addition, recent scholarly discussions on Islamic legal hermeneutics, *maqasid al-shari'ah*,

and textual interpretation were incorporated to strengthen the theoretical and contextual dimensions of the study (Auda, 2021; Opwis, 2020).

Data collection was conducted through documentation techniques by identifying, selecting, classifying, and reviewing relevant textual materials associated with the four principal forms of textual indication in Hanafi *usul al-fiqh*, namely *al-Ibarat al-Nash*, *al-Isyarat al-Nash*, *Dalalah al-Nash*, and *al-Iqtida' al-Nash*. The collected sources were critically evaluated based on their relevance, scholarly authority, and contribution to the discourse of Islamic legal methodology. This procedure enabled the researcher to construct a comprehensive conceptual framework regarding the linguistic and juridical dimensions of *dalalah al-alfazh* (Zuhayli, 2006).

The analytical technique applied in this research combines descriptive, interpretative, and comparative analysis. Descriptive analysis was employed to explain the conceptual definitions, classifications, and characteristics of each category of textual indication within the Hanafi school. Interpretative analysis was used to examine how Hanafi jurists derive legal meanings from textual structures through linguistic reasoning, logical implication, and legal causation (*'illah*). Furthermore, comparative analysis was applied to identify the distinctions and interrelations among the four forms of *dalalah* and to evaluate their methodological significance in the broader discourse of Islamic legal theory (Hallaq, 2009).

To ensure academic rigor, the study also adopts a contextual approach by relating classical theories of textual indication to contemporary legal issues. This approach is important because modern Islamic legal challenges increasingly require interpretative models capable of integrating scriptural authority with changing social realities. In this regard, the Hanafi framework of *dalalah al-alfazh* offers a dynamic methodology that balances textual fidelity, rational analysis, and the objectives of Islamic law (*maqasid al-shari'ah*) (Auda, 2021). Therefore, this study seeks not only to describe classical concepts theoretically, but also to demonstrate their continuing relevance in contemporary Islamic legal discourse.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### The Concept of *Dalalah al-Alfazh*

In the discourse of *usul al-fiqh*, the term *dalalah* linguistically derives from the Arabic root “دَلَّ – يَدُلُّ – دَلَالَةٌ,” which means “to indicate,” “to guide,” or “to signify” something (Ibn Manzur, *Lisan al-'Arab*). Terminologically, *dalalah al-alfazh* refers to the indication of textual expressions toward meanings or legal rulings contained within a scriptural text (*nash*). In other words, it represents the mechanism through which legal expressions in the Qur'an and Sunnah convey meanings that serve as the basis for the derivation of Islamic law (*istinbat al-hukm*) by jurists. Within the literature of *usul al-fiqh*, *dalalah* is understood as the relationship between a textual expression (*lafazh*) and the meaning indicated by it, whether explicit or implicit (Khallaf, 1978).

According to Wahbah al-Zuhaili (2004), *dalalah* in Islamic legal theory refers to “the method by which a textual expression indicates a particular meaning or signifies what is intended by the speaker.” This definition demonstrates that *dalalah* is not merely a formal linguistic relation, but also a communicative bridge between divine revelation and human legal understanding. Through *dalalah*, the revealed texts become operational sources of law capable of guiding human conduct across varying social and historical contexts. Consequently, the study of textual indication occupies a foundational role in ensuring that legal interpretation remains methodologically sound and aligned with the objectives of the Shari'ah (*maqasid al-shari'ah*).

Classical scholars of *usul al-fiqh* generally classify *dalalah* into two broad categories. The first is *dalalah lafẓiyyah*, namely meaning conveyed through verbal expressions, while the second is *dalalah ghayr lafẓiyyah*, which refers to meaning indicated through non-verbal signs such as circumstances, actions, gestures, or causal relationships. Nevertheless, the primary concern of classical Islamic legal theory centers upon *dalalah lafẓiyyah*, because the Qur'an and Sunnah are fundamentally textual revelations articulated through Arabic linguistic structures (Zuhaili, 1997; Kamali, 2008). The complexity of Arabic legal language requires careful semantic and methodological analysis in order to uncover the intended legal meanings embedded within scriptural expressions.

Within the Hanafi school of jurisprudence, *dalalah al-alfazh* is systematically divided into four principal categories: (1) *al-Ibarat al-Nash*, namely explicit textual indication in which the intended meaning is directly expressed by the wording of the text; (2) *al-Isyarat al-Nash*, namely implicit indication derived logically from the structure of the text although not directly intended; (3) *Dalalah al-Nash*, namely an extended indication in which a ruling applies to another case due to a shared effective cause (*'illah*); and (4) *al-Iqtida' al-Nash*, namely a necessary implied meaning required either rationally or legally to complete the coherence of the text (Hasballah, 1996; Syarifuddin, 2001). This classification reflects the sophisticated methodological framework developed by Hanafi jurists in interpreting scriptural language beyond its superficial wording.

The Hanafi classification further demonstrates that legal texts possess multiple layers of meaning. A single textual expression may contain literal, implicit, indicative, and necessarily inferred meanings simultaneously. Such a framework illustrates the methodological flexibility of Hanafi jurisprudence in accommodating linguistic precision, rational inquiry, and contextual interpretation without departing from the boundaries of scriptural authority. Hence, the Hanafi approach to *dalalah* cannot be reduced to mere textual literalism; rather, it represents an integrative methodology that harmonizes language, logic, and legal objectives.

The significance of *dalalah al-alfazh* becomes particularly evident in the process of legal derivation. Different forms of textual indication produce different levels of legal certainty and authority. For instance, a *ẓahir* text whose meaning appears clear but remains open to interpretation does not possess the same epistemic strength as a *muhkam* text, whose meaning is definitive and not subject to reinterpretation. Likewise, understanding *al-Isyarat al-Nash* and *al-Iqtida' al-Nash* is crucial for interpreting legal texts that may appear structurally incomplete yet require supplementary meaning in order to become legally operative (Khallaf, 1978; Zallum, 2003). These distinctions highlight the centrality of linguistic methodology in determining the validity and applicability of Islamic legal rulings.

In practical terms, mastery of the various forms of *dalalah* is indispensable for jurists engaged in *istinbat al-ahkam*. A mujtahid must be capable of distinguishing whether a ruling is derived through explicit wording (*ibarat*), implicit indication (*isyarat*), analogical extension (*dalalah*), or necessary implication (*iqtida'*). Misunderstanding these methodological categories may lead to erroneous legal conclusions and distortions of the intended objectives of the Lawgiver (*al-Shari'*). Therefore, the science of textual indication functions not only as a linguistic discipline but also as a safeguard for the integrity and consistency of Islamic legal interpretation.

Furthermore, the relevance of *dalalah al-alfazh* extends beyond classical jurisprudential debates into contemporary Islamic legal discourse. Modern legal challenges including bioethics, digital finance, artificial intelligence, and global social transformation often involve issues not explicitly mentioned in classical texts. In such contexts, the methodological principles of *dalalah* provide Islamic jurists with interpretative tools capable of extending the

relevance of revelation to new realities while preserving normative authenticity. This demonstrates the dynamic nature of Islamic legal theory and its ability to respond to social change through disciplined reasoning grounded in revelation.

Ultimately, *dalalah al-alfazh* constitutes the intellectual core of *usul al-fiqh* because it provides the linguistic and rational foundation for understanding divine revelation. Without a proper understanding of textual indication, the process of deriving Islamic law risks becoming speculative, inconsistent, and detached from the intended meaning of the sacred texts. Therefore, the study of *dalalah* should occupy a central place in contemporary Islamic legal education and scholarly development, particularly in efforts to formulate contextual, adaptive, and methodologically rigorous approaches to Islamic jurisprudence.

### ***Al-Ibarat al-Nash***

*Al-Ibarat al-Nash* represents the most fundamental and explicit form of *dalalah al-alfazh* within the framework of Islamic legal theory. In this category, legal meaning is understood directly from the wording and syntactical structure of the scriptural text (*nash*) without requiring additional interpretation, inferential reasoning, or contextual reconstruction. Hanafi jurists define this form of indication as the original and intended meaning (*ma'na asli*) conveyed explicitly by the speaker (*mutakallim*), namely Allah or the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, through a clear textual formulation. Consequently, *al-Ibarat al-Nash* is regarded as one of the strongest forms of legal indication because its evidentiary authority is considered definitive (*qath'i*) so long as there is no evidence suggesting specification (*takhsis*), reinterpretation (*ta'wil*), or abrogation (*naskh*) (Khallaf, 1978).

Classical scholars of *usul al-fiqh* provide extensive explanations regarding the concept of *al-Ibarat al-Nash*. Abu Zahrah defines it as “the meaning understood directly from what is explicitly mentioned in the wording, whether in the form of *nash*, *zahir*, *mufassar*, or *mubkam* expressions.” Similarly, Wahbah al-Zuhaili (2004) explains that *al-Ibarat al-Nash* refers to the direct indication of a textual expression toward its intended meaning, whether primary (*asli*) or secondary (*tabi'i*), provided that such meaning is clearly evident from the structure of the wording itself. This demonstrates that the authority of *al-Ibarat al-Nash* lies in the clarity and transparency of the textual formulation, which allows legal rulings to be derived without the need for extensive interpretative mediation.

The strength of *al-Ibarat al-Nash* is rooted in the concepts of clarity (*wuduh*) and explicitness (*tashrib*). Classical jurists categorize legal expressions into several degrees of clarity, including *zahir* (apparent meaning), *nash* (explicit text), *mufassar* (elaborated text), and *mubkam* (decisive text). All of these categories fall under the broader scope of *al-Ibarat al-Nash* because their meanings can be understood directly from the wording of the text itself. This methodological classification illustrates the precision of Islamic legal hermeneutics in determining the strength and certainty of legal evidence derived from scriptural language (Kamali, 2008).

One clear example of *al-Ibarat al-Nash* can be found in the Qur'anic verse:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَوْفُوا بِالْعُقُودِ

“O you who believe, fulfill your contracts.” (Qur'an 5:1)

This verse explicitly conveys the legal obligation to fulfill agreements and contractual commitments. The imperative verb *awfu* (“fulfill”) directly indicates the legal ruling of obligation (*wajib*), leaving little room for ambiguity regarding the intended meaning of the text. Therefore, the obligation to honor contracts is derived directly from the explicit wording of the verse and constitutes a clear example of *al-Ibarat al-Nash*. The legal authority

of this ruling remains definitive unless another textual evidence limits or specifies its application.

Another significant example appears in the Qur'anic statement:

وَأَحَلَّ اللَّهُ الْبَيْعَ وَحَرَّمَ الرِّبَا

“Allah has permitted trade and prohibited usury.” (Qur'an 2:275)

In this verse, the verbs *ahalla* (“permitted”) and *harrama* (“prohibited”) directly indicate the permissibility of lawful trade and the prohibition of usury (*riba*). The meanings are explicit and do not require inferential reasoning or hidden interpretation. As such, the legal rulings contained within this verse are categorized under *al-Ibarat al-Nash* and possess strong normative authority within Islamic jurisprudence.

Usul scholars further explain that *al-Ibarat al-Nash* may encompass two forms of meaning. The first is the primary meaning (*ma'na asli*), namely the immediate meaning understood directly from the wording. The second is the secondary or consequential meaning (*ma'na tabi'i*), which follows naturally from the primary meaning while still remaining explicitly connected to the textual structure. Both forms are considered legally valid as long as they reflect the intended meaning of the speaker (*mutakallim*) (Syarifuddin, 2001). This demonstrates that explicit textual meaning in Islamic legal theory is not always restricted to a single narrow interpretation, but may include related meanings inherently connected to the linguistic formulation.

Nevertheless, not every apparently clear expression automatically qualifies as *al-Ibarat al-Nash*. Certain methodological conditions must be fulfilled. First, the meaning must correspond to the grammatical and contextual structure of the text. Second, there must be no indication of specification, reinterpretation, or metaphorical usage that alters the apparent meaning. Third, the interpretation must not contradict stronger textual evidence from the Qur'an or Sunnah. If these conditions are not met, the certainty of the meaning may shift from definitive (*qath'i*) to speculative (*zanni*), thereby requiring further interpretative analysis (Kamali, 2008).

The practical significance of *al-Ibarat al-Nash* can also be observed in numerous Prophetic traditions that form the basis of Islamic legal rulings. For example, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ stated:

البيعان بالخيار ما لم يتفرقا

“The buyer and seller retain the option (to cancel the transaction) as long as they have not separated.” (Reported by al-Bukhari and Muslim)

This hadith directly establishes the permissibility of *khiyar* (the contractual option of cancellation) for both parties engaged in a commercial transaction. The ruling is derived directly from the wording of the hadith without requiring inferential interpretation, making it a clear manifestation of *al-Ibarat al-Nash*.

From a methodological perspective, understanding *al-Ibarat al-Nash* is essential because it constitutes the foundation of legal derivation in Islamic jurisprudence. The majority of primary legal rulings in *fiqh* are derived from explicit textual formulations belonging to this category. Neglecting the principles governing *al-Ibarat al-Nash* may result in deviations from the intended objectives of the Shari'ah. For this reason, Hanafi jurists emphasize the necessity of aligning legal interpretation with the explicit wording and intended meaning of the revealed texts (Hasballah, 1996; Zallum, 2003).

Ultimately, *al-Ibarat al-Nash* represents the strongest and most authoritative form of textual indication because it conveys legal meaning directly and explicitly. It serves as the primary foundation for definitive legal rulings (*ahkam qath'iyyah*) in Islamic jurisprudence and reflects the ideal methodological model for understanding and implementing the guidance of the Qur'an and Sunnah within Muslim life.

### ***Al-Isyarat al-Nash***

*Al-Isyarat al-Nash* refers to a form of textual indication in which the meaning derived from the scriptural text is not explicitly intended by the wording itself, yet emerges as a necessary logical implication inseparable from the structure and content of the text. Unlike *al-Ibarat al-Nash*, which conveys direct and explicit meaning, *al-Isyarat al-Nash* points toward implicit meanings that remain intrinsically connected to the wording of the revelation. Hanafi jurists maintain that such meanings are obtained through deeper reflection upon the textual structure, even though they do not constitute the primary purpose of the expression. Consequently, *al-Isyarat al-Nash* is regarded as a supplementary but legally authoritative form of textual indication within the methodology of Islamic jurisprudence (Khallaf, 1978).

Abdul Wahab Khallaf explains that *al-Isyarat al-Nash* denotes a meaning indicated by the wording not because it represents the primary objective of the text, but because it constitutes an unavoidable implication arising from the sentence structure itself. In other words, the meaning is not directly intended, yet it cannot be ignored due to its logical attachment to the principal meaning of the text. Wahbah al-Zuhaili (2004) similarly defines *al-Isyarat al-Nash* as “the indication of a textual expression toward a meaning that is not directly intended, but necessarily follows from the structure of the wording.” This demonstrates that legal rulings derived through *isyarah* are not arbitrary interpretations; rather, they are grounded in linguistic logic and coherent textual reasoning.

A classical example of *al-Isyarat al-Nash* appears in the Qur’anic verse:

وَعَلَى الْمَوْلُودِ لَهُ رِزْقُهُنَّ وَكِسْوَتُهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ

“The father of the child shall bear the cost of the mother’s food and clothing in an honorable manner.” (Qur’an 2:233)

Through *al-Ibarat al-Nash*, this verse explicitly establishes the obligation of the father to provide financial support for the mother who breastfeeds the child. However, through *al-Isyarat al-Nash*, the verse also implicitly indicates that the child’s legal lineage (*nasab*) is attributed to the father rather than the mother. This implication emerges from the phrase *al-mawḥūd lahu* (“the one for whom the child is born”), which establishes a legal association between the child and the father. Biologically, the child is born by the mother, yet the Qur’anic wording deliberately attributes the child to the father. From this linguistic structure, jurists infer legal implications related to inheritance, guardianship (*wilayah*), lineage, and financial responsibility (Syarifuddin, 2001). Thus, the implicit indication derived from the verse becomes a significant legal principle despite not being explicitly stated.

Another example of *al-Isyarat al-Nash* can be observed in the Prophetic tradition:

أنت ومالك لأبيك

“You and your wealth belong to your father.” (Reported by Ibn Majah and Ahmad)

Explicitly, this hadith emphasizes respect toward parental rights and authority. Nevertheless, through *al-Isyarat al-Nash*, jurists derive the legal understanding that a father cannot technically be considered guilty of theft when taking from the property of his child under certain circumstances. Although the hadith does not directly articulate this legal conclusion, the linguistic implication and contextual reasoning embedded within the text lead to such an interpretation. This demonstrates how implicit textual indications can produce significant legal consequences within Islamic jurisprudence.

The distinctive characteristic of *al-Isyarat al-Nash* lies in the fact that its meaning is not directly intended by the wording but arises inevitably from the sentence structure and logical coherence of the text. Such meanings often require advanced expertise in *usul al-fiqh*

and legal reasoning to be properly understood. Therefore, deriving rulings through *isyarah* demands linguistic sensitivity, analytical reasoning, and familiarity with the broader objectives of Islamic law. Al-Sarkhasi explains that this type of meaning “does not appear on the surface of the wording but is discovered through contemplation and careful reflection” (*Ushul al-Sarkhasi*, 2/88). This perspective highlights the intellectual depth involved in Islamic legal interpretation.

The legal authority of *al-Isyarat al-Nash* has been debated among Muslim jurists. However, within the Hanafi school, meanings derived through *isyarah* are generally considered legally binding and valid as evidentiary proof (*hujjah*), provided they do not contradict stronger and definitive textual evidence. In practical legal reasoning, *al-Isyarat al-Nash* often functions to complement or expand rulings already established through explicit textual indication. This is particularly important because social realities and legal complexities frequently require more nuanced interpretations than those provided by literal wording alone (Kamali, 2008).

From a methodological perspective, *al-Isyarat al-Nash* demonstrates the flexibility and depth of Islamic legal theory. It reveals that scriptural texts contain layered meanings capable of addressing evolving legal and social circumstances without departing from the authority of revelation. Rather than limiting interpretation to literal expressions, Hanafi jurists recognize that the structure of the text itself may generate broader legal implications through logical necessity and contextual coherence. This approach reflects the dynamic interaction between language, reason, and legal objectives within Islamic jurisprudence.

In contemporary contexts, the relevance of *al-Isyarat al-Nash* becomes increasingly significant in addressing modern legal issues not explicitly mentioned in classical texts. Questions related to digital ownership, electronic transactions, cyber ethics, artificial intelligence, and emerging forms of social responsibility often require interpretative approaches based on implicit legal principles rather than direct textual statements. Through *al-Isyarat al-Nash*, Muslim jurists are able to derive legal guidance from the broader implications of scriptural values and objectives. Consequently, this method contributes to the adaptability of Islamic law while maintaining its normative foundation within revelation.

Ultimately, *al-Isyarat al-Nash* represents an important methodological dimension of *dalalah al-alfazh* because it expands legal understanding beyond explicit textual meaning while remaining firmly rooted in linguistic and logical principles. It enables Islamic jurisprudence to address complex realities through careful interpretation and disciplined reasoning. Within the Hanafi tradition, this approach is not merely permissible but strongly encouraged as part of a comprehensive effort to understand the Qur'an and Sunnah in accordance with the higher objectives of the Shari'ah (*maqasid al-shari'ah*).

#### **D. *Dalalah al-Nash***

*Dalalah al-Nash* constitutes one of the most significant forms of textual indication in Islamic legal theory due to its ability to extend legal meaning beyond the explicit wording of a scriptural text while remaining firmly rooted in the authority of revelation. Unlike *al-Ibarat al-Nash*, which derives rulings directly from explicit expressions, and *al-Isyarat al-Nash*, which derives meaning from implicit linguistic implications, *Dalalah al-Nash* refers to the indication of a legal ruling toward another case that shares the same effective legal cause (*'illah*) as the one explicitly mentioned in the text. In the Hanafi tradition, this method is understood as the extension of legal meaning through *mafhum al-muwafaqah* a harmonious analogical understanding supported by linguistic logic and shared legal reasoning (Khallaf, 1978).

Hanafi jurists argue that when a scriptural text establishes a legal ruling for a specific case, and another case possesses the same underlying legal cause, then the ruling may

legitimately extend to the second case even if it is not explicitly mentioned in the text. In this framework, the text indirectly indicates the ruling for the second case through a coherent and rational connection between the two situations. For this reason, some scholars refer to *Dalalah al-Nash* as *dalalah al-dalalah*, meaning an indication derived through rational implication from what has already been established by the text (Zuhaili, 2004). This approach demonstrates that Islamic legal interpretation is not restricted to literal wording but also encompasses the logical continuity of legal principles embedded within revelation.

A classical example of *Dalalah al-Nash* appears in the Qur'anic verse:

فَلَا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا أُفٍّ وَلَا تَنْهَرْهُمَا وَقُلْ لَهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا

“Do not say to them even ‘uff,’ nor rebuke them, but speak to them with noble words.” (Qur’an 17:23)

Through *al-Ibarat al-Nash*, the verse explicitly prohibits uttering disrespectful words toward one’s parents. However, through *Dalalah al-Nash*, jurists extend this prohibition to all forms of harmful behavior toward parents, including insulting, shouting at, humiliating, or physically harming them. This extension is justified because all such actions share the same underlying legal cause, namely causing emotional or physical harm to parents. Thus, the prohibition is not confined to the literal utterance of the word “uff”, but encompasses every act that violates the principle of filial respect and kindness.

Imam al-Shafi’i refers to this interpretative mechanism as *mafhum al-muwafaqah*, namely a meaning that is consistent with and supportive of the explicit wording of the text. Through this approach, legal rulings may be applied to matters not directly mentioned in revelation as long as there exists a logical indication connecting them to the original ruling. This methodology is highly significant because many contemporary legal issues are not explicitly addressed in classical scriptural formulations, yet their legal status may still be determined through the broader implications of revealed principles (Kamali, 2008).

Within the Hanafi framework, *Dalalah al-Nash* occupies a middle position between strict textualism and independent analogical reasoning (*qiyas*). It does not require the full process of analogical deduction characteristic of formal *qiyas*, yet it also transcends literal interpretation. Instead, it extends legal rulings through the logical implications inherent within the textual structure itself. Consequently, *Dalalah al-Nash* is considered methodologically strong and may attain definitive (*qath’i*) authority when the shared legal cause (*‘illah*) is clearly established. However, if the similarity of the legal cause remains uncertain or speculative, then the ruling becomes probabilistic (*ẓanni*) and requires further juristic analysis (Syarifuddin, 2001).

Another important example can be found in the Qur'anic verse:

وَأَحَلَّ اللَّهُ الْبَيْعَ وَحَرَّمَ الرِّبَا

“Allah has permitted trade and prohibited usury.” (Qur’an 2:275)

The verse explicitly prohibits *riba* in specific forms known during the early Islamic period. Through *Dalalah al-Nash*, however, jurists extend this prohibition to all forms of exploitative financial practices that contain the same underlying cause of injustice, exploitation, and unlawful gain. Consequently, modern forms of usurious transactions including certain exploitative digital financial systems may also be classified as prohibited because they share the same legal rationale as classical *riba*. This demonstrates the relevance of *Dalalah al-Nash* in the development of contemporary Islamic commercial jurisprudence (*fiqh al-mu‘amalat*).

One of the major strengths of *Dalalah al-Nash* lies in its capacity to expand the applicability of Islamic law while remaining faithful to the authority of revelation. Unlike pure analogical reasoning, which may rely more heavily on external juristic deduction, *Dalalah*

*al-Nash* remains closely tied to the textual structure and internal logic of the scriptural sources. Through this methodology, Islamic law demonstrates both flexibility and continuity, enabling it to respond to changing social realities without abandoning its normative foundations (Hasballah, 1996).

Nevertheless, the authority of *Dalalah al-Nash* has not been accepted uniformly by all schools of Islamic jurisprudence. Some jurists, particularly among the Zahiri school, adopt a stricter textual approach and argue that legal rulings should apply only to matters explicitly mentioned in revelation. In contrast, the Hanafi and Shafi'i schools maintain that broader legal implications may legitimately be derived from the logical structure and objectives of the text. According to these schools, limiting legal interpretation solely to explicit wording risks undermining the adaptability and universality of Islamic law in addressing evolving human circumstances (Zallum, 2003).

In contemporary Islamic legal discourse, *Dalalah al-Nash* remains highly relevant for addressing issues that did not exist during the classical period. Questions related to digital finance, biotechnology, cyber ethics, environmental responsibility, and artificial intelligence frequently require interpretative approaches based on shared legal causes rather than explicit textual references. Through *Dalalah al-Nash*, Muslim jurists can derive legal guidance from the broader principles and objectives embedded within revelation while maintaining fidelity to the Qur'an and Sunnah. This methodological flexibility demonstrates the dynamic and rational character of Islamic jurisprudence.

Ultimately, *Dalalah al-Nash* represents a crucial interpretative method within *usul al-fiqh* because it allows legal meaning to extend beyond literal wording through the identification of shared legal causes embedded in the text. It confirms that Islamic law is not merely textual but also rational, coherent, and responsive to social realities. Within the Hanafi tradition, this approach reflects a balanced methodology that harmonizes linguistic interpretation, legal reasoning, and the higher objectives of the Shari'ah in the continuous development of Islamic legal thought.

### ***Al-Iqtida' al-Nash***

*Al-Iqtida' al-Nash* is one of the most intellectually sophisticated forms of *dalalah al-alfazh* in Islamic legal theory because it concerns meanings that are not explicitly stated in the wording of the text and may not even be directly implied, yet are necessarily required either rationally or legally for the text to convey a coherent legal meaning. Linguistically, the term *iqtida'* derives from the Arabic verb *iqtida'-yaqtadi*, which means "to require," "to necessitate," or "to demand." In the terminology of *usul al-fiqh*, *al-Iqtida' al-Nash* refers to situations in which additional meaning must be understood or mentally supplied in order for the scriptural text to function properly as a legal statement (Khallaf, 1978).

According to Wahbah al-Zuhaili (2004), *al-Iqtida'* occurs when the wording of a scriptural text appears incomplete or incoherent if interpreted purely literally, thereby necessitating the inclusion of an implied meaning to make the legal ruling intelligible and operational. Without this implied element, the text would become ambiguous, legally ineffective, or even misleading. Therefore, the implied meaning in *al-Iqtida' al-Nash* is not an arbitrary addition introduced by the interpreter; rather, it is a necessary component demanded by the logic and objectives of the text itself.

A classical example of *al-Iqtida' al-Nash* appears in the Qur'anic verse:

حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةُ

"Carrion has been prohibited to you." (Qur'an 5:3)

Literally, the verse merely states that carrion is prohibited, without explicitly mentioning the prohibited action associated with it. If interpreted purely at the lexical level, the statement lacks a clear operative legal function because the prohibition logically concerns an action rather than the object itself. Consequently, jurists understand the verse through *al-Iqtida' al-Nash* as meaning: “The consumption of carrion has been prohibited to you.” The addition of the implied verb “consumption” is not a speculative interpretation but a rational and legal necessity required to make the text legally meaningful. Since carrion cannot itself be “prohibited” in abstraction, the prohibition must relate to human conduct toward it, specifically eating it (Hasballah, 1996).

Another example is found in the Qur’anic verse:

فَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ مَّرِيضًا أَوْ بِهِ أَذًى مِّن رَّأْسِهِ فَفِدْيَةٌ مِّن صِيَامٍ أَوْ صَدَقَةٍ أَوْ نُسُكٍ

“Whoever among you is ill or suffers from an ailment of the head must offer a ransom through fasting, charity, or sacrifice.” (Qur’an 2:196)

In this verse, the text mentions *fidyah* (compensation) without explicitly stating the obligation to perform or pay it. Therefore, jurists infer an implied legal statement: “then he is obligated to offer a ransom.” Without this implied obligation, the verse would fail to communicate a complete legal command. This inferred element constitutes *al-Iqtida' al-Nash* because it is necessary for the legal coherence of the text (Zuhaili, 2004).

Within the Hanafi school, *al-Iqtida' al-Nash* is regarded as possessing strong legal authority, particularly when the implied meaning is indispensable for the validity and operability of the text. Some scholars even consider *iqtida'* stronger than *isyyarah* because the implied meaning is not merely supplementary but existentially necessary for the legal statement itself (Syarifuddin, 2001). In this sense, *al-Iqtida' al-Nash* reflects the close relationship between language and rationality in Islamic legal interpretation.

Methodologically, *al-Iqtida' al-Nash* plays a crucial role in interpreting concise or elliptical scriptural expressions. It demonstrates that revelation sometimes omits certain elements because they are assumed to be understood through rational and linguistic convention. Thus, the process of deriving implied meanings through *iqtida'* is not an uncontrolled exercise of personal reasoning, but rather a disciplined intellectual activity guided by the internal coherence of the text and the objectives of Islamic law (Kamali, 2008).

However, not every inferred meaning may be classified as *al-Iqtida' al-Nash*. Certain methodological conditions must be fulfilled. First, the implied meaning must be necessary for the text to convey a coherent legal ruling. Second, the implied interpretation must not contradict clearer scriptural evidence. Third, the inferred meaning must possess rational or legal legitimacy within the broader framework of Islamic jurisprudence. If these conditions are absent, the interpretation risks becoming weak *ta'wil* or an unjustified manipulation of the text (Khallaf, 1978).

In contemporary Islamic legal discourse, *al-Iqtida' al-Nash* remains highly relevant, particularly in interpreting texts related to emerging issues such as electronic contracts, digital transactions, intellectual property, and technological ethics. Many modern legal realities require contextual interpretation in order to preserve the operational relevance of scriptural guidance. Through *al-Iqtida' al-Nash*, jurists are able to bridge concise scriptural formulations with complex contemporary realities while maintaining fidelity to the principles of revelation.

Ultimately, *al-Iqtida' al-Nash* represents an interpretative method grounded in rational and legal necessity. It enriches Islamic legal methodology by allowing the intellect to complete the operational meaning of scriptural texts responsibly and systematically. Within the Hanafi tradition, this method reflects a profound respect for both revelation and human reason as complementary instruments in understanding and implementing Islamic law.

## CONCLUSION

The study of *Dalalah al-Alfazh* within the Hanafi tradition of *usul al-fiqh* demonstrates that the interpretation of Islamic legal texts extends far beyond literal textual reading. The Hanafi methodological framework reveals that scriptural expressions contain multiple layers of meaning that can be understood through linguistic analysis, logical reasoning, and consideration of the objectives of the Shari'ah. Through the classifications of *al-Ibarat al-Nash*, *al-Iyyarat al-Nash*, *Dalalah al-Nash*, and *al-Iqtida' al-Nash*, Hanafi jurists developed a sophisticated interpretative system capable of deriving legal rulings that remain faithful to revelation while also responsive to changing social realities.

*Al-Ibarat al-Nash* represents the clearest and most explicit form of textual indication, in which legal rulings are derived directly from the wording of the text. This category serves as the primary basis for definitive legal rulings in Islamic jurisprudence due to its strong evidentiary authority and textual clarity. In contrast, *al-Iyyarat al-Nash* highlights the existence of implicit meanings logically embedded within the textual structure, demonstrating that legal interpretation in Islam requires intellectual depth and sensitivity to linguistic implications. Meanwhile, *Dalalah al-Nash* expands legal rulings to analogous cases sharing the same effective legal cause (*'illah*), thereby illustrating the flexibility and adaptability of Islamic law in addressing emerging legal issues. Finally, *al-Iqtida' al-Nash* emphasizes the necessity of implied meanings required to preserve the coherence and operability of scriptural texts, reflecting the integration of rationality and revelation within Islamic legal methodology.

The findings of this study affirm that the Hanafi approach to *dalalah al-alfazh* represents a balanced methodological model that combines textual fidelity with rational interpretation. Rather than adopting rigid literalism, Hanafi jurists recognized the dynamic relationship between language, logic, and legal objectives in the process of *istinbat al-ahkam*. This methodological flexibility enables Islamic law to maintain its normative authenticity while responding effectively to contemporary legal and social challenges.

Furthermore, the study demonstrates that *dalalah al-alfazh* remains highly relevant in modern Islamic legal discourse. Contemporary issues such as digital transactions, cyber ethics, financial technology, artificial intelligence, and intellectual property rights often require interpretative approaches capable of extending scriptural guidance beyond explicit textual references. In this context, the Hanafi theory of textual indication provides an important epistemological foundation for contextual and adaptive legal reasoning grounded in the principles of the Qur'an and Sunnah.

Ultimately, *Dalalah al-Alfazh* constitutes one of the core pillars of Islamic legal theory because it ensures that the process of legal derivation remains systematic, coherent, and methodologically accountable. A comprehensive understanding of the various forms of textual indication is therefore essential not only for scholars of *usul al-fiqh*, but also for contemporary Muslim jurists seeking to formulate legal rulings that are both textually legitimate and socially relevant. Through its integration of linguistic precision, rational inquiry, and legal objectives, the Hanafi methodology of *dalalah* continues to offer valuable contributions to the development of contemporary Islamic jurisprudence.

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