



Seerah-Based Reconciliation to Marital Conflict Resolution: Analysis of Spousal Communication in Pakistani Families

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the relationship between Prophet Muhammad's (ﷺ) reconciliatory practices, spousal communication quality, and marital conflict, focusing on how communication mediates the link between reconciliatory behaviours and conflict. Rooted in marital relationship dynamics and guided by ethical principles demonstrated by Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), the research examined whether a decline in reconciliatory practices adversely affects communication and increases marital discord. The study was conducted in Peshawar using a purposive sample of 721 married individuals (359 females, 362 males) representing diverse age groups, educational backgrounds, and family types. Data were collected through validated self-report measures and analyzed using SPSS and AMOS, incorporating exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses, structural equation modelling, and mediation testing. Findings revealed that low adherence to Prophetic reconciliatory practices was significantly associated with reduced spousal communication quality and increased marital conflict, with communication quality playing a strong mediating role. The study concludes that strengthening reconciliatory practices and communication skills can effectively promote marital harmony and stability.

Keywords: Marriage, Marital Conflict, Prophet Muhammad's (ﷺ) Reconciliation, Family, Muslims

Maximum number of authors of a paper shouldn't be more than two and contribution of second author (if any) should be mentioned below:-

Mutual Development of paper

Social, economic and cultural changes in Pakistani society are putting increasing pressure on marital relationships. Family structures have changed due to urbanization, economic pressures, changing gender roles and the influence of international media, leading to conflicts between spouses.¹ Although marriage is still respected and a central aspect of Muslim culture, recent literature on counseling centers and family welfare offices indicates a high incidence of divorces and long separations and overall dissatisfaction in marriages. In most cases, these are not so much deep-seated as insidious battles of values but rather the inability of couples to handle conflicts constructively, which is why minor disputes turn into long-lasting resentments.² Such a reality requires interventions to be effective and based on the moral and religious norms of the society where they are implemented.

The foundation of any successful marital relationship can be a healthy dialogue, which is lacking in most couples in Pakistan, characterized by open, respectful and constructive communication.³ Conflicts are a natural phenomenon but when communication is lacking, conflicts will not be updated and instead of trust, distrust begins to build.⁴ Western-style marital counseling methods can be very effective in providing couples with tools to enhance communication but can be experienced culturally foreign to most Muslim couples and are likely to be conflicted due to a perceived sense of value conflict. Unless there is a framework that can influence the religious and social values of Pakistani families, conflict resolution methods are of limited long-term adoption.

¹- Syed Nomanul Haq. "The Effects of Urbanization on Traditional Family Structures," *Journal of Social Signs Review* 2, no. 3, (2024): 70-79.

²- Caroline, and Christian Heim. "Jointly Negotiated Conflict Resolution Strategies of Couples in Long-Term Marriages: A Qualitative Study." *Contemporary Family Therapy* 47, no. 1, (2025): 16-28.

³- Ali Parvandi, Mokhtar Arefi, and Asma Moradi. "The Role of Family Functioning and Couples Communication Patterns in Marital Satisfaction," *Family Pathology, Counseling and Enrichment Journal* 2, no. 1, (2016): 54-65.

⁴- Kathleen M. Galvin, Dawn O. Braithwaite, and Carma L. Bylund. *Family Communication: Cohesion and change* (Routledge, 2015), 1-432.

This leads to a strong demand for evidence-based and Islamic worldviews to be more focused.

The Sīrah of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) provides an exemplary framework for addressing marital discord in a manner that preserves dignity, compassion, and mutual respect.⁵ His approach emphasized forgiveness, patience, active listening, and fairness, as well as the avoidance of harsh language and public humiliation. In many documented cases, the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) mediated disputes with empathy and wisdom, fostering reconciliation rather than division. The enduring wisdom and applicability of these Prophetic reconciliatory practices offer valuable guidance for contemporary marriages, providing culturally and spiritually grounded strategies for conflict resolution.⁶ However, contemporary research has seldom explored their potential integration into modern marital contexts. As a result, an important source of culturally and spiritually authentic guidance remains underutilized in the design of marital support interventions in Pakistan.

Although Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) reconciliation practices are thought to reduce marital discord, the mechanism by which this is achieved needs to be explored. One of the mechanisms is an increase in the quality of communication between spouses. Couples who have set out to use Prophet Muhammad's (ﷺ) Sīrah, such as listening patiently, speaking gently even in disagreement, and putting themselves in the other's shoes, are more likely to resolve differences amicably between them.⁷ In contrast, other couples engage in cycles of blame, avoidance,

⁵- Syed Hamid Farooq Bukhari. "A Qur'anic and Prophetic Framework for Islamic Counselling in Addressing Contemporary Family and Marital Challenges," *AL-HAYAT Research Journal (AHRJ)* 2, no. 2, (2025): 119-127.

⁶- Abdul Ghaffar, Tanveer Qasim, and Waqas Ali Haider. "Resolving Marital Discord: Insights from Islamic Jurisprudence on Conflict and Reconciliation," *Al-Qawārīr*, 5, no. 2, (2024): 49-76.

⁷- Afshan Naz, and Syeda Sadia. "The Role of Counseling in Marital Conflict Management: An Islamic Perspective," *Islamic Studies Research Journal Abhath*, 9, no. 36, (2024). 24-60.

or verbal aggression when they ignore these principles, and this can result in increased tension in the marital relationship.⁸ By analyzing the communication between husband and wife as an intervention effect, one can understand how Sirah of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) influence and achieve their effects in real-life relationships.

Although Islamic scholarship offers a rich description of the Prophet Muhammad's (ﷺ) methods for helping to promote marital harmony, empirical research examining the methods in modern Muslim societies is rare. There is a lack of effective quantitative data that determines whether the frequent practice of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) conciliatory methods is associated with improvements in marital outcomes and increased communication quality. Filling this gap would be useful in the academic literature as well as in the work of marriage counselors, imams, and family welfare professionals who seek culturally and religiously authentic materials to enhance family life in Pakistan.

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the relationship between the adoption of Prophet Muhammad's (ﷺ) reconciliatory practices and levels of marital conflict among Pakistani Muslim couples.
2. To investigate the relationship between the adoption of Prophet Muhammad's (ﷺ) reconciliatory practices and levels of communication quality among Pakistani Muslim couples.
3. To investigate whether poor spousal communication quality mediates the relationship between Prophet Muhammad's (ﷺ) reconciliatory practices and increased marital conflict.

⁸- Shahzad, Amir, Hafiz Zaheer Azam, and Anwar Ullah. "The Role of Islam in Peaceful Coexistence (Analytical study by the Sirah of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ))." *Al-Amir Research Journal for Islamic Studies*, " 5, no. 01, (2024): 13-30.

Literature Review

Martial conflict in Pakistan

In Pakistan, marital conflict has become an issue of concern and women petitioning *khula* (separation) has increased and reports of growing dissatisfaction with marriages are on the rise. These tensions are caused by a number of socio-cultural factors such as the economic instabilities, interference in the family by extended families, changing gender expectations and absence of formal methods of conflict resolutions.⁹ Even minor conflicts tend to get out of hand since none of the divorced couples access culturally adequate mediating tools. Although Islam regards marriage as a sacred institution, there are still no available and culturally valid interventions to be used to manage unresolved issues as they can only crystallize into long-term estrangement.¹⁰ According to government and NGO reports, although a considerable number of couples turn to the outside assistance, secular methods of counseling usually do not best appeal to Pakistani Muslim families, which makes them less likely to embrace the suggested remedies. This necessitates culturally and religiously based interventions in a big way.

Prophet Muhammad's (ﷺ) Reconciliatory Practices as a Model for Marital Mediation

The *Sīrah* of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) provides a rich and enduring source of guidance for resolving marital disputes, fostering

⁹- Rizwan Ullah, Madiha Afzal, and Noor ul Huda. "Khula (Divorce at The Instance of Wife) in Pakistan: A Critical Examination of the Law and Practice," *Research Consortium Archive* 3, no. 2, (2025): 618-633.

¹⁰- Ramsha Wafa, Zohaib Ahmed, and Shahrukh Saleem. "Breaking the Chains: Exploring the Barriers of Carrying out a Marital Relationship in Women Seeking Khula," *Journal of Development and Social Sciences*, 4, no. 4, (2023): 373-380.

mutual respect, and preventing unnecessary separation between spouses.¹¹

Authentic hadith literature and historical accounts illustrate the Prophet Muhammad's (ﷺ) exceptional ability to address conflicts with empathy, wisdom, and fairness. When disagreements arose, he would give both spouses the opportunity to speak openly, listening attentively to their concerns without interruption and ensuring each felt heard and valued. He deliberately avoided harsh or hurtful language, recognizing that words spoken in anger could damage trust and affection. Instead, he modeled gentle communication, patience, and sincerity, creating an environment conducive to understanding and reconciliation.¹² Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) also encouraged forgiveness as a key to maintaining marital harmony, teaching that overlooking faults not only strengthens the marital bond but also brings spiritual reward. Central to his approach was the principle of fairness ('adl), ensuring that both spouses were treated equitably and with respect. His focus was not on assigning blame but on restoring peace and dignity within the relationship. These reconciliatory practices offer both spiritual inspiration and practical strategies that remain highly relevant for couples navigating marital challenges today.¹³

Spousal Communication as a Mediating Mechanism

The quality of communication is one of the most acknowledged marital satisfaction and conflict resolution determinants. Effective communication - which is characterized by active listening; respectfully expressing disagreement; and constructive negotiation - helps to curtail the growth of disagreements, and ineffective communication has the

¹¹- Afzalur Rahman. *Muhammad (ﷺ) Encyclopedia of Seerah*, Vol 1. (London: Seerah Foundation, 1981), 1-758.

¹²- Fozia Fiaz, Ammara Tabassum, and Naeem Qaiser Alazhari. "Western Understanding of the Sirah of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) with Orientalistic Approach.... A Critical Analysis," *Negotiations* 1, no. 3, (2021): 44-53.

¹³- Abid Naeem. "Muhammad (PBUH) As A Prophet of Mercy in the Light of English Books on Sirah," *AL-IDRAK JOURNAL* 2, no. 1, (2022): 213-230.

propensity of increasing tense situations.¹⁴ Structured communication skills training decreased marital conflict levels greatly among couples but that religiously inspired communication principles were not present in the intervention models. Key communication aspects in reconciling practices such as keeping a calm tone, asserting the validity of the spouse point of view and reframing conflict as positive is naturally induced into prophetic reconciliation practices.¹⁵ This correspondence indicates that Prophet Muhammad's (ﷺ) Sīrah practices may be an effective mediating variable since it can potentially enhance marital outcomes by increasing the quality of communication between spouses.

Hypotheses

H₁: Low adoption of Prophet Muhammad's (ﷺ) reconciliatory practices have a significant relationship with increased marital conflict.

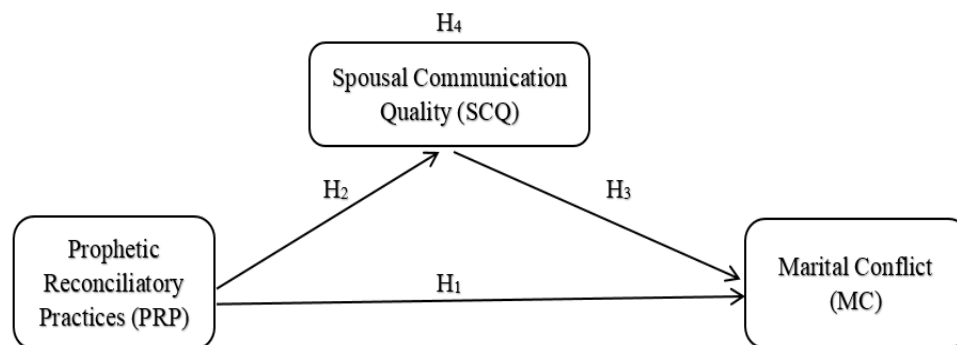
H₂: Low adoption of Prophet Muhammad's (ﷺ) reconciliatory practices has a significant relationship with low spousal communication quality.

H₃: Low spousal communication quality has a significant relationship with increased marital conflict.

H₄: Low spousal communication quality significantly mediates the relationship between low adoption of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) reconciliatory practices and increased marital conflict.

¹⁴– Lavner, Justin A., Benjamin R. Karney, and Thomas N. Bradbury. "Does couples' communication predict marital satisfaction, or does marital satisfaction predict communication?," *Journal of Marriage and Family* 78, no. 3, (2016): 680-694.

Figure 1. Conceptual Model



Material and Methods

Method and Design

The study employed quantitative research approach using cross-sectional survey design to collect data from married individuals in District Peshawar. This design was appropriate as it allowed the measurement of relationships between the adoption of Prophet Muhammad's (ﷺ) reconciliatory practices, marital conflict, and spousal communication at a single point in time. The design's emphasis on standardized measurement enhanced reliability, while the use of a representative sample improved the generalizability of findings to the wider population of Pakistani Muslim families in the district.

Participants

The participants of the study were married individuals residing in District Peshawar, representing diverse socio-economic, cultural, and educational backgrounds from both urban and rural settings. All respondents were practicing Muslims, living with their spouses, and had been married for at least three years, ensuring that they possessed sufficient marital experience to reflect on the study variables. Both men and women were included to capture perspectives from each spouse's lived experience within the marital relationship. Participants varied in age, with younger, middle-aged, and older couples represented,

allowing for insights across different stages of married life. They also differed in educational attainment, ranging from no formal schooling to higher education, and in occupational engagement, including homemakers, employed professionals, laborers, and self-employed individuals. This diversity allowed the study to reflect the heterogeneity of Pakistani Muslim families in Peshawar while maintaining a shared cultural and religious context.

Sampling

The study employed purposive sampling to deliberately select respondents who met specific, pre-defined criteria essential for addressing the research objectives. This non-probability technique was chosen because the research required participants with direct marital experience, familiarity with Islamic marital teachings, and the capacity to reflect on Prophet Muhammad's (ﷺ) reconciliatory practices - characteristics not evenly distributed in the general population and therefore unlikely to be captured effectively through random selection. Probability sampling was deemed unsuitable due to the absence of a complete and reliable sampling frame of all married individuals in District Peshawar, the cultural sensitivities surrounding discussions of marital relationships, and the need for gender-matched interviewers to ensure open and authentic responses. Inclusion criteria required that participants be (1) currently married and living with their spouse to ensure experiential relevance, (2) married for at least three years to allow sufficient relationship history for evaluating communication and conflict, (3) practicing Muslims to ensure alignment with the religious context of the study variables, and (4) permanent residents of District Peshawar to maintain cultural and environmental consistency. These criteria were logically justified as they ensured that responses were grounded in lived marital experience, relevant religious context, and the local socio-cultural setting. The final sample consisted of 721 participants, including 362

males (50.2%) and 359 females (49.8%), maintaining near gender parity to enable comparative analysis between male and female perspectives.

Measures

Since no existing instruments were fully suitable for capturing the constructs in the Pakistani cultural and religious context, three new scales were developed specifically for this study to measure (1) the frequency of family-level adoption of Prophetic reconciliatory practices, (2) the level of marital conflict, and (3) the quality of spousal communication. All scales were constructed using a 5-point Likert format, with items framed in negative statements to minimize acquiescence bias. Content validity was established through expert review by five scholars specializing in Islamic studies, marital counseling, and social research, who evaluated the items for cultural relevance, conceptual clarity, and comprehensiveness. The scales were then pilot tested on a sample of 40 married individuals from District Peshawar to assess comprehension, wording, and response variability. Reliability was confirmed through Cronbach's alpha coefficients, which exceeded the acceptable threshold of 0.70 for all scales. Following full-scale data collection, convergent and discriminant validity, as well as composite reliability, were examined using the Fornell-Larcker criteria, ensuring that each construct demonstrated adequate internal consistency and theoretical distinctiveness.

Data Collection Procedure

Formal approval for the study was obtained from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the University of Peshawar. Prior to initiating fieldwork, official permissions were secured from the relevant district authorities to facilitate access and community cooperation. A day before data collection, meetings were scheduled with identified participants, during which the purpose of the study was explained, and informed consent was obtained. On the scheduled day, the researchers visited the designated meeting venues of the participants - such as community centres, local offices, and accessible neutral spaces - and administered

the questionnaires in a comfortable and culturally appropriate setting. Anonymity and confidentiality of responses were strictly maintained, and participants were assured that the information provided would be used solely for academic purposes. The research team invested time in building rapport and trust, which encouraged openness and minimized response bias. Although minor instances of missing data were identified during collection, the researchers ensured completeness on-site, resulting in a 100% usable response rate.

Data Analysis Procedure

The collected data were analyzed using SPSS and AMOS. Initially, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted to identify the underlying factor structure of the newly developed scales and to ensure that items loaded appropriately on their respective constructs. This was followed by confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to validate the measurement model and assess the model fit. Discriminant and convergent validity were established through the Fornell-Larcker criteria, and composite reliability values for all constructs exceeded the recommended threshold. After confirming the adequacy of the measurement model, a structural model was developed to test the hypothesized relationships between variables. Mediation analysis was performed to assess the indirect effects of spousal communication quality between the adoption of Prophet Muhammad's (ﷺ) reconciliatory practices and marital conflict, while direct effects were also examined. Both direct and indirect paths were evaluated to provide a comprehensive understanding of the relationships among the study variables.

Results

Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the 721 participants in the study. The age distribution shows that the largest proportion of participants (40.9%) were in the 26-35 age group,

followed by 18-25 years (23.3%) and 36-45 years (20.8%). This indicates that the sample was largely composed of adults in their prime working and family-rearing years, which is appropriate given the study's focus on marital dynamics. Only 1.7% were below 18, reflecting the purposive selection of married individuals, while 3.6% were above 55, suggesting fewer older participants who are still actively engaged in family life. Gender representation was balanced, with females at 49.8% and males at 50.2%, ensuring gender-neutral insights into marital and communication patterns.

Table 1. Participants' demographic information.

Variables	<i>n</i>	%
Participants' Age (in years)		
Below 18	12	1.7
18-25	168	23.3
26-35	295	40.9
36-45	150	20.8
46-55	70	9.7
Above 55	26	3.6
Participants' Gender		
Female	359	49.8
Male	362	50.2
Educational Status		
Illiterate	102	14.15
Up to primary education	138	19.14
Up to secondary education	190	26.34
Up to bachelor's	160	22.19
Up to master's	101	14.00
Above master's	30	4.16
Duration of Marriage (in years)		
3-6	122	16.91
7-10	148	20.53
11-14	312	43.27

More than 14	139	19.28
Family Type		
Joint	478	66.29
Nuclear	243	33.71

In terms of education, the largest group had completed secondary education (26.34%), followed by those with bachelor's degrees (22.19%) and primary education (19.14%). The presence of 14.15% illiterate participants underscores the inclusion of voices from less-educated segments of society, while the 4.16% with above master's degrees indicates that highly educated participants were a minority. This diversity ensures that the findings are reflective of varying literacy levels in Pakistani marital contexts. Regarding marital duration, the largest group (43.27%) reported being married for 11-14 years, which aligns with the study's intention to include couples with established relationship histories. This was followed by those married 7-10 years (20.53%) and more than 14 years (19.28%), while only 16.91% were married for 3-6 years, reflecting a focus on mature marital experiences where reconciliatory practices may have developed over time. Family type data reveal that the majority (66.29%) lived in joint families, consistent with cultural norms in Pakistan, where extended family structures are prevalent. However, a significant minority (33.71%) lived in nuclear families, allowing comparative insights into how family systems might influence communication and marital conflict.

Before conducting exploratory factor analysis (EFA), it was necessary to determine whether the dataset was appropriate for such analysis. Two preliminary tests - the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity - were performed to assess the suitability of the data. The KMO value obtained was 0.955, which is considered "marvelous" according to Kaiser's (1974) classification, indicating that the correlations among variables were sufficiently compact to yield reliable factors. This high value reflects that

the sample size and the correlation patterns were highly adequate for factor analysis. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity further supported the factorability of the data, producing a statistically significant result, $\chi^2(903) = 67,686.173$, $p < .001$. This outcome rejects the null hypothesis that the correlation matrix is an identity matrix, confirming that meaningful relationships exist among the items.

To evaluate the adequacy of the proposed measurement model, several model fit indices were examined. The chi-square divided by degrees of freedom (χ^2/df) was 2.345, which falls within the acceptable range of 1 to 3, indicating a good fit between the model and the observed data. The Comparative Fit Index (CFI) was 0.942, exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.90, suggesting that the model fits the data considerably better than the null model. The Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) was 0.071, which is below the cutoff value of 0.10, indicating that the residuals between the observed and predicted correlations were small. Similarly, the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) was 0.067, falling below the recommended limit of 0.08, with a PClose value of 0.046, surpassing the threshold of 0.02, indicating a close fit to the data. Collectively, these indices demonstrate that the measurement model achieved a good fit, supporting the structural integrity of the constructs and the validity of the scale structure for further analysis.

Table 2. Discriminant validity through Fornell-Larcker criterion.

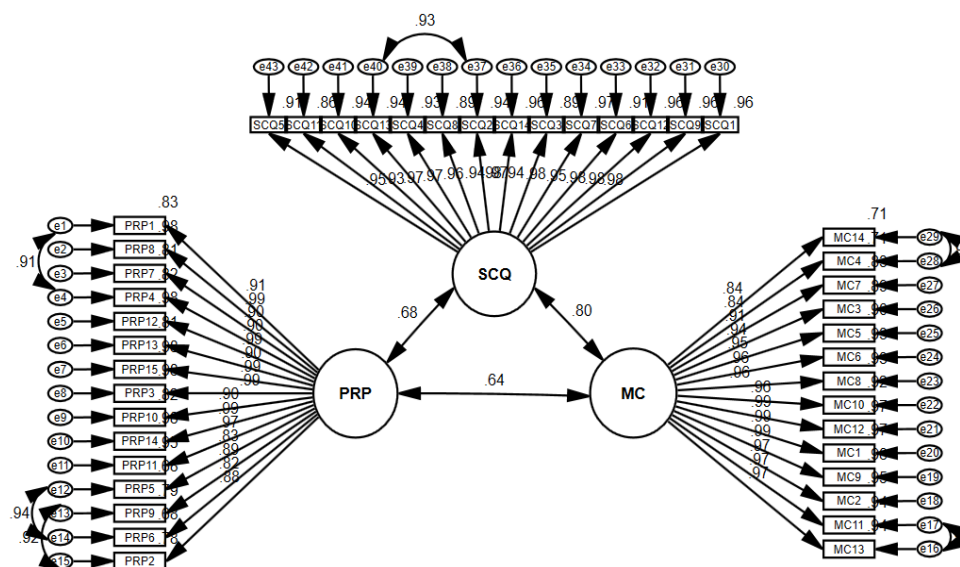
	Scales	MSV	MaxR(H)	1	2	3	4
1	PRP	0.467	0.997	0.926			
2	MC	0.640	0.996	0.636***	0.947		
3	SCQ	0.640	0.996	0.683***	0.800***	0.964	

Note. *** $p < 0.001$.

Table 2 presents the discriminant validity results assessed using the Fornell-Larcker criterion. According to this criterion, the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct (shown on

the diagonal in bold) should be greater than its correlations with other constructs (off-diagonal values). For Prophetic Reconciliatory Practices (PRP), the square root of AVE was 0.926, exceeding its correlations with Marital Conflict (MC) ($r = 0.636$, $p < .001$) and Spousal Communication Quality (SCQ) ($r = 0.683$, $p < .001$). Similarly, MC had a square root of AVE of 0.947, which was greater than its correlation with PRP and SCQ ($r = 0.800$, $p < .001$). For SCQ, the square root of AVE was 0.964, also higher than its correlations with PRP and MC.

Figure 2. Measurement model.



Furthermore, the Maximum Shared Variance (MSV) for all constructs was less than their respective AVE values, and the MaxR(H) values were very close to 1, indicating high construct reliability. The highest correlation observed was between MC and SCQ ($r = 0.800$), yet it remained below both constructs' square roots of AVE, confirming discriminant validity. These results suggest that each construct in the study was empirically distinct, with minimal risk of multicollinearity, thereby supporting the validity of the measurement model for subsequent hypothesis testing.

Table 3. Psychometric properties.

Scales	M	SD	FL	Z _{kurt}	α	CR	AVE
Prophetic Reconciliatory Practices	3.67	1.32			.992	.989	.858
PRP1	3.70	1.29	.884	-1.76			
PRP2	3.70	1.28	.829	-1.84			
PRP3	3.60	1.26	.868	-1.68			
PRP4	3.71	1.28	.876	-1.63			
PRP5	3.70	1.33	.840	-1.50			
PRP6	3.73	1.33	.835	-1.66			
PRP7	3.72	1.28	.878	-1.79			
PRP8	3.61	1.24	.879	-1.57			
PRP9	3.69	1.27	.840	-1.63			
PRP10	3.72	1.28	.871	-1.49			
PRP11	3.61	1.26	.855	-1.76			
PRP12	3.63	1.26	.876	-1.78			
PRP13	3.72	1.28	.876	-1.86			
PRP14	3.65	1.27	.870	-1.75			
PRP15	3.59	1.25	.874	-1.89			
Spousal Communication Quality	3.60	1.36			.995	.995	.928
SCQ1	3.57	1.35	.814	-1.76			
SCQ2	3.61	1.32	.808	-1.66			
SCQ3	3.61	1.29	.811	-1.86			
SCQ4	3.59	1.33	.805	-1.63			
SCQ5	3.59	1.30	.788	-1.45			
SCQ6	3.60	1.27	.812	-1.86			
SCQ7	3.58	1.33	.812	-1.76			
SCQ8	3.63	1.27	.806	-1.88			
SCQ9	3.59	1.34	.813	-1.84			
SCQ10	3.60	1.34	.802	-1.83			
SCQ11	3.64	1.29	.801	-1.91			
SCQ12	3.60	1.33	.812	-1.94			
SCQ13	3.62	1.33	.805	-1.67			

SCQ14	3.61	1.36	.810	-1.76
Marital Conflict	3.61	1.33		.992 .992.898
MC1	3.59	1.33	.848	-1.77
MC2	3.60	1.32	.852	-1.69
MC3	3.64	1.31	.810	-1.75
MC4	3.64	1.31	.773	-1.57
MC5	3.53	1.37	.819	-1.86
MC6	3.60	1.34	.840	-1.55
MC7	3.58	1.31	.808	-1.75
MC8	3.61	1.32	.840	-1.46
MC9	3.63	1.33	.850	-1.76
MC10	3.61	1.32	.841	-1.58
MC11	3.63	1.30	.856	-1.57
MC12	3.60	1.35	.846	-1.86
MC13	3.65	1.31	.859	-1.87
MC14	3.65	1.32	.773	-1.67

Note. *Kurtosis standard error = $\sqrt{.379} = .615$.

Table 3 shows that all three study scales - Prophetic Reconciliatory Practices (PRP), Spousal Communication Quality (SCQ), and Marital Conflict (MC) - demonstrated excellent psychometric properties. Mean scores for PRP (M = 3.67, SD = 1.32), SCQ (M = 3.60, SD = 1.36), and MC (M = 3.61, SD = 1.33) indicate that participants tended to moderately endorse the negatively worded items. Factor loadings for all items exceeded the acceptable threshold of 0.70, with most values above 0.80, confirming strong item reliability. Internal consistency was outstanding, with Cronbach's alpha values of .992 (PRP), .995 (SCQ), and .992 (MC), along with high composite reliability (CR > .98 for all). Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values - .858 (PRP), .928 (SCQ), and .898 (MC) - were well above the recommended 0.50 benchmark, supporting convergent validity. All kurtosis values were within acceptable limits (± 2), suggesting that the data did not substantially deviate from normality. These results

confirm that the newly developed scales were both reliable and valid for use in the Pakistani context.

Table 4. Standardized Path Coefficients.

Outcome Variable		Predictor Variable	β	SE*	t	p**	Bootstrap LBCI	Bootstrap UBCI
SCQ	←	PRP	.683	.030	22.77	.001	0.623	0.740
MC	←	SCQ	.686	.054	12.70	.001	0.582	0.793
MC	←	PRP	.167	.049	3.41	.001	0.072	0.262

Note. Bootstrapping was set at 2,000 samples. Bootstrap confidence interval was set at 95%. *Bootstrap standard error (SE). **Two Tailed Significance (p-value) is based on percentile method (PC).

Table 4 presents the standardized path coefficients from the structural model. Results revealed that Prophetic Reconciliatory Practices (PRP) had a strong and significant positive effect on Spousal Communication Quality (SCQ) ($\beta = .683$, $SE = .030$, $t = 22.77$, $p = .001$), with the 95% bootstrap confidence interval (CI) ranging from 0.623 to 0.740, indicating a highly stable estimate. SCQ, in turn, had a strong and significant negative association with Marital Conflict (MC) ($\beta = .686$, $SE = .054$, $t = 12.70$, $p = .001$; 95% CI [0.582, 0.793]), suggesting that better spousal communication was linked to lower levels of marital conflict. Additionally, PRP had a smaller but still statistically significant direct effect on MC ($\beta = .167$, $SE = .049$, $t = 3.41$, $p = .001$; 95% CI [0.072, 0.262]), indicating partial mediation. The bootstrapped confidence intervals for all paths did not cross zero, confirming the robustness and significance of the hypothesized relationships in the model.

Figure 3. Structural Model without Control Variable.

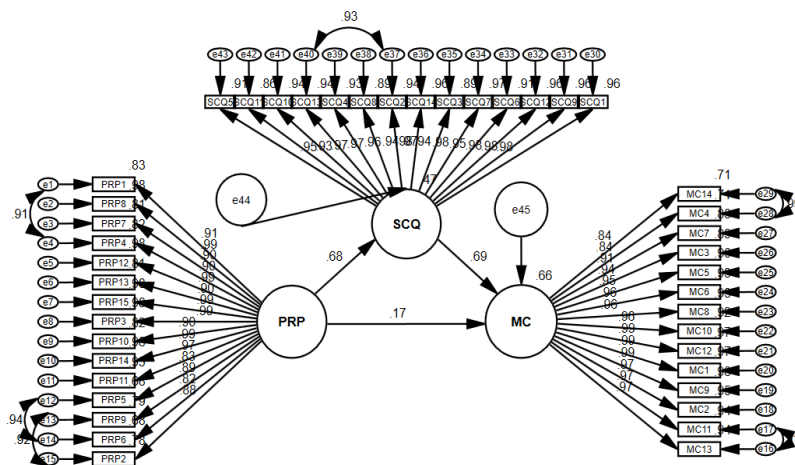


Table 5 presents the total, direct, and indirect effects of Prophetic Reconciliatory Practices (PRP) on Marital Conflict (MC). The total effect ($\beta = .636$, $SE = .033$, $p = .001$) was positive and statistically significant, with a narrow 95% bootstrap confidence interval (0.665 to 0.696), indicating a strong overall association between the two variables. When the relationship was decomposed, the direct effect of PRP on MC ($\beta = .167$, $SE = .049$, $p = .001$; 95% CI [0.072, 0.262]) accounted for 26.26% of the total effect. This shows that PRP independently influenced marital conflict even without considering the mediator. The indirect effect through Spousal Communication Quality (SCQ) was considerably larger ($\beta = .469$, $SE = .043$, $p = .001$; 95% CI [0.394, 0.564]), accounting for 73.74% of the total effect. This indicates that PRP’s influence on marital conflict operated mainly by affecting how spouses communicated, with reduced communication quality amplifying conflict levels.

Table 5. Total, Direct, and Indirect Effects.

		B	SE	LBCI	UBCI	p*	Effect Size
PRP onto MC	Total	.636	.033	0.665	0.696	.001	---
	Direct	.167	.049	.072	.262	.001	26.26%
	Indirect	.469	.043	.394	.564	.001	73.74%

Note. Bootstrapping was set at 2,000 samples. Bootstrap confidence interval was set at 95%. *Two Tailed Significance (p-value) is based on percentile method (PC).

Overall, the findings showed that there was a high and significant correlation between prophetic reconciliatory practices and conflict in marriage, where majority of the correlation is attributed to spousal communication quality. Although reconciliatory practices had a direct effect on the level of conflict, its greater effect was experienced indirectly and this implies that the practices can be seen to have major impact on the dynamics of marriage mainly by determining how partners talk to each other. That is, as communication quality became poor it was observed that conflict tended to increase, with a majority of the relationship between reconciliatory practices and conflict being explained by this poor quality of communication. These results emphasize the central importance of communication as a transition mechanism between conflict resolution practices and marital harmony, which implies that enhancing spousal communication, would decrease the level of conflict even in the presence of unchanged conditions.

Discussion

The results reveal that Prophet Muhammad's (ﷺ) reconciliatory practices correlates with increased marital conflict, implying that a lack of insufficient execution of these practices may obstruct spouses' effective resolution of disputes. Prophetic reconciling tenets - anchored in patience, empathy, forgiveness, and courteous dialogue - constitute a moral and relational blueprint that cultivates mutual understanding and alleviates hostility. When such values are not actively practiced, couples may resort to negative communication patterns, emotional withdrawal, or confrontational approaches, thereby escalating disputes rather than resolving them. Some previous studies align with current study, affirming that effective conflict-handling approach diminishes relational distress whereas their omission intensifies disputes.¹⁵ In addition, studies from Islamic counselling underscore that the Prophet Muhammad's (ﷺ)

¹⁵- Du Plooy, Kobus, and Ronél De Beer. "Effective Interactions: Communication and High Levels of Marital Satisfaction." *Journal of Psychology in Africa*, Vol. 28, No. 2, (2018), pp. 161-167.

reconciliation strategies foster not only harmony but also spiritual and emotional flourishing - assets that are crucial to maintaining marital satisfaction.¹⁶ Accordingly, the evidence corroborates the proposition that abandoning reconciliatory ethics leaves a void in which disputes can escalate unabated, thereby eroding marital stability.

The results also indicate that spousal communication quality decreases when Prophet Muhammad's (ﷺ) reconciliatory practices are used less frequently, indicating that a deficit of these practices may weaken every tactic that couples use to exchange thoughts, emotions, and problem-solving strategies. Prophetic reconciliatory principles - such as active listening, tenderness in one's speech, a spirit of empathy, and a commitment to fairness - are fundamentally communication-driven, crafted to sustain respect and mutual understanding within marital exchanges. When these practices are not upheld, communication can become fragmented, defensive, or emotionally distant, making it harder for partners to express needs and resolve misunderstandings effectively. These observations are consistent with Gottman's model of marital communication, which stresses that constructive conversation functions as a pivotal predictor of marital satisfaction and stability.¹⁷ Moreover, Islamic marital research indicates that Prophet Muhammad's (ﷺ) guidance cultivates not only spiritual intimacy but also practical communication competencies that bridge the emotional divide between spouses.¹⁸ Consequently, these results imply that overlooking Islamic reconciliatory ethics can corrode the bedrock of marital communication, ultimately undermining couples' mutual trust and understanding.

¹⁶- Fincham, Frank D., and Steven RH Beach. "Marriage in the New Millennium: A Decade in Review." *Journal of marriage and family*, Vol. 72, No. 3, (2010), pp. 630-649.

¹⁷- Abu-Raiya, Hisham, and Kenneth I. Pargament. "Empirically Based Psychology of Islam: Summary and Critique of the Literature." *Mental Health, Religion & Culture*, Vol. 14, No. 2, (2011), pp. 93-115.

¹⁸- Gottman, John M., and Clifford I. Notarius. "Decade Review: Observing Marital Interaction." *Journal of marriage and family*, Vol. 62, No. 4, (2000), pp. 927-947.

According to the results of the study, the lower is the quality of spousal communication, the more chances there would be to see increases in marital conflicts, supporting the idea that when couples fail to effectively share their thoughts, feelings, and concerns, it is more probable that their misunderstandings and disagreements would result in elevations. Communication acts as the main source to solve conflicts, to express emotions and to maintain relations. In case it is poor, the unresolved problems may increase over time leading to resentment and aggression. This follows the marital communication interaction theory which Gottman put forth where he noted that negative patterns of communication, which include criticism, defensiveness, contempt and stonewalling are the major predictors of marital breakdown.¹⁹ Along the same lines, open, favourable, and flexible communication is critical in ensuring that the harmony of relations is maintained and conflict spirals avoided altogether.²⁰ The results are compliant with that of Islamic family ethics literature with its focus on the importance of the presence of respectful and empathetic dialogue that maintains marital peace. Thus, the findings emphasize the idea that communication quality deficits cannot be only a symptom but one of the main premises of marital discord.

The results offer the conclusion that low quality of spousal co-ordination fits into the relationship between low Prophet Muhammad's (ﷺ) reconciliatory practices and strengthened marital conflict as a strong mediating variable. This implies that poor display of reconciliatory behaviours, which includes patience, forgiveness, empathy, and gentle conflict resolution, impairs the capacity of spouses to effectively communicate with each other, which then aggravates misunderstandings and interpersonal differences. In other words, absence of these moral

¹⁹- Al-Krenawi, Alean, and John R. Graham. "Somatization among Bedouin-Arab Women: Differentiated by Marital Status." *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, Vol. 42, No. 1-2, (2004), pp. 131-143.

²⁰- Canary, Daniel J., and Laura Stafford. "Relational Maintenance Strategies and Equity in Marriage." *Communications Monographs*, Vol. 59, No. 3, (1992), pp. 243-267.

and interpersonal principles does not just directly cause the disharmony in marriage, but also indirectly contributes to the conflict as they undermine the communication in the marriage based on open and respectful communication. These findings are also in line with previous research that apply the marital conflict framework, by focusing on the fact that communication processes are key avenues where relational attitudes and behaviours can be relayed into determining conflict dynamics.²¹ The ethics practiced in interpersonal relationships inspired by Prophet Muhammad, point to realizing the communicative environment that is favourable in the mutual understanding and conflict resolution. The study documents the quality of communication as one of the main mechanisms that bridge the gap between reconciliatory performances and marital outcomes, therefore indicating the significance of fostering ethical behaviours and communications to facilitate stable matrimonial trajectories.

Implications

These results hold significant practical and theoretical ramifications for fortifying marital relationships. In practical terms, the findings underscore the necessity of marriage counselling and premarital education programmes, alongside community-based initiatives, to foreground Prophet Muhammad's (ﷺ) reconciliatory practices i.e., patient endurance, forgiveness, and courteous dialogue, as fundamental relationship values. When marital training incorporates these principles, couples learn the skills required to improve the quality of their communication with one another, thus diminishing the likelihood of conflict escalation. From a theoretical standpoint, the study broadens existing marital conflict models by showing that communication quality functions less as a parallel relational factor than as an essential mediator, through which ethical and reconciliatory behaviours influence conflict

²¹ – Frank D Fincham. "Marital Conflict: Correlates, Structure, and Context," *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 12, no. 1, (2003): 23-27.

severity. These findings thus affirm the necessity of engaging with couples' moral foundations and communicative competence in both marital research and intervention design. Additionally, the findings carry cultural significance, furnishing evidence-based backing for faith-integrated marital guidance that is simultaneously culturally attuned and rigorously empirically supported, thereby becoming highly valuable to policymakers, educators, and family practitioners working to strengthen marital harmony in culturally diverse settings.

Conclusions

Finally, this paper would show that low or no use of Prophet Muhammad's (ﷺ) reconciliatory practices closely relate to the impaired communication quality between spouses and an augmented nourishment of marital dissonance, in which the quality of communication acts as an important mediating process within the association. Based on these results, it can be understood that the moral and ethical roots of marital interaction based on patience, empathy, and constructive problem solving are vital in developing a healthy form of interaction and reducing conflict between a husband and wife. The significance of the study is in the fact that the interrelationship between the interpersonal behaviours of reconciliation and communication has been confirmed on the empirical level; therefore, the study offers subtle insight into the dynamics of the effects of relational ethics and interactional skills on marital stability. Finally, the study confirms that the enhancement of both value-based and communicative aspects of marital relationship could serve as the effective avenue toward minimizing the level of conflict and fostering long-term mutual harmony.

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