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## The Concept of Love in Marriage: Integrating Sternberg's Theory with Quranic Teachings

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### ABSTRACT

*Love is a universal phenomenon; its expression and significance can differ markedly across individuals. Thus, it is important to understand the real form of love. This qualitative study examines the connection between Sternberg's triangular theory of love and the Quranic framework for love by utilizing primary and secondary data sourced from various Islamic texts and psychological theories. The data have been analyzed through content analysis and comparative methods. According to the Triangular Theory of Love, love is described as a blend of three essential components: commitment, intimacy, and passion. It also distinguishes eight different types of love based on their basic components. Similarly, the Quranic teachings emphasize the importance of love in the building of a healthy and long-lasting marriage, and they describe affection between intimate partners as a manifestation of God's blessing. In particular, Sternberg observes that consummate love is the most extensive form of love, as it encompasses all three components and is frequently observed in healthy marital relationships. Islam promotes the pursuit of love through marriage, which it regards as the optimal framework for cultivating affection between intimate partners. Thus, love within marriage provides long-lasting spiritual and psychological benefits. The findings of the study provide new insights to understand love from both Quranic and psychological perspectives.*

**Key Words:** *Al-Quran, intimate partner relationships, love, triangular theory.*

Love is a fundamental element of human existence that influences various domains, including philosophy, religion, culture, and interpersonal relationships. It serves as a tool through which individuals express their perceptions of the world and their relationships with others; behaviors are often influenced by external factors. These connections are established during youth and play a crucial developmental role during young adulthood. Emotional associations may encompass relationships, engagement, marriage, cohabitation, and other situations (Ercan et al. 2025).

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Lee's (1974; 1988) Color Theory of Love defines three primary love styles: passionate (eros), playful (ludus), and friendly (storge). These primary styles encompass the formation of secondary styles: pragmatic (pragma), possessive (mania), and altruistic (agape). However, secondary love styles are a combination of primary love styles in varying proportions. Eros is characterized by strong emotions and physical attraction, whereas ludus focuses on fun and excitement. Both primary and secondary love types require unique techniques and abilities comparable to playing a game. Many psychological concepts describe the elements of love, including their influence on intimate partner relationships and relationship satisfaction. According to Sternberg's investigation love is divided into three main components, namely passion, intimacy and commitment. Every element may vary from another part, and it's based on individual background and well as cultural differences. Most couples experience love in their relationship fulfilment (Sternberg 1986). Likewise, Eileen Hatfield differentiated between two forms of love: passionate love and compassionate love, the latter encompassing sexual attraction, anxiety, tenderness, connection, trust, and mutual respect (Hatfield 2008).

The Quran uses the term of love in several contexts. Also, it varies according to its context. The term *hubb* or *mahabbah* is frequently used to convey love, which is derived from the Arabic words *ahabba*, *yuhibbu*, and *mahabbatan*, which mean to love deeply, affectionately, or with a profound passion. Ibn Arabi posits that love is a state of joy that arises from the integration of divine elements into humanity, and it can serve as an inspiration for the realization of divine ideals like tolerance and compassion. Love is a sentiment that is perpetually recollected and contemplated by all human beings. It is also one of the most significant gifts that Allah has bestowed upon all of humanity, and as a result, it has become a natural human instinct to love one another (Sulhadi & Firdaus 2020). There are different lexical items that can express Qur'anic views in a various of ways, both literally and figuratively. The figurative lexical items of the concept of *Hubb* (Love) are all related to relationships, including those with God, other people, and the external environment. The word حُبَّ (hubb) is related to the lexical item الرَّحْمَةَ (al-rahmah) (mercy). Shamsudin & Aladdin (2024) indicated the necessity of integrating Isuzu's methodology with conceptual metaphor theory to understand some Quranic exegeses.

Furthermore, the words of love and affection appear similar, they possess unique meanings and connotations in the Quran. Love often denotes an emotional inclination towards that which is regarded as positive, while affection is viewed as one of the most elevated manifestations of love. The affection is not static and encompasses diverse interpretations, it also includes liking, friendship, desire, foundation, and literature. However, Love is frequently perceived as a singular and universal idea, but affection encompasses a wider and more varied spectrum of interpretations. However, this variation, both names pertain to emotions that attract an individual to something which they find gratifying. Thus, Sameer (2024) bproposed that terms such as love and affection require more in-depth examination to comprehend their distinct functions in language and religious texts.

The dimension of love influences the quality and durability of intimate relationships, potentially affecting the lifetime of marriage and formation of close relationships. Many individuals have proposed intricate, uniform, or diverse interpretations of love; certain aspects may have been neglected, whereas others have been arbitrarily included. Therefore, it is essential to define the meaning of love. On the other hand, social media and movies only demonstrate romantic love between intimate partners. Therefore, Individuals are often misled about the essential components of an intimate partner relationship because of erroneous narratives and circumstances. Conversely, social media and films portray romantic love exclusively. Deficient narratives and circumstances typically deceive people about what an intimate partner relationship should involve frequently (Cameron et al. 2020). Consequently, various interpretations of love have been separated from the institution of marriage; this kind of situation produces unrest within relationships, encouraging persons dissatisfied with their marriages to seek affection elsewhere (Abela 2020).

In the last half century, the correlation between marital quality and health has gained attention. Marriage has experienced socio-demographic changes characterized by a decreasing

marriage rate and increasing age at first marriage. The significance of marriage and the influence of marital quality, whether positive or negative, on physical well-being have consistently captivated the attention of scholars, practitioners, and the general public. The dominant perspective is that cohabitation is correlated with enhanced well-being compared with being alone (Robles et al. 2013). The Advancement of long-distance relationships is substantially impacted by characteristics of affection, trust, and dedication. A few researchers have employed a variety of love scales to investigate the relationship between commitment and intimacy and their impact on long-term marital relationships. For instance, Sawai et al. conducted a study that evaluated various aspects of love using the *Triangular Love Scale*, *Dyadic Trust Scale*, *Investment Model Scale*, and *Relationship Maintenance Scale*. Based on their investigation, marital relationships are strengthened and maintained by three fundamental components: trust, desire, and long-term commitment (Sawai et al. 2023).

In Islamic doctrine, love transcends mere emotional expression. Nonetheless, it affects an individual's behavior and outlook on life. People start to live with increased beauty, contentment, and better thinking when they express love with the support of religious aims. This spiritual understanding cultivates compassion and empathy for others despite human interactions. Thus, Islam advocates the pursuit of love through marriage. Merely executing a marriage contract does not ensure that love will be optimal (Suud 2023). Therefore, Islam guides us to build an ideal, harmonious family by employing *sakinah*, *mawaddah*, and *rahmah*. The Quran offers instructions on fostering a peaceful family, including metaphors that depict spouses as clothing for each other. These parallel underscores reciprocal caring, safeguarding, and unity within familial existence. Family happiness is always associated with the strength of love between spouses, which constitutes the foundation of a relationship because love is typically the basis of marriage. In practice, many families fail to accomplish harmony due to parental divorce, work obligations that distance parents from their children, or minors being raised by their grandparents while spending more time with their peers (Anam et al. 2024). These issues can include childhood assault and homelessness. These afflictions can arise because of a decline in religious awareness and alienation from the moral principles taught by the Quran (Al-Murshidi 2024).

Various studies have shed light on the concept of love in different notions, and they do not focus on the Quranic view of love within the context of marriage alongside psychological theories or thoroughly examine the significance of love concerning marital practice. This lack of a thorough investigation of love in marital relationships sheds light on the knowledge gap. Therefore, the present study tends to examine the connection between Sternberg's theory of love and the Quranic framework for marital love and emphasise the significance of love in marital life. Consequently, by combining the teachings of the Quran with Sternberg's triangular theory, people can comprehend the relevance and significance of love within a marriage relationship from both psychological and Quranic viewpoints. This study employed a qualitative approach to answer its objectives. Data were gathered using both primary and secondary data instruments. The holy verses of the Quran were used as primary data, while secondary data were collected from psychological theories, journals, books, research articles, Quranic tafsir, and online resources. The reviewed literature has been presented using content analysis and comparison methods. This study has been limited to the use of several selected Quranic verses, and some figures have been employed to illustrate the triangular theory.

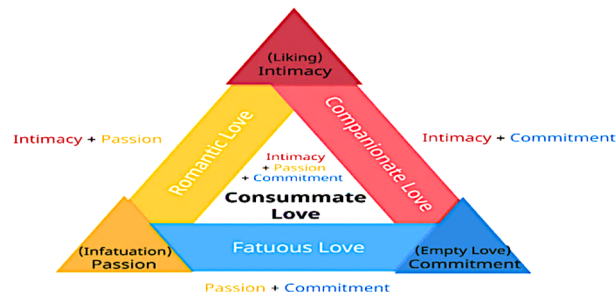
### **Triangular Theory of Love**

Love is an essential psychological and physiological phenomenon for all human beings. Whether one realizes it or not, love forms the foundation of human relationships. According to Sigmund Freud, love is considered to be the goal of the human ideal, and Reich referred to love as a means of healing or recovery in life (Sternberg 1997). Thus, Various psychologists' viewpoints have shown that the concept of love has been interpreted differently over time. Thus, famous psychologist Robert Sternberg identified three main components of love. These can be viewed as follows.

## Intimacy

Intimacy reflects feelings of attachment and relationship bonds found in partner relationships. It includes feelings of emotional investment in the intimate partner relationship, warmth, mutual understanding (Sternberg 1986), promoting the well-being of the loved one, sharing emotional support with them, and valuing the presence of the loved one (Sternberg & Grajek 1984).

**Figure 1: Sternberg's Triangular theory (1986)**



## Passion

It is based on methods that lead to physical attraction and sexual satisfaction. Passion is expressed by intimate partner gestures, physical affection, and romantic feelings towards the intimate partner relationship. Generally, one's physical attraction is considered the main cause of sexual desire. Occasionally, physical intelligence, characteristics, conditions, and other aspects can also influence sexual desire. Thus, sexual attraction may change based on getting to know someone better or on other cognitive processes (Sternberg 1986). Therefore, it is valuable for a person to have a long-term relationship with their partner. Commitment: Couples may express love differently depending on how the components of love interact with other components. For example, an intimacy-only relationship may express only liking, and only a passion-based relationship may express sexual desires (Sternberg 1986). However, Sternberg noted that the stability of passion, intimacy, and commitment components leads to complete love in a marital relationship, and these elements interact with each other to create different types of life experiences. Passion contributes to the initial motivation of a relationship, and simultaneously, couple companionship and commitment are necessary for long-term stability (Sternberg 1997; 1986). However, the components of love may fluctuate because of individual diversity and cultural differences (Sternberg 1997). Thus, the triangular theory of love highlights the importance of companionship, passion, and commitment to the stability of a relationship and categorizes various forms of love based on the presence and absence of those elements.

### **Triangular Theory and Quranic Compatibility**

Sternberg combined different types of love in his triangular theory, including the main components of love, intimacy, commitment, and passion. Sternberg notes that, each component of love combines to varying degrees to reflect a different love (Sternberg 1986) They can be viewed as follows.

**Figure 2: Types of Love**

Kind of Love	Components		
	Intimacy	Passion	Decision, commitment
Nonlove	-	-	-
Liking	+	-	-
Infatuated Love	-	+	-
Empty Love	-	-	+
Romantic Love	+	+	-
Companionate Love	+	-	+
Fatuous Love	-	+	+
Consummate Love	+	+	+

Source: Adapted from Sternberg (1986)

### Non-love

Sternberg notes that this category cannot accommodate elements of love such as companionship, passion, and long-term commitment (Sternberg 1986). The Quran never regarded love as meaningless. The Quran recommends showing love to one's spouse. In this way, Allah created human beings in pairs, The Quran encourages couples to be each other's closest friends and sources of support.

### Liking

Desire is love that expresses only intimacy in a relationship without the elements of commitment and passion (Sternberg 1986). According to Sulhadi & Firdaus, love is a strange feeling, and everyone will undoubtedly feel love. Therefore, love permeates the soul of all who have sensitive souls. However, it is rare to see emotional love in only passionate relationships (Sulhadi & Firdaus 2020). Feeling a crush on someone is not wrong, but being intimate love for someone outside of marriage is contrary to Quranic teachings. Likewise, dependence on intimacy only in marriage can be unhealthy for couples. This is because love requires the inclusion of additional elements.

### Infatuation

Infatuation refers to an intense/short-term feeling or admiration that one has for another (Huzayfa 2010). In this kind of love, without the elements like intimacy and commitment, only passion is found (Sternberg 1986). In this relationship, people cannot see the deep emotional connections or long-term commitment (Myers 2023). Shah Waliullah Dehlavi mentions that this type of delirium can occur continuously in the life of some people and when such delirium reaches extreme levels, it can make people blind and deaf. The story of Yusuf (peace be upon him) in chapter 12 of the Quran clearly explains this. Yusuf of great beauty and virtue once attended a royal banquet organized by Zulayka, the wife of the king of Egypt. The king's wife, including the maids, marveled at the beauty of Yusuf (peace be upon him) and fell in love with him. Thus, the king's wife conspired to illegally get hold of Yusuf. However, Yusuf (peace be upon him) protected himself from it by rejecting her invitation out of the fear of Allah. These events spread among the people, and Zulayka became an object of ridicule. Consequently, Yusuf (peace be upon him) was falsely accused and imprisoned for seven years. Later, when he was re-examined, Yusuf (peace be upon him) was acquitted (Huzayfa 2010). The above-mentioned incident in the Quran describes and warns against the negative effects of infatuation on a person. This is why al-Quran describes:

O Prophet! Tell believing men to lower their gaze and guard their chastity. That is purer for them. Surely Allah is All-Aware of what they do (Al-Quran, al-Nur 24: 30).

As the effects of infatuation on a person cause many problems spiritually and mentally, it can be understood from Quranic teachings that such infatuation cannot be a form of healthy love. A lack of attitude and companionship will lead to conflict in the relationship over time; therefore, passion alone is not enough for fulfilling love.

### Empty Love

This style of love does not have any element of intimacy or passion in a relationship and only involves commitment. In this type of relationship, there is neither emotional intimacy nor physical attraction, and it may represent an expression of an incomplete love (Sternberg 1986). The Quran mentions that a husband and wife have the right to companionship with their spouses in the marital relationship. Therefore, not sharing the other elements of love, such as companionship, passion, with one's partner while being committed alone can be detrimental to relationship satisfaction. Couples who lack closeness and companionship may feel distant from each other. So, they should not forget to give time and emotional and physical intimacy to their spouses due to the responsibilities and obligations of married life. Thus, Al-Qur'an emphasizes that companionship and passion are important for a loving, intimate relationship. It has been made permissible for you the night preceding fasting to go to your wives [for sexual relations]. Al-Quran says:

They are clothing for you, and you are clothing for them. Allah knows that you used to deceive yourselves, so He accepted your repentance and forgave you. So now, have relations with them and seek that which Allah has decreed for you (Al-Quran, al-Baqarah 2:187).

In the above verse clothe is used to refer to intimacy and protection between spouses. Also, considering the natural sexuality of man, the Quran allows them to engage in domestic life with their partners during the fasting nights. Husband and wife are a source of emotional comfort, protection, attraction and mutual support to each other just as the clothes one wears provide protection, beauty and attraction to the body. Also, this verse implies a spiritual connection beyond the physical and emotional attraction (Ibn Kathir 2000). At this point, by integrating elements of love like companionship and passion with spiritual approaches within the confines of marriage, couples can find mutual support, peace, and God's love within their relationship. However, Sternberg defines passion as one of the components of love as intense physical and emotional attraction between individuals. Meanwhile, the Quranic teachings incorporate spiritual concepts beyond psychological concepts and give guidelines for receiving God's love through marriage.

### Romantic Love

Sternberg states that romantic love encompasses emotional attachment and physical attraction. This form of love encompasses intimacy and passion for the partner but lacks the qualities of commitment to the relationship. Romantic love serves as the initial phase in which intimate partners express their affection for each other in their relationship. Couples engaged in this form of love can take part in profound conversations with their partners but remain uncertain of their long-term commitment or goals for the future (Sternberg 1986). Islam has consistently valued the feeling of love between spouses. Nevertheless, it has underscored the significance of commitment in marital life. Divorced women must wait three monthly cycles 'before they can re-marry'. It is not lawful for them to conceal what Allah has created in their wombs, if they 'truly' believe in Allah and the Last Day. Their husbands reserve the right to take them back within that period if they desire reconciliation. Allah almighty says in the Quran:

Women have rights similar to those of men equitably, although men have a degree of responsibility above them. And Allah is Almighty, All-Wise (Al-Quran, al-Baqarah, 2:228).

Maintaining intimacy with the spouse is rewarded by Allah and is regarded as an advantageous aspect of life. However, married life encompasses more than mere romance. Rather, it entails commitment, duty, and obligations. The husband possesses certain rights regarding his wife, just as the wife bears specific responsibilities towards her spouse. These commitments enhance the strength and happiness of their intimate connection. They ought to pray to Allah for it. The Al-Quran elucidates this matter: "Our Lord, give us, from our spouses and our children, coolness of eyes and make us heads of the God-fearing." (Al-Quran, al-Furqan 25: 74).

#### Companionate Love

Sternberg finds that this form of love encompasses greater intimacy and passion, although it is devoid of physical attraction and passion towards partners. Also, Sternberg claimed that this type of love is generally stronger than friendship and contains long-term commitments. However, there is a deficiency of sexual desire towards a couple (Sternberg 1986). According to Islam, partners are encouraged to foster mutual friendship while concurrently developing emotional intimacy with one other. The rationale is that humans possess an inherent desire for sexual fulfilment, which may be realized with a partner within the confines of a stable marital relationship. This fair-minded interpretation of the Quran upholds the dignity and sexual rights of both husband and wife. Thus, a disposition characterized by reduced sexual desire or the neglect of oneself or one's partner will not culminate in complete love. Hence, Islam opposed asceticism and extramarital male-female partnerships.

#### Fatuous Love

Sternberg characterizes this sort of love as a manifestation of immature affection. This form of love possesses the qualities of passion and commitment, but it lacks intimacy. This type of love is typically observed among adolescents. Individuals who encounter such affection are perceived as more impulsive and can express love towards several people. Consequently, the reflection and essence required to sustain a long-term intimate relationship cannot be revealed within a tempest of emotions. (Sternberg 1986). This relationship diminishes over time as a result of the lack of a propensity to validate. Imaginary partnerships might traverse considerable distances yet fail to provide genuine significance and tranquility to human existence. Thus, Islam encourages affection, interest, companionship, commitment, reciprocity, trust, responsibility, patience, and respect in marital relationships. According to Ali, a wife is expected to show respect to her husband's feelings and dress in a way that he finds attractive, and to follow her husband's orders. Similarly, a husband is expected to be close to his wife and treat her with love and favour. Without expecting any reciprocity, a husband should provide his wife with a dowry of his choice, which comes with love, intimacy, and care. In addition to following Islamic law, the wife's main responsibility is to be physically and intellectually committed to her husband; she also has to plan and run the everyday household needs to the best of her capacity (Ali 2022). Consequently, it is evident from the previous statement that mutual rights and obligations in marriage between husband and wife form the foundation of intimacy, and they promote love and emotional closeness.

#### Consummate Love

Sternberg views this type of love as the ultimate form, integrating the three components of commitment, companionship, and passion and the three primary components of his triangular theory of love vary significantly across different types of love; nonetheless, he observes that all three components are present in long-term marriage relationships, but rarely observed in practice (Sternberg 1986). Moreover, Hadi et al. note that this scenario is paradoxical in non-committal love partnerships, as couples in marital unions are more inclined to forgo personal interests for the enduring well-being of their relationship (Hadi et al. 2019). The Quranic principles for delineating ideal love emphasize marital existence. This form of love encompasses

companionship, desire, and devotion while also highlighting peace, kindness, affection, divine love, and wisdom, and these can also be seen from the following verse:

And of His Signs is that He has created mates for you from your own kind that you may find peace in them, and He has set between you love and mercy" (Al-Quran, al-Rum 30:21).

"Kindness" denotes the spiritual bond that evolves in marriage, leading spouses to exhibit increased affection and empathy towards one another. In later life, individuals often exhibit greater kindness towards one another compared to their early years. These elements are divine blessings designed to meet the requirements of human nature and to provide mutual support. In pursuit of tranquility and fulfilment, the man and woman endeavor to communicate, and the marital bond unites both the joys and challenges of life. Consequently, the wisdom of Allah is evident in the creation of men and women, each exhibiting distinct physical, mental, and emotional attributes. These attributes are reciprocated inside the marital bond and enhance one another. Since the dawn of existence, Allah has maintained an equal ratio of males and females. This biological equilibrium is beyond human manipulation and cannot be altered through human intervention. Furthermore, the establishment of this organization is not a fortuitous occurrence. It signifies that God has instituted a covenant between men and women, aiming for their satisfaction and tranquility in marriage. When assessed objectively, the love and compassion experienced by millions cannot be produced by any material object or evaluated by any kind of measure. Abul A'la Maududi (1972) states in his *Tafsir* interpretation that human creation encompasses the attributes of love, intimacy, and compassion inherent among individuals. Similarly, Blumenthal (2023) believes that the human ability to endure love is grounded in the biological evolutionary history of our ancestors and signifies the continuity of love in human life.

Each human being possesses deficiencies that are present in both themselves and others. This condition is universal; however, when they join in marital life with their interactions, childbirth, and reproduction create them fully engaging persons in general. because every imperfect yearns for its perfection, and every destitute tends to do something that removes its poverty (Al-Murshidi 2024). God created marriage as the means for human reproduction and the continuation of future generations. He designed people to live in communities, fostering relationships based on love and kindness. The Quran states: "And He placed between you affection and mercy (Al-Quran, al-Rum 30:21).

The verse above delineates that God has instilled love and compassion between spouses, making marriage a source of comfort and support. Through affection and mercy, marriage brings peace and stability to both partners, ensuring a balanced and fulfilling life. calling on the Most Merciful to rescue couples from deprivation and correct their shortcomings (Al-Murshidi 2024).

Furthermore, the Quranic verse of 30:21 denotes peace is the wife. wife has been described as the perfect spouse and a household filled with love and compassion. If any component of this serenity is absent, the house loses its significance. Similarly, if the husband is unwell or experiencing financial difficulties, the wife must be supportive, patient, and compassionate towards him. Allah created women from the rib of the first man, rather than from a different species, as couples are inherently supportive. This naturally highlights the profound bond between them as mutual supporters in their marital life (Al-Shaarawi 1997). The Quran considers that authentic love is characterized by intimacy, dedication, kindness, respect, piety, and patience between spouses in marriage. The Quran underscores that treating one's spouse with these qualities will invoke Allah's tranquility in their lives. Similarly, numerous verses of the Quran (4:1, 30:21, 25:74, 4:19-20, 2:228, 2:187) affirm that one cannot concentrate on a single aspect while disregarding the other. Each component of love is contingent upon the other components. Thus, it is evident from the previous literature that the three components of the triangle theory and other elements cited in the Quran are indispensable for the continuity and prosperity of married life and couples who comprehend the components of love and the nature of true affection can be motivated to assess and enhance their relationship.

### Significance of Love in Marriage Relationships

A Muslim's affection or aversion towards anything or anyone should be driven by the decree of Allah. The term 'love' in Arabic denotes attraction to an object, constancy, a container for water, a plant seed, a loved person, and an appreciation for what one perceives as favorable (Al-Shaarawi 1997), and it pertains to emotions within the human heart. Similarly, another term close to love is affection, which denotes observable aspects of human behavior. Not every compassionate individual exhibit overt friendliness and affection towards others. Nevertheless, they may possess affection that is not shown in their conduct (Abdullah & Halim 2018).

Early Muslim scholars did not regard affection for others as prohibited. Rather, they considered it as an unavoidable aspect of human nature unless combined with elements explicitly forbidden by Islamic law. Cultivating affection for an individual is "*aslan mubah*" (primarily acceptable), however, it is preferable to pursue legitimate outcomes. Imam Ibn al-Qayyim, in his book, *Raudah al-Muhibbin* (1973), states that it is *Sunnah* for an individual to intervene on behalf of another individual concerning their marriage, particularly in cases of love. Nonetheless, "*khalwat*," denoting the situation of two non-mahrams being alone in a location devoid of a third party, is considered as *haram* (prohibited). The Prophet Muhammad expressed no contempt towards those afflicted by the illness of *'ishq* (love). Nevertheless, he exhibited compassion and empathy towards them. For instance,

A woman presented herself to the Prophet (for marriage). A man said to him, "O Allah's Messenger (PBUH)! (If you do not need her) Marry her to me. The Prophet (PBUH) asked, "What do you possess?" The man stated, "I possess nothing." The Prophet (PBUH) approached him, "Go and search for something) even if it were an iron ring." The man went and returned saying, "No, I have not found anything, not even an iron ring; but this is my (Izar) waist sheet, and half of it is for her." He had no Rida' (upper garment). The Prophet (PBUH) said, "What will she do with your waist sheet? If you wear it, she will have nothing over her; and if she wears it, you will have nothing over you." So, the man sat down, and when he had sat a long time, he got up (to leave). When the Prophet (PBUH) saw him (leaving), he called him back, or the man was called (for him), and he said to the man, "How much of the Quran do you know (by heart)?" the man responded that he was familiar with specific Surahs, reciting their names from memory. The Prophet (PBUH) stated, "I have wed her to you for your knowledge of the Quran" (Al-Bukhari, n.d., Hadith 5121).

Thus, the Prophet acknowledged her feelings and facilitated a marriage for her with a man who was interested in her. This shows the Prophet's deep understanding of human emotions and his commitment to helping people fulfil their needs in a dignified manner. Similarly, Maslow points out some essential human needs: physiology, safety, social, love, and esteem. Love is one of them. Before a person can act unselfishly, their love needs must be fulfilled. We must feel cherished. Maslow defined these wants as deficiency needs. Satisfying our appetites promotes growth and self-actualization (Sailor 2013). Human beings are made as pairs, male and female as well as, and they will inevitably experience attraction and love with one. However, in the circumstance that the expression of love is in direct opposition to Islamic principles and its legal provisions, it must be strictly prohibited. Islamic shariah aspires to defend a person's dignity even when in related to love. Allah says in Al-Quran: "Marry off the free singles among you, as well as the righteous of your bondmen" (Al-Quran, al-Nur 24:32).

In Islam, marriage constitutes a binding contract between a male and a female, distinct from other relationships outside of marriage and Couples are responsible for supporting one another. The Quran specifies marriage as the most esteemed and preferred expression of love, rooted in divine kindness and bounties. Couples are urged to contemplate the evidence of divine grace and wisdom inside their marriage and to exhibit manifestations of love in their interactions.

Anam et al. (2024) point out that family harmony is generally linked to the power of love within a couple. This is because Quranic aspects such as *sakinah*, *mawaddah* and *rahmah* are important in creating a good family. The state of *sakinah* is characterised by a person's self-awareness. That is, it is linked to the ability to act with dedication in the family and the ability to

firmly understand and act on religious values. *Mawaddah* is generally considered synonymous with *nikah*. It refers to the love between a husband and wife, but it is also used to refer to sexual intercourse. The term *mawaddah* extends beyond its definition, as some contend that the notion of *rahmah* (mercy) is predominantly aimed towards parents, whereas *mawaddah* is linked to the emotional enthusiasm of youth. On the other hand, some argue that *mawaddah* is a form of affection that is more suppressed between husband and wife. In this context, people often refer to *mawaddah* as more concealed or "hidden" within the marital relationship. Although the significance of *mawaddah* and *rahmah* is that Allah creates an affectionate bond between husband and wife, which is accompanied by a dignified marriage between a man and a woman. This bond produces their offspring (Anam et al. 2024).

The aspect discussed suggests that *Rahmah* is associated with parents, taking into account their age, sacrifices, and compassion for their children. It is widely believed that God grants mercy to parents. *Mawaddah* might signify the notion of love between youth, as it represents a phase where their emotions of love and marriage develop. At the same time, the authors also discuss that some people distinguish between the strength or intensity of *mawaddah* between a husband and wife when it is consummated through marriage. Nonetheless, Allah Almighty knows the profound meaning behind each word in the Quran. However, this context requires more detailed lexical analysis.

Furthermore, couples can satisfy their physical and emotional demands by valuing one another's affection. Some instances encompass embracing one's spouse affectionately, exchanging thoughts, emotions, and life experiences, and fostering mutual understanding and trust (Njoku 2023). The facets of love include affection, compassion, trust, commitment, companionship, interest, and respect, among others. Similarly, Blumenthal asserts that love is a multi-faceted process commencing with attraction, fostering a connection between partners through physical intimacy, and ultimately sustaining that connection (Blumenthal 2023). Intimate love necessitates reciprocal support, trust, and effort from both intimate partners (Suud 2023). Affection is the manifestation of love conveyed via gestures, words, and acts. Likewise, Compassion in love is demonstrating empathy towards one's spouse, providing support for their well-being, and exhibiting kindness and understanding. Consequently, love is essential for couples to enhance their relationship, foster mutual trust, sustain long-term commitment, and cultivate the capacity to navigate life's obstacles collaboratively. Thus, al-Quran advocates for marriage as a means for individuals to attain comfortable and supportive affection. While also establishing civil obligations between them. Islam mandates that the husband provide both material and moral rights to the wife to foster stability and peace within the familial environment. The dowry constitutes the primary economic claim of the wife. The wife has the right to fully deserving of it. If she consents to it being immediate or postponed, this does not imply that she relinquished her entitlement to the dowry. If she relinquishes some or the majority of the dowry, it aligns more closely with piety and fosters contentment. The husband must respond with love and favor. Allah commands:

Provide ladies their bridal presents generously upon marriage. However, if they voluntarily relinquish any portion to you, accept it with contentment and tranquility (Al-Quran, al-Nisa 4:4)

The Holy Quran characterizes the dowry as a "gift," signifying an obligatory offering intended to prevent the husband from perceiving it as a hardship imposed by the woman. Rather, it is a present from a benevolent individual, which the spouse bestows upon his life partner and soulmate. God Almighty mandated that a man is responsible for financially supporting his wife, as stated in the Quran: "Men are in charge of women by right of what Allah has given one over the other and what they spend for maintenance from their wealth" (Al-Quran, al-Nisa' 4:34).

Financial neglect necessitates the judgment of God and retribution. Islam grants legal authority the power to mandate that the husband provide maintenance, acknowledging the importance of this right. Imam Al-Baqir claimed that anyone who demonstrates patience towards his wife, even once, will have his neck freed from the Fire, and Paradise will be decreed for him.

He reinforced Islam's view of marriage, defining it as a lasting union based on love, compassion, and empathy (Al-Murshidi 2024). By sharing their obligations and affection within the marital connection, couples maintain stability in their lives. The level of emotional closeness and shared understanding between a husband and wife can improve within the context of their marriage. A man's responsibility extends beyond only providing financial support for his family. Similarly, a woman's responsibilities do not conclude with childbirth and child-rearing. Conversely, if both spouses aspire to attain enduring happiness and satisfaction in their familial life, they must conduct their relationship with patience and dedication. Allah says in the Quran:

O you who have believed, it is not lawful for you to inherit women by compulsion. And do not make difficulties for them in order to take [back] part of what you gave them unless they commit a clear immorality. And live with them in kindness. For if you dislike them - perhaps you dislike a thing and Allah makes therein much good (Al-Quran, an-Nisa' 4:19).

The teachings of the Quran highlight the importance of love while also stressing the need for forgiveness, tolerance, empathy, acceptance, and dialogue in resolving marital disagreements (Islam et al. 2018). Additionally, there are significant positive links between tolerance and companionship among partners, and Mehr et al. (2018) claimed that patience greatly contributes to relational closeness. Individuals' subjective well-being grows when they are satisfied with their relationships; if they love their partner more, their love and life will improve (Das & Bapu 2024). When the affection between spouses is lacking or when they fail to express love towards one another, their marriage partnership becomes unengaged. It may get disheartening over time. This situation will progressively diminish the intimacy between them and provide them with the opportunity to pursue other relationships. Consequently, this results in the dissolution of the marital union and various issues within family life. Consequently, in alignment with the Quranic metaphor of spouses as each other's garments, couples are compelled to demonstrate genuine love and affection towards one another and to safeguard their partners. Sternberg defined commitment as the ability to sustain a connection over time in the face of difficulties in personal relationships. The aforementioned Quranic passages also corroborate this viewpoint. Sternberg's theory encompasses intimacy, commitment, and passion as integral components of love, emphasizing emotional intimacy and the significance of empathy in fostering close bonds (Sternberg 1986; 1997).

Sternberg delineates love into three basic aspects: commitment, passion, and intimacy and describes consummate love as the most complete type of love, often observed in healthy marriages. The Quran stresses love as a necessary element for a good and long-lasting marriage relationship by calling affection towards one's spouse a gift from God and stating that marriage is the perfect way for a man and a woman to experience love. Thus, the study concludes that while other relationships may provide a temporary form of happiness, love in marriage is the only way to achieve spiritual and earthly peace. It also suggests future research contrasting Sternberg's theory with the Sunnah, based on real-life experiences of love and companionship in marriage. This study helps both partners in cultivating a spiritually enriched relationship by incorporating aspects of emotional commitment, affection, intimacy, and passion into their marriage. Thus, love functions as a basis, reinforcing marital relationships and cultivating an atmosphere conducive to personal growth, spiritual enrichment, and the transmission of Islamic teachings.

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