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Article

The Significance and Procedure of Marriage: A Content Analysis of the Holy Qur'an

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Abstract

Marriage (nikāh) is central to Islamic moral, legal, and social thought. This study conducts a qualitative content analysis of the Holy Qur'an to explicate both the importance of marriage—its purposes, ethics, and social function—and the procedure of marriage—its core elements, conditions, and safeguards. Guided by a maqāṣid al-sharī'a (higher objectives of the law) lens integrated with family-sociological theory and principles from uṣūl al-fiqh (legal theory), we analyse a purposively sampled corpus of verses (notably from Sūrat al-Baqarah, al-Nisā', al-Nūr, al-Aḥzāb, al-Ṭalāq, and al-Rūm). Using an a priori coding scheme refined inductively, we identify and interpret thematic clusters: companionship and tranquillity; consent and contract; mahr (dower) and property protections; guardianship and publicness; prohibited degrees and modesty norms; financial responsibilities; dispute resolution and reconciliation; divorce procedures and waiting periods; and child welfare and lineage protection. Findings show the Qur'anic discourse frames marriage as a covenant oriented to compassion (rahma) and equity ('adl), while embedding procedural rules that promote clarity, consent, and community accountability. The study clarifies doctrinal anchors for contemporary policy and pastoral guidance and suggests avenues for further work integrating hadith/fiqh jurisprudence and empirical sociological data. Qur'anic citations are reported throughout using Abdel Haleem's English translation.

Keywords: Qur'an; marriage; nikāh; content analysis; maqāṣid al-sharī'a; consent; mahr; family law; Islamic ethics

1. Introduction

Marriage in the Qur'an is presented not merely as a private arrangement but as a social institution that sustains personal well-being, intergenerational continuity, and communal order. The matrix of Qur'anic guidance on marriage integrates ethical ideals (mercy, fairness, chastity), legal formality (contract, witnesses, mahr), and social welfare (maintenance, inheritance foundations, child protection). In Islamic intellectual history, these strands were elaborated through prophetic practice (sunna), juristic reasoning (fiqh), and institutional custom. However, the Qur'an's text remains the normative fountainhead from which these elaborations draw.

This paper undertakes a content analysis of the Qur'anic text explicitly focused on (a) importance: the theological and ethical rationales for marriage, and (b) procedure: the core elements and safeguards of contracting a marriage. The research aims to answer three questions:

- What purposes and values does the Qur'an attach to marriage?
- What specific procedural components does the Qur'an prescribe or strongly commend in constituting and maintaining a marriage?

- How do these purposes and procedures secure the Qur'anic higher objectives—religion, life, lineage, intellect, and property?

By clarifying the Qur'anic architecture of marriage, the study provides a textual baseline for contemporary Muslim personal status laws, community counselling, and academic engagement with comparative family ethics.

1.1. Problem Statement

Despite the centrality of marriage (nikāḥ) in Muslim societies, significant confusion and contestation surround its proper understanding and application today. On one hand, many Muslim-majority states regulate marriage through codified personal status laws influenced by Qur'anic principles, prophetic traditions, and juristic elaborations. On the other hand, cultural customs, patriarchal practices, and state legal frameworks often diverge from the Qur'an's explicit ethos of justice, mercy, and equity (Kamali 2008; Rahman 1980). This disjunction raises urgent scholarly and practical questions: what does the Qur'an prescribe, and how might these prescriptions inform contemporary practice?

The problem is multidimensional. First, existing research frequently conflates Qur'anic directives with fiqh elaborations, making it difficult to isolate what is divinely mandated versus what emerged through juristic reasoning (Wadud 1999; Ali 2016). For instance, debates over guardianship (walī), women's consent, and polygyny often cite Qur'anic verses alongside hadith and juristic consensus, but without a clear methodological distinction. Such conflation risks both misinterpretation and misapplication, particularly when Qur'anic principles of consent, non-coercion, and kindness (Q: 4:19, 2:232, 30:21) are overshadowed by cultural or patriarchal readings.

Second, while the Qur'an frames marriage as a covenant of tranquillity, love, and mercy (Q: 30:21), in many contexts it is reduced to a contractual or transactional exchange. Mahr, intended as a dignified gift and security for the woman (4:4), is sometimes manipulated into a symbolic or oppressive burden. Divorce procedures, carefully structured in the Qur'an to ensure reflection, reconciliation, and fairness (Q: 2:228-232; 65:1-7), are practised impulsively or exploitatively in some societies. This discrepancy highlights the implementation gap between Qur'anic ideals and lived realities (Ahmed 1992; Esposito 2011).

Third, there exists a methodological problem in Qur'anic studies themselves. While classical tafsir works provide rich context, modern scholarship has not always employed systematic, replicable methods such as qualitative content analysis (Krippendorff 2018; Neuendorf 2017). As a result, the Qur'an's discourse on marriage has not been mapped in a way that clearly links purpose (importance) and procedure (mechanism). Without such systematic treatment, both academic and policy discussions risk partial or selective readings.

Finally, contemporary debates around gender justice, consent, financial obligations, and family law reform in Muslim societies necessitate a careful return to the Qur'anic text. The Qur'an remains the highest normative authority for Muslims, but its guidance must be articulated in a way that is faithful to its text and responsive to modern contexts (Zuhayli 2007). By conducting a rigorous content analysis of the Qur'an, this research addresses a pressing need: delineating the importance and procedure of marriage as envisioned in revelation, thereby offering clarity for jurisprudence, policymaking, and community practice.

1.2. Significance of the Study

As a social and religious institution, marriage is pivotal in Islamic thought and practice, shaping family structures and broader communal and moral frameworks. The Qur'an, as the central text of Islam, provides a comprehensive set of guidelines and principles that inform the institution of marriage. This study's significance lies in its attempt to analyse marriage through the Quranic content lens, thereby offering a deeper understanding of marital life's theological, ethical, and social

dimensions. By grounding the discussion directly in Qur'anic verses, this study seeks to contribute to academic scholarship and practical discourse surrounding marriage in Islam.

First, the study is significant because it addresses a fundamental unit of human civilisation—the family—which originates in the marriage bond. The Qur'an repeatedly emphasises the sacredness of this bond, describing it as a "sign of God's creation" (Q: 30:21). In this sense, marriage is not merely a contractual or social arrangement but a divinely ordained institution with spiritual, emotional, and moral dimensions. Analysing marriage in the Qur'an is thus crucial for understanding how Islam envisions a harmonious and balanced human society.

Second, this research contributes to contemporary scholarly discussions on marriage by highlighting the role of Qur'anic guidance in addressing modern challenges. Marriage institutions are transforming rapidly in many societies due to globalisation, secularisation, and changing cultural norms. Issues such as delayed marriages, rising divorce rates, and the erosion of traditional family systems have prompted new debates about the relevance of religious teachings. By examining Qur'anic directives on marriage, this study provides insights into how timeless religious principles can respond to these modern dilemmas. This makes the study relevant to Muslim communities and broader comparative discussions on religion, marriage, and family ethics.

Third, the study is significant because it employs a methodological framework of content analysis, which allows for a systematic and thematic examination of Qur'anic verses on marriage. This methodological rigour ensures that the findings are not based on selective readings or cultural interpretations but are grounded in a scientific and academic approach. Such a framework enhances the study's credibility and offers a replicable model for other scholars seeking to explore Qur'anic teachings on different aspects of life.

Finally, this study's significance extends to practical applications in law, education, and social policy. In many Muslim-majority contexts, marriage laws and family policies draw legitimacy from the Qur'an. By providing an academically grounded analysis of Qur'anic teachings, this study can inform policy debates, legal reforms, and educational curricula. It can also serve as a resource for counsellors, religious leaders, and educators who daily engage with family and marital issues.

This study is significant because it situates marriage within its Qur'anic context, bridges traditional teachings with contemporary challenges, and contributes to academic and practical discourses on family life. Its findings are expected to deepen scholarly understanding, enrich public debates, and provide guidance for individuals and institutions concerned with the role of marriage in building strong, ethical, and spiritually grounded societies.

2. Literature Review

The study of marriage outlined in the Holy Quran has generated considerable interest among scholars in theology, sociology, anthropology, and Islamic jurisprudence. The existing literature reflects diverse perspectives encompassing the religious, cultural, spiritual, and legal dimensions of marriage in Islam. This section provides a comprehensive review of relevant works, situating the importance and procedure of marriage within broader scholarly discussions. The review highlights four major themes: marriage as a divine institution, the ethical and spiritual dimensions, socio-legal regulations of marital life, and four contemporary challenges in interpreting Quranic guidance on marriage.

2.1. Marriage as a Divine Institution in the Quran

The Quran presents marriage as a sacred and divinely ordained union, emphasising companionship, tranquillity (*sakinah*), love (*mawaddah*), and mercy (*rahmah*). Scholars such as Engineer (2008) and Esposito (2011) have argued that the Quran views marriage not merely as a social contract but as a spiritual partnership ordained by God. The verse in Surah Ar-Rum (Q: 30:21) is often cited: "And among His signs is that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that you may dwell in tranquillity with them, and He placed between you love and mercy. Verily, in that are signs

for a people who reflect." This verse has been interpreted as a theological foundation for marriage, highlighting its sanctity and spiritual significance.

Further, Al-Ghazali (1997) emphasises that marriage protects individuals' faith by safeguarding them from immorality and fulfilling natural desires within lawful means. Likewise, Kamali (2008) notes that the Quran stresses marriage as an act of worship when conducted according to divine principles. This religious orientation contrasts with purely secular or contractual views of marriage seen in Western literature, thus establishing an Islamic framework rooted in divine guidance.

2.2. Ethical and Spiritual Dimensions of Marriage

A substantial body of scholarship has explored the ethical teachings of the Quran concerning marital life. Qutb (2000) observes that marriage fosters mutual respect, compassion, and cooperation between spouses. The Quranic ethos stresses balance—husbands and wives are described as garments for one another (Q: 2:187), symbolising intimacy, protection, and dignity. Islamic scholarship widely discusses this metaphor as representing mutual dependency and support.

Scholars like Wadud (1999) and Hassan (1987) have argued for a gender-sensitive reading of these verses, contending that the Quran promotes equity and spiritual equality between spouses. Although patriarchal practices have historically overshadowed these ideals, Quranic guidance emphasises kindness (ihsan), justice ('adl), and mutual consultation (shura) in marital relationships. Furthermore, Rahman (2009) highlights that the spiritual significance of marriage is not limited to procreation but includes companionship, emotional fulfilment, and collective striving toward God-consciousness (taqwa).

2.3. Socio-Legal Regulations of Marital Life

Marriage in the Quran is also within a legal framework, covering aspects such as consent, dowry (mahr), rights, and responsibilities of spouses. Coulson (2011) and Schacht (1982) have demonstrated that Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh) has drawn extensively from Quranic principles to regulate marital contracts. The Quran mandates the giving of mahr (Surah An-Nisa 4:4), signifying respect and responsibility on the husband's part. Unlike dowry systems in other traditions, mahr is a woman's right, reinforcing her financial independence.

Consent, too, emerges as a central principle. Scholars such as Barlas (2002) and Ali (2006) underscore that forced marriages contradict Quranic injunctions, as marriage requires the free will of both parties. Furthermore, the Quran prohibits exploitative practices such as forcing women against their will (Surah An-Nisa 4:19). These verses highlight the Quran's role in protecting women's dignity and ensuring fairness in marital arrangements.

Divorce, though permissible, is highly discouraged and surrounded by guidelines promoting reconciliation (Q: 2:229–232). Al-Alwani (1995) emphasises that the Quranic regulation of divorce aims to maintain balance—providing an exit strategy for irreconcilable differences while discouraging hasty separation. The socio-legal framework reflects an intricate balance between rights, responsibilities, and ethical values.

2.4. Contemporary Interpretations and Challenges

Modern scholarship has grappled with the reinterpretation of Quranic marriage principles in light of contemporary challenges such as gender equity, globalisation, and evolving family structures. Esack (1997) and Abou El Fadl (2001) advocate for contextual interpretations that respond to changing realities while remaining faithful to Quranic teachings. For instance, debates on polygamy are central to contemporary discourse. While the Quran permits polygamy under strict conditions (Surah An-Nisa 4:3), scholars like Hassan (1987) and Engineer (2008) argue that the ethical framework of justice makes it nearly impossible to practice without injustice, thereby suggesting monogamy as the normative model.

Another area of concern involves women's rights in marriage. Critics argue that patriarchal readings of the Quran have historically undermined the text's egalitarian spirit. Wadud (1999) and Barlas (2002) challenge male-centred exegesis and highlight the Quran's emphasis on mutuality and fairness. In addition, globalisation and migration have influenced Muslim matrimonial practices, leading to questions about intercultural marriages, transnational legal recognition, and the preservation of Quranic ethics in secular environments (Mir-Hosseini 2000).

Contemporary scholarship also raises methodological concerns. Content analysis of the Quran requires careful attention to linguistic, contextual, and interpretive dimensions. Izutsu (2002) stresses that understanding Quranic terminology demands a semantic study rooted in the Quran's worldview. Thus, modern content analyses of marriage must avoid anachronistic readings while engaging with evolving socio-cultural dynamics.

2.5. Gaps in the Literature

While a considerable corpus exists on Quranic teachings on marriage, specific gaps remain. First, much of the literature focuses on legal and theological aspects, focusing less on holistic Quranic content analysis that integrates spiritual, ethical, and sociological dimensions. Second, contemporary challenges—such as digital matrimonial practices, evolving gender roles, and global Muslim diaspora contexts—are often analysed in isolation without systematic engagement with Quranic exegesis. Finally, the intersection of Quranic principles with modern human rights discourses remains underexplored, particularly regarding issues like marital consent, financial independence, and the prevention of domestic abuse.

This research addresses these gaps by offering a comprehensive content analysis of the Quranic verses on marriage. It emphasises their theological, ethical, and legal significance while situating them in contemporary debates.

3. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this study is anchored in the interdisciplinary nexus of theology, sociology, and anthropology, using content analysis as the methodological lens through which the verses of the Holy Quran are examined. The importance and procedure of marriage, as delineated in the Quran, cannot be understood in isolation from broader theoretical constructs that inform family, kinship, gender roles, and religious norms. This section outlines the research's conceptual theories, focusing on Islamic theological foundations, social contract theory as adapted to marital relations, symbolic interactionism in the interpretation of marital roles, and gender and family systems theory within the Islamic worldview.

3.1. Islamic Theological Foundations

The Quranic worldview on marriage is at the heart of this study, which is rooted in divine revelation. The theological perspective situates marriage not merely as a human institution but as a sacred covenant (*mithaq ghaliz*) between spouses, recognised and blessed by God (Q: 4:21). Islamic theology views marriage as part of the divine plan for humanity's continuity, spiritual growth, and social harmony (Engineer 2004). Thus, this framework positions the Quran as the ultimate source of normative guidance and acknowledges the interpretive traditions (*tafsir*) that contextualise these verses historically and culturally (Esposito 2018).

This theological foundation emphasises that marriage is not a mere social arrangement but a divinely ordained mechanism for fulfilling emotional, sexual, and spiritual needs, while ensuring social order. It also highlights the Quran's dual dimensions—universal principles (justice, mercy, companionship) and contextual directives (dowry, witnesses)—guiding Muslim societies together.

3.2. Social Contract Theory

Although marriage in Islam is a religiously significant act, it also embodies characteristics of a contractual agreement, resonating with broader social contract theories. In Islamic jurisprudence, marriage (nikah) is a civil contract involving mutual consent, responsibilities, and rights (Kamali 2008). The offer and acceptance (ijab and qabul), presence of witnesses, and agreement on a dowry (mahr) reflect contractual elements intended to safeguard fairness, transparency, and accountability.

Social contract theory (Locke 1690/1988) posits that individuals voluntarily enter agreements to ensure security and mutual benefit within society. In the marital context, this resonates with the Quranic injunctions that spouses should dwell together in “*tranquility, love, and mercy*” (Q: 30:21). The contractual lens thus allows us to see marriage as a balance between personal freedom and collective responsibility, where the rights and obligations of spouses ensure the stability of the family unit and, by extension, society.

3.3. Symbolic Interactionism

From a sociological perspective, symbolic interactionism offers a lens to interpret how meanings attached to marriage are constructed and maintained within Muslim communities. Symbolic interactionists argue that social institutions are sustained through shared meanings, roles, and daily interactions (Blumer 1969). The Quranic conception of marriage emphasises symbols of unity, such as the metaphor of spouses being “*garments for each other*” (Q: 2:187), which signifies protection, intimacy, and mutual support.

When analysed through symbolic interactionism, this metaphor reveals how Muslims internalise and enact marital roles through cultural practices, rituals, and expectations. The exchange of dowry, the act of consent, and the presence of witnesses are legal requirements and symbolic affirmations of trust, legitimacy, and continuity. Such meanings evolve with changing contexts but retain their Quranic essence, making symbolic interactionism a critical theoretical tool in this study.

3.4. Gender and Family Systems Theory

Marriage in the Quran also operates within the framework of family systems theory, which examines how individual behaviour is shaped by family roles and dynamics (Bowen 1978). The Quran emphasises complementary roles of men and women, rooted in principles of mutual rights and responsibilities (Q: 2:228). Gender and family systems theory allows us to examine how Quranic verses balance authority and care, rights and duties, and individuality and collectivism within the household.

While critics argue that traditional interpretations have reinforced patriarchal systems, contemporary scholarship highlights the Quran’s inherent emphasis on equity, justice, and mutual respect (Barlas 2002; Wadud 1999). Family systems theory provides a structured lens to analyse how Quranic injunctions shape family life by regulating inheritance, guardianship, child-rearing, and conflict resolution, thereby ensuring the cohesion and moral stability of the community.

3.5. Integration of Theories

This study employs an integrative theoretical approach that combines theology, sociology, and anthropology to analyse Quranic teachings on marriage. The theological dimension anchors marriage as a sacred covenant; the social contract lens emphasises its procedural and legal aspects; symbolic interactionism highlights the interpretive and cultural dimensions; and family systems theory situates marriage within broader kinship and gender relations. Together, these theories create a robust analytical framework for understanding the Quran’s multi-dimensional treatment of marriage.

Combining these theoretical lenses, the study acknowledges marriage’s divine and human aspects: it is a divinely ordained institution yet enacted and negotiated within human societies. This

integrative approach ensures that the content analysis does not reduce Quranic verses to static prescriptions but rather situates them in ongoing interpretive, legal, and sociocultural discourses.

4. Methodology

The methodological framework of this study is anchored in qualitative research traditions, with a specific focus on content analysis of the Holy Quran. Since this research aims to explore the importance and procedure of marriage as reflected in Quranic verses, the methodology integrates classical exegetical principles with modern hermeneutic tools. This section outlines the research design, data sources, sampling strategies, analytical procedures, and reliability and validity measures, ensuring methodological rigour and transparency.

4.1. Research Design

This study adopts a qualitative content analysis design, which is particularly suited for examining the textual, symbolic, and thematic meanings embedded within sacred scripture (Krippendorff 2018). As an interpretive approach, content analysis enables the researcher to identify recurring themes, values, and normative guidelines about marriage in the Quran. Unlike quantitative approaches, which may reduce verses to frequency counts, the qualitative design emphasises contextual meaning and theological interpretation (Elo and Kyngäs 2008).

The design is informed by Islamic hermeneutics, a discipline that recognises the Quran as both a linguistic and spiritual text. By situating verses in their linguistic, historical, and theological contexts, the study seeks to uncover holistic insights regarding the institution of marriage. The dual reliance on qualitative content analysis and hermeneutics thus allows for a nuanced exploration of textual structure and spiritual significance.

4.2. Sources of Data

The primary data source is the Holy Quran, analysed in its original Arabic text to preserve linguistic authenticity. To complement this, several authoritative English translations (e.g., Pickthall 1930; Ali 1934; Haleem 2004) were consulted for cross-validation and accessibility. This multi-translation approach reduces interpretive bias and accounts for linguistic variances.

In addition to the Quran, secondary sources include classical tafsir (exegesis) works—such as Tafsir al-Tabari, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, and Al-Qurtubi—and contemporary scholarly analyses (Esposito 2011; Kamali 2008). These exegetical references provide interpretive depth, enabling contextualization of verses concerning marriage, kinship, and gender roles. Hadith collections (e.g., Sahih al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim) are supplementary references to clarify Quranic injunctions where necessary.

4.3. Sampling Strategy

A purposive sampling technique was employed to identify and select verses directly or indirectly related to marriage (see Appendix: A). Purposive sampling is appropriate in content analysis when specific textual features must be examined (Patton 2015). Criteria for inclusion encompassed:

- Verses explicitly mentioning marriage (e.g., Quran 4:3, 24:32).
- Verses referring to marital ethics, rights, and obligations (e.g., Quran 2:187, 30:21).
- Verses addressing procedural aspects of marriage, including dowry (mahr), guardianship, and divorce regulations (e.g., Quran 4:4, 65:1-2).
- Verses on family stability, kinship, and lineage underpin the broader institution of marriage (e.g., Quran 16:72).

Approximately 60 verses were identified as relevant to the study. These verses were then categorised into thematic clusters for systematic analysis.

4.4. Analytical Procedures

The analysis followed the thematic content analysis method outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). The procedure involved multiple steps:

- Familiarisation with the text: Repeated readings of the Quranic verses in Arabic and English translations to internalise meanings.
- Initial coding: Highlighting key terms (e.g., *nikah*, *mahr*, *zawj*, *'ishrah bil-ma'ruf*) and identifying their semantic fields.
- Categorisation: Grouping codes into larger categories, such as the purpose of marriage, legal procedure, mutual rights and responsibilities, divorce regulations, and spiritual symbolism.
- Thematic development: Synthesising categories into overarching themes that explain the Quranic marriage philosophy.
- Interpretive contextualization: Relating themes to classical tafsir, Prophetic traditions, and socio-historical contexts to ensure theological accuracy.

For instance, Quran 30:21 ("*And among His signs is that He created for you mates...*") was analysed under the theme of marriage as divine companionship, while Quran 4:3 was placed under marriage procedure and polygamy regulation.

4.5. Ensuring Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity are critical to qualitative content analysis, especially when dealing with sacred texts. Multiple translations were compared to enhance reliability, and interpretive consistency was cross-checked with classical tafsir. Additionally, intercoder reliability was applied by involving a second researcher with expertise in Quranic studies to verify coding consistency (Lombard et al. 2002).

Validity was ensured through triangulation:

- Textual triangulation (Quran in Arabic vs. translations),
- Interpretive triangulation (comparing classical and modern exegesis), and
- Contextual triangulation (aligning verses with socio-historical background).

This triangulated approach strengthens the credibility of findings, minimising subjective bias.

4.6. Ethical Considerations

Given the sacred status of the Quran, ethical sensitivity was paramount. The study adhered to the principle of respectful engagement, ensuring that verses were not decontextualised or misrepresented. The analysis refrains from imposing external cultural frameworks alien to Islamic theology. Instead, it privileges authentic Islamic hermeneutics while engaging critically with contemporary scholarship. Citations of Quranic verses are carefully contextualised, recognising the theological significance for practising Muslim communities.

4.7. Limitations of the Methodology

Despite rigorous design, certain limitations exist. First, interpretive subjectivity cannot be eliminated, as even classical exegetes differ in their views. Second, the focus on Quranic verses means that broader sociological data on Muslim marriage practices are not directly analysed. Third, due to the theological nature of the text, findings may not be universally generalizable across cultural and

sectarian interpretations. Nonetheless, the study provides a strong foundational analysis that can be expanded with sociological and comparative research in future studies.

5. Findings: The Significance of Marriage in the Qur'an

The Qur'an, as the foundational scripture of Islam, outlines marriage (nikāḥ) as a divinely ordained institution that fulfils spiritual, social, ethical, and communal purposes. Unlike secular or cultural understandings of marriage that often emphasise personal preference or contractual utility, the Qur'an embeds marriage within a broader theological and moral framework. It underscores that marriage is not merely a private arrangement but a covenant (mīthāq ghalīz) with sacred implications (Q: 4:21). Through an in-depth content analysis of the Qur'anic verses about marriage, several central themes emerge: marriage as a divine sign, as a source of companionship and tranquility, as a means of moral and social regulation, as a safeguard of lineage and modesty, and as a framework for rights, duties, and mutual respect. This section highlights these themes, demonstrating how the Qur'an elevates marriage into a significant moral and religious institution that underpins Islamic family law and ethical life.

5.1. Marriage as a Divine Sign of God's Creation

The Qur'an frequently presents marriage as one of the āyāt (signs) of Allah's creation, emphasising its divine origin and purpose. One of the most frequently cited verses states:

"And among His signs is that He created for you from yourselves mates that you may find tranquillity in them, and He placed between you affection and mercy. Indeed, there are signs for people to reflect." (Q: 30:21)

This verse frames marriage as a divine gift, rooted in the natural order of human existence. The mention of tranquillity (sukūn), affection (mawadda), and mercy (rahma) indicates that the marital relationship transcends physical attraction and contractual obligations. Instead, it embodies spiritual harmony, mutual care, and divine blessing (Engineer 2008). The Qur'an thus positions marriage as a sacred arrangement designed for holistic well-being.

Scholars such as Esposito (2011) argue that the Qur'anic emphasis on marriage as a divine sign reveals its cosmological significance. Marriage is not only functional but symbolic—it mirrors the harmony and balance of creation itself. By grounding marriage in divine will, the Qur'an protects it from reduction to purely economic or social necessity.

5.2. Marriage as Companionship and Tranquillity

The Qur'an consistently portrays marriage as a partnership of companionship. Verses such as Q: 7:189 describe how Allah created spouses *"from a single soul"* so humans may find peace in each other. This theological anthropology situates marriage within the broader Qur'anic view of humanity's creation in pairs (Q: 51:49). The pairing imagery affirms that marital companionship is natural and divinely intended.

The Qur'an also emphasises that spouses are garments (libās) for one another:

"They are clothing for you, and you are clothing for them." (Qur'an 2:187)

This metaphor conveys intimacy, protection, comfort, and mutual dignity (Kamali 2008). Just as garments shield and adorn, marriage provides moral protection and beautification of life. This symbolism suggests that marriage fosters a relationship of mutual reliance and honour, where neither partner is subordinate but both are equally necessary for wholeness.

Modern scholarship often highlights how these verses counter patriarchal misinterpretations of marriage (Hassan 1987). By depicting marriage as companionship, the Qur'an recognises women as active moral partners rather than passive dependents, underscoring equality in dignity and responsibility.

5.3. Marriage as a Moral Safeguard

The Qur'an also underscores marriage as a moral safeguard against immorality and social disorder. In Qur'an 24:32, believers are commanded to marry off the single and virtuous among them, suggesting that marriage serves to channel natural desires into a lawful and ethical framework. The Qur'an recognises human sexual instincts but seeks to regulate them within a legitimate union to preserve individual dignity and communal morality.

Furthermore, in 5:5, the Qur'an permits Muslim men to marry chaste women from among the People of the Book, again emphasising chastity and moral conduct as conditions for marital legitimacy. Such injunctions underline marriage's role in safeguarding 'iffah (modesty) and ḥayā' (decency).

According to Rahman (1980), this moral dimension illustrates the Qur'anic strategy of integrating human nature with divine law. Marriage thus operates as a spiritual discipline that channels desires, preventing the spread of zina (fornication or adultery), which the Qur'an strongly condemns (Q: 17:32). In this way, marriage preserves both personal virtue and the ethical integrity of society.

5.4. Marriage as Preservation of Lineage and Family Structure

Another recurring Qur'anic theme is the role of marriage in protecting lineage (nasab) and establishing family structures. The Qur'an affirms the importance of family continuity:

*"Do not approach unlawful sexual intercourse. Indeed, it is ever an immorality and is evil as a way."
(Qur'an 17:32)*

The condemnation of illicit relations highlights the Qur'anic concern with legitimate lineage, inheritance rights, and social stability. Marriage ensures that children are born into secure family environments, with recognised rights of care, inheritance, and belonging (Q: 4:7–12).

Ibn Kathir's classical tafsir emphasises that marriage ensures the preservation of nasab and prevents social chaos caused by uncertain paternity. Contemporary scholars, such as Ali (2006), similarly argue that the Qur'anic emphasis on lawful marriage underscores its centrality in building stable communities.

5.5. Marriage as a Covenant and Social Contract

The Qur'an describes marriage as a mīthāq ghalīz (solemn covenant) in 4:21, a phrase also used for God's covenant with prophets. This parallel suggests that marriage is not an ordinary contract but one imbued with sacred gravity (Esposito and DeLong-Bas 2001). The covenantal nature of marriage elevates it above a mere private transaction into a social and spiritual trust with divine accountability.

Moreover, the Qur'an recognises marriage as a social contract with reciprocal rights and responsibilities. Verses such as 2:228–232 outline regulations concerning divorce, remarriage, and women's rights, highlighting balance and fairness. The Qur'an commands husbands to treat their wives honourably (bi'l-ma'rūf) and not to retain them in marriage unjustly (Q: 2:231).

The Qur'an treats marriage as a covenant, reflecting its dual aspect: a private bond of intimacy and a public institution regulated by divine law. This duality preserves individual autonomy while ensuring social justice and cohesion.

5.6. Mutual Rights, Duties, and Equity

The Qur'an emphasises reciprocal rights and obligations within marriage. In Qur'an 2:228, it affirms:

"And due to them [wives] is similar to what is expected of them, according to what is reasonable. Nevertheless, the men have a degree over them."

While the verse acknowledges role differences, it frames marriage regarding reciprocity and equity. Classical and modern exegetes interpret the “degree” (daraja) as either responsibility in maintenance or authority in leadership, but it does not negate mutual dignity and respect (Barlas, 2002). Indeed, the broader Qur’anic discourse stresses kindness, consultation, and fairness between spouses (Q: 4:19).

The Qur’an also mandates men to provide nafaqah (financial maintenance), while women are recognised for their contribution of care, household management, and moral support. Both roles are essential and interdependent. This system ensures that marriage is balanced, where rights and duties complement rather than compete.

5.7. Marriage and Spiritual Growth

The Qur’an situates marriage as a means of spiritual growth and fulfilment. In Qur’an 24:32, the divine command to marry is accompanied by reassurance that Allah enriches those who marry from His bounty. This suggests that marriage is an earthly arrangement and a divine blessing and provision channel.

Furthermore, the Qur’an views marriage as part of fulfilling human responsibility to establish a righteous community (ummah ṣāliḥa). By raising children in faith and mutual respect, marriage sustains religious identity. It transmits values across generations (Q: 25:74). Rahman (2009) stresses that marriage is integrated into the larger project of spiritual refinement (tazkiyah) in the Qur’an. Marriage fosters character development and draws believers closer to God by nurturing compassion, patience, and responsibility.

5.8. Marriage as a Framework for Conflict Resolution

The Qur’an is not oblivious to marital difficulties. It provides guidance on conflict resolution to preserve harmony. Verse 4:35 recommends appointing arbiters from both families if disputes arise, emphasising reconciliation as the first recourse. Similarly, Verse 2:229 permits divorce but frames it as a last resort, preferring reconciliation and kindness even in separation.

The Qur’anic approach reflects realism—marriage may involve challenges, but these are to be managed through justice, patience, and mutual respect. Divorce is permissible yet discouraged, underscoring the sanctity and permanence of marriage while allowing flexibility when continuation is harmful.

5.9. Marriage in the Context of Broader Qur’anic Ethics

Finally, marriage in the Qur’an must be understood within the framework of Qur’anic ethics of justice (‘adl), mercy (raḥma), and mutual consultation (shūrā). Marriage reflects the Qur’an’s larger vision of social harmony, where individual desires are balanced with communal welfare and divine accountability. Thus, marriage is significant for personal fulfilment and the realisation of an ethical society.

5.10. Conclusion of Findings

The Qur’anic portrayal of marriage reveals its multidimensional significance. It is a divine sign, a covenant, a partnership of companionship, a safeguard of morality, and a foundation of social order. The Qur’an elevates marriage to a sacred institution that integrates personal, social, and religious dimensions by emphasising tranquillity, affection, mutual rights, and spiritual growth. These findings highlight that marriage in the Qur’an is not simply a cultural artefact but a central element of Islamic theology and ethics, shaping Muslim life’s moral and social fabric.

6. Findings: The Procedure of Marriage in the Qur'an

Marriage, in the Qur'anic paradigm, is not merely a social arrangement but a divinely instituted covenant (mithāqan ghalīzan) that binds two individuals, their families, and the broader community into a structure of mutual rights, responsibilities, and sacred trust (Q: 4:21). While the Qur'an does not prescribe a detailed step-by-step manual of marriage rites, it provides a comprehensive framework for the procedure, emphasizing principles of justice, transparency, mutual consent, and the safeguarding of moral and social values. This section explores the procedural dimensions of marriage as reflected in the Qur'an, focusing on consent, guardianship, the mahr (dower), contractual obligations, publicity, and ethical boundaries. These all highlight the Qur'an's concern for balancing individual autonomy with collective responsibility.

6.1. Consent and Mutual Agreement

The foundation of marriage in the Qur'an lies in mutual consent between the bride and groom. The Qur'an clarifies that compulsion in marriage is prohibited, as individuals are granted free will in choosing their spouses. In Qur'an 4:19, believers are instructed:

"O you who believe! You are not permitted to inherit women against their will..."

This verse was revealed in a socio-historical context where women could be coerced into marriages or transferred as property after the death of their husbands. The Qur'an categorically rejected such practices, affirming the dignity and agency of women.

Similarly, the Qur'an encourages believers to seek spouses of their choosing, provided that the union is morally sound:

"Do not marry idolatresses until they believe... And do not give your women in marriage to idolaters until they believe..." (Qur'an 2:221).

Thus, while the Qur'an stresses faith as a guiding criterion, it also implies that the decision must stem from the free will of both parties. Modern scholarship emphasises this verse as a foundation for contemporary discourses on marital autonomy and gender justice (Engineer 2004; Wadud 1999).

6.2. Guardianship and Family Involvement

While mutual consent is central, the Qur'an also acknowledges the role of family and guardians (awliyā') in facilitating marriage. Qur'an 24:32 instructs:

"And marry off those among you who are single and the righteous among your male and female slaves..."

This verse implies that guardians and community leaders facilitate marriage for those unable to arrange it themselves, especially vulnerable individuals. However, guardianship is not synonymous with absolute authority but reflects a supportive and protective role within the larger social framework.

The balance between individual freedom and parental involvement in Qur'anic marriage is an ongoing debate in Islamic jurisprudence. While classical jurists often emphasised the necessity of a guardian for women, contemporary interpretations highlight the Qur'an's broader concern with justice and voluntariness (Kamali 2008).

6.3. The Mahr (Dower)

One of the most emphasised procedural elements in the Qur'an is the mahr (bridal gift or dower), an obligatory right of the bride. The Qur'an states:

"And give the women their bridal gift graciously. But if they remit any of it willingly to you, then take it with satisfaction and ease" (Qur'an 4:4).

The mahr is not a bride-price but a symbolic token of commitment and financial responsibility on the groom's part. It ensures the woman's economic security and recognises her dignity within the marital contract. The Qur'an highlights that this gift must be given willingly and without resentment, reflecting sincerity and respect in the union.

Further, Qur'an 2:236-237 elaborates on the adjustments of the mahr in cases of divorce before consummation, underscoring the contractual nature of marriage and its financial implications. This aspect shows the Qur'an's concern for safeguarding women's rights in marital transactions, which historically offered them a degree of financial independence (Esposito 2001).

6.4. *Marriage as a Contract*

Marriage in the Qur'an is fundamentally understood as a contractual relationship ('aqd al-nikāh), rather than a sacrament in the Christian sense. The Qur'anic emphasis on clarity, documentation, and mutual agreement underscores the contractual nature. In Qur'an 2:235, the instruction regarding proposals to widows highlights the importance of transparency and respect in initiating the marital process.

Additionally, Qur'an 2:282—though primarily addressing financial contracts—has been interpreted by jurists as an indication of the Qur'an's broader insistence on documentation and witnesses in contracts, including marriage. The Prophet's hadith tradition complements this understanding, requiring witnesses for the validity of a marriage contract. Thus, marriage emerges as a solemn covenant with legal, moral, and spiritual implications.

6.5. *Publicity and Community Witness*

The Qur'an encourages the public declaration of marriage, thereby distinguishing it from clandestine or illicit relationships. While not prescribing a specific ritual, the Qur'an's emphasis on witnesses and transparency aligns with protecting family honour and preventing disputes. This principle is supported by Qur'an 4:25, which, in discussing marriage with slave women, underscores conditions of chastity, lawful recognition, and the involvement of community approval.

The emphasis on publicity serves spiritual and sociological functions: it protects the couple from accusations of immorality, integrates them into the community, and strengthens the institution of family. Modern Muslim societies often incorporate ceremonial practices to fulfil this Qur'anic principle of transparency (Nasir 2009).

6.6. *Ethical Boundaries and Prohibitions*

The Qur'an establishes clear ethical and legal boundaries regarding whom one may or may not marry. Qur'an 4:23 lists categories of prohibited relationships, including mothers, daughters, sisters, aunts, nieces, foster mothers, and foster siblings. This ensures the protection of kinship bonds and prevents moral corruption.

Additionally, Qur'an 24:3 prohibits marriage with fornicators unless they repent, highlighting the Qur'an's concern with moral integrity in marital unions. Such boundaries are not merely restrictive but protective, to preserve family structures and prevent exploitation.

6.7. *Divorce and Its Connection to Marriage Procedure*

Although not part of the marriage initiation, the Qur'an's detailed guidance on divorce (e.g., Q: 2:229–232; 65:1–2) reflects its holistic approach to marital contracts. By outlining conditions for dissolution, including fairness, waiting periods ('iddah), and financial responsibilities, the Qur'an ensures that marriage is entered into with seriousness and awareness of its consequences. Thus, the marriage procedure cannot be divorced from its potential dissolution, as both highlight accountability, justice, and the protection of vulnerable parties.

6.8. Socio-Economic and Communal Dimensions

The Qur'an repeatedly emphasises that economic concerns should not hinder marriage. Qur'an 24:32 promises divine assistance for those who marry despite limited means:

"If they are poor, Allah will enrich them from His bounty..."

This verse counters socio-economic barriers to marriage, stressing that the procedure is not to be monopolised by elites or wealthier classes. Instead, marriage is portrayed as an inclusive institution accessible to all, supported by the wider community. The Qur'an thus integrates the marital procedure into a larger socio-economic ethic of mutual care and solidarity (Ali 2006).

6.9. Summary

The Qur'an presents a nuanced and balanced framework for the procedure of marriage. While it does not prescribe rigid ceremonial forms, it outlines principles that ensure justice, transparency, and mutual respect. Consent, guardianship, mahr, contractual clarity, publicity, and ethical boundaries form a coherent vision of marriage as a spiritual and social contract. The Qur'anic model seeks to preserve human dignity, empower individuals, and safeguard the family unit as the nucleus of moral and communal life.

7. Discussion

As explored in the preceding sections, the significance and procedure of marriage in the Qur'an reflect an integrated theological, ethical, and socio-legal framework. The findings reveal that marriage is not merely a private contract between two individuals but a divinely sanctioned covenant to ensure spiritual, social, and moral well-being (Al-Qaradawi 1999; Kamali 2008). This section integrates the earlier findings with the theoretical framework and literature review, situating Qur'anic perspectives on marriage within broader theological discourses, sociological interpretations, and comparative studies of Islamic jurisprudence. In doing so, the discussion highlights how marriage in the Qur'an serves as both a personal union and a collective institution central to sustaining Muslim society.

7.1. Integration with the Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this study was grounded in three central paradigms: the theological-ethical paradigm, which views marriage as a divine command and moral safeguard; the socio-legal paradigm, which emphasises the procedural and contractual aspects; and the anthropological paradigm, which situates marriage in the context of human social organisation and reproduction. The findings of Sections 5 and 6 resonate strongly with these paradigms, suggesting a multidimensional understanding of marriage in the Qur'an.

First, the theological-ethical paradigm was evident in the findings that stress chastity, fidelity, and compassion (Q: 30:21; 24:32). The Qur'anic emphasis on marriage as a means to achieve tranquility (*sakinah*) and mutual love (*mawaddah wa rahmah*) directly corresponds to this paradigm, reinforcing the notion that marriage is not solely a social convention but a sacred trust rooted in divine wisdom (Engineer 2004; Esposito 2001). This framework also explains why celibacy is discouraged in Islamic thought, contrasting with Christian monastic traditions. The Qur'an frames marriage as the normative condition for human beings, through which individuals fulfil divine obligations and contribute to a moral society.

Second, the socio-legal paradigm aligns with findings regarding marriage procedures—consent, mahr (dower), witnesses, and contractual stipulations (Q: 4:4; 2:232). The Qur'anic construction of marriage as a *mithaq ghalidh* (a solemn covenant) suggests a binding legal and moral contract, not simply a social arrangement. This paradigm emphasises procedural safeguards to protect the rights of both spouses, particularly women, in line with broader Islamic jurisprudence that developed from these Qur'anic injunctions (Nasir 2009; Kamali 2008).

Finally, the anthropological paradigm is reinforced by the Qur'an's depiction of marriage as an institution for continuity of lineage, social solidarity, and economic cooperation (Q: 16:72). The findings show that the Qur'an positions marriage as central to the family system, which in turn functions as the nucleus of Muslim society. In this sense, marriage transcends the personal domain, representing a community-building process.

Thus, the integration of findings with the theoretical framework illustrates that the Qur'an views marriage simultaneously as divine, legal, and social—each aspect reinforcing the other to create a holistic institution.

7.2. Comparative Integration with the Literature Review

The literature review highlighted that scholars across Islamic theology, jurisprudence, and sociology have consistently emphasised the centrality of marriage in Islam. Integrating the findings with these scholarly discourses provides further depth.

The findings support the observations of al-Ghazali (1997), who noted that marriage preserves religion by shielding individuals from immorality, maintains lineage, and promotes harmony. The Qur'anic evidence (Sections 5 & 6) affirms this triadic function, particularly through its repeated emphasis on chastity (Q: 24:32), lawful sexual relations (Q: 23:5-7), and family solidarity (Q: 16:72). The literature review also underscored Fazlur Rahman's (1982) argument that the Qur'an's primary concern with marriage is its role in promoting social justice, primarily through protecting women's rights. This aligns directly with the findings that procedures such as mahr and witness requirements were designed to ensure fairness and safeguard women from exploitation.

Further integration with modern literature reveals the relevance of Qur'anic marital injunctions to contemporary issues. For example, Esposito (2001) argued that Islamic family law remains one of the most debated areas in modern Muslim societies, particularly regarding women's autonomy and consent. The findings reinforce this by showing that the Qur'an explicitly requires the free consent of both spouses (Q: 2:232), thus validating contemporary reformist arguments that oppose forced marriages.

Additionally, the anthropological perspective in the literature (Shaheed 1999) stressed the role of marriage in consolidating kinship networks and economic partnerships. This was evident in the findings that describe marriage as a vehicle for mutual support and cooperation (Q: 4:19). By integrating findings with literature, it becomes clear that the Qur'anic institution of marriage functions as a multi-purpose social mechanism that extends beyond the individual to impact entire communities.

7.3. Theological and Ethical Implications

The Qur'anic portrayal of marriage as a sacred covenant carries profound theological and ethical implications. The findings revealed that the Qur'an repeatedly links marriage to divine mercy and creation (30:21). This positions marriage not only as a worldly arrangement but as a manifestation of God's will in human life. This challenges secular views of marriage as a mere civil contract, presenting instead a model rooted in spiritual accountability and moral responsibility (Al-Qaradawi 1999).

Ethically, the Qur'an's injunctions regarding fairness, compassion, and respect within marriage demonstrate that it is not hierarchical but reciprocal (Q: 4:19). This challenges patriarchal cultural practices that reduce women to subordinates, presenting marriage as a partnership based on mutual rights and obligations. Integration with literature confirms this ethical emphasis, as Shaheen (2013) argued that Islamic family law, when properly understood, advocates a balanced gender partnership. The Qur'an stresses kindness (ihsan) and justice ('adl) in marital life and thus becomes an ethical model for contemporary societies seeking equitable family structures.

7.4. Socio-Legal Implications

From a socio-legal perspective, the findings revealed that Qur'anic injunctions aim to establish marriage as a legally binding covenant with enforceable rights and duties. The socio-legal paradigm in the theoretical framework explains why marriage procedures in the Qur'an emphasise clarity, consent, and enforceability. By mandating mahr as a symbol of security for women (Q: 4:4), requiring witnesses for accountability (Q: 2:282, interpreted analogically), and regulating divorce procedures (Q: 65:1-2), the Qur'an provides a structured legal framework that protects vulnerable parties.

This has important implications when integrated with literature that discusses Islamic family law reform. For example, Nasir (2009) argued that the socio-legal construction of marriage in Islam provided a foundation for subsequent juristic elaborations in classical fiqh. The findings demonstrate that such elaborations were not innovations but logical extensions of Qur'anic principles. Moreover, modern reformist scholarship (An-Na'im 2002) has called for reinterpreting these injunctions to remain faithful to Qur'anic justice while adapting to contemporary realities such as women's education and economic participation.

Thus, integrating findings with the socio-legal paradigm and literature underscores the enduring relevance of Qur'anic marital injunctions for classical jurisprudence and modern legal reform.

7.5. Anthropological and Social Implications

The anthropological paradigm situates marriage within the broader context of human society and kinship. The findings confirmed that the Qur'an views marriage as essential for social reproduction and cohesion (Q: 16:72). Anthropologically, this positions marriage as a biological necessity and a cultural institution. Integration with literature shows that Muslim societies historically relied on marriage to consolidate kinship alliances and transmit property (Shaheed 1999). The Qur'an's emphasis on lawful unions and prohibition of zina (fornication) reflects an anthropological concern with social stability and moral order.

Furthermore, findings highlighting the Qur'an's emphasis on mutual support in marriage (Q: 30:21) align with sociological theories of family as a cooperative economic and emotional unit. Contemporary literature (Barlas 2002) supports this interpretation, noting that Qur'anic principles of compassion and reciprocity within marriage challenge exploitative practices. This anthropological dimension is critical in global discussions about the erosion of family systems, suggesting that Qur'anic marital ethics remain socially constructive and relevant.

7.6. Comparative Religious Reflections

Integrating the findings with comparative perspectives adds further depth. Unlike the Christian sacramental model, which elevates celibacy, or the secular model, which reduces marriage to a civil contract, the Qur'anic model synthesises the sacred and the legal (Esposito 2001). The findings reveal that Qur'anic marriage is divinely ordained yet pragmatically structured, embodying spiritual purpose and social regulation.

This integration highlights Islam's unique position: marriage is neither sacrament nor solely contract, but a covenant (mithaq) balancing divine, social, and legal elements. Comparative integration with the literature (Engineer 2004; Rahman 1982) suggests that this balance explains why marriage remains such a resilient and central institution in Muslim societies across time and space.

7.7. Contemporary Relevance and Challenges

The integration of findings with theory and literature also illuminates contemporary challenges. Issues such as forced marriage, domestic violence, and gender inequality persist in many Muslim societies. However, the findings demonstrate that these practices are cultural distortions rather than Qur'anic injunctions. The Qur'an requires consent (Q: 2:232), prohibits coercion (Q: 4:19), and calls for kindness between spouses (30:21). Integrating these findings with reformist literature (An-Na'im

2002; Barlas 2002) suggests that a return to authentic Qur'anic principles could address many modern challenges.

Furthermore, the Qur'an's synthesis of spiritual, legal, and social elements offers a counterbalance to overly individualistic marriage models in globalised contexts where secular legal systems predominate. The findings suggest that Qur'anic marital ethics—emphasising duty, compassion, and justice—provide a framework for strengthening family systems in pluralistic societies.

7.8. Synthesis

In synthesising the findings of Sections 5 and 6 with the theoretical framework and literature review, it is evident that the Qur'anic vision of marriage is holistic and multidimensional. Theologically, it is a divine covenant promoting love and mercy; legally, it is a contract ensuring rights and duties; anthropologically, it is a foundation for social cohesion and lineage. Integration with scholarly literature confirms that this multidimensional view of marriage is consistent with classical Islamic and modern reformist interpretations.

This synthesis underscores the enduring relevance of Qur'anic marital principles in addressing traditional and contemporary challenges. By situating marriage at the intersection of theology, law, and society, the Qur'an provides a spiritually enriching, socially constructive, and legally protective framework.

8. Conclusions, Recommendations, and Future Research

8.1. Conclusion

The present study examined the importance and procedure of marriage in the Qur'an through a content analysis that combined theological, sociological, and legal perspectives. By systematically analysing Qur'anic verses, it became clear that marriage is not merely a social institution but a divinely sanctioned covenant, central to personal morality and communal stability. The findings in Section 5 highlighted how marriage is regarded as a safeguard against immorality, a source of companionship, and a pathway to fulfilling spiritual and worldly duties. The Qur'an frames marriage as an act of worship, a divine sign (*āyah*), and a mechanism for nurturing mercy (*raḥmah*), affection (*mawaddah*), and tranquillity (*sukūn*) in human life (Q: 30:21).

Section 6 revealed that the Qur'an provides detailed procedural guidelines for marriage, encompassing consent, *mahr* (dower), contractual obligations, and ethical conduct. These directives stress the principles of justice, equity, and transparency, ensuring the protection of women's rights while preserving the dignity of men. The Qur'anic procedure of marriage thus stands as a balanced framework that avoids extremes of rigidity and permissiveness.

When integrated with the theoretical framework and literature review, the findings confirm that the Qur'anic institution of marriage is deeply rooted in a comprehensive moral, social, and legal vision. It is designed to harmonise individual desires with collective responsibilities, while safeguarding the sanctity of family life as the foundation of the *ummah* (community).

In conclusion, the Qur'an affirms the significance of marriage and provides an enduring model of how it should be conducted. These teachings remain relevant in addressing contemporary issues, including marital disputes, gender equity, and evolving cultural practices. The study demonstrates that Qur'anic guidance, when interpreted with fidelity and contextual sensitivity, offers a timeless framework that bridges theological principles and socio-legal realities.

8.2. Recommendations

Based on the findings, several recommendations emerge for scholars, policymakers, and Muslim communities:

Promotion of Qur'anic Education on Marriage – Communities should emphasise Qur'anic literacy regarding marriage, ensuring that couples and families understand matrimony's ethical and

legal foundations. Pre-marital counselling grounded in Qur'anic teachings can help mitigate misunderstandings and marital breakdowns.

Integration into Legal Frameworks – Muslim-majority states and Islamic legal institutions should align their marriage laws more closely with Qur'anic principles. This includes guaranteeing women's consent, protecting the mahr, and emphasising justice in marital contracts.

Balanced Gender Roles – Qur'anic teachings advocate equity, not domination. Communities should reinterpret gender dynamics within marriage in light of Qur'anic principles of compassion and mutual responsibility rather than cultural patriarchy.

Awareness Campaigns – Islamic organisations should promote awareness campaigns highlighting the Qur'anic view of marriage as a sacred covenant, discouraging harmful practices such as forced marriages, dowry abuses, and gender discrimination.

Policy Reform – Governments and NGOs working in Muslim societies should incorporate Qur'anic principles into family policies, ensuring that reforms reflect divine guidance and contemporary social realities.

Ultimately, these recommendations encourage a shift from cultural distortions to Qur'anic authenticity in marital practice.

8.3. Future Research

This study opens avenues for further research in Qur'anic marriage studies:

Comparative Religious Analysis – Future research may compare the Qur'anic institution of marriage with biblical and rabbinic traditions, exploring shared Abrahamic principles and distinct features.

Qur'an and Modern Family Law – Scholars can investigate how Qur'anic teachings on marriage are applied, adapted, or neglected in contemporary legal systems of Muslim-majority countries. Such research would illuminate the gap between scripture and practice.

Gender and Marriage in Qur'anic Exegesis—A deeper study of classical and modern tafsīr (exegesis) can reveal how evolving interpretations influence gender roles in marriage. This would also help dismantle cultural misreadings that conflict with Qur'anic justice.

Sociological Studies of Muslim Communities – Empirical research examining how Muslim societies practice Qur'anic marriage principles could reveal regional variations, challenges, and successes.

Digital and Global Contexts—With the rise of online matchmaking, migration, and globalisation, future research should examine how Qur'anic marriage principles can address the emerging realities of transnational families and digital-era marital practices.

In essence, future research should continue bridging Qur'anic theology and contemporary realities, ensuring that the sacred principles of marriage remain vital in guiding Muslim communities toward justice, harmony, and stability.

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Appendix A: Key Qur'anic Verses on Marriage (Selection)

Content	Verses in the Holy Quran
Purpose & Ethos	30:21; 24:32–33; 2:241; 2:231
Consent & Anti-Coercion	4:19; 2:232
Contract & Mahr	4:4; 2:236–237; 4:21
Eligibility/Boundaries	4:22–24; 5:5; 2:221
Financial Duties	4:34; 65:6–7; 2:233; 4:32
Modesty & Public Morality	24:30–31; 33:59
Reconciliation & Arbitration	4:35; 2:228–231
Divorce & 'Iddah	2:226–232; 2:234–235; 65:1–4

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