

## THE ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE ON PEACE BUILDING AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION: MARITAL CONFLICT IN FOCUS

BY

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Islam as a religion have existing strategies and alternatives ways of management and resolution of marital disputes and peace building among the married partners. To this end, the study aim at analyzing and review the Islamic perspective of peace building, with emphasis on marital related conflict and identify, the causes of conflict, strategies of resolving and management of the conflicts, challenges and way forwards in accordance with Islamic principles. The paper adopted primary and secondary method of data collection and use qualitative data analyses in analyzing the data collected. The study, made a review of the general perspective of Islam on resolution of marital related conflict. The study identify the causes of marital conflict include, disobedience, lack of sexual enjoyment, poor maintenance and allocation of time among co-wives etc. While arbitration, mediation, reconciliation, and divorce among others have been identified as the strategies of resolving marital related conflict. The challenges identified are, lack of trust, effective communication and adopting Islamic principles etc. It also recommended that, government ministries and departments of religious affairs should ensure proper implementation of Islamic principles in resolution married related conflict include marriage and peace education Islamic studies course content at all level, While Islamic religious organizations and Scholars, should emphasize on organizing seminars, workshops and sensitization on Islamic perspective of peace building and resolution of marital related conflicts. The Study concluded that, the Islam as a religion of peace have existing strategies of peacebuilding and management of marital related conflicts in according with Islamic principles.*

**Key words:** *Conflict, Disputes, Islam, Marital, Peace Building, Resolution.*

### **1. Introduction**

The Islamic religion as a religion of peace have perspective of peace building which have since been in existence in line its principles that guide the conduct all Muslims across the globe. Which encompasses the culture of peace that include, justice and mercy that fostered , kindness , tolerance and respect. Based on the fact that, all human beings shares common origin which naturally need

to be recognized, dignified respected irrespective of gender, ethnicity, race, and religion. In one of the Arafat Day sermon delivered by Imam A Sudais on 9<sup>th</sup> Thul Hijjah 1437 in Makkah stated that, “ Islam protects five indispensable necessities that every person required , which are life, religion, property, integrity and intellect thus; prohibits transgression against person in his religion and all of the above. Those necessities are basic for a person to leave in peace and for the betterment of his life here and here after”. (Abdulr-Rahman, 2016). This formed the basis for the foundation of peace building, where by transgression against all such indispensable necessities led to conflict at all level and in every human interaction.

It is known fact that, peaceful family, builds a better community which consequently determines the quality of lives in a society (Ahmad I. , 2001). Islam is one of the major religion that made marriage the only way that guarantees man and women companionship and compatibility in their lives in a dignified manner. When Allah created man, then He created women for him from his own self and permitted marriage for them to live in peace and stability. As Allah Said in the Quran:

And among His signs is that, He created for you wives from among yourselves, that you may find repose in them, and he put between you affection and love. Verily in that are indeed signs for people who reflect.,(Q30:21)

Indeed, Allah does not only created sacred institution of marriage, but also encourage us to marry as soon as possible, due to the abundant of Allah’s blessings to mankind, and feeling of sense of belonging between the couples in humane and tranquil as well as legitimate way of procreation of offspring.

To this end, the study seeks to analyses the Islamic perspective of peace building with emphasis on marital related conflict. In fact, peace building in Islam involved fostering culture of peace through reconciliation, justice and mercy, proactive engagement, diplomacy, kindness and tolerance , engaging respectable dialogue towards resolution of conflict and strengthening community harmony as exemplified by the teachings of Prophet Muhammed (SAW)

### **Conceptual clarification**

#### **Peace Building.**

The concept of peace building entails the effort to identify the underline cause of conflict in order to resolve it, repairs damaged relationship and also deals with individual level psychological trauma. In Islamic perspective peace building, it as a culture of peace which can be built within individuals and groups in adherence to golden principles of patience and tolerance, respect for all, equal treatment for all, compassion (mercy and love, kindness, modesty), and forgiveness (Khanam, 2013). In the perspective of this study , peace building can be refers as the effort to identify the underline root cause of the conflict, prevent escalation of conflict/violence and putting measures to resolve conflict and also adopting culture of peace in adherence to core Islamic principles of building culture of peace by individual at all level.

#### **Peace.**

The concept of peace is conceptualize in different perspective, is what is needed at all level of human interaction. Peace is conceptualize by different scholars in different perspective, some of which include. Charles who define it as “an absence of war and non violence situation, which in fact peace is known by its absence. Peace is also like happiness, justice and other human ideals which is something that every person and culture claims to desire and adore (Webel, 2007). In Islamic perspective, the word Islam is derived from an Arabic word which means “peace” (Hussain, 2024) . Which signifies its foundation of peace building through promotion of

diplomacy, justice, kindness and tolerance towards conflicts resolution as exemplified by teachings of Quran and Sunnah. Peace in Islamic tradition is also seen as an aspiration for pursuit justice and happiness, (UI, 2023). Therefore, in the perspective of Islam peace is the process of adopting non-violence way of resolving conflict and peace building process through, justice, happiness, compassion, patience and tolerance

### **Conflict**

The concept of conflict is conceive in different perspective, which made it very difficult to define and has no general acceptable definition. Conflict is an inherent in human experience, an inevitable and integral part of human interaction. It can be define as a disagreement between two or more individuals or group over values and incompatible goals, or differences in perception which can result into disagreement (Oche, 2006). In Islamic perspective, it can be define as “ taking a different position or course from another person in opinion , utterances or actions.it is also a differences between people, that may begin with a difference of opinion overran issue which often may lead to argumentation, mutual wrangles, active controversy, discord and schism” (Ahmad N. , 2021). In the perspective of this study, conflict can be conceptualize as an disagreement and struggle over scarce resources or incompatible goals among two or more individuals or a group and nations.

### **Marriage**

Marriage can be refers to as the legal contract between a man and woman that involve varying right and obligation and recognition among the couples and partners based on the culture and traditions as well religious beliefs and societal norms and values. In Islamic Perspective, “Marriage is derived from the two Arabic words “*Nikah and Zawaj*” which literally means of inserting something into another and combination of any two things whether opposite or equal. It also define by Muslim juris as the contract that permits sexual enjoyment between spouses in accordance with Shariah ” (Muhammad, 2015) . In the perspective of this study it can be conceptualize as the social and institution, union and legal contract between spouses as, well as social and religious contract that permit sexual enjoyment and relationship between a man and women.

### **Brief Overview of Islamic Perspective of Peace Building (a review)**

The perspective of Islam in peace building is rooted to its name which is originated from Arabic word “*Salam*” which means peace, which signifies that Islam is a religion of peace and is always preaching peace. The Islamic principles have been established on peaceful relationship with anybody at all level. The process of peace building through non-violence have been established particularly, socio-economic, political and religious activities and relationship with any individual and group at all level. However, there is circumstances that led to violence when there is breach of fundamental right to practice of religion, which is in according with the teachings of Quran , hadith and Islamic jurisprudence. It is further highlighted by scholars like Hashmi and Khaddari that, “Islam is religion of peace but permitted use of violence only some circumstances and conditions”, (Ayse S. Kadayifci-Orellana , et al, 2013) . Allah also said in Quran:

Allah doesn't not forbid you to deal justly and kindly with those  
who fought not against you on account of religion and did not  
drive you out of your homes. Allah loves those who deals with  
equity .(Q60:8)

It is worthy to note that, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in his life time in many situation have maintain friendly relationship with non-Muslims. It was reported that, “The Prophet Muhammed (SAW), allowed the delegate of *Banu Taqib*, to stay in His Mosque despite they are Non-Muslim

just to show them courtesy and respect. Also after the conquest of Makkah, he helped Non-Muslims people of Makkah during a famine, despite they had driven out of his home, (Ahmad I. , 2001). This shows how Islam ordain kindness to disbelievers in order to maintain peaceful co-existence among Muslims and non-Muslims.

It should be noted that, Qur'an and Sunnah is the main source of law in Islamic religion, have provide a complete system of peace building for people at all level and provides various alternative for conflict resolution particularly family and marital related conflict and many others. As contended by Muhammed Ziyad "The Quran as the main sources of law and guidance Muslims life , have provided a complete framework that covers, community, society, family and personal level as well as judicial level operations (Batha, 2022). Going by the above, the system of marriage and family in Islam is widely viewed as the backbone of peace and moral society.

### **Causes of Marital Conflict**

There are many causes of marital related conflicts some of which include the following:

- i. **Disobedience to the Husband:** The obedience to husband is the right and one of the major responsibility of wife. Islam mandated wife to obey her husband, and carry out his commands accordingly unless it is against the teaching of Islamic principles. It stated in the Holy Quran (4:34)

Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because Allah has made one them to excel the other, and because they spend(to supportthem) from ther means. Therefore righteous women are the devotedly obedient to 'Allah and to their husbands' and guard in their husband absence what Allah orders them to guard in the husband absence (e,g. their chastity, their husband's property), as to those women on whose part you see ill-conduct admonish them (first), (next), refuse to share their bed (and last) beat them lightly (if it is useful) , but if they obey you, seek not them means (of annoyance), Surely, Allah is Ever Most High, Most Great (Q4:34) .

Therefore disobedience to husband in marriage is against the teaching of Islam and is lead to conflict.

- ii. **Lack of staying in matrimonial Home:** This is also i measure causes of marital related conflict which is also against the teaching of Islam, for a wife to leave her matrimonial home without permission of her husband or legitimate excuse approved by Islamic principles. As Allah said in the Qur'an:

.And stay in your houses, and do not display yourselves like that of the time of ignorance, *AS-Salat (Iqamat-as-Salat)*, and give Zakat and obey Allah and His Messenger (SAW), Allah wishes only to remove *Ar-rijs*. (evil) deeds and sins) from you.O members of the family(of the Prophet (SAW), and to purify you with a thorough purification, (Q33:33) .

The verse mandated women to stay in their husband houses and do not leave without the husband permission or the reason permitted by Islamic shariah, because it is an act of disobedience which equally cause conflict among the spouses.

- iii. **Giving out Husband Property without his permission:** This is another common causes of marital conflict, where by a women give out man's property without seeking his permission of in accordance with the Islamic principles. It should be

noted that, Islam emphasis sincerity and trust in marital relationships particularly in respect of property and financial matters. According to Abu Umamah reported that;:

I had the Prophet (SAW) Said: Allah Most Exalted, has appointed for Everyone who has a right what is due to him and no one will be made to an heir, and a woman should not spend and never give out anything from her husband's home without his permission.. (Abu Dawud :3565)

Therefore, it is one of the primary responsibility of a wife to guards and protect husband property and never give out anything without his permission..

iv. **Lack of Maintenance :** The major and critical responsibility of husband in the marriage institution is the maintenance of wife. This clearly in the Holy Quran that:

Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because Allah has made one them to excel the other, and because they spend(to support them) from their means. Therefore righteous women are the devotedly obedient to 'Allah and to their husbands' and guard in their husband absence what Allah orders them to guard in the husband absence (e.g. their chastity, their husband's property), as to those women on whose part you see ill-conduct admonish them (first), (next), refuse to share their bed (and last) beat them lightly (if it is useful) , but if they obey you, seek not them means (of annoyance), Surely, Allah is Ever Most High, Most Great (Q4:34) .

Hence, it is the duty of the husband to ensure proper maintenance of wife and children , by providing all basic necessities to avoid conflict.

v. **Improper Allocation of time to the Co-wives:** This is also another important factor that negatively affected the peaceful coexistence of among the co-wives in a polygamous family. As Allah (the Most High) Said in the Quran:

And if you fea that you shall not be able to deal justly with the orphan-girsl, then Marry (other) women of your choice, two or three or four, but if you fear that, you shall not be able to deal justly (with them), then only one, or the slaves) that your right possess. That is nearer to prevent you from injustice" (Q4:2)

To this end Islam obligated the husband to ensure judicious allocation of time for each of the co-wives in the interest of peace and justice.

2. **Lack of Sexual Enjoyment:** Sexual enjoyment is an important aspect of marriage which is the right over the spouses for them to have sexual enjoyment with each other at any time they desire the husband. As stated in the Quran where Allah (the Most High) said that:

Your wives are tilth for you, so go to your tilth, when or how you will, and send (good deeds or ask Allah to bestow upon you pious offspring) for your own selves beforehand And fear Alla, and know that you are to meet Him (in the Hereafter), and give good tidings to the believer (O Muhammad SAW) ( Q2:223)

Hence to the need to maintain and enjoyment among the spouses as its one of the critical right of the spouses as stated above..

### 3. The Strategies of Resolution of Marital Conflicts in Islamic Perspective

i. **Reconciliation (sulh):** This is one of the most important strategy of peace building in the management in resolving marital conflict.. It is also involve mutual compromise between the spouses as stated in the Quran:

ii. And if a woman fears cruelty or desertion on her husband's part, it is not wrong for them to bring about reconciliation among themselves (by way of compromise on their rights for settlement is better, And human inner-selves are swayed by greed. But if you do good and keep away from evil, verily, Allah is Ever Well-Acquainted with that you do. (Q4:128)

Going by this the couples were urge to reconcile themselves and have mutual compromise when they have conflict among themselves, in the interest of peace.

iii. **Forgiveness, patience and tolerance:** This is another significance strategy of peace building among spouses which can be used manage and resolve marital conflict. Allah (the Most High) Said in the Quran , “And verily, whoever shows patience and forgiveness, that would truly be from the things recommended by Allah,” (42:43),By this verse, as Allah (the most High) recommended patience and forgiveness, the couples need to be patient and overlook some of the displeasing words and actions or in actions against each other and bear with each other and the situation that led to conflict. The husband need admonish a wife tactfully, patiently to fear Allah and be up to her responsibility as a wife, while the wife is urge to realize her mistake and ask for forgiveness.

iv. **Arbitration (tah kim):** It is the third party intervention in conflict resolution where by a respected third party will intervene and arbitrate for the parties in conflict and the decision will be accepted and banded by all of them. Islam also recommended that, the two arbiters from both sides of the couples should intervene in order to reconcile their grievances. As stated in the Quran:

If you fear a breach between them (husband and wife) appoint (two) arbitrators from both the husband and wife's family, if they both wish for peace, Allah will cause their reconciliation.

Indeed Allah is Ever All-Knower, Well Acquainted with all things (Q4:35)

Therefore, Almighty Allah (the Most High) recommended for an arbitrator from bo the family. However, the arbiter is expected to be impartial and also expert and skilled in communication, conflict resolution and Islamic law (*fiqh*).

v. **Mediation (Al-Wasatah) :** This is also another alternative form of “Wasatah,” which is also third party intervention in resolving marital conflict , where by a mediation session is organize by the respected third party to help the couples facilitate resolution of marital issues or conflict. “The mediation session is essentially conducted to reach a reconciliation agreement between the married couples” (Zuhri, 2023). The mediator(s) is the third party that intervene between the spouses to facilitate the dispute resolution and seeks number of agreements in order to achieve satisfactory result towards resolving marital conflict in line with Islamic principle. One of the Chief magistrate interviewed stated that, “ the Judges

usual mediate marital related conflict as form of out of court settlement to avoid dissolution of marriage (Mohammed, 2025). The mediator cannot decide the outcome rather facilitate the parties to decide and reach an agreement by themselves. However, the decision is not binding, the parties can also withdraw in process.

vi. **Divorce (Talaq):** This is another alternative method of management of marital conflict, after absorbing all other alternative disputes resolution before resorting to divorce. The words *Talaq* is an Arabic word which means freeing or undoing the knot and dissolution of marriage. Although it is permissible in Islam, but it is the most disliked permissible act to Allah (SWT) (Rabbani, 2025). It should be noted that, before divorce take place, all the Islamic principles, that guide the process should be followed before resorting to divorce

#### 4. Challenges of Peace Building in Marital Related Conflicts and Way forward

i. **Lack of trust:** Trust building is the critical aspect in conflict resolution marital related conflict. “It is important to approach the conflict with positive attitude and trust” (Ali, 2024) .Therefore, trust is an important aspect of conflict resolution particularly by the third party and parties in conflict. As Lack of trust from the spouses is negatively affecting the resolution process, sometimes the couples may fails to speaks the trust on the actual issues involve. Also lack of trust and confidence on the third party instill fear of partiality in the min (Fatimah, 2024)d of the parties in conflict. particularly in mediation process, which affect the outcome negatively.

ii. **Lack of Effective Communication:** It is known fact that, effective communication is critical in peace building. Agbu contend that, “ Communication skill is an assets in conflict management, and the main tool a mediator needs to have successful mediation is good and effective communication skills, which goes beyond talking, but active listening with all part of the body (Osita, 2006). Additionally, lack of effective communication and consultation triggers conflict particularly among spouses, some husband does not consult their wives on matters relating to home affairs which causes conflict. Spouses are encourage to communicate and engaged in mutual consultation and respect each other’s opinion, (Fatimah, 2024). Hence the need for proper consultation and communication among the couples to avoid conflict and also in resolving conflict.

iii. **Lack of adopting Islamic Principles:** This is also another critical challenges in conflict resolution process which negatively affected the successful resolution of marital related conflict. The Islamic principles stated the need for considering right and responsibilities of husband and wife which must be considered in the resolution process. ‘the principles provided by the Quran, Hadith and Islamic jurist ensure that, both spouses fulfil their roles in manner pleasing to Allah,’ (Fatimah, 2024) . Therefore, lack of conserving the right and of both spouses in resolution marital related conflict constitute a great challenge.

iv. **Lack of Peace Education:** This is also another challenges of resolution of marital conflicts, as most of the couples and third parties in resolutions process lacks peace education that will provide them with appropriate skills to analyses the conflict and use the appropriate method to resolve it. Peace education is multifaceted and related to idea of promoting knowledge and skills that promote peace and non-violence, as well as in conflict resolution process, values and attitudes, (Osita, 2006). Therefore,

peace education is needed for the couples and third party in the resolution process as it provide them with basic knowledge and skills to constructively manage conflict.

## 5. Conclusion

The study highlighted the Islamic perspective in peacebuilding in accordance with Quran and Sunnah and consensus of scholars on the resolution and management of marital related conflict. The challenges and major causes of resolution of marital related conflict have equally be identified and discussed accordingly, which include, disobedience, and lack staying in matrimonial home by the wife, among others. Additionally, the strategies of resolving and management of marital related conflict have also been enumerated and discussed accordingly.

### Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

- i. The government at all level should :
  - a. Engage with the Ministries of religious affairs to ensure proper implementation of Islamic principles in management and resolution of marital conflict.
  - b. Include Marriage and peace education in Islamic studies course content at all level of education.
  - c. Establish Marriage counseling department at all level that will guide couples on management of marital conflict.
- ii. The international and national Islamic organizations and associations should be organizing annual and quarterly workshop, seminars as well as monthly sensitizations on Islamic perspective of peace building process on management and resolution of marital related conflict.
- iii. The Islamic scholars should maintain media campaign using social media to educate, and sensitize Marriage couples on and resolution of marital related conflict in accordance with Islamic principles.

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