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Teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (S.M.) in Building an Ideal Marital Life: A Review in the Bangladesh Context

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Abstract

Objective: This study aims to examine the Qur'anic conception of marital relationships, emphasizing mutual protection, tranquillity, love, security, and companionship between husbands and wives within Islamic family life. **Theoretical framework:** The study employs the Qur'anic metaphor of spouses as garments for one another, particularly in relation to intimacy, mutual protection, dignity, and shared responsibility. This framework challenges patriarchal interpretations that position marriage as a mechanism for domination by either spouse. **Literature review:** Existing discussions of Islamic marriage frequently highlight family harmony, gender relations, moral responsibility, and the spiritual purposes of marital life. **Methods:** This study adopts a qualitative, library-based approach using descriptive and interpretive analysis of relevant Qur'anic verses and Islamic scholarly literature. The analysis focuses on the symbolic meaning of garments and their implications for marital relationships, particularly within the context of Islamic values and family life in Bangladesh. **Results:** The findings indicate that marriage in Islam is founded on reciprocity rather than domination. The garment metaphor illustrates how spouses provide emotional security, protect one another from immoral conduct, preserve personal dignity, conceal each other's shortcomings, and support spiritual well-being. These interconnected responsibilities establish marriage as a partnership grounded in affection, trust, respect, and accountability. **Implications:** The findings offer practical insights for Islamic family education, premarital counseling, marital conflict prevention, and family policy development. Integrating these principles into community education in Bangladesh may strengthen mutual understanding, encourage constructive conflict resolution, and promote healthier marital relationships. **Novelty:** This study synthesizes the garment metaphor into a multidimensional framework encompassing emotional, ethical, social, and spiritual protection. By connecting Qur'anic symbolism with contemporary family challenges, it provides an integrated conceptual perspective for understanding reciprocal marital responsibilities and strengthening Islamic family values.

Keywords: marital life, conflict, family, bangladesh, islamic values

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INTRODUCTION

The family is really important to our society. It is the most important part of our social system. At the centre of the family is the relationship between a husband and a wife. A good and stable family is not just good for the people in it. It also helps make our society a better place. The family is where we learn about values and how to be people. This is important for making our society a fair and peaceful place. The United Nations has some goals for making the world a better place and one of these goals is to make sure families are stable. This is important for making our society a fair and peaceful place and for making sure men and women are treated equally [1].

In Islam the family is considered the unit of society. The Quran says that marriage is a thing. It says that Allah made husbands and wives for each other so they can find peace and love with each other. The Quran also says that Allah put love and mercy between husbands and wives. This shows us that marriage in Islam is not a legal or social thing but a sacred promise between two people. This promise is based on respect, responsibility and being good to each other. We can see an example of this in the life of Prophet Muhammad (s.m.). He treated his wives with respect and kindness. He was fair and gentle with them. He worked together with them to take care of their home. He was patient and forgiving. He showed us how to be good leaders in our families. He said that the best person is the one who is good to their family. This is an idea for building strong and happy families [2].

In Bangladesh today many families are facing problems. Because of cities growing and people moving and because of the influence of media and money many families are not as strong as they used to be. This is causing problems like divorce fighting at home and mental health issues. It is also affecting children. Causing problems for them. So it is really important that we think about how to make our families stronger. One way to do this is to look at the life of Prophet Muhammad (s.m.) and see how he treated his family. We can learn from his example. Use it to make our own families stronger. His teachings can help us at all levels. As individuals as families and as a society. They can help us create a culture of peace, fairness and respect. By looking at his example and at the problems facing families in Bangladesh we can find ways to make our families stronger and happier [3].

This study looks at the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (s.m.) about marriage and family. It uses the Quran, the Sunnah and other Islamic writings well as the realities of life in Bangladesh. It tries to find the causes of problems in families in Bangladesh and to use the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (s.m.) to find solutions. It is hoped that this study will add some ideas to what we already know about families in Islam and that it will be useful for people who make policies for researchers, for academics and, for ordinary families [4].

Despite the extensive literature on Islamic marriage and family values, limited attention has been given to systematically connecting the Prophetic model of marital relationships with contemporary family challenges in Bangladesh. Previous studies have generally discussed Islamic marital principles, individual responsibilities, or family stability separately, without sufficiently integrating the ethical dimensions of the Prophet Muhammad's (S.M.) teachings with the changing socioeconomic and cultural conditions of Bangladeshi society. This gap highlights the need for a more comprehensive examination of Prophetic guidance as a practical framework for addressing contemporary marital and family problems [5].

The novelty of this study lies in developing an integrated understanding of the Prophet Muhammad's (S.M.) marital teachings through the interconnected principles of love, mercy, mutual respect, justice, consultation, patience, and shared responsibility. Rather than treating these principles merely as religious ideals, this research examines their practical relevance to marital conflict resolution, gender relations, emotional well-being, and family sustainability within the Bangladesh context. It also connects Islamic normative perspectives with contemporary social realities to establish a contextually relevant framework for strengthening marital relationships [6].

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The findings are expected to offer theoretical and practical implications for Islamic family studies, marriage education, and family policy development. Academically, this study contributes to the contextualization of Prophetic marital ethics within contemporary family research. Practically, it may inform religious institutions, policymakers, educators, and family counselors in designing culturally sensitive programs that promote marital harmony, gender justice, responsible parenting, and sustainable family relationships. Ultimately, this research positions Prophetic teachings as a relevant ethical foundation for building resilient families and fostering a peaceful and equitable society in Bangladesh [7].

LITERATURE REVIEW

Divorce Rates in Bangladesh

A report published in the Daily Kaler Kantho on 8 January 2023, titled "Thirty-Seven Divorces a Day; Women Initiate 65 Percent of Them," reveals that an average of 37 divorces take place every day in the capital. From January to November 2022, a total of 12,268 divorce applications were filed. On average, 1,115 divorce cases were recorded each month. Of these, 7,890 were initiated by women and 4,378 by men. In other words, 65 percent of divorces were initiated by women, while 35 percent were initiated by men. Before that, the two city corporations recorded 12,051 divorces in 2020. During the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021, the number increased to 14,661 [8], [9].

According to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) Population Census 2022, around 42 percent of married men and women are divorced. Rajshahi has the highest divorce rate, followed by Khulna and Sylhet. Dhaka and Mymensingh rank third and fourth, respectively. Another report published in the Daily Inqilab on 31 January 2022, titled "The Rising Trend of Divorce," states that the two city corporations in Dhaka receive more than 1,042 divorce applications every month. This means that, on average, 35 divorce applications are submitted every day. The report also shows that divorce cases increased by 17 percent in 2019 compared to 2018, and the number has continued to rise each year since then. The data further indicate that women are now more likely than men to initiate divorce [10], [11].

A report published by Deutsche Welle, titled "Why Is Divorce Increasing in Bangladesh?", states that around 30 percent of divorces are initiated by men, while 70 percent are initiated by women. In two areas under the Dhaka South City Corporation, a total of 2,309 divorces were registered between 2006 and 2009. Among these, 1,692 were initiated by wives and 925 by husbands. From 2010 to July 2014, the number of divorces increased to 3,589, of which 2,381 were initiated by wives and 1,208 by husbands. These statistics show that around 30 percent of divorces were initiated by men, while 70 percent were initiated by women. Overall, the available data indicate that the number of divorces in Dhaka increased nearly fivefold within just three years [12].

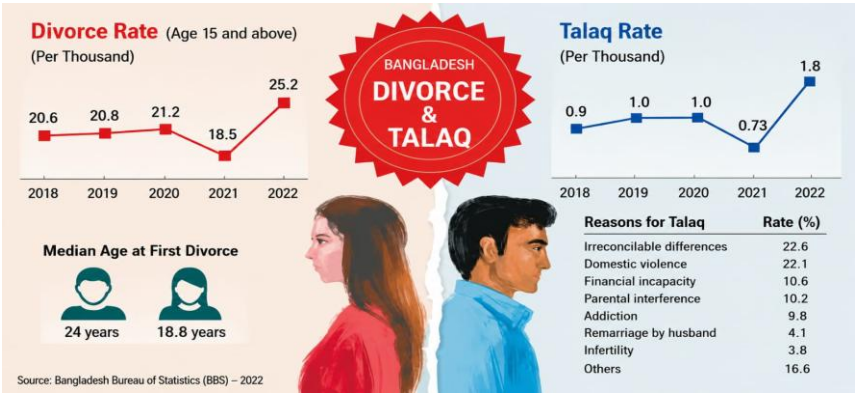


Figure 1. Statistical Trends and Primary Causes of Divorce in Bangladesh

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Source: https://www.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/oft1iqhsp0/ 8 February, 2024. Statistical data from the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics 2022 provides further insight into nationwide marital separation dynamics. Between 2018 and 2022, the general divorce rate per thousand people aged fifteen and above increased from 20.6 to a peak of 25.2, while the talaq rate doubled from 0.9 to 1.8 per thousand. Furthermore, the median age at first divorce is notably lower for women at 18.8 years compared to 24 years for men. Among the key catalysts behind talaq, irreconcilable differences (22.6 percent) and domestic violence (22.1 percent) rank as the leading primary causes. Other prominent factors include financial incapacity, parental interference, and addiction. Together, these statistics underline how rising marital strain and evolving socio-economic realities continue to shape divorce patterns throughout the country.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a comprehensive methodological framework combining qualitative library-based research with an empirical field survey to investigate marital stability and conflict resolution within the contemporary Bangladeshi context. The central objective is to evaluate modern marital challenges against the foundational teachings and practical lifestyle of Prophet Muhammad (S.M.) [13], [14].

The qualitative component adopts a descriptive and interpretive analytical approach focused on primary Islamic textual sources. It examines relevant Qur'anic verses, specifically utilizing the metaphor of spouses as garments to analyze mutual protection, dignity, emotional security, and shared responsibility. Furthermore, extensive scholarly literature and Hadith collections are critically reviewed to extract actionable principles from the domestic life of Prophet Muhammad (S.M.), including marital communication, mutual empathy, shared domestic duties, and compassionate dispute resolution [15].

To contextualize these theological principles within modern socio-economic realities, the research incorporates a secondary literature review alongside quantitative empirical data. Secondary demographic statistics regarding rising divorce trends in Bangladesh were compiled from national census reports by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) 2022, alongside published reports from reputable media outlets including Daily Kaler Kantho, Daily Inqilab, Deutsche Welle, and Prothom Alo [16].

The empirical segment comprises a primary field survey conducted with a target sample of 200 divorced families in Bangladesh. The sample distribution includes 75 love marriages (37.5%) and 125 arranged marriages (62.5%). Data collection focused on categorizing key behavioral, emotional, and social determinants of marital breakdown. Descriptive statistical methods were applied to evaluate primary causes, including emotional distance (20%), lack of mutual respect (15%), self-centered attitudes (12.5%), lack of quality time (12.5%), communication failures (10%), external prioritization (10%), substance addiction (7.5%), extramarital affairs (7.5%), and superficial social appearances (5%). By integrating qualitative textual exegesis with empirical survey data, this methodology offers a holistic, evidence-based assessment of marital dysfunction and provides practical Islamic framework solutions tailored to contemporary Bangladeshi society [17], [18].

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Causes of Marital Conflict in the Present Socio-Economic Context and field Survey

In the current socio-economic context of our country, several factors contribute to conflict between husbands and wives, leading to a growing number of divorces. In the part of this study we did a field survey with 200 divorced families. Out of these 75 (37.5%) were love marriages and 125 (62.5%) were arranged marriages. The results show that 62.5% of the

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marriages were arranged marriages and 37.5% were love marriages. The main reason given for the end of marriages was distance between the spouses (20%). Next was lack of respect (15%). Then came self-centered behavior (12.5%). Not spending enough time together (12.5%). Other reasons included not sharing happiness and feelings (10%) putting others before the spouse (10%) addiction to substances (7.5%) cheating (7.5%) and caring more about looks than the relationship (5%).

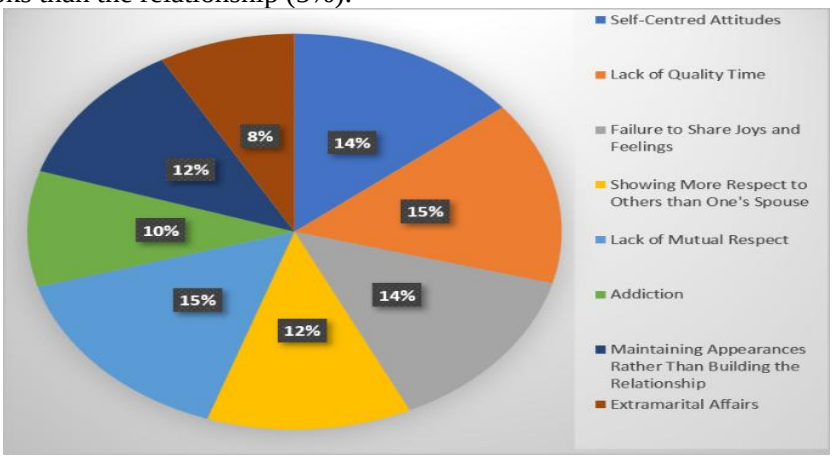


Figure 2. Distribution of Key Psychological and Behavioral Factors Contributing to Marital Conflicts and Breakdown

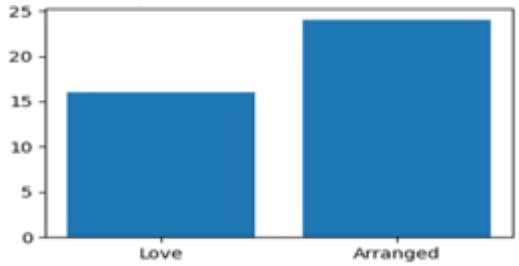
The pie chart illustrates primary interpersonal factors contributing to relationship breakdown. Leading the causes are a lack of quality time and a lack of mutual respect, each accounting for 15 percent of total responses. Self-centred attitudes and the failure to share joys and feelings closely follow, both representing 14 percent of identified causes. Meanwhile, showing more respect to others than to one's spouse and maintaining superficial appearances rather than genuinely building the relationship each comprise 12 percent. Addiction constitutes 10 percent of marital issues, while extramarital affairs account for the remaining 8 percent. Overall, this visual data strongly emphasizes how emotional disconnection and severe communication deficits primarily drive ongoing relationship distress.

Overall the results show that emotional separation and problems in how people talk to each other affect marriages more than money or other outside issues. This shows that how well couples feel connected, understand each other and communicate is more important for keeping a marriage, than money or outside situations.

Some of the Major Causes Are Discussed Below

Emotional Distance between Husband and Wife: Many husbands gradually become emotionally distant from their wives. They lose their romantic attitude and no longer express their love openly. As a result, many wives begin to wonder whether their husbands truly love them. This becomes even more evident when a wife is unwell. Many husbands fail to give their wives the care and attention they need during illness. Women often experience periods of physical discomfort when they need emotional support the most, yet many husbands remain indifferent. Some even make fun of their wives' natural emotions or speak to them in a disrespectful way. They pay little attention to their wives' interests and often ignore their needs by saying, "We'll deal with it later" [19], [20].

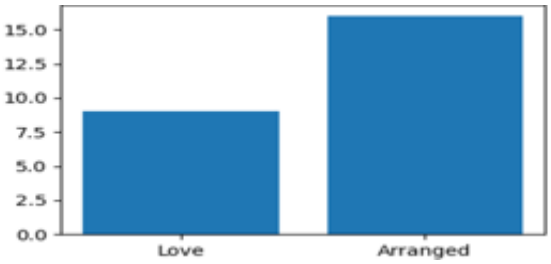
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Interpretation: Total 40 cases (20.0%). Love marriage: 16; Arranged marriage: 24.

Figure 3. Emotional Distance between Husband and Wife

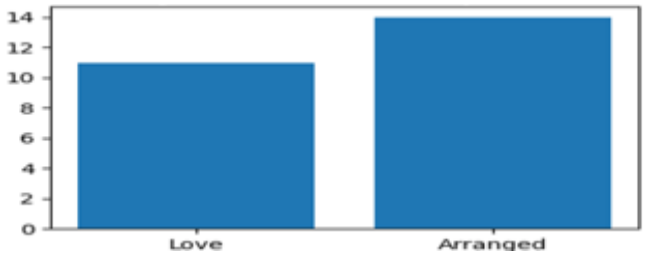
Self-Centred Attitudes: Many men tend to put their own needs first and expect to receive greater importance within the family. Even when both husband and wife return home from work together, the responsibility for preparing meals usually falls entirely on the wife. Many husbands offer little or no help with household chores. Sometimes they eat outside without even considering whether their wives have had anything to eat.



Interpretation: Total 25 cases (12.5%). Love marriage: 9; Arranged marriage: 16.

Figure 4. Self-Centred Attitudes

Lack of Quality Time: Modern technology, social media, and many other distractions have reduced the amount of meaningful time husbands and wives spend together. Although they live under the same roof, they often remain emotionally distant from one another. They may share the same house, yet they seem to live in two different worlds. In addition, many working men bring the pressures and frustrations of their workplace back home. As a result, they fail to spend quality time with their families [21].

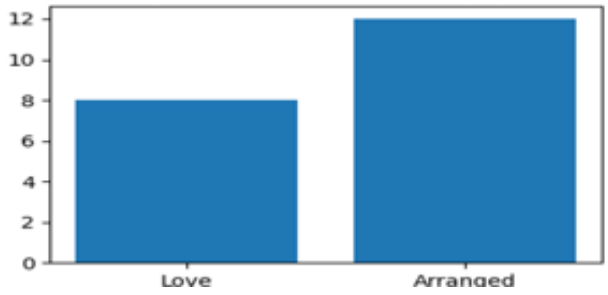


Interpretation: Total 25 cases (12.5%). Love marriage: 11; Arranged marriage: 14.

Figure 5. Lack of Quality Time

Failure to Share Joys and Feelings: Family members often do not share their happiness, thoughts, or experiences with one another. When a wife or child tries to discuss something with the head of the family, they are sometimes met with irritation and asked to keep the conversation brief. Remarks such as, *"You ask too many questions," "Don't bother me so much,"* or *"I'm tired; we'll talk later,"* discourage meaningful communication. Over time, this creates emotional distance among family members.

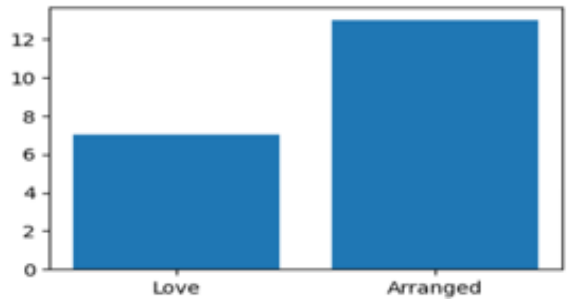
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Interpretation: Total 20 cases (10.0%). Love marriage: 8; Arranged marriage: 12.

Figure 6. Failure to Share Joys and Feelings

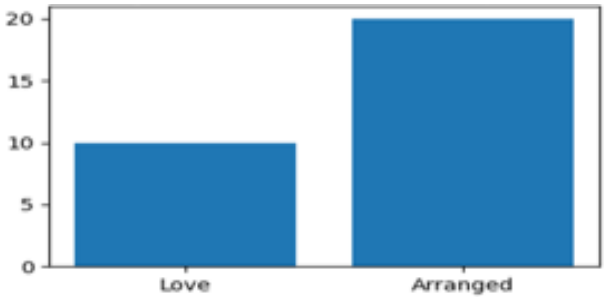
Showing More Respect to Others than to One's Spouse: In many families, husbands spend more time with their female colleagues than with their wives. They enjoy talking and socializing with people outside the home and behave politely with them. However, the same person may be impatient, harsh, or indifferent toward family members. A similar pattern can also be seen among some working women.



Interpretation: Total 20 cases (10.0%). Love marriage: 7; Arranged marriage: 13.

Figure 7. Showing More Respect to Others than to One's Spouse

Lack of Mutual Respect: Many couples fail to value and respect one another. Instead of appreciating each other's dignity and individuality, they often try to dominate or belittle one another. Mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation gradually disappear, while criticism and blame become more common.

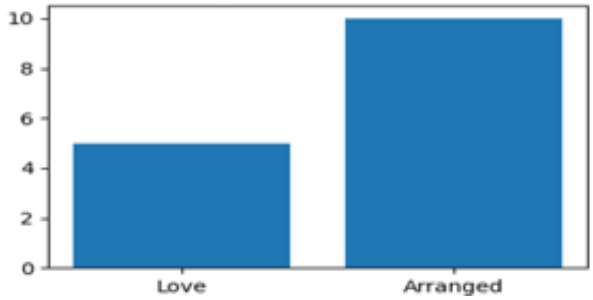


Interpretation: Total 30 cases (15.0%). Love marriage: 10; Arranged marriage: 20.

Figure 8. Lack of Mutual Respect

Addiction: Addiction has become a serious problem in today's society. Smoking, alcohol, and various other addictive substances are spreading rapidly among young people. A person struggling with addiction often behaves harshly toward family members. When they cannot obtain money to support their addiction, they may become aggressive or even abusive. Such behaviour creates conflict within the family and frequently leads to divorce.

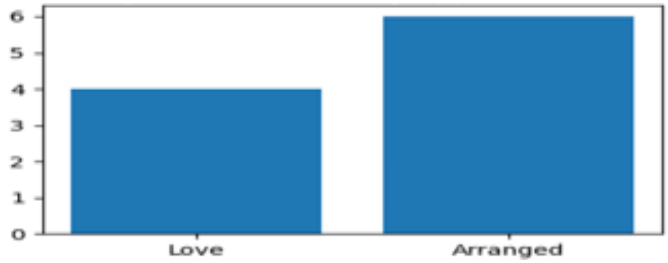
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Interpretation: Total 15 cases (7.5%). Love marriage: 5; Arranged marriage: 10.

Figure 9. Addiction

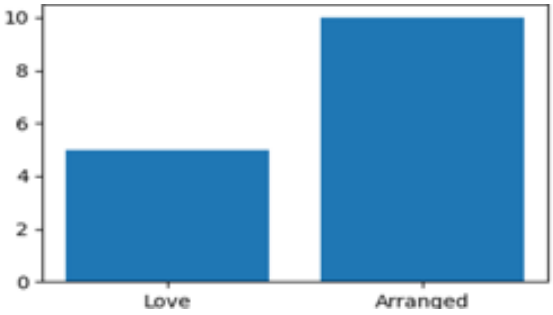
Maintaining Appearances rather Than Building the Relationship: Another important reason behind the rising divorce rate is that many husbands and wives try hard to maintain a good image in front of others, while making little effort to build a healthy relationship with each other. They appear polite and respectful in public, but neglect their marital relationship at home. In many cases, they continue the marriage only to protect their social status or for the sake of their children, rather than because they genuinely wish to strengthen their relationship. Yet, when dealing with people outside the family, they often display kindness and good manners [22].



Interpretation: Total 10 cases (5.0%). Love marriage: 4; Arranged marriage: 6.

Figure 10. Maintaining Appearances rather Than Building the Relationship

Extramarital affairs social media and other online platforms have made extramarital affairs increasingly common. In general, an extramarital affair refers to a married man or woman becoming emotionally or physically involved with someone other than his or her spouse. In English, this is commonly described as adultery, an extramarital affair, or extramarital sex. According to Wikipedia, an extramarital affair refers to a romantic or sexual relationship between a married person and someone other than his or her spouse. The Cambridge Dictionary defines it as: "Sex between a married man or woman and someone he or she is not married to."



Interpretation: Total 15 cases (7.5%). Love marriage: 5; Arranged marriage: 10

Figure 11. Extramarital Affairs

The summary of Figures 3 to 11 displays key interpersonal factors driving marital breakdown across 200 surveyed families, with arranged marriages outnumbering love marriages in every category. Emotional distance serves as the primary cause, accounting for 40 cases (20.0%). Lack of mutual respect follows with 30 cases (15.0%), while self-centered

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attitudes and insufficient quality time each contribute 25 cases (12.5%). Additionally, failing to share feelings and prioritizing outsiders represent 20 cases each (10.0%). Substance addiction and extramarital affairs both account for 15 cases (7.5%), and maintaining superficial social appearances comprises 10 cases (5.0%), demonstrating that emotional deficits dominate overall.

No nationwide survey on extramarital affairs has yet been conducted in Bangladesh. However, a survey carried out in India drew considerable public attention. The survey, conducted by the extramarital dating platform Gleeden, was published under the title "Why Are Women Becoming Involved in Extramarital Relationships?" According to its findings, seven out of every ten women surveyed admitted to being involved in an extramarital relationship. The survey also reported that women living in major cities such as Bengaluru, Mumbai, and Kolkata were more likely to engage in such relationships.

Solutions to These Problems in the Light of the Marital Life of the Prophet Muhammad (S.M.)

The life of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is the finest example for every aspect of our lives—*our personal life, family life, social life,* and *public life.* In this regard, Allah says:

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ

"Indeed, in the Messenger of Allah you have an excellent example."

The following discussion presents practical solutions to marital problems based on the marital life and teachings of the Prophet Muhammad .ﷺ. Expressing Love and Affection between Husband and Wife: Love should be expressed through words, actions, and everyday behaviour. Openly showing love strengthens the bond between husband and wife and brings warmth and happiness to married life [23], [24]. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ expressed his love for his wives both in his words and in his actions. It is narrated from Anas (RA):

عَنْ أَنَسٍ, قَالَ: قِيلَ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ, أَيُّ النَّاسِ أَحَبُّ إِلَيْكَ? قَالَ: عَائِشَةُ

Anas (RA) reported that someone asked, *"O Messenger of Allah, who is the dearest person to you?"* He replied, *"Ayeshah." The Prophet ﷺ made this statement in a society where openly expressing love for one's wife was often looked down upon. 'Ayeshah (RA) also narrated:

قَالَتْ كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم يُقَبِّلُ وَيُبَاشِرُ وَهُوَ صَائِمٌ

The Prophet (S.M) would kiss and embrace me while he was fasting." Umme Kulsum (R.A.) also said:

أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم كَانَ يُقَبِّلُهَا وَهُوَ صَائِمٌ وَكُنْتُ أَغْتَسِلُ أَنَا وَالنَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم مِنْ إِنَاءٍ وَاحِدٍ مِنَ الْجَنَابَةِ.

The Prophet ﷺ would kiss me while he was fasting. We would also perform the ritual bath together using water from the same container after major ritual impurity. These narrations show that expressing love, affection, and emotional closeness is an essential part of a healthy and successful marriage. Treating Family Members with Kindness: Today, many people behave politely and patiently with others but fail to show the same kindness to their own family members. They may appear gentle and well-mannered in public, yet their behaviour

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at home is often quite different [25]. The Prophet Muhammad (s.m.) however, treated everyone with kindness, and he was even kinder to his family. He said:

خيركم من كان خيركم لأهله وانا خيركم لأهلي

The best among you is the one who is best to his family, and I am the best among you to my family. The Prophet Muhammad (S.M.) regarded kind and respectful treatment of one's wife as a defining measure of moral excellence. The hadith further conveys that a person's excellence before Allah is reflected in his conduct towards his own family, indicating that true righteousness begins with fulfilling one's responsibilities at home with compassion, justice, and good character. Using Miswak and Applying Fragrance before Meeting One's Wife: Using the miswak and applying fragrance before meeting one's wife is a recommended Sunnah. An unpleasant smell from the mouth or body may create discomfort between husband and wife and reduce emotional closeness [26], [27]. The Prophet Muhammad (s.m.) paid careful attention to personal cleanliness. 'Ayeshah (RA) narrated:

عَنِ عَائِشَةَ قُلْتُ بِأَيِّ شَىْءٍ كَانَ يَبْدَأُ النَّبِيُّ -صلى الله عليه وسلم- إِذَا دَخَلَ بَيْتَهُ قَالَتْ بِالسِّوَاكِ.
الْمِقْدَامِ بْنِ شُرَيْحٍ عَنْ أَبِيهِ قَالَ سَأَلْتُ

Al-Miqdam ibn Shurayh reported from his father that he asked 'Ayeshah (RA), *"What was the first thing the Prophet ﷺ did when he entered his house?"* She replied, "He began by using the miswak." This shows his concern for cleanliness and consideration toward his family. He also used fragrance before going to his wives. 'Ayeshah (RA) said:

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ - رضى الله عنها - أَنَّهَا قَالَتْ كُنْتُ أُطَيِّبُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ -صلى الله عليه وسلم- ثُمَّ يَطُوفُ عَلَى نِسَائِهِ

"I would apply perfume to the Messenger of Allah (S.M.) and then he would visit his wives."These practices reflect the importance of maintaining cleanliness, pleasantness, and mutual consideration in married life. Giving Priority to One's Wife in Daily Life: Many husbands tend to think only about their own comfort and preferences. They often spend time with friends, dine at restaurants, or attend social gatherings without including their wives. However, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ demonstrated a very different approach. Whenever he travelled, he would take one of his wives with him. Even when he received an invitation, he sometimes declined it if his wife was not also invited [28].

'Ayeshah (RA) narrated: The Prophet ﷺ always tried to give me special consideration. We had a Persian neighbour who was an excellent cook. One day, he prepared some food and invited the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. The Prophet ﷺ asked, "Will she also come with me?", referring to me. The man replied, "No." The Prophet ﷺ said, "Then I will not come." The neighbour invited him again, and the Prophet ﷺ repeated the same question: "Will she also come with me?" Again, the reply was "No." The Prophet ﷺ declined the invitation once more. When the neighbour invited him for the third time, the Prophet ﷺ asked the same question. This time the neighbour replied, "Yes." Only then did the Prophet ﷺ accept the invitation, and we went together to the neighbour's house. This narration shows how much the Prophet ﷺ valued his wife's feelings. He knew that 'Ayeshah (RA) would appreciate the invitation, especially since food was often scarce in their household. Rather than enjoying the meal alone, he preferred to share the experience with her. If they had food, they would enjoy it together; if not, they would face hardship together.

'Ayeshah (RA) also narrated that gifts and food were often brought to the Prophet ﷺ. He would generously distribute them among the poor and the Ahl al-Suffah, while he himself

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remained patient. She said that she also remained patient because she saw that the Prophet ﷺ never chose comfort for himself while leaving her behind. Helping with Household Chores: In many families, household responsibilities are considered the wife's duty alone. Husbands often provide little or no assistance with domestic work. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, however, set a different example. Despite carrying the enormous responsibilities of prophet hood and leading the Islamic state, he still helped his family with household tasks. 'Ayeshah (RA) narrated:

عَنِ الْأَسْوَدِ، قَالَ: سَأَلْتُ عَائِشَةَ: مَا كَانَ النَّبِيُّ ﷺ يَصْنَعُ فِي بَيْتِهِ؟ قَالَتْ: كَانَ يَكُونُ فِي مِهْنَةِ أَهْلِهِ، تَعْنِي خِدْمَةَ أَهْلِهِ، فَإِذَا حَضَرَتِ الصَّلَاةُ خَرَجَ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ

Al-Aswad reported that he asked 'Ayeshah (RA), *"What did the Prophet ﷺ do at home?"* She replied, *"He would help his family with their household work. When it was time for prayer, he would leave for the prayer." Spending Quality Time Together: A strong family relationship requires husbands and wives to spend meaningful time together. They should talk to each other, listen to each other's concerns, discuss their problems, and share moments of joy and laughter. The Prophet Muhammad (s.m.) ﷺ devoted time to his family in this way [29], [30].

'Ayeshah (RA) said: Whenever the Prophet ﷺ was with me, he gave me my full rights as his wife. He remained emotionally present and valued our time together. He welcomed every opportunity to be close to me. Even through small and simple actions, he taught me many important lessons. That is why so many hadiths have been narrated through me. I was not merely an observer of his public life; I was closely involved in his private life. Even during my menstrual period, he would rest his head on my lap and recite the Qur'an." She also said: We always enjoyed our time together. Even taking a bath became a pleasant memory for us. We would perform the ritual bath together using water from the same container. Sometimes we would playfully compete over the water. I would say, 'Leave some for me,' and he would reply, 'You leave some for me." Their mutual love and companionship made even the simplest moments of daily life enjoyable. 'Ayeshah (RA) also narrated another incident:

خرجت مع النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم في بعض أسفاره وأنا جارية لم أحمل اللحم ولم أبدن فقال للناس تقدموا فتقدموا ثم قال لي تعالى حتى أسابقك فسابقته فسبقته فسكت عنى حتى إذا حملت اللحم وبدنت ونسيت خرجت معه في بعض أسفاره فقال للناس تقدموا فتقدموا ثم قال تعالى حتى أسابقك فسابقته فسبقني فجعل يضحك وهو يقول هذه بتلك

The Prophet ﷺ and I were once travelling together when I was still young and physically light. He asked the rest of the people to move ahead and then said to me, "Come, let us have a race." I raced with him and won. Some time later, after I had grown older and gained some weight, we travelled together again. Once more, he asked the others to go ahead and invited me to race. This time he won. Smiling, he said: "This victory makes up for the previous one."

Sharing Joy and Happiness with One Another: A marriage becomes stronger when husband and wife share their happiness with each other. The Prophet Muhammad (s.m.) ﷺ often shared joyful moments with his wives. 'Ayeshah (RA) narrated: "One day, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ came home looking very happy. His face was glowing with joy. He said to me, 'Do you know what happened just now? Muazzaz al-Mudliji looked at the feet of Zayd ibn Harithah and Usamah ibn Zayd and said, "These feet belong to the same family." The Prophet ﷺ was pleased because Muazzaz, who was well known for identifying family relationships from physical features, recognized the close relationship between Zayd ibn

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Harithah and Usamah ibn Zayd simply by looking at their feet. This was significant because Usamah had a much darker complexion than his father, and some people had questioned their biological relationship. 'Ayeshah (RA) also narrated another memorable incident:

زَارَتْنَا سَوْدَةُ يَوْمًا فَجَلَسَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَهَا إِحْدَى رِجْلَيْهِ فِي حِجْرِي ، وَالأُخْرَى فِي حِجْرِهَا، فَعَمِلْتُ لَهَا حَرِيرَةً ، أَوْ قَالَ : خَزِيرَةً فَقُلْتُ : كُلِي ، فَأَبَتْ فَقُلْتُ : لَتَأْكُلِي ، أَوْ لَأُلَطِّخَنَّ وَجْهَكِ ، فَأَبَتْ ، فَأَخَذْتُ مِنَ الْقَصْعَةِ شَيْئًا فَلَطَّخْتُ بِهِ وَجْهَهَا ، فَرَفَعَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ رِجْلَهُ مِنْ حِجْرِهَا تَسْتَقِيدُ مِنِّي ، فَأَخَذَتْ مِنَ الْقَصْعَةِ شَيْئًا فَلَطَّخَتْ بِهِ وَجْهِي ، وَرَسُولُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَضْحَكُ

"One day I prepared some food while Sawdah (RA), another wife of the Prophet ﷺ, was with us. I invited her to eat, but she declined. I said, 'Either you eat, or I will smear some food on your face.' When she still refused, I playfully put a little food on her face. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ laughed at what happened. Then Sawdah (R.A.) took some food and gently smeared it on my face in return, and the Prophet ﷺ laughed again."

This incident reflects the warm, cheerful, and affectionate atmosphere that the Prophet ﷺ encouraged within his family. Taking One's Wife Along While Travelling: Travelling together strengthens the relationship between husband and wife. It builds trust, deepens affection, and provides valuable opportunities to spend time together. It also helps protect the marriage from unnecessary doubts and misunderstandings [31], [32]. The life of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ provides an excellent example in this regard. Whenever he intended to travel, he would take one of his wives with him. 'Ayeshah (RA) narrated:

كَانَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم إِذَا أَرَادَ سَفَرًا أَقْرَعَ بَيْنَ أَزْوَاجِهِ فَأَيُّهُنَّ خَرَجَ سَهْمُهَا خَرَجَ بِهَا رَسُولُ اللهِ

"Whenever the Messenger of Allah ﷺ intended to travel, he would draw lots among his wives. The one whose name was selected would accompany him on the journey." Listening to One's Wife with Attention: A successful marriage depends on mutual understanding, and that begins with listening to one another. Many people interrupt their spouses before they finish speaking or assume they already know what the other person wants to say. This often leads to misunderstanding and unnecessary conflict. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ however, listened carefully and patiently to both his wives and his Companions.

'Ayeshah (RA) said: *"The Prophet ﷺ never interrupted me while I was speaking. One day I narrated to him the long story of eleven women and their husbands. He listened attentively until I had finished the entire account. When I was done, he said to me, 'I am to you as Abu Zar' was to Umm Zar','* meaning that he would treat her with the same love, honour, and kindness. 'Ayeshah (RA) also said that whenever she heard something from the Prophet ﷺ that she did not fully understand, she would ask him about it repeatedly until it became clear. For example, the Prophet ﷺ once said that anyone whose account is thoroughly examined on the Day of Judgment will face punishment. She then asked that, Allah said:

فَسَوْفَ يُحَاسَبُ حِسَابًا يَسِيرًا

"Then he will receive an easy reckoning."

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She asked how this verse could be reconciled with the Prophet's statement. He replied: "The verse refers to the presentation of one's record. But anyone whose deeds are examined in detail will be punished." The Prophet ﷺ appreciated her eagerness to learn. The books of hadith contain hundreds of questions asked by 'Ayeshah (RA), and he answered them with patience and care. He never showed annoyance because of her questions, nor did he avoid answering them. Respecting a Wife's Feelings and Emotional Needs: A husband should understand and respect his wife's emotions. Women are naturally more emotional than men, and they appreciate care, affection, and understanding. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ always showed consideration for the feelings of his wives and treated them with kindness and compassion [33].

وَكَانَ يَوْمَ عِيدٍ يَلْعَبُ السُّودَانُ بِالدَّرَقِ وَالْحِرَابِ فَإِمَّا سَأَلْتُ النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم وَإِمَّا قَالَ تَشْتَهِينَ تَنْظُرِينَ فَقُلْتُ نَعَمْ فَأَقَامَنِي وَرَاءَهُ خَدِّي عَلَى خَدِّهِ وَهُوَ يَقُولُ دُونَكُمْ يَا بَنِي أَرْفِدَةَ حَتَّى إِذَا مَلِلْتُ قَالَ حَسْبُكِ قُلْتُ نَعَمْ قَالَ فَاذْهَبِي.

Once, a group of Abyssinians (Habashis) were performing a spear display in the mosque. The Messenger of Allah (S.M.) asked me, "Would you like to watch them?" I replied, "Yes." He then stood at the doorway, and I stood behind him. I rested my chin on his shoulder, and my cheek touched his cheek. He covered me with his cloak. After a while, he asked, "Have you had enough?" I replied, "Yes." He then said, "Then let us go."

In another narration, Ayeshah (R.A.) said that, to help people appreciate how long this lasted, she would say: "Just imagine how long a young girl, fond of watching games and entertainment, would wish to stand there." In another hadith, Ayeshah (R.A.) narrated, The Messenger of Allah (S.M.) married me when I was still a child. I used to play with dolls, as young girls do, and some of my friends would play with me. Whenever they saw the Prophet (S.M), they would become shy and hide themselves. But the Messenger of Allah (S.M) would call them back and let them come to me, so that I could continue playing with them comfortably and happily [34].

Thus, Ayeshah (R.A.) spent the final years of her childhood in the companionship of the Messenger of Allah (S.M). She learned from him, played under his care, and worshiped alongside him. Her heart was free from anxiety and doubt, for the Messenger of Allah (S.M) looked after her with affection, gave her importance, and fulfilled all her emotional and personal needs. Resolving Marital Disputes with Patience and Wisdom: Disagreements between husband and wife are a natural part of married life. What truly matters is how those disagreements are handled [35], [36]. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ dealt with such situations with patience, wisdom, and compassion rather than anger or harshness.

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ زَوْجِ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَتْ خَرَجْنَا مَعَ رَسُولِ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم فِي بَعْضِ أَسْفَارِهِ حَتَّى إِذَا كُنَّا بِالْبَيْدَاءِ ، أَوْ بِذَاتِ الْجَيْشِ – انْقَطَعَ عِقْدٌ لِي فَأَقَامَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم عَلَى الْتِمَاسِهِ وَأَقَامَ النَّاسُ مَعَهُ وَلَيْسُوا عَلَى مَاءٍ فَأَتَى النَّاسُ إِلَى أَبِي بَكْرٍ الصِّدِّيقِ فَقَالُوا أَلاَ تَرَى مَا صَنَعَتْ عَائِشَةُ أَقَامَتْ بِرَسُولِ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم وَالنَّاسِ وَلَيْسُوا عَلَى مَاءٍ وَلَيْسَ مَعَهُمْ مَاءٌ فَجَاءَ أَبُو بَكْرٍ وَرَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم وَاضِعٌ رَأْسَهُ عَلَى فَخِذِي قَدْ نَامَ فَقَالَ حَبَسْتِ رَسُولَ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم وَالنَّاسَ وَلَيْسُوا عَلَى مَاءٍ وَلَيْسَ مَعَهُمْ مَاءٌ فَقَالَتْ عَائِشَةُ فَعَاتَبَنِي أَبُو بَكْرٍ وَقَالَ مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ أَنْ يَقُولَ وَجَعَلَ يَطْعُنُنِي بِيَدِهِ فِي خَاصِرَتِي فَلاَ يَمْنَعُنِي مِنَ التَّحَرُّكِ إِلاَّ مَكَانُ رَسُولِ اللهِ صلى

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الله عليه وسلم عَلَى فَخِذِي فَقَامَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم حِينَ أَصْبَحَ عَلَى غَيْرِ مَاءٍ فَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ آيَةَ التَّيَمُّمِ فَتَيَمَّمُوا. فَقَالَ أُسَيْدُ بْنُ الْحُضَيْرِ مَا هِيَ بِأَوَّلِ بَرَكَتِكُمْ يَا آلَ أَبِي بَكْرٍ قَالَتْ فَبَعَثْنَا الْبَعِيرَ الَّذِي كُنْتُ عَلَيْهِ فَأَصَبْنَا الْعِقْدَ تَحْتَهُ.

I was traveling with the Prophet Muhammad (S.M), when we stopped at a place called al-Bayḍāʾ that's when I realized my necklace was missing. The Prophet (S.M) immediately stopped the entire group from moving forward until we found it. It was a challenging situation because the Companions didn't have any water with them, not even enough for ablution.My dad, Abu Bakr(R.A), got really mad at me because I made our caravan late. He came up to me and poked me hard in the side, which hurt a lot. But at that moment, the Prophet Muhammad (S.M) was sleeping with his head on my lap. I didn't want to disturb him, so I just stayed still and quiet, even though it was painful. I didn't want to make any noise or move around, because I knew he needed his rest. It was a tough situation, but I tried to be patient and not disrupt the Prophet's sleep. When the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) woke up in the morning, there was still no water available. At that moment, Allah, the Exalted, revealed the verse concerning tayammum (dry ablution), thereby granting ease to the Muslim community [37], [38].

Ayesha (R.A) told another story about losing her necklace. This time, she got separated from the group and was left behind. That's when some people started spreading rumours about her. But even though she lost her necklace again and had a tough time, the Prophet Muhammad (S.M) never scolded her or made her feel bad. He always treated her with kindness and understanding. This shows how patient and gentle he was, even in difficult situations. Aisha's experiences teach us about the importance of being strong and faithful, even when things get tough. And the Prophet's behaviour towards her is a great example of how we should treat others with love, respect, and compassion.

The Prophet (S.M) never dealt with them unfairly or harshly. Instead, he corrected them with kindness and wisdom. In this regard, Ayesha (R.A) narrated: "Once I remarked about Ṣafiyyah, saying, 'It is enough that she is short.' The Prophet (S.M) replied, 'You have uttered a word which, if it were mixed with the water of the sea, it would pollute it.' He showed me how to respect God and warned me about saying bad things about others or using hurtful words, but he never made me feel small or stupid. When I did something wrong without realizing it, I could tell by the look on his face that he wasn't happy. So, I would fix my mistake before he even had to say anything to me [39].

These incidents show that caring for one another during illness strengthens the bond between husband and wife and deepens love, trust, and compassion within the family. Caring for One Another during Illness: Whenever one of the Ummul Muminin became ill, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ took special care of her. He was especially attentive to his wives during times of physical discomfort. 'Ayeshah (RA) narrated:

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ قَالَتْ كُنْتُ أَشْرَبُ وَأَنَا حَائِضٌ ثُمَّ أُنَاوِلُهُ النَّبِيَّ -صلى الله عليه وسلم- فَيَضَعُ فَاهُ عَلَى مَوْضِعِ فِيَّ فَيَشْرَبُ وَأَتَعَرَّقُ الْعَرْقَ وَأَنَا حَائِضٌ ثُمَّ أُنَاوِلُهُ النَّبِيَّ -صلى الله عليه وسلم- فَيَضَعُ فَاهُ عَلَى مَوْضِعِ فِيَّ

'Ayeshah (RA) said: "While I was menstruating, I would drink from a cup and then hand it to the Prophet ﷺ. He would deliberately place his lips on the very spot from which I had drunk and drink from it. Likewise, I would eat meat from a bone and then hand it to him, and he would place his mouth on the exact place where I had eaten." She also narrated that when she began menstruating during the Farewell Pilgrimage and became distressed, the Prophet ﷺ comforted her by saying:

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هَذَا شَيْءٌ كَتَبَهُ اللَّهُ عَلَى بَنَاتِ آدَمَ، فَافْعَلِي مَا يَفْعَلُ الْحَاجُّ غَيْرَ أَنْ لَا تَطُوفِي بِالْبَيْتِ حَتَّى تَطْهُرِي

"This is something Allah has decreed for the daughters of Adam. So continue to perform everything that the pilgrims do, except circumambulations the Ka'bah until you become pure." 'Ayeshah (RA) also said:

أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ ﷺ كَانَ يَتَّكِئُ فِي حِجْرِي وَأَنَا حَائِضٌ، ثُمَّ يَقْرَأُ الْقُرْآنَ

"The Prophet ﷺ would rest his head on my lap while I was menstruating and recite the Qur'an." He also prohibited divorcing a wife during her menstrual period. These examples show that spouses should care for one another with patience, compassion, and understanding during times of illness or physical discomfort. Such care strengthens the marital bond and deepens mutual love and trust. Avoid Making Decisions about Married Life Based on Suspicion: One of the major causes of divorce in today's society is suspicion between husband and wife. Mistrust leads to loss of peace and tranquillity in the home. Hence, a wife and husband must be very careful in order not to create suspicion in their partner's heart. Furthermore, a man and a woman must not condemn each other hastily on the basis of suspicion. One of the most prominent examples in this regard is the Incident of Ifk (slander).

Abd-Allah ibn Ubayy with some of his companions started spreading rumours about me in society. I have already related that the Messenger of Allah (S.M) defended me before the people saying: "By Allah, I do not know anything bad about my wife, except that she does good deeds". Still, for a whole month, not a verse about me was revealed. However, he never dared to ask me something that could cause me sorrow. And when he questioned me about it, he said: "O' Ayesha! Some rumours have reached me concerning you. So, if you are clean from that, Allah will purify you but if you have committed something seek the forgiveness of Allah and turn to him for when a servant of Allah repents and asks for forgiveness, he accepts it." Subsequently, Allah revealed the verses cleansing me from that slander.

Thus, the eloquence and wisdom of Allah's Messenger (S.M) shone bright through his treatment of the incident. Despite the Messenger of Allah (S.M) being deeply hurt and betrayed, he did not accuse me or humiliate me in front of people. He also did not condemn me hastily or confirm the rumours since he knew that only Allah could judge me. Still, he respected me and did not spoil my peace of mind and comfort by asking harsh questions. Rather, he waited patiently for an opportunity to come from Allah to declare me pure and innocent of that slander. Not Leaving One's Partner for Worldly Desires: Todays, tempts people with various means in order to arouse their lustful desires and greed. The world is presented as the only goal worth pursuing. Everywhere, be it at school, home and society, people are urged to earn money and to seek comfort. As a result, the concepts of good and evil have become distorted, leading to the divorce rates amongst people skyrocketing. But, even in the household of the Prophet (S.M), there was a period when his wife and daughters were tempted by financial difficulties, leading them to request more provision from the Prophet (S.M). However, even in this incident, the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (S.M) provides useful guidance for the ummah [40], [41].

Ayeshah (R.A) relates: "I was once arguing with my paternal sisters concerning the Prophet (S.M), wishing that he would give us more. We insisted that he should grant us more provision. Each one of us argued against the others and even attempted to surpass one another in complaining and in requesting more. In truth, we were so rude to one another that the Prophet (S.M) was deeply grieved and decided not to talk to us for a whole month". Subsequently, Allah revealed a verse concerning us in which He said that, we have the option to either stay with the Prophet (S.M) or live a humble life or to leave him and have wealth and provision.

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"Thereafter, the Prophet (S.M) began with me and said: "O' Ayesha! I desire to propose to you a suggestion that I hope you will accept. Wait till you consult with your parents concerning this matter." I asked: "And what is it O' Rasul Allah?" Thereupon, he recited to me the following verses: "O Prophet! Say to your wives: If you desire the life of this world and its adornment, then come, I will provide for you and release you in a gracious manner. But if you desire Allah and His Messenger and the Home of the Hereafter, then indeed Allah has prepared for the righteous among you a magnificent reward."

But I hastened to say to him: "Shall I consult my parents concerning you O' Messenger of Allah? Indeed, I have chosen Allah, His Messenger, and the Home of the Hereafter." When Prophet (S.M) heard my answer, he became delighted. Ayesha's (R.A) words "shall I consult my parents concerning you O' Rasul Allah?" Eloquently show the depth of her feelings for the Prophet (S.M). Ayesha (R.A) could not imagine living without the Prophet Muhammad (S.M). She felt that her soul was connected to his soul and that they had become one.

Today, unfortunately many couples are tempted to part ways for the sake of trifling matters. Even if their relationships do not end, many of them still hurt each other through constant reproach and blame, allowing some petty worldly problems to hinder them from living happily together. However, the example shown by the household of Prophet (S.M) teaches us that, the bond between a husband and a wife can be strong only if they truly love each other and if they seek to please Allah Most High [42].

Scientific Analysis

The findings of this study demonstrate that marital instability in contemporary Bangladesh is fundamentally associated with interconnected socio-emotional, behavioral, and relational factors. The survey of 200 divorced families reveals that emotional distance (20%) and lack of mutual respect (15%) constitute the most prominent causes of marital breakdown. These findings suggest that marital sustainability cannot be adequately explained through economic conditions or formal marital arrangements alone. Instead, the quality of interpersonal relationships, emotional responsiveness, and reciprocal recognition plays a decisive role in maintaining family stability.

From an Islamic perspective, these findings reinforce the Qur'anic understanding of marriage as a relationship characterized by tranquillity (sakinah), affection (mawaddah), and mercy (rahmah). The metaphor of spouses as garments for one another provides a comprehensive conceptual foundation for interpreting marital responsibilities through protection, intimacy, dignity, and mutual support. This perspective challenges hierarchical interpretations that normalize unilateral authority and instead emphasizes partnership, shared accountability, and ethical reciprocity.

The Prophetic model further translates these theological principles into practical marital behaviors. His demonstrated affection, attentive listening, participation in household responsibilities, emotional sensitivity, and compassionate conflict resolution illustrate that marital harmony requires continuous interpersonal commitment. Significantly, these practices address the principal problems identified in the survey, establishing a meaningful connection between empirical findings and Islamic normative teachings [43].

Furthermore, the results indicate that love marriages and arranged marriages both experience similar relational difficulties. Therefore, marital stability should not be determined solely by the process through which a marriage is established, but by the quality of communication, mutual respect, emotional investment, and ethical conduct developed throughout married life. Nevertheless, the study's findings should be interpreted within the limitations of its sample of divorced families and descriptive research design. Overall, integrating Prophetic marital ethics into premarital education, family counseling, and community-based Islamic education offers a contextually relevant approach to strengthening family resilience in Bangladesh. This integration connects religious values with

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contemporary relational challenges and provides a practical foundation for promoting equitable, compassionate, and sustainable marital relationships.

CONCLUSION

From an authentic Islamic perspective, the marital bond between a husband and wife represents a sacred covenant designed to attain spiritual closeness and the pleasure of Almighty Allah. Both spouses receive divine rewards by fulfilling their reciprocal responsibilities with sincerity, affection, and mutual accountability. The marital life of Prophet Muhammad (S.M.) serves as the ultimate practical model for establishing family harmony, emphasizing that true moral excellence begins with compassionate conduct at home. Contemporary Bangladeshi society faces severe marital instability, evidenced by rising divorce trends recorded in official statistics and public media reports. Empirical survey findings from two hundred divorced families demonstrate that marital breakdowns stem primarily from socio-emotional and communicative breakdowns rather than purely financial constraints. Key drivers include emotional distance, lack of mutual respect, self-centered attitudes, insufficient quality time, substance addiction, extramarital affairs, and prioritizing external appearances over genuine emotional connection within both love and arranged marriages. Applying the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (S.M.) offers comprehensive solutions to these complex modern challenges. His exemplary conduct demonstrates the vital importance of expressing love openly, prioritizing a spouse's feelings, maintaining personal hygiene, sharing domestic chores, spending dedicated quality time, listening attentively without interruption, resolving disputes with wisdom, and refraining from hasty suspicions or financial greed. Integrating these prophetic principles into everyday family life, premarital counseling, and community education across Bangladesh provides a vital practical framework for preventing marital conflict. By replacing domination with reciprocity and mutual dignity, couples can overcome emotional alienation, rebuild trust, and nurture resilient domestic environments. Ultimately, adhering to the guidance of Prophet Muhammad (S.M.) enables Muslim families to build stable homes, foster a healthier society, and secure success in this world and the Hereafter.

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Author Contribution

Md. Yeakub conceptualized the study and coordinated the research. All authors contributed to literature review, data interpretation, manuscript preparation, critical revision, and approval of the final version, accepting accountability for its content overall.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that they have no financial, professional, or personal conflicts of interest that could have influenced the research design, data collection, interpretation, writing, or publication of this manuscript in any way.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

AI tools assisted with drafting and language refinement during manuscript preparation. The authors critically reviewed the generated material, verified its accuracy, and accept full responsibility for the final submitted manuscript and its contents.

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