

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Study

The discourse on gender equality has developed through a long and complex intellectual history.¹ While contemporary debates often focus on legal, social, and philosophical dimensions, the roots of gender inequality can be traced to much earlier cultural and religious traditions.² It is within this historical trajectory that the modern concept of gender equality emerged.³

¹ Gender equality has been a global concern since the United Nations launched the Decade for Women (1975–1985), which was followed by international forums such as Mexico (1975), Copenhagen (1980), Nairobi (1985), Beijing (1995), and other world conferences on human rights, social development, the environment, and population. See Mohammad Muslih, *Agama, Pendidikan, Perempuan, Dan Isu Kontemporer* (Yogyakarta: Laksbang Akademia, 2023), p. 58. In addition, gender equality is one of the main goals of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly goal 7. See United Nations, “Sustainable Development Goals,” United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, accessed August 13, 2025, <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>. In Indonesia, feminism is studied in various institutions, such as the Women's Studies Centre (PSW) at various IAIN (UIN) across Indonesia, the Rahima Institute in Jakarta, and the Fahmina Institute in Cirebon. See Tiar Anwar Bachtiar, *Pertarungan Pemikiran Islam Di Indonesia : Kritik-Kritik Terhadap Islam Liberal Dari H.M. Rasjidi Sampai INSIST* (Jakarta: Pustaka Al-Kautsar, 2017), p. 387

² For example, in the Church's tradition during the Dark Ages (5th–11th centuries C.E.), women were often regarded as the source of sin and described as “flawed men.” Relations with women were considered impure, and even innocent women were expected to submit to men, whose nature was viewed as suited for dominance while women were deemed suited for obedience. See Roberta Hamilton, *The Liberation of Women: A Study of Patriarchy and Capitalism* (New York: Routledge, 2013), p. 21; During the Inquisition (1450–1800), the Church was marked by widespread cruelty, with women constituting approximately 85% of the victims. Historical estimates suggest that 2–4 million women were burned alive across Europe, while many others were subjected to enslavement and exploitation. See Michael Kerrigan, *Dark History of the Catholic Church: Schisms, Wars, Inquisitions, Witch Hunts, Scandals, Corruption* (London: Amber Books, 2014).

³ The emergence of the term gender equality reflects resistance against discrimination toward women, including subordination, oppression, and unjust treatment. See Qasim Amin, *The Liberation of Women and The New Woman* (Kairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 2000), p. 131; See too Asghar Ali Engineer, *The Rights of Women in Islam* (London: C. Hurst. Co, 1994), p. 55

As various forms of discrimination persisted across history, feminist thought emerged as an intellectual and social movement aimed at challenging patriarchal structures and reclaiming women's rights.⁴ Early debates about gender differences, framed in terms of nature⁵ versus nurture,⁶ were increasingly seen as insufficient to dismantle the deeper assumptions about the fixity of gender identity. Even these theoretical approaches could not fully address the complexities of sexuality and identity. At this point, the ideas of Judith Butler, a poststructuralist feminist philosopher, emerged with her theory of gender performativity, articulated in her influential book *Gender Trouble*.⁷

⁴ A wide range of literature has addressed the emergence of the feminist movement to challenge patriarchal structures; see, for example, foundational works such as *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792) by Mary Wollstonecraft and the analysis of class and race by Angela Y. Davis (*Women, Race & Class*, 1981), as well as modern explorations of gender identity in *Gender Trouble* (1990) by Judith Butler and the call for an inclusive feminism in *Feminism Is for Everybody* (2000) by bell hooks.

⁵ The nature approach argues that gender differences stem from biology, giving men and women distinct traits and roles. See Ratna Megawangi, *Membiarkan Berbeda: Sudut Pandang Baru Tentang Relasi Gender* (Depok: Mizan Pustaka, 2014), p. 93. This theory popularized by Carol Gilligan and Alice Rossi, who reinforced biological essentialism. See Gregory A. Kimble, "Evolution of the Nature-Nurture Issue in the History of Psychology" in Robert Plomin and Gerald E. McClearn, *Nature, Nurture, & Psychology* (Washington DC: American Psychological Association, 1993), p. 5; See too Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, & London: Harvard University Press, 2003).

⁶ In contrast, the nurture approach, advocated by Ann Oakley, Margaret Mead, Virginia Woolf, Simone de Beauvoir, Hilary M. Lips, Ann Oakley, Nancy Chodorow, Judith Butler, and others. The nature theory, which is mostly characterised by religious scientists, the nurture theory is promoted by humanities experts who tend to be humanist and deconstructiveist. See Maggie Humm, "Dictionary of Feminist Theories" (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2003), p. 177-180. This theory views masculinity and femininity as socially constructed and flexible, encouraging feminists to challenge patriarchal norms. See Richard A. Lippa, *Gender, Nature, and Nurture* (London: Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2008), p. 153; See too Ann Oakley, *Sex, Gender & Society* (London: Maurice Temple Smith, 1972), p. 165

⁷ See Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990). This book was written as a form of her concern for the environment when she witnessed the injustice experienced by transgender people. Transgenders experience violence both in the work environment and labelling in the environment (stereotyping).

Butler proposes a more radical approach through the theory of performativity⁸, which views gender not as something fixed or naturally inherent in a person, but as something continuously through actions and expressions performed by individuals. Gender identity does not precede action, but rather emerges and is constructed through repeated behaviors.⁹ In other words, gender identity is not something you 'have', but something you 'do'.

Butler argues that *"there is no gender identity behind the expressions of gender; that identity is performatively constituted by the very 'expressions' that are said to be its results."*¹⁰ This statement emphasizes that gender is not a stable or innate characteristic, but rather "always a doing," shaped through repeated actions within specific cultural and social norms. In other words, gender is not something one simply is, but something one continuously does, performs, and enacts in everyday life, making it a social construction that is constantly produced and reproduced.

Judith Butler's theory of gender performativity is one of the most influential theories in postmodern gender studies, rooted in the philosophy of deconstruction and discourse theory of Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault.¹¹ Although epistemologically complex, this theory is widely

⁸ Butler adapts J.L. Austin's concept of performativity, that certain statements or actions can create social reality, not just describe it. See Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter* (New York: Routledge, 1993), p. 224

⁹ Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, p. 25

¹⁰ Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, p. 25

¹¹ Judith Butler's formulation of gender performativity was significantly shaped by the ideas of Jacques Derrida, particularly his notions of deconstruction and iterability in *Of Grammatology* and *"Signature Event Context,"* as well as by Michel Foucault's theories of discourse and power/knowledge developed in *The History of Sexuality*. In addition, Butler was also greatly influenced by Hegel's thinking, along with Lacanian psychoanalysis and Austin's speech act theory. All of this intellectual foundation helped shape the conceptual framework that enabled Butler to formulate gender as a performative identity in *Gender Trouble*.

applied in contemporary feminism and has been instrumental in strengthening transgender discourse as part of the social construction of gender. In which individuals psychologically, socially, or medically alter their gender identity from the one assigned at birth.¹² This phenomenon reflects the extreme impact of viewing gender as fluid and detached from biology. While aiming to deconstruct domination,¹³ gender performativity risks eroding essential understandings of human nature upheld by religious and moral traditions.¹⁴

Although Butler's goals are commendable, such as dismantling patriarchal domination and making space for marginalised groups, this approach still leaves problems. By rejecting the essential and metaphysical basis of human identity, gender performativity has the potential to increase identity uncertainty, blur moral orientation, and add to unanticipated social complexity.¹⁵ Consequently, this theory risks conflicting with religious traditions and moral values that emphasise order, the purpose of creation, and the stability of human identity.

This view differs from the Qur'anic framework, which emphasises the

¹² Sacramento Pinazo-Hernandis and Celia Carrascosa, "Discrimination and Loneliness among Transgender Older Adults," *Journal of Aging Studies* 75, no. May (2025): 4.

¹³ Butler also wrote *Gender Trouble* as a response to real social injustices, particularly those experienced by transgender and queer communities, who frequently face violence, discrimination, and negative labeling in their everyday lives. See Moya Lloyd, *Judith Butler: From Norms to Politics* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007), p. 2

¹⁴ By completely separating gender from the body and biological nature, performativity theory creates instability in the definition of identity, opens up space for moral relativism, and blurs the boundaries between human expression and essence. This impact gives rise to new social problems that remain unanswered in contemporary feminist discourse.

¹⁵ Several critics argue that detaching gender from any essential or stable basis risks producing conceptual instability, moral relativism, and social uncertainty. Without an ontological anchor, identity becomes endlessly fluid and difficult to regulate ethically or legally. See Martha C. Nussbaum, "The Professor of Parody," *The New Republic*, 1999, in the website <https://newrepublic.com/article/150687/professor-parody> (accessed 23 November 2025, 20:40 WIB).

order of creation, ontological purpose, and stability of human identity. Imam Asy-Sya'rāwī, when interpreting Surah An-Nisā' [4] verse 32, said:

*Wa kadhālika inqasama al-insānu ilā naw'ayn: ilā dzukūrah tamaththala fī ar-rijāl, wa ilā unūthah tamaththala fī an-nisā', wa baynahumā qadrun musytarakun yajma'uhumā ka-jins, tsumma baynahumā ikhtilāfun bi-ikhtilāfi naw'ayhimā. Fa law aradta an taḍa'a naw'an makāna naw'in lamā istaṭa'ta.*¹⁶

This confirms that humans were indeed created in two types, male and female, who share similarities as fellow humans, but also have differences according to their type. He emphasised that it is impossible for one type to replace the role of the other, as these differences are part of God's decree, which has wisdom.

The explanation of this difference in roles is emphasised by Shaykh Al-'Uthaymīn in his interpretation of Surah An-Najm [53] verse 45, that the distinction between the functions of men and women is not merely a social construct, but part of sunnatullah, every creature is created with characteristics, traits, and roles that are in harmony with the wisdom of its creation.¹⁷ This view is in line with Zaynab al-Ghazālī al-Jubaylī's¹⁸ interpretation of Surah An-Nisā' [4] verse 1, which emphasises that men and women originate from the same soul, but still have biological and social differences that make them complementary to each other; the life of one without their partner is understood as an incomplete life.¹⁹ The Qur'an

¹⁶ Muḥammad Mutawallī Asy-Sya'rāwī, *Tafsīr Asy-Sya'Rāwī* (Kairo: Maṭābi' Akhbār al-Yawm, 1991), vol. 4, p. 2183

¹⁷ Muḥammad bin Ṣāliḥ Al-'Uthaymīn, *Tafsīr Al-Qur'ān Al-Karīm* (Al-Mamlakah al-'Arabiyyah as-Su'ūdiyyah: Mu'assasah asy-Syaikh Muḥammad bin Ṣāliḥ al-'Uthaymīn al-Khayriyyah, 2015), p. 249-250

¹⁸ Zaynab was the first woman to write a complete Arabic commentary on the Qur'an (30 juz). See Afaf Abdul Ghafoor Hameed, "Women's Contributions to Qur'anic Interpretations in Modern Era," *Ma'ālim Al-Qur'ān Wa Al-Sunnah* 19, no. 1 (2023): 120.

¹⁹ Zaynab al-Ghazālī Al-Jubaylī, *Naẓarāt Fī Kitābillāh* (al-Qāhirah: Dār al-Shurūq, 1994), p. 281.

asserts that there are fundamental differences between men and women as part of the nature of human creation. This difference is not only biological,²⁰ but also relates to complementary roles, responsibilities and social functions.²¹

Judith Butler's view indirectly rejects the essence, purpose of creation, and stability of human identity, whereas the Qur'anic framework affirms the order of creation (*al-khalq*), the ontological purpose of humans (*ghāyah al-insān*), and the balance of roles between men and women. While performative gender theory views identity as a fluid and ever-changing construct,²² the Qur'an views human identity as something that has an essential basis and a clear direction of creation.²³ It is this contradiction that forms the academic point of contention in this study.

Various studies on Judith Butler generally focus on aspects of poststructuralist philosophy, queer studies, or feminist critiques of essentialism. These studies are numerous, but tend to be descriptive²⁴ or

²⁰ In many verses, such as surah Ar-Rum [30]:30 and surah An-Najm [53]:45-46, show that gender identity has a natural and ontological basis that is inherent since creation, not merely the result of cultural construction. M. Quraish Shihab provides several examples of biological and psychological differences between men and women, for example, that men generally prefer physical activity, challenge, and confrontation, where as women tend to prefer peace, sociability, and emotional tranquility. According to him, these differences are part of the divine design and reflect the complementary nature of gender roles in human life. See M. Quraish Shihab, *Perempuan: Dari Cinta Sampai Seks, Dari Nikah Mut'ah Sampai Nikah Sunnah, Dari Bias Lama Sampai Bias Baru* (Tangerang: Lentera Hati, 2010), 8-30

²¹ For example, in the family, men earn a living and women maintain the mandate of the household. This is not a competition in the role space, but complementing each other according to their nature and responsibilities, in order to form a harmonious family and society.

²² Shafi S Muhammed, "The Queerness of Art and the Foucauldian Origins of Judith Butler's Notion of Performativity: An Overview," *Tattva-Journal of Philosophy* 2024, no. 1 (2024): 24.

²³ This also contradicts the fact that there are clear biological differences between men and women, such as anatomical structure, reproductive systems, and other physiological functions. See Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi, *Misykat: Refleksi Tentang Westernisasi, Liberalisasi, Dan Islam* (Jakarta: INSIST-MIUMI, 2023), p. 257

²⁴ For example, J.T. Ton MSc, "Judith Butler's Notion of Gender Performativity: To What

critical from a social and modern feminist perspective.²⁵ However, there is almost no research that systematically examines the theory of performativity through a Qur'anic perspective. There has been no study that methodologically combines Butler's philosophical analysis with normative Islamic sources such as Qur'anic exegesis to examine the ontological, epistemological consistency and moral implications of the idea of performativity.

In fact, the debate on gender in Muslim societies urgently requires a theoretical framework capable of bridging contemporary discourse with normative Islamic views.²⁶ This void indicates a research gap as well as the academic urgency and social relevance of this research.

This study does not simply compare Western theories and Islamic views, but specifically critiques Judith Butler's epistemology of performative gender through a thematic (*maudhū'ī*) interpretation of selected Qur'anic verses. These verses are chosen based on their direct relevance to the concepts of fitrah, gender identity, and social roles, which

Extent Does Gender Performativity Exclude a Stable Gender Identity?" (Utrecht University, 2018), a student thesis that provides a descriptive exposition of Butler's theory, including her view of gender identity as unstable and socially constructed. See too Frances C. E. Smith, *"Rethinking the Norm: Judith Butler and the Hollywood Teen Movie"* (PhD thesis, University of Warwick, 2013), an analytical study that applies Butler's theory of performativity to cinematic gender norms while providing a descriptive account of Butler's key concepts.

²⁵ For example, Aya Boustany, *"An Existentialist Critique of Judith Butler's Concept of Performativity"* (Bachelor thesis, Global Responsibility & Leadership, 2024), who criticised Butler's theory through the lens of Beauvoir and Tillich's existentialism. See too Patricia Soley-Beltrán, *"Transsexualism and Heterosexual Matrix: a critical and empirical study of Judith Butler's performative theory of gender"* (PhD thesis, University of Edinburgh, 2001). Analysing critiques of Butler's theory, particularly regarding the construction of the body and gender identity.

²⁶ See Nur Rofiq, "Gender, Faith, and Reform: A Narrative Review of Islamic Feminism and Public Policy," *Sinergi International Journal of Islamic Studies* 2, no. 2 (2024): 66–81, which argues that despite growing Islamic feminist scholarship, there remains a disconnect between gender-sensitive theological discourse and concrete public policy in Muslim-majority societies

are central to the critique. For instance, Surah An-Najm [53]: 45 affirms binary creation,²⁷ Surah Ar-Rūm [30]: 21 highlights the relational harmony and purpose between men and women,²⁸ and Surah An-Nisā' [4]: 32 underscores differentiated roles grounded in divine wisdom.²⁹ This research consciously positions the Qur'an not merely as an object of normative understanding, but as a subject of theological critique capable of responding to postmodern gender deconstruction.

Based on this background, this research therefore offers novelty by bringing Judith Butler's theory, one of the most influential and debated frameworks in contemporary gender studies, into direct conversation with Qur'anic discourse. Butler is selected not only because of her central role in shaping modern gender theory, but also because her concept of gender performativity raises fundamental ontological, epistemological and ethical questions that remain insufficiently explored from a Qur'anic perspective.

The novelty of this study lies in two points. First, it identifies the ontological, epistemological and ethical gaps in performativity theory when contrasted with the Qur'anic conception of human nature (*fitrah*) and purposeful creation. Second, it proposes a constructive model of gender based on Qur'anic principles of complementarity, balance, and ethical responsibility, something rarely articulated in previous scholarship.

Thus, this study does not simply critique Butler, but offers a Qur'anic alternative to gender performativity, showing that the Qur'an provides a more holistic, purposive, and morally grounded vision of gender that contributes meaningfully to contemporary gender discourse.

²⁷ Al-'Uthaymīn, *Tafsīr Al-Qur'ān Al-Karīm*, p. 295

²⁸ 'Āshūr, *Al-Taḥrīr Wa Al-Tanwīr*, vol. 21, p. 71

²⁹ Asy-Sya'rāwī, *Tafsīr Asy-Sya'Rāwī*, vol. 4, p. 2183

B. Formulation of The Problem

Based on the background that has been explained above, a formulation of the problem can be drawn as follows:

1. What does Judith Butler mean by performativity and gender deconstruction within her broader theory of gender?
2. What are the main weaknesses and limitations found in Judith Butler's theory of gender performativity?
3. How does the Qur'anic perspective on gender and human nature provide a critical response to Judith Butler's ideas?

C. Objectives of Research

In detail, several objectives of this study can be stated, namely the following:

1. Understanding the concept of performativity and gender deconstruction in Judith Butler's thought.
2. Identifying and critically analyzing the main weaknesses and limitations in Judith Butler's theory of gender performativity.
3. Presenting Qur'anic interpretations on gender and human nature as a critical response to Judith Butler's ideas.

D. Significance of Study

This research is expected to provide benefits for readers. Based on this, the researcher hopes that this study contains the following benefits:

1. Theoretically

- a. To provide a Qur'anic-based critical perspective on Judith Butler's theory of gender performativity.
- b. To clarify the conceptual differences between gender as performative (Butler) and gender as creation-based (the Qur'an).

- c. To contribute to Qur'anic gender studies by offering a thematic interpretation related to male-female identity and roles.
- d. To enrich interdisciplinary scholarship between contemporary gender theory and Islamic thought, specifically within the discourse of gender ontology.

2. Practically

- a. To offer a clearer and more balanced understanding of gender roles for Muslim readers based on Qur'anic principles.
- b. To reduce misconceptions that associate Islam with gender injustice by presenting evidence-based analysis.
- c. To provide academic material that can be utilized in courses, seminars, or discussions on Qur'anic gender studies.
- d. To serve as a reference for activists, educators, and community leaders in promoting gender discourse aligned with Islamic values.

E. Literature Review

After researchers conducted a review of previous theses or scientific works, there were several that discussed Judith Butler's performativity theory, gender deconstruction and gender equality in the Qur'an. The following study presents several studies that are close to the title:

1. A master's thesis written by J.T. Ton (2018) at Utrecht University, entitled **"Judith Butler's Notion of Gender Performativity: To What Extent Does Gender Performativity Exclude a Stable Gender Identity?"**. The study provides a descriptive exposition of Judith Butler's theory, particularly emphasizing her view that gender identity is unstable, fluid, and socially constructed through repeated performances. Ton's research focuses on explaining Butler's concepts rather than critiquing them, highlighting how performativity

challenges the notion of fixed gender identity. While Ton's thesis remains within a theoretical-philosophical discussion of Butler's ideas, the present study goes further by employing a Qur'ānic framework to critically examine the ontological status of gender, positioning revelation as an evaluative lens rather than merely adopting Butler's paradigm.

2. A doctoral dissertation by Patricia Soley-Beltrán (2001) at the University of Edinburgh, entitled **"Transsexualism and the Heterosexual Matrix: A Critical and Empirical Study of Judith Butler's Performative Theory of Gender."** This work critically examines Butler's theory, especially its implications for the body, embodiment, and transsexual identities, and uses empirical analysis to question key assumptions within the heterosexual matrix. In contrast, the present study offers a thematic (maudhū'ī) Qur'ānic critique, analysing Butler's concept of performativity through Qur'ānic themes such as creation (khalq), human nature (fitrah), and the purpose of male-female existence. Rather than focusing on social experience and embodiment, this research evaluates Butler's claims using Qur'ānic principles, positioning the Qur'an as a normative framework that responds to Butler's rejection of biologically grounded gender.
3. A thesis to obtain a bachelor's degree written by Tiara Alifia Chusnul Chotimah in 2023, a student of the Department of Aqidah and Islamic Philosophy, Sunan Gunung Djati State Islamic University, with the title: **"Konsep Gender Perspektif Judith Butler dalam Gender Trouble"**. The results of this study reveal that Judith Butler's concept of gender performativity has changed the paradigm in gender studies by

highlighting the socially constructed nature of gender. This research also emphasizes the importance of understanding gender identity as something that is continuously performative, and not as a fixed entity. While Tiara's research focuses on analyzing the content of the book *Gender Trouble* and understanding Judith Butler's theory descriptively, this study employs a thematic interpretation (*tafsīr maudhū'ī*) approach to explore Qur'ānic verses concerning the nature, identity, and social roles of men and women. Through this method, the Qur'ān is positioned not merely as an object of interpretation, but as a critical framework (*manhaj naqdī*) that actively engages with and responds to the performative epistemology of gender both philosophically and theologically, rather than simply reproducing Western theoretical discourse.

4. A thesis to obtain a bachelor's degree written by Ray Ahmad in 2021, a student of the Department of Philosophy Science Study, Parahyangan Catholic University, with the title: "**Analisis Filsafat Judith Butler Dan Kaitannya Dengan Feminisme Dan Identitas Gender Di Pusaran Era Digital**". The result of his research is the need to review Butler's key philosophical ideas about gender identity through the basis of pragmatic truth ethics. In essence, the discourse and interpretation of gender identity is emphasizes the aspect of "liberation". In contrast to studies that employ feminist philosophy and pragmatic analysis of Judith Butler's theory in the context of the digital era, this research adopts a thematic-critical interpretation (*tafsīr maudhū'ī naqdī*) of Qur'ānic verses concerning fitrah, identity, and gender roles. Through this approach, the Qur'ān functions as a critical epistemological framework that evaluates and responds to

performative gender theory, offering an alternative understanding rooted in divine creation and spiritual wisdom. If the study uses Butler's performativity theory as an analytical knife to emphasize the liberation aspect of gender, then this study makes the theory an object of criticism, by asserting that gender identity in Islam is fitri and theological.

5. A thesis to obtain a postgraduate degree written by Santy in 2019, a student of the Master of Philosophy Program, Driyarkara College of Philosophy, with the title: "**Identitas Gender dan Seksualitas melalui Performativitas: Menyambut Keragaman Identitas Gender Menurut Pemikiran Judith Butler**". The thesis explains the construction of gender as a form of imposition of heterosexual norms by using Judith Butler's performativity theory as an analytical tool. The focus is on a critical reading of gender norms and advocacy of subversive action. In contrast, this thesis positions Butler's theory as an object of critique through a thematic interpretation (tafsīr maudhū'ī) approach, aiming to demonstrate that gender in Islam is fitri, theological, and embedded with divine purpose. This approach provides an epistemological critique and develops a Qur'ānic synthesis of postmodern gender discourse, presenting Islam not merely as a counterpart, but as an alternative paradigm grounded in revelation and divine wisdom.
6. A thesis to obtain a postgraduate degree written by Melinda Siahaan in 2013, a student of the Department of Theological Science, Kristern Duta Wacana University Yogyakarta, with the title: "**Performativitas Gender: Kajian Kritis Pemikiran Judith Butler dalam Konteks Pluralisme Gender dan Relevansinya bagi Gereja di Indonesia**". The difference with my research is that Melinda Siahaan uses Butler's

performativity theory to support gender pluralism in the church context with an inclusive theology approach. In contrast, my research criticizes the theory from the perspective of the Qur'an, which asserts that gender is part of the nature of creation and has a fixed divine role, not something that is fluid or freely defined.

7. A thesis to obtain a bachelor's degree written by Reza Kurniawan in 2024, a student of the Department of Qur'anic Studies and Tafsir, Faculty of Ushuluddin, University of Darussalam Gontor, with the title: **"Gender Equality in the Qur'an from Asma Barlas's Perspective (Critical Analysis)."** This thesis discusses Asma Barlas's thoughts on gender equality in the Qur'an. According to Barlas, equality between men and women is inherent in the Qur'anic message, because the text of the Qur'an rejects patriarchal interpretations and offers the principle of tawhid as the basis for equality. This study further emphasizes that gender discrimination arises more from biased traditional interpretations rather than from the Qur'anic text itself. Unlike the aforementioned study, which employs a descriptive-critical approach to analyze Barlas's thoughts, this research utilizes a thematic interpretation method to critique Judith Butler's theory of performativity based on Qur'anic verses, with an emphasis that gender in Islam is natural and divine, not a social construct that can be freely exchanged.
8. A thesis to obtain a bachelor's degree written by Safira Attamimi in 2014, a student of the Department of Aqidah & Islamic Philosophy, Darussalam Islamic Studies Institute, with the title: **"Gender Menurut Quraish Shihab Dalam Tafsir Misbah"**. This study uses a descriptive-analytical method of Quraish Shihab's interpretation and concludes

that he holds a moderate view and rejects absolute equality between men and women to maintain fitrah. In contrast, my thesis uses a critical analysis method with a thematic interpretation approach (maudhū'ī) to critique Judith Butler's performative gender theory from a Qur'anic perspective, emphasizing that gender is fitri, fixed, and divinely ordained.

F. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework in this study is a conceptual foundation that helps researchers formulate logical and systematic approach in studying and solving problems,³⁰ including Judith Butler's concept of performativity and gender from a Qur'anic perspective.

In this research, the author employs an Islamic gender theory framework that refers to the thoughts of 'Abbas Maḥmūd al-'Aqqād as a critical response to Judith Butler's gender performativity theory. According to al-'Aqqād, men and women are two types of one human species who share common humanity, but differ in functions and capacities as determined by the nature of creation.³¹ He rejects the notion that equality must mean total equality in all roles, because he believes that justice is achieved not by homogenizing tasks, but by distributing roles according to their potential and natural needs.³² Differences in responsibilities between men and women-such as the obligation of maintenance and leadership in the family-are rooted in the wisdom and social balance intended by the Shari'ah, rather than being a form of oppression or inequality of values.³³

³⁰ Suryana, *Metodologi Penelitian Model Praktis Penelitian Kuantitatif dan Kualitatif*, (Bandung: Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, 2010), p. 30.

³¹ Al-'Aqqād, *Al-Mar'ah Fī Al-Qur'ān*, p. 9

³² Al-'Aqqād, *Al-Mar'ah Fī Al-Qur'ān*, p. 65

³³ Al-'Aqqād, *Al-Mar'ah Fī Al-Qur'ān*, p. 69

This concept contrasts with Butler's performativity theory, which rejects gender essentialism and views gender identity as a social construction formed through the repetition of performance.³⁴ In this context, al-'Aqqād's thought is employed as a counter theory that highlighting the existence of an Islamic gender system based on revelation, fitrah, and social functions.

In analysing the Qur'anic verses, this study refers to the interpretations of contemporary scholars such as Ibn 'Āshūr, al-Sha'rāwī, and Ibn 'Uthaymīn to understand key concepts related to creation, human nature (fitrah), and gender. The Qur'anic discussion is structured using a thematic approach, while the critical assessment of Butler's theory is guided by al-Ghazālī's principle of evaluating ideas through a clear and systematic reasoning process. With this combined approach, the critique of Butler is not based on personal opinion, but on Qur'anic concepts and established scholarly methodology.

Maudhū'ī interpretation, as formulated by 'Abd al-Ḥayy al-Farmawī, is an approach that seeks to compile verses from the Qur'an that have similar themes, examine their context, and then arrange them systematically to obtain a complete picture. Using this method, the Qur'an can speak integrally about a particular topic, including gender relations.³⁵

In this study, the author uses the maudhū'ī interpretation method as explained by 'Abd al-Ḥayy al-Farmawī, which generally consists of seven steps. However, not all steps are applied in their entirety, but are adapted to the needs of the study. The author only applied the relevant steps, such as (1) determining the theme, (2) compiling related verses, (3)

³⁴ Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, p. 25

³⁵ 'Abd al-Ḥayy Al-Farmawī, *Metode Tafsir Maudhui: Sebuah Pengantar*, Trans. Suryan A. Jamrah (Jakarta: Raja Grafindo Persada, 1994), p. 36-37

understanding the context and *munāsabah* of the verses, and (4) analysing the meaning of the verses thematically in accordance with the focus of the study.³⁶

After establishing the thematic approach as the basis for organising the Qur'anic discussion on gender, this study then moves toward the critical dimension of the research. In analysing and critiquing gender issues, especially those related to Judith Butler's concept of performativity, a theoretical approach is needed that is can bridge between modern feminist studies and classical Islamic studies. This approach not only serves to compare ideas, but also reveals the extent to which a concept or theory of Judith Butler's performativity can be accepted or criticised based on Qur'anic values. In this context, criticism is not simply pointing out errors, but rather a scientific attempt to test the validity of an idea based on a specific theoretical and epistemological framework. In Arabic, criticism is called *al-naqd* which linguistically has many meanings including: examination or valuation of coins,³⁷ cash payment, differentiating, criticizing, hitting or touching,³⁸ discuss and debate.³⁹

The word *naqd* originally means 'to hit' or 'to break,' as in the expression *naqadtu ra'sahu bi isba'i*, which means 'I hit his head with my finger.' From this literal meaning, it developed into a figurative meaning, namely 'to point out the flows, weakness, or shortcomings' of a person or an idea. Thus, when it is said '*naqadtahum*,' it means 'you criticised or

³⁶ Al-Farmawī, *Metode Tafsir Maudhui: Sebuah Pengantar*, p. 45-46

³⁷ Majd al-Dīn Abū Ṭāhir Muḥammad ibn Ya'qūb Al-Fayrūzābādī, *Al-Qāmūs Al-Muḥīṭ* (Bayrūt: Mu'assasat al-Risālah li-al-Ṭibā'ah wa-al-Nashr wa-al-Tawzī', 2005), p. 322

³⁸ Jamāl al-Dīn Ibn Manzūr al-Anṣārī al-Ruwayfa'ī al-Ifriqī, *Lisān Al-'Arab* (Bayrūt: Dār Ṣādir, 1990), vol. 3, p. 425-427

³⁹ Abū al-Ḥusayn Aḥmad ibn Fāris ibn Zakariyyā al-Qazwīnī ar-Rāzī, *Mu'jam Maqāyīs Al-Lughah* (Bayrūt: Dār al-Fikr, 1979), p. 913

condemned them,' and if you do so, they will respond in kind.⁴⁰

Although etymologically, the word *al-naqd* carries multiple meanings, it generally revolves around two main meanings, namely (1) *Māddī* (material), because *al-naqd* can mean cash or cash payments, or it can mean gold and silver in the word *al-naqdān*. In addition, it can also mean (2) *at-tamyīz* (to distinguish), which means to distinguish between the good and the bad.

Meanwhile, 'Abd al-Salām argues that the activity of criticism (*naqd*) revolves around three main aspects, namely: (1) activities undertaken to distinguish, uncover, verify and test something. In Arabic, the activity carried out to select the quality of coins (dirhams) is called *naqd al-darāhīm*. Also the activity of verifying and judging good and bad, right and wrong words is called *naqd al-kalām*; (2) assigning a positive and commendable attribute to something, such as the statement of *Dirhamu Naqdin*, which denotes or to evaluates a good/quality dirham; and (3) giving a negative and unfavorable assessment of something. Therefore, in Arabic, a fool is called *naqd al-nās*, and a goat with small and ugly legs is called *naqadu al-ghanam*.⁴¹

By understanding the root meaning and scope of the term *naqd* in the Arabic tradition, we can see that the concept of criticism is not limited to censure but also encompasses judgment, appreciation, and the separation of good and bad. This understanding is in line with the views of the modern thinkers, Muhammad Muslih, who explains that criticism involves examining '*aqal*, reason, episteme, *khitāb*, and discourse, to find the structure of thought, or the mindset behind the development of science,

⁴⁰ Ibn Manẓūr al-Anṣārī al-Ruwayfa'ī al-Ifriqī, *Lisān Al-'Arab*, vol. 3, 426

⁴¹ 'Abd as-Salām ibn Ṣāliḥ ibn Sulaimān, *Naqd Aṣ-Ṣaḥābah Wa at-Tābi'īn Li at-Taḥfīr* (Riyadh: Dār al-Tadmuriyah, 2008), p. 15-17

philosophy, culture, and civilisation.⁴² Broadly speaking, criticism is typically divided into two forms: constructive criticism, which aims to evaluate and improve the object of critique, and destructive criticism, which merely focuses on finding faults to discredit the object being criticized.⁴³ William Henry Hudson divided criticism into two purposes: to praise and identify what is good, and to expose fault.⁴⁴ Meanwhile, Gayley and Scoot mentioned that criticism includes the activities of finding fault, praising, judging, comparing, and appreciating.⁴⁵

Based on this explanation, the term criticism in this research refers to constructive criticism. In other words, the author seeks to identify and analyze the weaknesses and limitations of Judith Butler's theory of performativity through a critical and dialogical examination from the perspective of the Qur'an and relevant theories of tafsir criticism.

The theory of criticism employed in this research is Imam al-Ghazālī's⁴⁶ Theory of Criticism. He developed a theory of rational criticism that serves to systematically and profoundly evaluate or dissect philosophical arguments. In his works, such as *Maqāṣid al-Falāsifah* and *Tahāfut al-Falāsifah*⁴⁷, al-Ghazālī formulated a sharp critique of classical Greek

⁴² Sujat Zubaidi and Mohammad Muslih, *Kritik Epistemologi Dan Model Pembacaan Kontemporer* (Yogyakarta: LESFI, 2018), p. 178

⁴³ Muhammad Ulinnuha, "Mendiskusikan Konstruksi Kritik Tafsir: Sejarah, Bentuk, Landasan Hukum, Prinsip dan Parameternya," *Jurnal Ilmu Al-Quran dan Tafsir* 6, no. 1 (2023): 83–106.

⁴⁴ William Henry Hudson, *Far Away and Long Ago* (London: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1990), p. 214

⁴⁵ Charles Mills Gayley and Fred Newton Scot, *The Nature and Function of Literary Criticism* (California: Kessinger Publishing, 2012), p. 13

⁴⁶ Al-Ghazālī (Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Ghazālī, 1058–1111 M) was a philosopher, theologian, faqih, and great Sufi of the Islamic world. See more profile Edoardo Albert, *Imam Al-Ghazali: A Concise Life* (Markfield: Kube Publishing Ltd, 2012).

⁴⁷ Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad Al-Ghazālī, *Maqāṣid Al-Falāsifah*, ed. Sulaymān Dunyā (Miṣr: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1961). This work was written by al-Ghazali between 484 H/1091-2 M and 486 H/1094 M, when he spent about two years studying philosophy in order to understand its contents. In the conclusion of *Maqāṣid al-Falāsifah*, he

philosophy⁴⁸, which in his time was widely studied and adopted by Muslim scholars.⁴⁹

In this regard, Al-Ghazali did not reject reason entirely, but rather placed it in harmony with revelation and spiritual intuition. He emphasized that ultimate truth must be achieved through an approach that combines logic, spirituality and religious principles.⁵⁰ In his method of criticism, al-Ghazali proposed four main principles:⁵¹ (1) *Equating the Thinker to Be Criticized*,⁵² (2) *Describing the Discourse to Be Criticized*,⁵³ (3)

stated his intention to criticise a number of branches of philosophy through the book *Tahāfut al-Falāsifah* (The Incoherence of the Philosophers), which is estimated to have been completed around 488 H/1095 M. Abū Ḥamid Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad Al-Ghazālī, *Tahāfut Al-Falāsifah* (al-Qāhirah: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1955).

⁴⁸ Greek philosophers such as Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle as well as those who followed them.

⁴⁹ In his search for truth, which is reflected in his famous work *al-Munqidh min al-Ḍalāl* (The Deliverer from Error), al-Ghazali emphasised that knowledge of anything, by any means, must be judged by the extent to which it leads people to a moral state that enables them to achieve true happiness. See M. Amin Abdullah, *The Idea Of Universality Of Ethical Norms In Ghazali And Immanuel Kant* (Ankara: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Yayınları, 1992), p. 6

⁵⁰ Sultan Mujahidin, "The Supremacy of Revelation over Reason: Al-Ghazali's Critique of Rationalist Philosophy in *Tahafut Al-Falasifah*," *Islamic Thought Review* 2, no. 2 (2024): 155.

⁵¹ Mansur, "Metode Kritik Nalar Filsafat Al-Ghazali" (Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga, 2004), p. 8-16

⁵² Al-Ghazālī argued that a critic must at least match, and preferably surpass, the abilities of the person being criticised. Al-Ghazālī said: "Then, after completing my studies in theology, I studied philosophy. I came to understand that one cannot discern the flaws in a particular field of knowledge without first understanding its purpose. One must even match the experts in that field in their mastery of its fundamentals, and then surpass them, so that one can comprehend what they have achieved, as well as their shortcomings and weaknesses. Only then might one's claim about its flaws be valid." See Abū Ḥamid Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Ghazālī Al-Ṭūsī, *Al-Munqidz Min Al-Ḍalāl* (Mişr: Dār al-Kutub al-Ḥadīthah, n.d.), p. 126

⁵³ After mastering philosophy, al-Ghazali confronted the Ta'limiyah group, who taught that truth could only be known through the ma'sūm imam. At his own instigation and by official order of the caliph, he researched, collected, and systematically organised their arguments, even including the arguments that had developed among their contemporaries. Although some criticised him for presenting his opponents' arguments too strongly, al-Ghazali insisted that refutation is only effective if the doubts that have spread are first presented in their entirety. His aim was to expose the confusion and flaws in their thinking through the strongest evidence. See Al-Ghazālī, *Al-Munqidz Min Al-Ḍalāl*, p. 158-160

Maintaining Objective,⁵⁴ and (4) *Using the Same Method of Reasoning*.⁵⁵ This approach allows for fair, incisive, yet scholarly criticism, making al-Ghazali one of the important figures in the tradition of Islamic intellectual criticism.

Therefore, the theory of criticism developed by Imam al-Ghazali is relevant to be applied in this research, especially in analysing and criticising Judith Butler's theory of gender performativity. Al-Ghazali's critical approach that balances reason, revelation and spiritual intuition can be an evaluative framework for Butler's relativistic perspective that separates gender identity from the dimensions of fitrah and divine value.

The author employs critical theory and develops a theoretical framework in this study by referring to the discipline of *'Ulum al-Qur'an* according to Manna' al-Qaththan. In general, *'Ulum al-Qur'an* encompasses various aspects, including the content, context, structure, and method of understanding the Qur'an.⁵⁶ In it there is a discussion of the reasons for the descent of verses (*asbab al-nuzul*), *Al-makkī wa-al-madanī*, *al-nāsikh wa-al-mansūkh*, *muhkam* and *mutasyabih*, to the theory of *tafsir* and *takwil* as well as the conditions for a mufasir.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ When discussing the views of opponents, fairness and objectivity require that their arguments be presented as they are, without altering or distorting them. For there can be no valid refutation except against a complete picture of the opinion. Al-Ghazālī said: '*and I do not want to be thought of as ignorant of the basis of their arguments. That is why I present their arguments, both those I have heard and those I have not heard, so that I am not considered to have ignored them. My intention is to present their doubts as fully as possible, and then reveal their flaws...*'. See Abū Hāmid Muḥammad Al-Ghazālī, *Maqāṣid Al-Falāsifah*, ed. Sulaymān Dunyā (Miṣr: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1961), p. 22

⁵⁵ In criticising philosophers, al-Ghazali chose to use the same method as them. He refers to this method as *neraca*, or logical thinking, which is also used by the philosophers he criticises. For this reason, al-Ghazali wrote a number of works on logic, including *al-Qiṣṭas al-Mustaqīm* and *Mi'yār al-'Ilm*, both of which are closely related to his monumental work, *Tahāfut al-Falāsifah*. See Mansur, "Metode Kritik Nalar Filsafat Al-Ghazali" (Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga, 2004), p. 15.

⁵⁶ Mannā Khālil al-Qaṭṭān, *Mabāḥiṣ Fī 'Ulūm Al-Qur'ān* (Riyāḍ: Al-Manṣūrāt al-'Aṣr al-Ḥadīṣ, 1973), p. 15-16

⁵⁷ Abu Anwar and Munzir Hitami, *Ulumul Qur'an: Sebuah Pengantar* (Depok: Rajawali Press, 2023), p. 2; In addition, there is also *Qirā'āt*, *Gharīb al-Qur'ān*, *I'jāz al-*

This approach is in line with the methodology of Islamic studies, in which revealed religion is based on *'Ulūm al-Dīn*, which includes *'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, *'Ulūm al-Ḥadīth*, and *Uṣūl al-Fiqh*. From this foundation, various disciplines emerged, such as *Tafsīr*, *Ḥadīth*, *'Aqīdah*, *Fiqh*, *Tasawwuf*, *Tārīkh*, philosophy, and *lughah*.⁵⁸ Thus, the methodology of Islamic studies aims to examine the sources of arguments, assess the validity of arguments from the perspective of their transmission, and determine the appropriate method to perform *istinbāṭ* on valid arguments. The main focus remains revelation, as revelation constitutes the very essence of Islam's existence.

In the context of this research, the author employs the theoretical approach of *tafsir* and *takwil* from the discipline of *'Ulūm al-Qur'ān* to analyse how Judith Butler's performativity theory deconstructs the concept of gender, as well as how the *Qur'ān* responds to these ideas. This research aims to examine the extent to which Butler's construction of gender aligns with or contradicts the principles of *Qur'anic* interpretation according to scholars, especially regarding gender identity, roles, and justice in an Islamic perspective.

Tafsir is the knowledge used to understand the Book of Allah revealed to His Prophet Muhammad Saw., explain its meaning, explore its laws and wisdom. This knowledge is taken from various disciplines such as linguistics, *nahwu*, *tashrif*, *bayān science*, *ushul fiqh*, and *qira'at*.⁵⁹

Thus, *tafsir* theory becomes an important foundation for dissecting the

Qur'ān, and many more. See Fahd bin 'Abd al-Raḥmān bin Sulaymān Al-Rūmī, *Dirāsāt Fī 'Ulūm Al-Qur'ān Al-Karīm* (Riyāḍ: Maktabah al-Tawbah, 2003), p. 37-40; A more detailed explanation can be found at Muḥammad Bakr Ismā'īl, *Dirāsāt Fī 'Ulūm Al-Qur'ān* (Qāhira: Dār al-Manār, 1999).

⁵⁸ Nashruddin Syarief, *Metodologi Studi Islam: Perspektif Islam Dan Barat* (Bandung: IAPI Bandung Press, 2023), p. 69

⁵⁹ Abū 'Abd Allāh Badr al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn Bahādūr Al-Zarkashī, *Al-Burhān Fī 'Ulūm Al-Qur'ān* (Bayrūt: Dār Iḥyā' al-Kutub al-'Arabiyyah 'Īsā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī wa-Syurakā'uh, 1957), p. 13

validity of the claims of performativity theory from Qur'anic perspective, as well as assessing whether the proposed deconstruction of the concept of gender really has a valid tafsir foundation and is in aligns with the methodology of the scholars. Therefore, this study is expected to enrich the understanding of how the Qur'an positions biological nature and environmental influences (nature and nurture) in the construction of gender roles a manner that is just, proportionate, and consistent with the nature of creation.

G. Research Methodology

1. Type of Research

This research employs a library research method, which involves collecting and analyzing data from various written and documented sources, such as books, manuscripts, journal articles, and tafsir literature.⁶⁰ The primary sources consist of the Qur'an and both classical and contemporary works of tafsir, while the secondary sources include studies related to Judith Butler's performativity theory and gender discourse.

2. Source of Data

The data sources in this research are divided into two categories, namely primary sources and secondary sources. The primary sources consist of contemporary tafsir works and Judith Butler's books, especially those that elaborate on her theory of performativity and gender. These sources serve as the main references and the central foundation for the analysis. Meanwhile, the secondary sources include other relevant studies, academic journals, and supporting literature that

⁶⁰ Nashiruddin Baidan, *Metodologi Penelitian Khusus Tafsir* (Yogyakarta: Agama Islam Negeri Surakarta, 2015), p. 25

help to strengthen and contextualize the primary data.

a. Primary Data

Primary sources are data obtained or collected directly by researchers related to the topic being discussed. The data sources used are as follows:

- 1) *Al-Tahrīr Wa Al-Tanwīr*, Muḥammad al-Ṭāhir Ibn Āshūr
- 2) *Tafsīr Asy-Sya'Rāwī*, Muḥammad Mutawallī Asy-Sya'rāwī
- 3) *Tafsīr Al-Qur'ān Al-Karīm*, Muḥammad bin Ṣāliḥ Al-'Uthaymīn
- 4) *Rūḥ Al-Ma'Ānī*, Abū al-Thanā' Shihāb al-Dīn al-Sayyid Maḥmūd Afandī al-Ālūsī
- 5) *Al-Baḥr Al-Muḥīṭ Fī Al-Tafsīr*, Abū Ḥayyān Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf ibn 'Alī ibn Yūsuf ibn Ḥayyān Athīr al-Dīn Al-Andalusī
- 6) *Gender Trouble: Feminism and The Subversion of Identity*, Judith Butler
- 7) *Undoing Gender*, Judith Butler
- 8) *Judith Butler*, Sara Salih
- 9) *Judith Butler: From Norms to Politics*, Moya Lloyd

b. Secondary Data

- 1) *The Qur'ān*, M.A.S Abdel Haleem
- 2) *Tafsir Al-Misbah*, Quraish Shihab
- 3) *Tafsir Mafatih al-Ghaib*, Fakhruddin Ar-Razi
- 4) *Who's Afraid of Gender?*, Judith Butler
- 5) *Bodies That Matter*, Judith Butler
- 6) *Lisān al-'Arab*, Jamāl al-Dīn Ibn Manẓūr al-Anṣārī al-Ruwayfa'ī al-Ifriqī
- 7) *Mufradāt Alfāẓ al-Qur'ān*, Ar-Rāghib al-Aṣfahānī
- 8) *Mu'jam Maqāyīs Al-Lughah*, Abū al-Ḥusayn Aḥmad ibn Fāris ibn

Zakariyyā al-Qazwīnī ar-Rāzī

9) *Mabāḥiṣ Fī 'Ulūm Al-Qur'ān*, Mannā Khālil al-Qaṭṭān

10) *Dirāsāt Fī 'Ulūm Al-Qur'ān Al-Karīm*, Fahd bin 'Abd al-Raḥmān bin Sulaymān al-Rūmi

In this study, Qur'anic exegesis books are the main source for exploring Islamic views on human creation, human nature, gender roles, and male-female relationships. In general, classical exegesis remains the basic reference, but the focus of the research is more directed towards contemporary exegesis because it is considered more capable of providing a modern social context and relevance to gender issues. Thus, the use of contemporary exegesis aims to present an analysis that is not only rooted in Islamic scholarly tradition but also responsive to the problems that have developed in the present day.

Meanwhile, from the perspective of modern gender theory, this study utilises the work of Judith Butler, particularly her book *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (1990). In Chapter 3, entitled 'Subversive Bodily Acts', particularly in the section 'Bodily Inscriptions, Performative Subversions', Butler explains the core concept of gender performativity, namely that gender identity is not something essential or innate, but rather is formed through repeated practices in actions and expressions. This idea then becomes the starting point for analysis and comparison, enabling this study to examine the extent to which Butler's concept can be accepted, criticised, or rejected based on the Qur'anic value framework.

3. The Method of Collecting Data

The data collection method used in this study is the documentation method, which involves gathering information from books, journal

articles, catalogues, and other written materials related to the research topic. These documents are then examined and analyzed carefully in order to obtain relevant data and construct a comprehensive understanding of the issues discussed.⁶¹

4. The Technique of Data Analysis

Data analysis methods are processes or steps to acquire scientific or scientific knowledge. Therefore, research methodology is a systematic way of building knowledge.⁶² The data in this study are analyzed using the critical-analytical method (*al-manhaj al-tahlīlī al-naqdī*). This method combines the analytical approach (*al-manhaj al-tahlīlī*) and the critical approach (*al-manhaj al-naqdī*) to examine Judith Butler's theory of performativity in light of Qur'anic interpretation. The analytical aspect is applied to dissect and interpret Butler's ideas, while the critical aspect aims to evaluate their validity and relevance from the Qur'anic perspective.

This method is chosen because the research does not merely describe or compare, but seeks to evaluate and deconstruct Butler's theory through the lens of Qur'anic epistemology. It enables a deep and reflective analysis that questions the philosophical assumptions underlying Butler's thought and assesses its compatibility with Islamic principles. Through this approach, the researcher aims to reveal the conceptual weaknesses and inconsistencies in Butler's framework and to offer an alternative understanding of gender grounded in the Qur'anic

⁶¹ Ayuliamita Abadi M. Afdhal Chatra P, Komang Ayu Henny Achjar, Ningsi, Muhamad Rusliyadi, A. Zaenurrosyid, Nini Apriani Rumata, Iin Nirwana, *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif: Panduan Praktis Untuk Analisis Data Kualitatif Dan Studi Kasus* (Jambi: Sonpedia Publishing Indonesia, 2023), p. 79

⁶² Priadana, M. Sidik, and Denok Sunarsi, *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif* (Tangerang: Pascal Books, 2021), p. 53

worldview.

H. System of Study

To facilitate research and writing about gender deconstruction and criticism of Judith Butler's performativity theory, the researcher divides her research into four chapters as follows:

Chapter One: This chapter contains a preliminary study that includes the background of the research problem, research formulation, research objectives, benefits or importance of research, literature review, theoretical framework, research methodology, and methodological discussion. The introduction in this study is written in a way that aims to understand the research capacity.

Chapter Two: In this second chapter, the author presents an overview of Judith Butler and the development of her gender theory. The discussion begins with a brief biography of Judith Butler, followed by the intellectual background that shaped her philosophical orientation and the major phases of her thought. The chapter then provides a general overview of gender studies, outlining key distinctions such as sex and gender as well as nature and nurture. After establishing this conceptual framework, the chapter proceeds to examine Butler's own theoretical contributions, including her formulation of gender performativity and her critique of gender essentialism.

Chapter Three: In this third chapter, the author presents the core discussion of the thesis, namely the Qur'anic perspective on gender as a critical response to Judith Butler's theory of performativity. The discussion begins with the Qur'an's perspective on gender and the concept of creation, which emphasises that men and women originate from the same essence and therefore have equal dignity before Allah. From this foundation, the

author highlights the main differences between the Qur'an and Butler's theory, where the Qur'an views gender as part of human nature (fitrah), while Butler reduces it to social performance. This chapter also explores the Qur'an's view of social roles and family, showing that men and women are granted equal rights and responsibilities, with differences that are complementary and rooted in divine wisdom. Beyond performativity, the Qur'ānic framework offers a more comprehensive vision of human identity, one that integrates the physical, moral, and spiritual dimensions of existence. The author demonstrates that Butler's theory contains fundamental flaws when compared to this framework, as it neglects the metaphysical reality of human nature and rejects the stability of gender identity. In contrast, the Qur'an affirms justice, balance, and purposeful distinction between men and women as expressions of divine wisdom.

Chapter four: This chapter is the conclusion, which is the final part of this study, and will present several conclusions. In relation to the research results described in the previous chapters, this section will also include criticism and suggestions for readers to improve and refine the research results.