

## Sex Dolls in Islamic Thought: A Qur'anic and Maqasidic Analysis of Sexuality and Tamatsil

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**Abstract:** The increasing use of sex dolls raises ethical, social, and religious concerns, particularly in Islamic discourse. While Islamic scholarship has extensively discussed sexuality and statues (tamatsil), there remains a research gap in analyzing their intersection within modern technology. This study examines the permissibility of sex dolls within Islamic ethics and law by integrating Qur'anic interpretation and Maqasid al-Shariah. A qualitative hermeneutical and thematic (tafsir maudhu'i) approach is employed to analyze Surah Al-Ma'arij (70:29-31), Surah Saba' (34:13), and Surah Al-Anbiya' (21:52). Classical and contemporary exegeses, along with fatwas from Dar al-Ifta' Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Indonesia, provide legal insights. Findings indicate that sex dolls contradict Islamic ethical principles, particularly hifz al-'ird (preserving dignity), hifz an-nasl (preserving lineage), and hifz al-aql (preserving intellect). Fatwas classify sex dolls as haram due to their potential to normalize unethical behavior and disrupt marital relationships.

**Keywords:** *Sex Dolls, Sexuality, Tamatsil, Contemporary Tafsir*

**Abstrak:** Penggunaan boneka seks (sex dolls) semakin meningkat dan menimbulkan tantangan etis, sosial, serta hukum Islam. Kajian Islam klasik telah membahas seksualitas dan patung (tamatsil) secara terpisah, tetapi masih terdapat kesenjangan penelitian dalam menganalisis keduanya dalam konteks teknologi modern. Studi ini bertujuan untuk mengevaluasi keabsahan boneka seks dalam etika dan hukum Islam berdasarkan tafsir Al-Qur'an dan Maqasid al-Shariah. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan tafsir tematik (tafsir maudhu'i) dan hermeneutik kualitatif untuk menganalisis Surah Al-Ma'arij (70:29-31), Surah Saba' (34:13), dan Surah Al-Anbiya' (21:52). Kajian ini juga mengacu pada tafsir klasik dan kontemporer serta fatwa dari Dar al-Ifta' Mesir, ulama Saudi, dan Indonesia. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa boneka seks bertentangan dengan prinsip Islam, khususnya hifz al-'ird (menjaga kehormatan), hifz an-nasl (menjaga keturunan), dan hifz al-aql (menjaga akal). Fatwa ulama mengklasifikasikan boneka seks sebagai haram karena dapat menormalisasi perilaku menyimpang dan merusak hubungan pernikahan.

**Kata Kunci:** *Boneka Seks, Seksualitas, Tamatsil, Tafsir Kontemporer*

## Introduction

The phenomenon of sex dolls has become increasingly widespread in the modern era,<sup>1</sup> sparking intense debates within Islamic discourse. One aspect rarely discussed academically is the relationship between this phenomenon and the Qur'anic concept of *tamatsil* (statues), as well as Islamic perspectives regarding the use of artificial objects for sexual fulfillment.<sup>2</sup> Previous Islamic studies have generally treated discussions about statues and sexuality as separate topics, overlooking their interconnectedness in the contemporary technological context. This represents an important research gap, particularly given that recent technological innovations have produced sex dolls which not only closely resemble humans but also incorporate artificial intelligence and interactive functionalities.<sup>3</sup>

Sculpture has historically been a controversial issue among Islamic scholars, primarily due to differing interpretations of the term "*tamatsil*" (statues), which is explicitly mentioned in the Qur'an. The term appears in Surah Saba' (34:13) and Al-Anbiya' (21:52), describing the practice of statue-making under Prophet Solomon's command to the jinn. Interpretations of these verses vary significantly among scholars.<sup>4</sup> Some view them as indicative of permissibility, provided the statues are decorative and not objects of worship, whereas others emphasize prohibitions drawn from other verses and prophetic traditions (hadith). Studies such as Umi Hanifa's thesis have explored the representation of fine arts, including sculpture, within the Qur'an, but have not extensively considered their implications regarding contemporary phenomena such as sex dolls.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Nicola Döring, M Rohangis Mohseni, and Roberto Walter, "Design, Use, and Effects of Sex Dolls and Sex Robots: Scoping Review," *Journal of Medical Internet Research* 22, no. 7 (July 30, 2020): e18551, <https://doi.org/10.2196/18551>; Robin Björkas and Mariah Larsson, "Sex Dolls in the Swedish Media Discourse: Intimacy, Sexuality, and Technology," *Sexuality & Culture* 25, no. 4 (August 25, 2021): 1227–48, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12119-021-09829-6>; Kenneth R. Hanson, Nicola Döring, and Roberto Walter, "Sex Doll Specifications versus Human Body Characteristics," *Archives of Sexual Behavior* 53, no. 6 (June 2024): 2025–33, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10508-024-02871-z>.

<sup>2</sup> Dilla Syafrina et al., "TAMATSIL DALAM AL-QUR'AN (KAJIAN SENI RUPA DALAM KISAH NABI SULAIMAN)," *RUSYDIAH: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 3, no. 1 (June 30, 2022): 78–94, <https://doi.org/10.35961/rsd.v3i1.470>.

<sup>3</sup> Fahrudin Faiz, *Hermeneutika Al-Quran Tema-tema Kontroversial*, (Yogyakarta: Penerbit Kalimedia, 2015), 174

<sup>4</sup> Aan Andesra, "At-Tamatsil Dalam Al-Qur'an ( Telaah Terhadap Pemikiran Al-Qurthubi, Quraish Shihab Dan Buya Hamka)" (2023).

<sup>5</sup> Syafrina et al., "TAMATSIL DALAM AL-QUR'AN (KAJIAN SENI RUPA DALAM KISAH NABI SULAIMAN)."

In recent years, advancements in technology have transformed traditional statues into highly sophisticated forms, including robotic sculptures. Such contemporary developments often challenge established religious and cultural norms, leading to widespread public debate. Sex dolls, in particular, embody a radical convergence of art, sexuality, and technology. Their increasing realism and interactivity, aided by artificial intelligence, prompt significant ethical and religious questions. This debate mirrors broader societal tensions between traditional Islamic teachings and contemporary Western ideals surrounding individual freedom, sexual autonomy, and artistic expression.<sup>6</sup>

The proliferation and commercialization of sex dolls through online platforms have significantly increased their visibility and accessibility.<sup>7</sup> The growing acceptance of sex toys, dolls, and robots has sparked societal and moral concerns, especially regarding their potential impacts on sexuality, relationships, and sexual education, including implications for minors. Academics and the broader public remain divided on the ethical and religious acceptability of these innovations, underscoring the need for a critical Islamic analysis.<sup>8</sup>

This study aims to examine how classical and contemporary Qur'anic interpretations, along with Islamic legal perspectives, address the phenomenon of statues and specifically assess the Islamic legal stance toward the use of sex dolls for sexual gratification. Given the rapid growth of the sex doll industry and widespread accessibility facilitated by digital platforms, understanding Islam's legal, ethical, social, and spiritual viewpoints becomes increasingly relevant. Debate surrounding the permissibility of sex dolls has intensified in scholarly discourse, bridging traditional Islamic jurisprudence and modern Islamic law perspectives.

Existing Islamic scholarship has explored the legality of statues (*tamatsil*) and the ethical parameters of sexuality separately. However, there remains a significant gap in analyzing the convergence of these two concepts in the context of modern technological advancements such as sex dolls. This study addresses two critical questions: (1) How has

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<sup>6</sup> Terry Smith, *What Is Contemporary Art?* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2009).

<sup>7</sup> Döring, Mohseni, and Walter, "Design, Use, and Effects of Sex Dolls and Sex Robots: Scoping Review"; Sarah Hatheway Valverde, "THE MODERN SEX DOLL-OWNER: A DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS" (California Polytechnic State University, 2012), <https://doi.org/10.15368/theses.2012.165>.

<sup>8</sup> Fahrudin Faiz, *Hermeneutika Al-Quran Tema-Tema Kontroversial* (Yogyakarta: Penerbit Kalimedia, 2015).

the phenomenon of sex dolls emerged and evolved in contemporary society? (2) How do contemporary interpretations of the Qur'an evaluate the use of sex dolls? The study focuses particularly on Qur'anic verses such as Surah Al-Ma'arij (70:29-31), which emphasizes maintaining sexual purity, and Surah Saba' (34:13), which sets boundaries on artistic expression consistent with Islamic monotheistic principles. By analyzing these foundational texts, this research seeks to clarify Islamic positions regarding contemporary issues involving sexuality and technology.

Additionally, the study contextualizes sex dolls within modern cultural dynamics, particularly focusing on shifting sexual norms driven by technological innovations. It provides deeper insight into the boundaries established by Islamic teachings in regulating human interactions with artificial objects, particularly for biological and emotional needs. Integrating Qur'anic interpretation, Islamic law, and contemporary social phenomena, this research offers a valuable academic contribution to the ongoing discourse on Islam's response to evolving technological and moral challenges.

Methodologically, this study adopts a qualitative hermeneutical approach, interpreting relevant Qur'anic verses within their historical and contemporary contexts.<sup>9</sup> A thematic interpretation method (*tafsir maudhu'i*) is employed, analyzing classical and contemporary Islamic exegeses, including *Tafsir Al-Misbah* by Muhammad Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Munir* by Wahbah Zuhaili, and *Shafwatut Tafasir* by Muhammad Ali As-Shabuni. Furthermore, the analysis draws on Islamic legal texts from various scholarly schools and incorporates insights from contemporary studies exploring the social and psychological impacts of sex dolls. Through this interdisciplinary approach, this research aims to contribute significantly to Islamic scholarship, providing guidance for addressing emerging moral and technological issues from an informed Islamic perspective. This study contributes a novel perspective by explicitly bridging classical Islamic discourse on *tamatsil* with the contemporary phenomenon of sex dolls, an area that remains largely unexplored within academic Islamic studies. By integrating Qur'anic interpretation with the analysis of emerging technological developments, this research fills a critical gap in contemporary Islamic scholarship.

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<sup>9</sup> Mestika Zed, *Metode Penelitian Kepustakaan* (Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 2014).

## Discussion

### The Phenomenon of Sex Dolls in Contemporary Society

#### *Definition and Types of Sex Dolls and Sex Toys*

Sex, according to general definitions found in standard dictionaries, has multiple connotations. The Oxford English Dictionary defines sex primarily as biological relations or gender differences, whereas the Great Indonesian Dictionary similarly describes it as relating to gender and activities associated with sexual organs. Sex itself is understood biologically, dividing species into male and female groups based on reproductive functions (i.e., sperm production in males and egg production in females).<sup>10</sup> Hathout<sup>11</sup> emphasizes that sex also encompasses emotional, psychological, and social dimensions relating to human sexual behavior and orientation. Specifically, sex acts refer to activities with procreative (for reproduction), recreational (for pleasure), or relational (as an expression of affection) purposes. In contrast, sexual behavior broadly includes psychological, social, and cultural aspects of sexuality, such as sensuality, eroticism, attraction to others, and even engagement with explicit content.<sup>12</sup> In general, human beings experience sexual urges throughout their lives.<sup>13</sup> Sex is considered the most intense form of physical expression of human sexuality.<sup>14</sup> As a fundamental aspect of human behavior, sex plays a significant role in shaping personality, encompassing religious, intellectual, and physical dimensions. In Islam, these three aspects must be fulfilled in accordance with Allah's guidance, in a pure, healthy, and balanced manner, without causing suffering or distress.<sup>15</sup>

Dolls are generally understood as artificial representations or replicas of humans or animals, widely used as toys, educational tools, decorative objects, or collectibles.<sup>16</sup> In recent decades, technological advancements have led to the emergence of sex dolls—life-sized, realistic human replicas specifically designed for sexual interaction. These dolls

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<sup>10</sup> James Drever, *Kamus Psikologi, Terj. Nancy Simanjuntak* (Jakarta: Bina Aksara, 1986).

<sup>11</sup> Hassan Hathout, *Revolusi Seksual Perempuan: Obstetri Dan Ginekologi Dalam Tinjauan Islam* (Bandung: Mizan, 1994).

<sup>12</sup> Rahmat Sudirman, *Konstruksi Seksualitas Islam Dalam Wacana Sosial* (Yogyakarta: Media Presindo, 1999).

<sup>13</sup> M. Imran Pohan, *Seks Dan Kehidupan Anak* (Jakarta: PT Asri Media Pustaka, 1990).

<sup>14</sup> Hassan Hathout, *Panduan Seks Islami* (Jakarta: Zahra, 2008).

<sup>15</sup> Ruqayyah Waris Maqsood, *Mengantar Remaja Ke Surga* (Bandung: Al-Bayan, 1997).

<sup>16</sup> Nia Sumiati, "Optimalisasi Perkembangan Dan Kecerdasan Berganda (Multiple Inteleigences) Anak SD Melalui Pertunjuka Sandiwara Boneka Berkarakter Cerita Rakyat," *EduHumaniora / Jurnal Pendidikan Dasar Kampus Cibiru* 6, no. 1 (August 1, 2016), <https://doi.org/10.17509/eh.v6i1.2859>.

commonly represent the female body and are intended to simulate realistic physical companionship and intimacy.<sup>17</sup>

In contemporary markets, products designed for sexual pleasure broadly fall into three categories: sex toys, sex dolls, and sex robots. First, Sex toys are physical objects designed explicitly to enhance sexual pleasure and diversify intimate experiences. Examples include vibrators, dildos, and devices utilized in BDSM, such as handcuffs and whips. Technological advancements have added innovative features like remote control capabilities, synchronization with virtual reality (VR), and built-in cameras, significantly enhancing their interactive dimension and user experience.<sup>18</sup> Second, Sex dolls are full-scale, life-like replicas of human bodies crafted to meet users' physical and emotional needs. These dolls range from basic inflatable types made from rubber to highly realistic silicone dolls that mimic human skin texture. Advanced customization features allow users to select gender, physical attributes, skin tone, and even facial features. While primarily designed for sexual satisfaction, many users form emotional bonds with these dolls, viewing them as companions.<sup>19</sup> Third, Sex robots represent the next evolutionary stage, integrating advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence, sensors, and robotic actuators. These robots closely mimic not only the human form but also interactive abilities, including realistic conversations, emotional responses, and physical movements during intimacy. Customizable in both appearance and personality, sex robots offer highly personalized and realistic companionship experiences.<sup>20</sup>

### ***Commodity Marketing of Sex Dolls***

Advances in technology and widespread internet access have significantly influenced the marketing and distribution of sexual products such as sex toys, dolls, and robots. Online platforms have enabled global accessibility, allowing manufacturers and retailers to reach diverse consumer demographics discreetly and efficiently. This digital market expansion has contributed to the normalization of sexual health products by providing consumers with educational information, detailed product reviews, and personalized options. Notably, online marketing strategies emphasize user privacy,

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<sup>17</sup> A Ferguson, *The Sex Doll: A History* (McFarland, Incorporated, Publishers, 2014).

<sup>18</sup> Joshua G. Rosenberger et al., "Sex Toy Use by Gay and Bisexual Men in the United States," *Archives of Sexual Behavior* 41, no. 2 (April 4, 2012): 449–58, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10508-010-9716-y>.

<sup>19</sup> Ferguson, *The Sex Doll: A History*.

<sup>20</sup> Ferguson.



fostering a broader acceptance of these products across various demographic groups, including marginalized communities.<sup>21</sup>

The growth of the sex doll market has been driven by technological innovations such as VR-compatible toys, remote-controlled devices, and products featuring cameras designed for long-distance relationships.<sup>22</sup> Consumer-driven demand has encouraged product diversity, exemplified by crowdfunded innovations such as the Nuansa Ambrosia bionic dildo, and products tailored specifically for elderly or disabled users, including mind-controlled sex dolls. This increasing acceptance and innovation have led to new market phenomena, such as sex doll brothels, which have emerged in Asia, North America, and Europe, sparking ethical debates regarding their societal and moral implications.<sup>23</sup>

### ***Social Impacts of Sex Dolls and Related Products***

Research indicates that sex toys offer significant benefits by enhancing sexual pleasure, satisfaction, and relationship intimacy. For example, Herbenick, Reece, and Reisner have shown improved quality in couples' sexual interactions resulting from the responsible use of these products.<sup>24</sup> However, potential negative impacts include emotional issues such as feelings of inadequacy among partners, as noted by Watson et al., and health risks, such as sexually transmitted infections resulting from improper cleaning.<sup>25</sup>

Sex dolls have sparked substantial debate due to both their potential benefits and drawbacks. On the negative side, concerns raised by researchers like Ray and Valverde include the possibility of sex dolls reinforcing harmful behaviors such as objectification

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<sup>21</sup> Kristian Daneback, Sven-Axel Mansson, and Michael W. Ross, "Online Sex Shops: Purchasing Sexual Merchandise on the Internet," *International Journal of Sexual Health* 23, no. 2 (April 13, 2011): 102–10, <https://doi.org/10.1080/19317611.2011.565112>.

<sup>22</sup> Nicola Döring, "Vom Internetsex Zum Robotersex: Forschungsstand Und Herausforderungen Für Die Sexualwissenschaft," *Zeitschrift Für Sexualforschung* 30, no. 01 (March 22, 2017): 35–57, <https://doi.org/10.1055/s-0043-101471>.

<sup>23</sup> Feona Attwood, "Fashion and Passion: Marketing Sex to Women," *Sexualities* 8, no. 4 (October 1, 2005): 392–406, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1363460705056617>.

<sup>24</sup> Erin D. Watson et al., "The Impact of a Couple's Vibrator on Men's Perceptions of Their Own and Their Partner's Sexual Pleasure and Satisfaction," *Men and Masculinities* 19, no. 4 (October 26, 2016): 370–83, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1097184X15595082>.

<sup>25</sup> T A Anderson et al., "A Study of Human Papillomavirus on Vaginally Inserted Sex Toys, before and after Cleaning, among Women Who Have Sex with Women and Men: Table 1," *Sexually Transmitted Infections* 90, no. 7 (November 2014): 529–31, <https://doi.org/10.1136/sextrans-2014-051558>.

or violence against vulnerable groups, particularly women and children<sup>26</sup>. Social isolation and mental health problems have also been identified among individuals who replace human relationships entirely with doll companionship. Nevertheless, positive impacts have also emerged, with users frequently citing emotional satisfaction, therapeutic support after trauma or breakups, and companionship for individuals with limited social or sexual opportunities.

Similar to sex dolls, sex robots generate extensive debate due to their advanced technological features. Negative implications include reinforcing harmful behaviors, especially when robots are designed to resemble vulnerable groups, which may inadvertently promote real-world aggression or violence. Another concern involves individuals developing psychological dependence on robot companionship, potentially leading to further isolation and social detachment. Conversely, sex robots provide significant advantages, including safer sexual experiences free from sexually transmitted infections, unwanted pregnancies, and emotional abuse. They also enable exploration of sexual preferences, particularly beneficial for individuals with disabilities or unique sexual needs, potentially reducing demand for human prostitution or illicit activities.

### ***Societal Debates: Advantages and Disadvantages of Sex Dolls***

Sex dolls have become an increasingly prevalent phenomenon, attracting both support and criticism in contemporary society. While some individuals embrace them as tools for enhanced satisfaction and companionship—particularly those struggling with loneliness, social isolation, or physical disabilities—others argue that their growing acceptance raises significant ethical, psychological, and societal concerns. Proponents highlight their ability to provide psychological comfort and reduce emotional distress, especially for individuals suffering from trauma, anxiety, or the loss of a partner, as they offer a form of companionship that can mitigate loneliness and provide an outlet for intimacy. However, critics argue that long-term reliance on sex dolls may contribute to social withdrawal and reduced motivation for real human interactions, reinforcing unrealistic expectations about relationships and intimacy, which could lead to difficulties in forming meaningful connections with actual partners.

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<sup>26</sup> Debashish Banerji and Makarand R. Paranjape, eds., *Critical Posthumanism and Planetary Futures* (New Delhi: Springer India, 2016), <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-81-322-3637-5>.



Another major concern revolves around gender objectification and the reinforcement of unrealistic beauty standards. The widespread availability of hyper-realistic sex dolls, often designed to adhere to exaggerated ideals of physical perfection, has sparked debates about their role in shaping perceptions of gender and intimacy. Critics argue that these dolls perpetuate the objectification of women by presenting them as passive, hypersexualized entities, thereby normalizing unhealthy power dynamics and reinforcing harmful societal ideals. To counter these concerns, advocates suggest greater inclusivity in product design, incorporating more diverse body types, ethnic backgrounds, and gender identities to create a more representative and less harmful industry. The establishment of sex doll brothels in various regions has further intensified ethical debates, with proponents arguing that such businesses could reduce human trafficking, limit the spread of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and provide a safer alternative to traditional prostitution. Nevertheless, detractors caution that these establishments might normalize detached, transactional sexual encounters while posing economic and ethical threats to human sex workers, potentially diminishing their livelihood and driving them further into exploitative or underground markets.<sup>27</sup>

Perhaps the most controversial issue surrounding sex dolls is the emergence of child-like models, which have sparked widespread outrage due to concerns that they could normalize or encourage pedophilic behavior. Advocates for banning such dolls argue that their production and use contribute to the desensitization of sexual violence against minors, fostering dangerous tendencies among individuals predisposed to such behavior. Consequently, many jurisdictions have imposed strict legal consequences on those found in possession of such dolls. However, some researchers have proposed a counterargument that their controlled use might serve as a harm-reduction strategy for individuals with pedophilic tendencies, potentially preventing them from acting on their urges in real-life situations. This perspective remains highly controversial, as critics maintain that any form of accommodation for such behavior is ethically indefensible and risks undermining child protection efforts.

The debates surrounding sex dolls reflect broader tensions between personal autonomy, ethical considerations, and societal values. While supporters highlight their

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<sup>27</sup> Patrick Lin, Keith Abney, and George A Bekey, *Robot Ethics: The Ethical and Social Implications of Robotics* (MIT Press, 2011).

benefits in providing companionship, reducing exploitation in traditional prostitution, and offering therapeutic value, opponents caution against their potential to reinforce gender objectification, unrealistic beauty standards, and social detachment. The emergence of sex doll brothels and the controversy surrounding child-like models further intensify the ethical and legal complexities of this issue. As technology continues to evolve and the market for artificial companionship grows, ongoing discussions are necessary to establish ethical guidelines and legal frameworks that balance individual freedom with societal well-being. Addressing these challenges requires a nuanced approach that considers the psychological, legal, and moral implications of sex dolls in an increasingly digitized and artificial world.<sup>28</sup>

### **Qur'anic Perspectives on Sex Dolls: Insights from Contemporary Interpretations**

#### ***Qur'anic Interpretation on Sexuality (Al-Ma'arij 70:29-31)***

Several Qur'anic verses explicitly discuss the ethical boundaries surrounding sexuality. Surah Al-Ma'arij [70] verses 29-31 states clearly:

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأُزْوَاجِهِمْ حَافِظُونَ (٢٩) إِلَّا عَلَىٰ أَرْوَاحِهِمْ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ غَيْرُ مَلُومِينَ (٣٠)  
فَمَنْ ابْتَغَىٰ وَرَاءَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْعَادُونَ (٣١)

“...and those who guard their chastity (private parts), except with their wives or those ‘bondwomen’ in their possession, for then they are free from blame, but whoever seeks beyond that are the transgressors.”

This passage is elaborated further by classical and contemporary interpretations, notably found in *Tafsir Al-Munir*, *Al-Misbah*, and *Shafwatut Tafasir*. According to *Tafsir Al-Munir* and *Al-Misbah*, these verses explicitly restrict permissible sexual relationships to marital partners or slaves legally owned at the time, emphasizing that seeking sexual fulfillment through any other means is considered a transgression of divine limits:

...من يسعى وراء الشهوة بطرق أو مع أشخاص لم يأذن الله بها، فقد ارتكب تجاوزاً للحدود المشروعة<sup>29</sup>  
"Whoever pursues desire through means or with individuals not permitted by Allah has committed a transgression of the lawful boundaries."

Similarly, *Shafwatut Tafasir* explicitly states:

فإنهم غير ملومين أي فإنهم غير مؤاخذين لأن وضع الشهوة فيما أباح الله من الزوجات والمملوكات، حلال يؤجر عليه الإنسان، لما فيه من تكثير النسل والذرية، فمن ابتغى وراء ذلك فأولئك هم العادون أي فمن طلب قضاء شهوته غير الزوجات<sup>30</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Danielle Knafo, "Guys and Dolls: Relational Life in the Technological Era," *Psychoanalytic Dialogues* 25, no. 4 (July 4, 2015): 481–502, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10481885.2015.1055174>.

<sup>29</sup> Wahbah Zuhaili, *Al-Tafsir Al-Munir Fi Al-'Aqidah Wa Al-Shari'ah Wa Al-Manhaj*, Juz 10 (Damaskus: Dar al-Fikr, 2009); Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbah, Pesan, Kesan Dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an* (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2002).

<sup>30</sup> Muhammad Ali Ash-Şabuni, *Shafwatut Tafasir Juz III* (Beirut: Dar Al-Fikr, 2001).

"They are not to be blamed, meaning they are not held accountable, because fulfilling one's desire within what Allah has permitted—through wives and bondwomen—is lawful and even rewarded, as it contributes to the increase of offspring and progeny. However, whoever seeks fulfillment of their desires beyond that, then they are the transgressors, meaning those who seek to satisfy their desires outside of marriage."

Thus, contemporary Islamic interpretations imply that the use of sex dolls for sexual gratification falls under the category of "seeking pleasure through impermissible means," aligning such actions with Qur'anic prohibitions of sexual acts outside the explicitly allowed relationships.

### ***Interpretation of Qur'anic Verses Related to Statues (Tamatsil)***

The term "*tamatsil*" (statues) occurs explicitly in several verses, notably Surah Saba' [34]:13, which states:

يَعْمَلُونَ لَهُ مَا يَشَاءُ مِنْ مَحْرِبٍ وَتَمَثِيلٍ وَجَفَانٍ لَكَ الْجَوَابِ وَقُدُورٍ رَاسِيٍّ عِبَادِي الشُّكُورُ  
 "They made for him whatever he desired of sanctuaries, statues (Which was permissible at the time of Solomon), basins as large as reservoirs, and cooking pots fixed 'into the ground'. 'We ordered: ' "Work gratefully, O family of David!" 'Only' a few of My servants are 'truly' grateful."

Muhammad Ali As-Shabuni explains in *Shafwatut Tafasir* that historically statues were permissible as decorative objects, not for worship. He further clarifies this view by citing Hasan, who states:

قال الحسن: ولم تكن يومئذ محرمة، وقد حرمت في شريعتنا سدا للذريعة لئلا تُعبد من دون الله، وَجَفَانِ كَالْجَوَابِ<sup>31</sup>  
 "Hasan said: 'At that time, they were not prohibited, but they were later forbidden in our Shariah as a preventive measure (Sadd al-Dhari'ah) to prevent them from being worshiped besides Allah.' And [as for] basins like reservoirs (Jifān kāl-Jawāb)..."

Similarly, Muhammad Quraish Shihab in *Tafsir Al-Misbah* emphasizes that Prophet Solomon's statues served purely decorative and functional purposes, explicitly excluding worship.<sup>32</sup> Therefore, the permissibility of statues in early contexts depended heavily on their purpose and association with monotheistic principles.

Another relevant verse appears in Surah Al-Anbiya' [21]:52, where Prophet Ibrahim questions the idol worship of his community:

إِذْ قَالَ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِ مَا هَذِهِ النَّمَاتُ الَّتِي أَنْتُمْ لَهَا عَاقِبُونَ

<sup>31</sup> Ash-Şabuni.

<sup>32</sup> M.Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbah Pesa, Kesan Dan Keserassian Al-Qur,An* (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2002).

“When he (Ibrahim) said to his father and his people, ‘What are these statues that you diligently worship?’”

Wahbah Zuhaili, in *Tafsir Al-Munir*, references Al-Qurtubi, noting Ibrahim's critical perspective toward idols, questioning their purpose and utility:

فقال: ما هذه التماثيل؟ أي الأصنام التي أنتم مقيمون على عبادتها وتعظيمها، وفي هذا القول تنبيه إلى ضرورة التأمل في شأنها، وأنها لا تغني عنهم شيئاً<sup>33</sup>

"So he said: 'What are these statues?'—meaning the idols that you remain devoted to in worship and veneration. This statement serves as a reminder of the necessity of reflecting upon their reality, as they provide no benefit whatsoever."

*Shafwatut Tafasir* similarly highlights Ibrahim's rhetorical stance:

قال لأبيه أزر وقومه المشركين: ما هذه الأصنام التي أنتم مقيمون على عبادتها؟ وفي قوله: 'ما هذه التماثيل' تحقير لها وتصغير لشأنها وتجاهل بها مع علمه بتعظيمهم لها<sup>34</sup>

"He said to his father, Azar, and his idolatrous people: 'What are these idols to which you remain devoted in worship?' In his statement, 'What are these statues,' there is an element of belittlement and diminution of their status, as well as an expression of feigned ignorance, despite his awareness of their veneration for them."

Quraish Shihab further emphasizes Ibrahim's firm rejection of idols, explicitly labeling them as mere objects devoid of divinity, thus firmly establishing a monotheistic critique against idol worship. Quraish Shihab stated:

"The idols or statues worshiped by the people of Prophet Ibrahim were numerous, but the largest among them was named Ba'il. This statue was made of gold and symbolized the sun. Prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him) referred to them as mere statues rather than calling them 'gods' or mentioning their names directly. This indicates that from an early stage, he firmly asserted that what his people worshiped were merely statues. Moreover, the question he posed served as a rebuke against their objects of worship and a criticism of their devotion to them. The firm and clear stance displayed by Prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him) becomes even more evident in the following verses."<sup>35</sup>

Thus, classical and contemporary Qur'anic interpretations consistently regard the production and use of statues as impermissible if they are associated with acts of worship or polytheism. The same principle of impermissibility applies analogically to sex dolls, considering their association with acts perceived as moral transgressions according to Islamic ethical standards.

<sup>33</sup> Zuhaili, *Al-Tafsir Al-Munir Fi Al-'Aqidah Wa Al-Shari'ah Wa Al-Manhaj*.

<sup>34</sup> Ash-Şabuni, *Shafwatut Tafasir Juz III*.

<sup>35</sup> M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2010).

### ***Ethical and Legal Implications of Sex Dolls from Islamic Perspectives***

Islamic teachings strictly warn against idolatry, including the creation of images resembling living beings. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) explicitly condemned making such images due to their association with shirk (polytheism) and moral corruption. For instance, a hadith narrated by Aisha (RA) in Sahih Al-Bukhari (No. 5954) states that the Prophet strongly disapproved of decorative images depicting animate beings due to their severe consequences in the afterlife.<sup>36</sup> This prohibition extends beyond mere artistic expression and is deeply rooted in the Islamic emphasis on monotheism (tawhid), ensuring that no physical representations become objects of reverence or lead to deviation from the worship of Allah. While these teachings were historically concerned with statues and idol worship, contemporary Islamic discourse extends their implications to modern artificial human-like figures, including sex dolls, particularly when they serve as objects of emotional or sexual attachment.<sup>37</sup>

Further reinforcing this point, another hadith describes communities that constructed places of worship over graves or created images of beings, categorizing them among the most severely punished by Allah.<sup>38</sup> These narrations illustrate the fundamental Islamic principle that creating and venerating human-like figures has historically been linked to spiritual corruption and deviation from faith. While the primary concern of these hadiths revolves around idol worship, the broader ethical implications extend to any practice that promotes the normalization of artificial human representations for gratification, whether physical, emotional, or psychological. The debate surrounding sex dolls thus intersects with these concerns, as their use risks fostering an unhealthy attachment to artificial representations of human intimacy, potentially diverting individuals from natural and lawful relationships within marriage. Additionally, the hyper-realistic nature of modern sex dolls raises concerns about the objectification of human bodies, reducing intimacy to a transactional and impersonal act that contradicts Islamic ethical principles.

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<sup>36</sup> “Sahih Al-Bukhari 5954 - Dress - كتاب اللباس - Sunnah.Com - Sayings and Teachings of Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه و سلم),” accessed March 8, 2025, <https://sunnah.com/bukhari%3A5954>.

<sup>37</sup> Yusuff Jelili Amuda and Ismaila B. Tijani, “Ethical and Legal Implications of Sex Robot: An Islamic Perspective,” *OIDA International Journal of Sustainable Development* 3, no. 6 (February 19, 2012): 19–28, <https://doi.org/10.2172/805760>.

<sup>38</sup> “Sahih Al-Bukhari 1341 - Funerals (Al-Janaa'iz) - كتاب الجنائز - Sunnah.Com - Sayings and Teachings of Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه و سلم),” accessed March 8, 2025, <https://sunnah.com/bukhari%3A1341>.

In analyzing the permissibility of sex dolls, Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh) and the framework of Maqasid al-Shariah (objectives of Islamic law) provide crucial insights. According to classical fiqh, any action associated with clear transgressions, such as sexual activities outside marriage or actions undermining social ethics, is considered impermissible. Scholars have historically ruled against artificial means of sexual gratification, such as masturbation, except under extreme necessity, such as preventing fornication (zina). Since sex dolls are explicitly designed for self-gratification outside the context of marital relations, they fall within the scope of practices that classical scholars deem haram (forbidden). Moreover, the use of sex dolls challenges the broader ethical principles that Maqasid al-Shariah seeks to uphold, particularly in the preservation of morality (hifz al-'ird), family integrity (hifz an-nasl), and societal well-being (maslahah). Several contemporary Islamic scholars argue that the increased dependence on artificial intimacy risks undermining the stability of marriages by reducing the need for emotional connection and companionship between spouses. Furthermore, in the context of Islamic ethics, sexuality is not solely a biological function but also a means of fostering emotional and spiritual connection within lawful relationships. The introduction of artificial substitutes for intimacy disrupts this balance, potentially leading to emotional detachment and distorted perceptions of human relationships.

Furthermore, psychological studies suggest that prolonged use of artificial sexual companions, including sex dolls, may lead to decreased social interaction and emotional detachment from real human relationships. Research in behavioral psychology highlights that excessive reliance on artificial means of intimacy can diminish a person's ability to form and maintain genuine emotional bonds, which is contrary to Islamic teachings that emphasize rahmah (compassion) and mawaddah (affection) within marital relationships. This concern is particularly significant in the context of Islamic ethics, where marriage is viewed not only as a means for lawful sexual fulfillment but also as a spiritual and emotional bond that fosters personal and communal well-being. By replacing human companionship with artificial substitutes, sex dolls introduce a potential disruption in the natural order of relationships, which Islam seeks to protect and cultivate. Additionally, from the perspective of hifz al-aql (preservation of intellect), dependency on sex dolls raises concerns about mental well-being, as studies have shown that excessive use of



artificial sexual companions may contribute to social withdrawal, diminished emotional intelligence, and even desensitization toward real human relationships.

Therefore, based on contemporary interpretations of Qur'anic verses, hadith, classical jurisprudence, and Maqasid al-Shariah, sex dolls would generally be viewed as ethically and legally problematic within Islamic teachings. This view emerges from their potential negative impacts on individual morality, marital relationships, social ethics, and spiritual purity. In addition to their implications for personal ethics, the widespread acceptance of sex dolls raises broader societal concerns, including the objectification of the human body, the reinforcement of unrealistic beauty standards, and the commodification of intimacy. Islam strongly upholds the dignity of both men and women, advocating for relationships based on mutual respect, emotional connection, and personal responsibility. The introduction of artificial intimacy, particularly through the lens of sex dolls, contradicts these values by promoting impersonal and transactional views of sexuality. Furthermore, the rise of sex dolls with hyper-customizable features, including those designed to mimic specific physical traits, poses additional ethical dilemmas concerning consent, identity, and the normalization of unrealistic expectations in human relationships.

Another ethical concern arising from the presence of sex dolls is the emergence of child-like models, which have been widely condemned for their potential to normalize deviant behaviors. Even in secular legal frameworks, many jurisdictions have banned these objects due to their association with the exploitation of minors and their potential role in reinforcing harmful psychological patterns. From an Islamic standpoint, any action that facilitates or encourages immorality (*fasad*) is strictly forbidden, and the existence of such products is viewed as a direct violation of moral and ethical principles. The prohibition of these items aligns with Islam's broader commitment to safeguarding societal purity and protecting individuals from exposure to morally corrupt influences. Several Islamic scholars and fatwa bodies, such as Dar al-Ifta' al-Misriyyah (Egyptian Fatwa House), have issued rulings prohibiting the use of sex dolls, particularly those resembling minors, citing them as haram due to their potential in promoting moral corruption and leading to deviant behaviors. The growing concerns over the normalization of such products have led to legal restrictions in various Muslim-majority

countries, reinforcing the view that these objects are fundamentally incompatible with Islamic ethics and legal principles.

As technology continues to advance and artificial human companionship becomes more sophisticated, the discussion surrounding sex dolls and their permissibility within Islamic teachings remains highly relevant. While some might argue that their use prevents greater sins, such justifications do not override the broader moral and social harms they introduce. The consensus among scholars adhering to traditional Islamic teachings is that sex dolls represent a morally and legally problematic innovation that threatens the integrity of personal morality, marriage stability, and societal ethics. Thus, from a legal and ethical standpoint, their use remains incompatible with the principles of Islam, as they undermine the fundamental purpose of human relationships and the divine wisdom behind marriage.

## **Conclusion**

This study has examined the ethical and legal implications of sex dolls in contemporary Islamic thought by integrating Qur'anic interpretation, Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh), and Maqasid al-Shariah. The findings indicate that sex dolls pose significant ethical, social, and spiritual concerns, as they contradict the Islamic principles of *hifz al-'ird* (preserving dignity), *hifz an-nasl* (preserving family structure), and *hifz al-aql* (preserving intellect). The analysis of Surah Al-Ma'arij (70:29-31), Surah Saba' (34:13), and Surah Al-Anbiya' (21:52) highlights the Islamic prohibition of artificial human-like figures, particularly when used for gratification, while fatwas from Dar al-Ifta' Egypt and scholars from Saudi Arabia and Indonesia further reinforce their impermissibility.

Beyond personal morality, sex dolls contribute to the objectification of human relationships, the erosion of marital bonds, and the normalization of hypersexualized behavior. Particularly concerning is the emergence of child-like sex dolls, which have been widely condemned in both Islamic and secular legal frameworks. Islamic teachings strictly prohibit any action that facilitates immorality (*fasad*), and the existence of such products is a direct violation of ethical and moral principles. As technological advancements continue to redefine human intimacy, Islamic scholarship must engage in further *ijtihad* to address the challenges posed by artificial companionship.

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