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**Directive Discourse and the Construction of Moral Authority in Sūrat Hūd:
Language, Power, and Social Reform**

MUHAMMAD AAMIR ALI¹

ABSTRACT

This article examines the linguistic construction of moral authority and directive discourse in the Qur’anic narratives of Sūrat Hūd, framing them as discursive interventions aimed at societal reform. Engaging concerns central to social anthropology—authority, legitimacy, moral order, and community transformation—the study adopts a discourse-semantic approach to analyze how prophetic speakers mobilize language to confront corruption, negotiate resistance, and reconstitute collective norms. Drawing on selected narratives of Nūḥ, Hūd, Ṣāliḥ, Ibrāhīm, Lūṭ, and Shu‘ayb as a coherent reform-oriented corpus, the analysis focuses on imperatives, vocatives, modality, conditionality, and evaluative lexicon. It demonstrates how these linguistic resources construct epistemic credibility, deny material self-interest, and frame compliance and rejection within a moral economy of accountability. By situating Qur’anic directive discourse within broader debates on social change and ethical authority, the article contributes to anthropological discussions of how language functions as a mechanism of moral regulation, communal boundary-making, and transformative social action.

Keywords: *Qur’anic linguistics; Directive Discourse; Moral Authority; Sūrat Hūd; Social Reform*

INTRODUCTION

Religious narratives constitute a crucial site for examining how moral authority, legitimacy, and social order are constructed and contested. Across societies, sacred texts do not merely transmit beliefs; they articulate frameworks of governance, accountability, and collective reform. Scholarship in discourse and religion has shown how language functions as a medium through which authority is claimed, resistance is negotiated, and ethical norms are stabilized. Yet the role of directive discourse as a mechanism of moral regulation and social transformation remains insufficiently theorized, particularly in relation to Qur’anic narrative.

¹ **Muhammad Aamir Ali*** (Corresponding Author) is a *Permanent Faculty Member of ICON TRAINING CENTRE-Qatar*, bringing over 19 years of results-oriented experience in feasibility studies, financial budgeting, market analysis, and leadership development. He specializes in training *senior leaders* to design and implement *effective strategic performance management and control systems within large organizations*, with executive training experience across leading organizations such as Dhriya Group, the Nigerian Parliament, government institutions, Qatar Airways, Armani, Ooredoo, SNONU, Retaj Real Estate, and the Filipino International School of Doha, QATAR. Email: aamir.ali@icontrainingcentre.qa

Religious narratives constitute a significant domain for linguistic inquiry, as they offer rich data for examining how language constructs authority, morality, and social order (Mohammad, 2024; Sacks, 2025; Fan, Van Hoof, Dou, & Serrano, 2023; Ejjebli, 2023). Within linguistics, increasing attention has been given to the ways discourse strategies encode evaluation, persuasion, and interpersonal relations, particularly in classical and sacred texts (De Wynter, Wang, Sokolov, Gu, & Chen, 2023; NKWAIN, 2023; Kaczor-Scheitler, 2024). The Qur'an, as a linguistically sophisticated corpus, has been widely studied from grammatical, semantic, and rhetorical perspectives (Masood & Nousheen, 2025; Alasmari, 2025; Ahmad, Ghafar, & Utama, 2025; Hakami, 2024); however, the systematic analysis of directive discourse as a mechanism for constructing moral authority remains comparatively underexplored (Hakami, 2024; Masood & Nousheen, 2025).

Directive discourse—language intended to influence beliefs, attitudes, or actions—plays a central role in narrative interaction (Linhares, 2025; Hakami, 2024; Masood & Nousheen, 2025). In Qur'anic narratives, prophetic figures repeatedly address their communities using commands, exhortations, warnings, and promises (Qur'an 11:27-95). These directives are not merely instructional; rather, they are embedded within broader discursive structures that legitimize the speaker's authority and frame moral responsibility (Qur'an, 11:27-95; 26:10-119). Such constructions operate through a combination of imperatives, modality, evaluative expressions, and conditional reward–punishment scenarios.

Sūrat Hūd, Chapter 11 of the holy Quran, presents an especially suitable corpus for examining these phenomena, as it contains a sequence of prophetic narratives characterized by sustained dialogue, repetition of reformatory appeals, and explicit responses from audiences (Qur'an, 11:25-48; 11:50-59; 11:61-68; 11:69-75; 11:78-81; 11:88-94). The surah offers a coherent narrative environment in which similar communicative goals are pursued through varying linguistic strategies (Qur'an, 11:25-48; 11:50-59; 11:61-68; 11:69-75; 11:78-81; 11:88-94). Treating these narratives as discourse data allows for an investigation into how moral authority is linguistically enacted rather than presupposed.

This study adopts a discourse-semantic approach to analyze how moral authority and directive force are constructed in *Sūrat Hūd*. Rather than evaluating theological content, the paper focuses on linguistic form and function, examining how specific language choices contribute to persuasion, legitimation, and moral positioning. By doing so, the study contributes to

synchronic linguistic research on classical Arabic texts and advances cross-disciplinary dialogue between discourse analysis and Qur’anic studies.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study is based on the following research questions:

1. How do the prophetic narratives of Sūrat Hūd construct and legitimize moral authority within a framework of social reform?
2. What discursive strategies are used to negotiate resistance, establish leadership credibility, and reshape communal norms?
3. How are reward and punishment articulated as mechanisms of moral regulation and collective accountability?
4. How do recurring narrative patterns across prophetic accounts contribute to a broader model of ethical governance and social transformation?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Discourse analysis has increasingly been applied to classical texts to investigate how language constructs authority, moral norms, and interpersonal relationships (Svennevig, 2021; Amossy, 2022; Adjei & Mpiani, 2022). Within this framework, directive discourse—language intended to influence, persuade, or regulate behavior—has been a central focus, as it provides insight into how speakers establish authority and motivate compliance (Humă, 2023; Joullié, Gould, Spillane, & Luc, 2021). Imperatives, vocatives, modal expressions, and evaluative structures have been identified as key linguistic mechanisms through which directive force is realized across both oral and written narratives (Portner, 2007; Kaufmann, 2023; Wochner, 2022).

These studies highlight the importance of examining not only the content of directives but also their relational and pragmatic functions, including mitigation, justification, and audience alignment. In parallel, research on Qur’anic linguistics has explored the rhetorical, semantic, and pragmatic features of the Qur’an as a unique discourse corpus (Alasmari, 2025; Ahmad, Ghafar, & Utama, 2025; Hakami, 2024).

Scholars have examined the use of repetition, modality, and evaluative language in constructing narrative coherence and persuasive force (Ahmad, Ghafar, & Utama, 2025; Mårtensson, 2022). Studies focusing on prophetic narratives have noted recurrent patterns of address, exhortation, and audience response, demonstrating that the Qur’an employs sophisticated strategies for conveying ethical guidance and reinforcing authority (Rashwani, 2024; Flowers, 2022). However, much of this research has focused on general rhetorical devices or thematic

interpretations, with limited systematic attention to directive discourse as a mechanism for moral legitimation.

A growing body of research explores how moral authority and ethical positioning are constructed in narrative and religious texts, highlighting the ways language mediates power, legitimacy, and social order. Studies in discourse and social theory have shown that speakers use strategies such as epistemic framing, self-presentation, and evaluative appeals to establish credibility and influence collective behavior. In particular, the use of commands, exhortations, and conditional framing demonstrates how authority is performed while simultaneously shaping communal norms and obligations. These insights provide a foundation for examining how prophetic figures in *Sūrat Hūd* exercise moral and social influence over their communities. Despite these contributions, there remains a notable gap in understanding how directive discourse functions across multiple prophetic narratives to regulate behavior, negotiate ethical responsibility, and sustain legitimacy within a coherent social and moral framework. Previous analyses have often focused on isolated textual features, single narratives, or rhetorical aspects without integrating the broader social and communal effects of repeated discursive strategies. This study addresses that gap by examining the narratives of Nūḥ, Hūd, Šālīḥ, Ibrāhīm, Lūt, and Shu‘ayb in *Sūrat Hūd*, showing how imperatives, vocatives, conditional constructions, and evaluative expressions operate to guide behavior, assert moral authority, and frame accountability within the community.

By situating the analysis at the intersection of discourse, moral regulation, and social reform, the study demonstrates that authority in Qur’anic narratives is not simply claimed but actively constructed through communicative strategies. Recurring patterns across multiple prophetic accounts reveal a coherent approach to ethical governance, illustrating how sacred narrative functions as a medium for persuasion, social reform, and the negotiation of communal norms. This perspective contributes to anthropological understanding of language as a mechanism for moral legitimation and transformative social action in historical and religious contexts.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a qualitative discourse-semantic approach. The dataset consists of selected passages from *Sūrat Hūd* involving the prophets Nūḥ, Hūd, Šālīḥ, Ibrāhīm, Lūt, and Shu‘ayb (Qur'an, 11:25-48; 11:50-59; 11:61-68; 11:69-75; 11:78-81; 11:88-94). Each narrative was examined for instances of directive discourse, moral authority construction, and reward–punishment framing. Analytical attention focused on imperatives, vocatives, modal

expressions, evaluative lexical items, and conditional clauses. Patterns were identified both within individual narratives and across prophets to determine recurring strategies of moral legitimation. The analysis is text-centered, emphasizing linguistic form and function while avoiding normative or theological interpretation.

Discussion

How is moral authority linguistically constructed in the prophetic narratives of Sūrat Hūd?

The linguistic construction of moral authority in the prophetic narratives of *Sūrat Hūd* emerges through a consistent pattern of epistemic positioning, self-legitimation, and evaluative framing. Across the narratives of Nūḥ, Hūd, Ṣāliḥ, Ibrāhīm, Lūṭ, and Shu‘ayb, moral authority is not asserted through coercive dominance or institutional power but is discursively established through repeated references to divine evidence, moral integrity, and personal disinterest in material gain. These strategies collectively function to position the prophetic speakers as credible, trustworthy, and ethically superior interlocutors within the narrative.

One central linguistic mechanism for constructing moral authority is epistemic legitimation. Prophetic speakers repeatedly ground their claims in expressions (See Table 2) such as “clear evidence from my Lord” (Qur'an, 11:28; 11:88; 11:63) and “my Lord is near and responsive,” (Qur'an 11:61) which linguistically frame their authority as derived rather than self-generated. Such constructions function as epistemic anchors, signaling that the speaker’s knowledge and directives originate from a higher, external source. From a discourse perspective, this removes subjectivity and positions the speaker as a transmitter of authoritative knowledge rather than a personal claimant to power. This strategy is visible in the narratives of Nūḥ, Ṣāliḥ, and Shu‘ayb (See Table 2), where references to divine evidence precede or accompany moral instruction (Qur'an, 11:28; 11:88; 11:63).

Another recurring feature is denial of personal benefit, which strengthens moral credibility. Statements (See Table 2) such as “I ask no reward from you” (Qur'an 11:61) and “my reward is with Allāh” (Qur'an 11:51) operate as negative self-presentation strategies that distance the speaker from material or social gain. Linguistically, these clauses neutralize potential accusations of manipulation or self-interest. In discourse terms, such constructions pre-empt resistance by removing common motives for distrust. The repetition of this pattern across multiple prophetic figures contributes to a unified narrative logic in which moral authority is consistently associated with altruism and sincerity.

Moral authority is also reinforced through evaluative language that constructs ethical alignment. Descriptions of prophets as forbearing, patient, forgiving, or reliant upon Allāh function as positive evaluative markers (See Table 2). These descriptors are not merely character traits; they are discursively positioned as evidence of ethical legitimacy. The consistent coupling of moral exhortation with demonstrations of patience, emotional restraint, and perseverance strengthens the authority of the speaker by aligning conduct with message. Linguistically, this alignment reduces dissonance between what is said and how it is enacted. Furthermore, contrastive moral positioning plays a significant role. The narratives frequently construct binary oppositions between the prophets and their communities, labeling the latter as deniers, wrongdoers, or disobedient (See Table 2) (Qur'an, 11:27; 11:43; 11:25-48; 11:53; 11:59; 11:67; 11:70; 11:81; 11:82; 11:94). This opposition is achieved through lexical choices that delegitimize rejection while reinforcing prophetic credibility. Importantly, moral authority is not constructed through insults or emotional aggression but through calm persistence and repeated reform-oriented discourse (See Table 2) (Qur'an, 11:29; 11:36; 11:38; 11:40; 11:52; 11:55; 11:57; 11:58; 11:61; 11:66; 11:68; 11:80; 11:85; 11:88; 11:92). This contrast heightens the perceived moral elevation of the prophetic voice.

Finally, moral authority is stabilized through narrative outcomes, where reward and punishment follow moral alignment or rejection. The ultimate validation of authority occurs retrospectively, as the narrative confirms the truth of prophetic claims through salvation or destruction. Linguistically, this outcome-based validation retroactively legitimizes the speaker's earlier discourse, transforming moral authority into a confirmed narrative fact rather than a contested claim (See Table 2).

In sum, moral authority in *Sūrat Hūd* is linguistically constructed through epistemic grounding, denial of self-interest, ethical self-presentation, contrastive evaluation, and narrative confirmation. These strategies collectively produce a stable and persuasive authority framework that is realized entirely through language.

What directive discourse strategies are employed to address and persuade audiences?

Directive discourse in the prophetic narratives of *Sūrat Hūd* is characterized by a diverse and strategically layered use of imperatives, vocatives, modal expressions, and reform-oriented exhortations. Rather than relying on forceful commands alone, the discourse employs a combination of direct and mitigated strategies that aim to persuade, instruct, and morally engage the audience over extended periods.

A prominent feature of directive discourse is the use of vocatives, particularly expressions equivalent to “O my people (Qur'an, 11:61; 11:84).” These forms serve an interpersonal function by establishing proximity and shared identity between speaker and audience (See Table 2). Linguistically, vocatives soften directive force by framing commands within a relational context. This strategy is evident across the narratives of Nūḥ, Hūd, Ṣāliḥ, and Shu‘ayb, where repeated address forms precede moral instruction. The effect is a reduction of hierarchical distance, even as moral authority is maintained.

Imperative constructions form the backbone of directive discourse. Commands such as “worship Allāh,” (Qur'an, 11:61; 11:84) “fear Allāh,” (Qur'an, 11:30-31; 11:52; 11:78) “ask forgiveness,” (Qur'an 11:61) and “do not decrease measure and weight” (Qur'an 11:85) directly encode desired behavior. However, these imperatives are frequently embedded within explanatory or justificatory clauses, which function to rationalize obedience. This combination of command and explanation enhances persuasive effectiveness by appealing to reason rather than fear alone. Linguistically, this strategy balances directive force with cognitive engagement (See Table 2).

Modal expressions also play a crucial role. Statements emphasizing reliance, return, or accountability introduce epistemic and deontic modality, framing obedience as both necessary and meaningful. The prophets’ repeated expression of trust in Allāh “Upon Him I have relied,” (Qur'an, 11:56; 11:88) function indirectly as directives by modeling desired attitudes. This indirect directive strategy shifts persuasion from command to exemplification, allowing the audience to infer moral expectations (See Table 2).

Another significant strategy is temporal extension of directive discourse. The narratives repeatedly emphasize consistency and duration, particularly in the case of Nūḥ, who advised his nation over a long period (Qur'an 29:14). Linguistically, repetition across time reinforces directive legitimacy and persistence, framing rejection as unreasonable rather than resistance as justified. This extended engagement also conveys patience and commitment, which further strengthens persuasive force (Qur'an 71:10-12).

Directive discourse is also shaped by threat-adjacent language, where warnings are articulated without immediate enforcement (Qur'an 11:88). Statements forecasting punishment function as conditional directives rather than absolute threats. The use of future-oriented constructions allows space for repentance and reform, maintaining the ethical tone of persuasion rather than

coercion (Qur'an 11:93). This strategy is evident in the narratives of Shu‘ayb and Lūṭ, where warnings precede actual narrative consequences.

Finally, self-limitation statements such as “I am not a guardian over you” (Qur'an 11:85) serve as paradoxical directive enhancers. By explicitly denying coercive authority, the speaker reinforces moral authority and voluntary compliance. Linguistically, this strategy frames obedience as a moral choice rather than an imposed obligation (See Table 2).

Overall, directive discourse in *Sūrat Hūd* operates through a carefully balanced system of commands, relational address, modal positioning, repetition, and conditional warning. These strategies collectively produce a persuasive discourse that seeks transformation through moral reasoning rather than force.

To demonstrate how moral authority and directive discourse are organized into a coherent narrative structure, Table 1 provides a comparative overview of recurrent discourse stages across the prophetic narratives in *Sūrat Hūd*.

Table 1: Narrative Coherence in the Prophetic Discourses of *Sūrat Hūd*

Prophet	Discourse Initiation (Epistemic Legitimacy)	Core Directive Strategies	Moral Stance & Self-Positioning	Audience Response (Evaluative Framing)	Narrative Outcome (Reward–Punishment Framing)
Nūḥ (AS)	Claims clear evidence and divine mercy; positions himself as morally grounded	Repeated imperatives (worship, repent), long-term exhortation, explanation without coercion	Patience, emotional restraint, denial of material gain	Accusations of falsehood; rejection by community and kin	Believers saved; rejection framed through destruction and divine punishment
Hūd (AS)	Reliance on divine authority;	Directives combined with warnings;	Explicit trust in God; refusal of	Open disbelief and defiance	Salvation of believers; punishment

	rejection of false associations	appeals to fear and accountability	worldly reward		of disobedient community
Ṣāliḥ (AS)	Epistemic grounding in divine signs and mercy	Commands to worship and seek forgiveness; calm repetition	Patience, anger control, ethical consistency	Dismissal and wrongdoing	Believers spared; sudden collective punishment
Ibrāhīm (AS)	Legitimation through divine communication (angels, good tidings)	Indirect directives through reassurance and moral exemplification	Forbearance, humility, emotional engagement	Narrative does not foreground rejection	Reward framed through divine mercy and blessings
Lūṭ (AS)	Moral urgency expressed through warnings	Imperatives and appeals to fear; expressions of helplessness	Ethical frustration combined with moral responsibility	Hostile rejection; moral transgression	Believers saved; severe punishment including close kin
Shu‘ayb (AS)	Clear evidence and ethical authority	Directives on justice, trade fairness, reform-oriented speech	Strong moral consistency; denial of coercive power	Accusations of weakness and disbelief	Salvation by mercy; punishment through destruction

As illustrated in Table 1, despite contextual variation, the narratives consistently follow a structured progression from divine authorization to moral resolution. This coherence reinforces the legitimacy of directives and strengthens the persuasive force of Qur’anic moral discourse. Table 1 demonstrates that the prophetic narratives follow a recurrent sequence of discourse stages, including divine authorization, directive formulation, moral justification, and resolution. The consistency of these stages across narratives confirms that moral legitimation

in Sūrat Hūd is achieved through a unified narrative strategy rather than through context-specific persuasion alone.

The analysis reveals that recurring discourse patterns across the prophetic narratives in Sūrat Hūd contribute to a **highly unified narrative strategy of moral legitimization**. Despite differences in historical context, audience configuration, and narrative detail, the prophetic accounts exhibit a consistent discursive architecture through which moral authority is established, reinforced, and ultimately validated. This unity is not thematic alone but is realized linguistically through recurrent patterns of authorization, directive formulation, evaluative framing, and narrative closure. The repetition of these discourse stages across narratives produces coherence at the macro-discursive level, allowing individual prophetic episodes to function as variations of a single moral communicative strategy rather than isolated accounts.

How are reward and punishment framed through conditional and evaluative linguistic structures?

Reward and punishment in the narratives of *Sūrat Hūd* are linguistically framed through a highly systematic use of conditional clauses, evaluative lexicon, and metaphorical imagery. These constructions function not merely as narrative outcomes but as integral components of directive discourse, reinforcing moral accountability and ethical causality.

A defining feature of reward–punishment framing is the conditional structure. Linguistic patterns equivalent to “if you repent, then...” (Qur'an, 71:10-12; 11:52) establish a clear cause–effect relationship between moral action and consequence. Such constructions frame divine response as predictable and just rather than arbitrary. The repeated use of conditional clauses emphasizes agency, placing responsibility squarely on the audience. Linguistically, this strategy constructs moral order as rule-governed and intelligible.

In Table 2 reward is often expressed through material and environmental metaphors, such as rain, gardens, rivers, increased wealth, and offspring (Qur'an, 71:10-12; 11:52). These lexical choices ground abstract moral obedience in tangible, experiential terms. From a discourse-semantic perspective, this metaphorization enhances persuasive impact by linking ethical behavior to visible and desirable outcomes. The repetition of these metaphors across narratives contributes to semantic coherence within the surah.

Punishment, by contrast, is framed through intensified evaluative language and abrupt narrative shifts. Descriptions of destruction, drowning, shrieks, and overturned towns rely on vivid lexical items that signal finality and irreversibility. Linguistically, punishment discourse often

lacks the extended explanation present in reward framing, emphasizing consequence rather than negotiation. This asymmetry reinforces urgency and seriousness (See Table 2).

Another important feature is collective vs individual framing. Punishment is frequently described as affecting communities, while reward often highlights believers specifically. This distinction linguistically encodes moral alignment rather than mere group membership. The inclusion of family members among the punished, such as the son of Nūḥ “His son rejected his offer and he drowned (Qur'an 11:43)” or the wife of Lūṭ “his wife also faced punishment (Qur'an 11:81)”, further reinforces the principle that moral alignment overrides social proximity.

Temporal framing also plays a role. Reward is often delayed or future-oriented, while punishment may be immediate and sudden. This temporal contrast linguistically constructs patience and perseverance as virtues, while framing rejection as leading to abrupt termination. Such framing aligns with broader narrative persuasion strategies.

In sum, reward and punishment in *Sūrat Hūd* are linguistically constructed as conditional, evaluative, and morally proportional responses. These structures reinforce ethical accountability and function as integral components of the directive discourse system.

To what extent do recurring discourse patterns contribute to a unified narrative strategy of moral legitimation?

The prophetic narratives in *Sūrat Hūd* exhibit a high degree of discourse pattern repetition, which contributes to a unified strategy of moral legitimation across otherwise distinct narrative episodes. Despite differences in historical context and audience response, the narratives consistently employ similar linguistic structures to establish authority, issue directives, and frame consequences.

One major recurring pattern is the sequence of address → directive → justification → response. This discourse structure appears across multiple narratives, creating a predictable communicative rhythm. Linguistically, such patterning enhances coherence and allows readers to recognize moral authority as structurally embedded rather than individually negotiated.

Another unifying feature is the repetition of ethical themes through similar lexical fields, including worship (Qur'an, 11:61; 11:84), fear (Qur'an, 11:30-31; 11:52; 11:78), repentance (Qur'an, 11:52; 11:61), justice (Qur'an 11:85), patience, and reliance . The recurrence of these fields across narratives constructs a shared moral vocabulary that transcends individual

prophetic voices. This lexical cohesion reinforces the perception of a unified moral message articulated through multiple speakers.

Additionally, parallel self-positioning strategies contribute to narrative unity. Each prophet presents themselves as sincere, non-coercive, and reliant on divine authority. The repetition of these self-referential constructions establishes a collective prophetic identity rather than isolated figures. Linguistically, this creates intertextual reinforcement, where each narrative echoes and validates the others.

Audience responses also follow recurring patterns, including denial, accusation, mockery, and eventual consequence (Qur'an, 11:27; 11:43; 11:53; 11:59; 11:67; 11:70; 11:81; 11:82; 11:94) (see Table 2). These repeated response structures frame rejection as predictable and morally flawed. By contrast, acceptance is linguistically associated with salvation and mercy. This consistency strengthens moral legitimation by portraying ethical outcomes as stable and universal.

Finally, the cumulative effect of these patterns is narrative normalization of moral authority. Authority is not contested anew in each episode; it is reaffirmed through repetition and outcome. Linguistically, repetition functions as legitimization through familiarity, transforming moral authority into an expected narrative constant.

Overall, the recurring discourse patterns in *Sūrat Hūd* function as a cohesive moral legitimation system, unifying diverse narratives into a single linguistically coherent ethical framework.

CONCLUSION

This study examined how moral authority and directive discourse are constructed in the Qur'anic narratives of *Sūrat Hūd*, treating the text as a narrative and social discourse corpus rather than a theological source. The analysis highlights how prophetic language functions to establish authority, persuade audiences, and frame ethical accountability through mechanisms of reward and punishment. Findings show that moral authority is not derived from coercion or institutional power but is systematically enacted through recurring strategies operating at lexical, syntactic, and discourse levels.

A central conclusion is that moral authority is grounded in epistemic legitimation. Across the prophetic narratives, authority is framed as derivative and anchored in divine evidence, reliance, and accountability, distancing the speaker from personal subjectivity and positioning authority as transmitted rather than self-claimed. This enhances credibility, presenting the

prophetic voice as ethically trustworthy, and reduces contestability, as authority is external and transcendent rather than interpersonal or political.

Directive discourse functions as a persuasive, dialogic mechanism. Imperatives, vocatives, and modal expressions are embedded within explanatory and relational frameworks, combining rational justification, appeals to shared identity, and demonstrations of ethical consistency. These strategies allow moral instruction to operate as an interactive, persuasive process, even in the presence of audience resistance.

Reward and punishment framing further reinforces ethical guidance. These are constructed as conditional, proportional, and morally intelligible responses to human action, highlighting audience agency and situating moral choice as consequential yet voluntary. Recurrent discourse patterns across multiple prophetic narratives create a unified strategy of moral legitimation, reinforcing ethical authority through repetition and structural predictability.

Contrastive positioning also strengthens moral authority. Prophetic figures are linguistically constructed as patient, sincere, and reform-oriented, consistently juxtaposed with rejecting audiences through delegitimizing evaluation. This binary opposition highlights ethical positioning without overt coercion, illustrating how evaluation and moral alignment are encoded in discourse.

Collectively, the findings demonstrate that *Sūrat Hūd* employs a sophisticated system of linguistic strategies to construct moral authority, guide behavior, and sustain ethical norms. The study advances understanding of how language mediates authority, persuasion, and social reform in classical texts and underscores the relevance of discourse analysis for broader discussions of moral governance and communal ethics.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on these findings, several recommendations are proposed for scholars studying classical and religious texts:

1. **Discourse-Centered Analysis:** Treat sacred texts as legitimate social and narrative corpora, analyzed through discourse and social theory frameworks rather than confessional or normative lenses, to facilitate cross-disciplinary engagement with authority, persuasion, and moral regulation.
2. **Thematic Organization:** Organize analysis around directive strategies, moral legitimation, and evaluative framing, rather than solely chronologically or by character, to uncover recurring patterns that transcend individual narratives.

3. **Comparative and Cross-Linguistic Study:** Incorporate comparative perspectives, including translation analysis, to examine how directive force, modality, and ethical evaluation are preserved or recontextualized across languages and cultures.
4. **Pragmatic and Interpersonal Dimensions:** Examine features such as vocatives, mitigation, and self-positioning as integral to persuasive discourse and ethical guidance, emphasizing the relational dynamics of authority.
5. **Institutional Support:** Encourage journals and academic institutions to support linguistics-informed research on religious texts, bridging historical textual analysis with contemporary theoretical debates on discourse, morality, and authority.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

1. **Corpus Scope:** Analysis is limited to Sūrat Hūd, which, while rich and coherent, may not represent broader Qur’anic discourse. Other chapters may employ different strategies or linguistic structures.
2. **Methodology:** The study uses qualitative discourse-semantic methods. While this allows nuanced interpretation, quantitative corpus analysis could complement the findings by assessing frequency, distribution, and variation of directive strategies.
3. **Translation:** Focus is on the Arabic text. Future work could investigate how directive force and moral authority are maintained or transformed in translations.
4. **Oral and Prosodic Features:** Phonological and recitational elements were not analyzed, yet these may contribute to persuasive and authoritative effects. Interdisciplinary study combining linguistics and oral discourse could enrich understanding.
5. **Comparative Studies:** Extending the framework to other religious or classical narratives could reveal both universal and context-specific strategies for constructing ethical legitimacy and social authority.

Overall, while focused on a single chapter, this study demonstrates how Qur’anic narratives systematically construct moral authority and directive force, offering pathways for further interdisciplinary inquiry into moral regulation, social reform, and persuasive discourse across cultural contexts.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) USAGE STATEMENT

The author used artificial intelligence tools solely for language refinement, structural organization, and academic editing support. All conceptualization, Qur’anic verse selection, thematic coding, interpretation, analysis, and conclusions are entirely the author’s original

scholarly work. The AI tools did not generate religious interpretations, analytical insights, or research findings. The author takes full responsibility for the accuracy, originality, and integrity of the content.

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Table 2: Linguistic Construction of Moral Authority and Directive Discourse in the Prophetic Narratives of Sūrat Hūd

Narrative Agent : Prophet	Discourse of Divine Authorization			Evaluative Moral Positioning			Directive and Reform-Oriented Discourse		Sanctioning and Threat Discourse	Promise and Legitimation Discourse
Nooh A.S. He was among Mohsineen, because he based himself on a clear evidence from his Lord, and his had also been blessed by ALLAH's mercy (Qur'an 11:28).	Explain everything clearly to his nation (Qur'an 11:25)	He completely surrendered to ALLAH and he always highlight ALLAH's supreme power (Qur'an 11:33-34)	He made very clear that he always had fear of ALLAH (Qur'an 11:30-31)	He controlled his anger during discussion (Qur'an 11:29).	He took believers with him in his boat (Qur'an 11:40).	Do not grieve over their deeds, He ignored them and kept making the boat (Qur'an, 11:36; 11:38).	Advised his nation to surrender to ALLAH (Qur'an 11:26).	He advised his nation continuously and consistently for a very long period (Qur'an 11:32)	They believed that he is a liar (Qur'an 11:27). His son rejected his offer and he drowned (Qur'an 11:43). ALLAH reward believers with HIS mercy and punished disbelievers (Qur'an 11:25-48).	If you repent, ALLAH will send rain, increase your wealth and children and provide for you gardens and provide for you rivers (Qur'an 71:10-12)
Hud A.S. He advised his nation to surrender to ALLAH (Qur'an 11:50)	He explained everything to his nation without any return (Qur'an, 11:51-59)	He said, "I am free from whatever you associate with Allāh (Qur'an 11:54)" Indeed, I have relied upon Allāh, my Lord and your Lord (Qur'an 11:56).	He advised his nation to Call ALLAH with fear (Qur'an 11:52)	He said to his nation, "So plot against me all together; then do not give me respite" (Qur'an 11:55)	He and his believers were saved (Qur'an 11:58).	Surely my Lord keeps a watch over everything (Qur'an 11:57)	His reward is with ALLAH (Qur'an 11:51)	His return is with ALLAH (Qur'an 11:51)	We will not believe in you (Qur'an 11:53) disobeyed His Messengers, and followed the bidding of every tyrannical enemy of the truth (Qur'an 11:59).	If you repent, ALLAH will send rain, increase your strength (Qur'an 11:52)

Salih A.S.	He said, "O my people, worship Allāh" (Qur'an 11:61)	He was among Mohsineen, because he based himself on a clear evidence from his Lord, and his had also been blessed by ALLAH's mercy (Qur'an 11:63)	ask forgiveness of HIM Indeed, my Lord is near and responsive (Qur'an 11:61)	He controlled his anger (Qur'an, 11:61; 11:68)	He and his believers were saved (Qur'an 11:66)	He overlooked their reactions (Qur'an, 11:61; 11:68)	He explained everything to his nation without any reward (Qur'an 11:61)	He remained patient (Qur'an, 11:61; 11:68)	those who had wronged, and they became within their homes [corpses] fallen prone (Qur'an 11:67)	HE has produced you from the earth and settled you in it, so ask forgiveness and repent to HIM. (Qur'an 11:61).
Ibrahim A.S (Portion of Surah Hud only)	We gave her (wife of Ibrahim) the good news of (the birth of) Isaac, and after Isaac, of Jacob (Qur'an 11:71). Angels said, "May the mercy of Allāh and His blessings be upon you, people of the house." (Qur'an 11:73). Indeed, Abraham was forbearing, grieving and [frequently] returning [to Allāh] (Qur'an 11:75).								Angles said, "Do not be afraid. We have been sent to the people of Lot" (Qur'an 11:70)	Angels came to Abraham with good tidings (Qur'an 11:69)
Lut A.S	He explained everything with perfection to his nation (Qur'an 11:78)	He invited his nation to Surrender to ALLAH (Qur'an 11:78)	He requested them to fear from ALLAH (Qur'an 11:78)	He said: 'Would that I had the strength to set you straight, or could seek refuge in some powerful support.' (Qur'an 11:80)		His reward is with ALLAH	He explained everything with perfection to his nation (Qur'an 11:78)	We turned the town upside down, and rained on it stones of baked clay, one on another (Qur'an 11:82). his wife also faced punishment (Qur'an 11:81).		He took believers with him (Qur'an 11:81). Angels said, "go away, let no one of you turn around" (Qur'an 11:81)
Shu'ayb A.S O my people, have you considered: if I am upon clear evidence	He explained them do not decrease from the measure and the scale	He said, "O my people, worship Allāh" (Qur'an 11:84)	I do not intend to differ from you in that which I have forbidden	He said, "O my people, is my family more respected for power by you than Allāh? But you put Him	I only intend reform as much as I am able (Qur'an 11:88)	I am not a guardian over you (Qur'an 11:85).	O my people, give full measure and weight in justice and do not deprive the	my success is not but through Allāh. Upon Him I have relied, and to Him I return (Qur'an 11:88).	the shriek seized those who had wronged (Qur'an 11:94)	We saved Shu'ayb and those who believed with him, by mercy from Us (Qur'an 11:94).

from my Lord and He has provided me with a good provision from Him...? (Qur'an 11:88)	(Qur'an 11:84).		you (Qur'an 11:88).	behind your backs [in neglect]. Indeed, my Lord is encompassing of what you do (Qur'an 11:92).			people of their due (Qur'an 11:85).	You are going to know to whom will come a punishment that will disgrace him and who is a liar (Qur'an 11:93)		
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