

HOW COMMITMENT TO ISLAMIC VALUES MAINTAIN MARITAL STABILITY

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A quantitative study with 47 respondents examined how commitment to Islamic values can maintain marital stability. Several studies have shown that the benefits of religious commitment can improve physical and mental health,¹ including improved marital relations.² Simple regression analysis has been used to analyze the data. These findings indicated that commitment to Islamic values significantly predict marital stability (R Square = 0.487). Commitment to the Islamic values is assessed via religious participation and religious beliefs. The persons who have higher commitment to Islamic values can maintain their marital stability better. Involvement in religious activity can encourage persons to survive and struggle successfully in difficult situations in their marriage life and avoid divorce.

Keywords: Commitment to Islamic values, Religious commitment, Marital stability.

Research Background

Nowadays, Muslims are faced with a tough challenge of preserving Islamic family values in a society that is not conducive towards preserving them. In spite of all the materialistic advancements, the widespread decadence of family values is open for all to see in this modern life. Divorce is widely prevalent and increasing day by day. Couples end up in divorce over trivial matters and simple disagreements. Lack of trust among family members is high due to prevalence of abuse, extra-marital affairs and incest. It proves that the modern mentality is hesitant to accept the responsibilities of a married life and subsequently

Allah (SWT) is lifting the blessings of marriage and family up from their lives. Thus, the very foundations of family are being terribly shaken and shattered in the society where we are living.

The consequences of separation and divorce can be severe. Research indicates that individuals who are divorced experience greater rates of psychopathology, physical illness, suicide, homicide, violence, and mortality from disease.³ In light of these marital stability statistics and the greater risk for mental and physical health problems among the separated and divorced individuals, identifying the factors that help marriages survive have important implications. Furthermore, an understanding how these factors influence marital stability will help build a theory of marital quality and stability. This is the objective of the present study.

The literature on marriage is dominated by researches on examining the factors that lead to marital instability or divorce/separation. More recently, there has been an interest in the role that religiosity plays in the stability of marital relations.⁴

Interest in religion and spirituality has increased dramatically recently both within culture in general and within psychology. Substantial literature now describe connections between religion and mental health, and between religion and physical health.⁵

Most scholars of religion now agree that religion often positively affects mental health, but recent questions of interest have become more specific. Who does religion affect positively and under what conditions? Who does religion affect negatively and under what conditions? Worthington suggested a model addressing such questions. He theorized that people who were highly religiously committed tended to evaluate their world on religious dimensions based on their religious values.⁶ The key variable in Worthington's model is religious commitment, which is defined as the degree to which a person adheres to his or her religious values, beliefs, and practices and uses them in daily living.⁷ The supposition is that a highly religious person will evaluate the world through religious schemas and thus will integrate his or her religion into much of his or her life.

Wilson and Musick found, from this research, that the number of the respondents is very high who believe in a particular religious doctrine and implement the teachings of their religion in many religious activities were experiencing an increase in the functions of family and marriage

satisfaction.⁸ Call and Heaton mention when marriage couples participated in religious activities, they tend to dislike divorce and very little is thought of divorce in the household.⁹ Involvement in religious activity was found to encourage individuals and couples to survive difficult situations in life and avoid divorce; such persons may also be afraid of sanctions (sin).

Brown, Orbuch, and Bauermeister found an association between religiosity and marital stability among the Americans, both white and black.¹⁰ This study is based on the theory of religiosity that may improve problem-solving abilities in difficult situations and stressful conditions.¹¹ Whenever the individuals are able to manage themselves at conflict situation, it is likely to make marriage more stable than individuals who do not have this capability.

In this study it will be tested whether an individual's commitment to the Islamic values can make their marriage more stable. Marital stability is important as a basis of a healthy family. Healthy family serves as a capital to build better civil society.

Theoretical Framework

Marital Stability Criteria

Verderber and Verderber describe that marital stability can be achieved when individuals and couples are able to manage its relationship where there is mutual understanding between each other and they feel satisfied with the achievements that were experienced together in the past. It takes energy and attention for a couple to manage and make their relation stabilized.¹²

Keeping the positive sentiment override in a marriage may be done through Gottman's seven principles.¹³ The seven principles for making marriage work are:

- Enhance your love maps: The more you are familiar with your partner, the more intimacy happens. This is called having a love map of your partner. This helps maintain intimacy, and better prepares one to deal with stressful events and conflicts.
- Nurture your fondness and admiration: — work to increase/recall/unearth positive emotions about each other. The “fondness” and “admiration” aspects of couple relatedness are the antidote to contempt – it is a buffer to stressors due to a fundamentally positive view of each other.

- Turn towards each other and not away: This principle is based on the idea of staying connected, and positively so. Turning towards each other in small and regular interactions builds romance and connection beyond the cushioning of stresses.
- Let your partner influence you: Accepting influence will make it easier for the husband to establish deeper love-maps, increase fondness and admiration, and to turn towards each other.
- Solve your solvable problems: 5 principles of problem resolution were found as key to happy marriages: soften your startup, learn to make and receive repair attempts, soothe yourself and each other, compromise, and be tolerant of each other's faults.
- Overcoming Gridlocks: Gridlocks happen when people's life dreams [hopes, aspirations, wishes] for their life are not being addressed/respected by each other. When dreams are respected: couples are happier as they realize that marriage is supposed to help them with those dreams – and not manipulate the other out of achieving the goal.
- Creating shared meaning: Some people look for a spiritual connection – finding meaning in the togetherness beyond the mere joint tasks of family life. Symbols and rituals are helpful. There is a family “culture”, which gives shared meaning to their sense of togetherness. The “shared meaning” couple: discuss convictions in a way which blends each of the partner's sense of meaning. The shared meanings will strengthen the marital friendship.

Buehlman and Gottman in a research to create a coding system which determines the ways people talk about marriage to their partners, about the general perception of individuals associated relationship with a partner; where the interaction of these individuals determine existence or absence of the marital stability. This coding system by Buehlman and Gottman is divided into eight dimensions (Fondness/Affection, We-ness, Expansiveness, Negativity, Disappointment and Disillusionment, Chaos, Volatility, and Glorifying the combined Struggle):¹⁴

- Three of the subscales are positive in nature: (a) Fondness/Affection: rates expressions of pride, fondness, and affection for one's partner, (b) We-ness: indicates unification in the marriage, and

- (c) *Expansiveness*: how expressive they respond to and expand on what their partner is saying.
- Two of the coding dimensions are negative: (a) *Negativity* and (b) *Disappointment and Disillusionment*. The *Negativity* scale indexes the extent to which spouses are critical of their partner, are vague about what attracted them to their partners, and display negative affect toward their partners. The *Disappointment and Disillusionment* scale assesses the degree to which each member of the couple has given up on the marriage by expressing depression or dissatisfaction about the relationship or not being able to articulate what makes the marriage work.
 - Three subscales evaluate information about how the couple reports handling marital conflict: (a) *Chaos*, (b) *Volatility*, and (c) *Glorifying the Struggle*. The *Chaos* scale rates the degree to which the couple feels out of control of their lives and buffeted about by elements outside of their control. Example items include “The couple has a lot of unexpected or out of control marital conflict” and “The couple believes that unexpected problems have weakened their relationship.” The *volatility* scale measures the intensity, both positive and negative, of the spouses’ feelings for each other. Highly volatile couples express feelings of great passion and yet fight frequently. Examples of items that are used to measure this subscale include “The couple mention they like a good fight (having it out)” and “They feel emotions and other things intensely.” *Glorifying the Struggle* scale assesses the extent to which a couple has gone through difficult times but perceives their marriage to be stronger because of these experiences. Their marriage is the center of their lives, and they are proud of the struggles they have gone through. Example items include “The couple expresses that marriage is a struggle, but it is worth it” and “The couple is proud of the hardships they have been through.”

Klagsburn mentions the characteristics of a sustainable and stable marriage:¹⁵

1. The ability to change and adapt to changes. Namely through the development of positive attitudes than see a change as a disturbing thing.

2. The ability to survive in conditions that can not be changed. A marriage should be based on awareness that every occurrence of a disagreement or a problem should not always be resolved, and in this case people sometimes have to let it happen as it is.
3. Assumptions to stay committed. Namely a shared firm belief on the values of a marriage as an institution that must remain solid and kept together in joy and sorrow, and the waves of life experienced.
4. Trust. Through this trust, an individual will feel safe (safety and security) in conjunction. Trust is also the foundation for the growth of sexual intimacy and psychological, as well as one way of implementing loyalty.
5. The balance in terms of interdependence. Individuals express their needs to their partners, especially emotional needs. This interdependence is dynamic, there is a role as 'dependent', and others act as a 'giver of affection or attention'.
6. Mutual enjoyment of activities. When this happens, the emotional and physical relationship becomes increasingly intertwined. Couples not only share the same interests, but also compromise to accommodate mutual differences, and each also still pursuing his personal activities so that it can still make them mutually attracted to each other. There must be a balance between time spent together with the time in which they are apart and lead their respective activities.
7. Mutual respect, sharing stories. Sharing experiences can make people have a perspective on the present, allowing them to look at an incident which is potentially damaging to the marriage through what has been faced and solved together. This sharing of activities can be considered an entity that remind them of the capacity to survive based on what has happened in the past, so as to prevent the occurrence of instantaneous decision making when facing difficulties at present, or in future.

Islamic Values in Married Life

In Islam, marriage is a legal contract (literary Arabic: عقد القران *'aqd al-qirān*, "matrimony contract"; Urdu: نکاح نامہ/ALA-LC: *Nikāh-nāmah*) between two people. Both the groom and the bride are to

consent to the marriage agreement or contract of their own free wills. A formal, binding contract is considered integral to a religiously valid Islamic marriage, and outlines the rights and responsibilities of the groom and bride. There must be two Muslim witnesses of the marriage contract.

By getting married a person can, with the help of Allah, overcome many of the traps of evil, for marriage helps him to lower his gaze and guard his chastity, as ‘Abdullah bin Mas‘ūd narrated:¹⁶ *“We went with Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ). While we were young men who had nothing. He said” ‘O, young men! You should marry, for indeed it helps in lowering the gaze and protecting the private parts. whoever among you is not able to marry, then let him fast, for indeed fasting will diminish his sexual desire.”*

Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) in a *ḥadīth* explains that getting married means following *as-Sunnah* and completing a person half her/his religion. Narrated by Anas bin Mālīk (رضي الله عنه):¹⁷ *A group of three men came to the houses of the wives of the Prophet (ﷺ) how the Prophet (ﷺ) worshipped (Allah), and when they were informed about that, they considered their worship insufficient and said, “Where are we from the Prophet (ﷺ); as his past and future sins have been forgiven.” Then one of them said, “I will offer the Ṣalāt (prayer) throughout the night forever.” The other said, “I will observe Ṣaum (fast) throughout the year and will not break my Ṣaum (fast).” The third said, “I will keep away from the women and will not marry forever.” Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) came to them and said, “Are you the same people who said so-and-so? By Allah, I am more submissive to Allah and more afraid of Him than you; yet I observe Ṣaum (fast) and also do not observe Ṣaum (fast), I do offer Ṣalāt (prayer) and also do sleep and I also marry women. So he who does not follow my *As-Sunnah* (legal ways) in religion, is not from me (not one of my followers).”* The importance of marriage in Islam is also narrated by Sa’d bin Abī Waqqāṣ:¹⁸ *“Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) did not allow ‘Uthmān bin Maz‘ūn (رضي الله عنه) to keep away from marrying (and other pleasures) and if he had allowed him, we would have gotten ourselves castrated.”*

Marriage has an honorable position in Islam. A Muslim enters a new phase of his/her life, to build a family in which he will enforce religious values not just for himself but also on his or her spouse, children, and society. Under traditional Islamic jurisprudence, marriage

creates a unit of society that mutually accepts God as an integral part of every situation and decision, and recognizes mutual rights and obligations between spouses. Through marriage, couples commit to a lifelong bond that is based upon mutual mental, spiritual, and physical gratification. Such a home promotes and ensures equity and harmony, and is a source of shelter filled with peace, comfort, security, and continuity.¹⁹

According to Islam, both men and woman have rights over each other when they enter into a marriage contract: with the husband serving as protector and supporter of the family most of the time, from his means as the the Qur'ān says:

“Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because Allah has given the one more (strength) than the other, and because they support them from their means. Therefore the righteous women are devoutly obedient, and guard in (the husband's) absence what Allah would have them guard. As to those women on whose part ye fear disloyalty and ill-conduct, admonish them (first), (Next), refuse to share their beds, (And last) beat them (lightly); but if they return to obedience, seek not against them Means (of annoyance): For Allah is Most High, great (above you all).”²⁰

This guardianship has two aspects for both partners: The husband is financially responsible for the welfare and maintenance of his wife or wives and any children they produce, to include at a minimum, providing a home, food and clothing. In return, it is the duty of the wife to safeguard the husband's possessions and protect how wealth is spent. If the wife has wealth in her own capacity she is not obliged to spend it upon her husband or children, as she can own property and assets in her own right, so the husband has no right for her property and assets except by her will. A pre-marital agreement of the financial expectation from the husband is in the *mahr* (dower money), given by him to the wife for her exclusive use, which is included as part of his financial responsibility.

Marriage is defined in the Qur'ān as a compassionate and peaceful relationship that is grounded in love as this Qur'ānic verse says:

“And among His Signs is this, that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that ye may dwell in tranquillity with them, and

He has put love and mercy between your (hearts): verily in that are Signs for those who reflect.”²¹

By describing spouses as “garments” for one another, Islam encourages supportive, protective, and nurturing marital relationships as the Qur’ān said:

“Permitted to you, on the night of the fasts, is the approach to your wives. They are your garments and ye are their garments. Allah knoweth what you used to do secretly among yourselves; but He turned to you and forgave you; so now associate with them, and seek what Allah hath ordained for you, and eat and drink, until the white thread of dawn appear to you distinct from its black thread; then complete your fast till the night appears; but do not associate with your wives while ye are in retreat in the mosques.”²²

Those are Limits (set by) Allah: Approach not nigh thereto. Thus doth Allah make clear His Signs to men: that they may learn self-restraint.”²³

In addition to being based upon gender equality, there is also a requirement for Muslim couples to consult with one another as a means of engaging in joint decision-making within their relationships as the Qur’ān says:

“Those who hearken to their Lord, and establish regular Prayer; who (conduct) their affairs by mutual Consultation; who spend out of what We bestow on them for Sustenance.”²⁴

However, within traditional Islamic jurisprudence, there are jurists that maintain that women must be “obedient” to their husbands, as cited in the Qur’ānic verse IV:34, which refers to righteous women as being devoutly obedient. Other scholars maintain that such an interpretation would contradict other verses citing equal responsibility for every individual before God, and hence interpret “obedience” to be an act due to God, not man.²⁵⁻²⁷ Beyond the husband/wife relationship, parental responsibilities include being honest, just, and patient with children. Islamic law holds parents accountable for rearing children who are physically and psychologically healthy, and able to contribute positively to society. In the

same vein children are charged with treating their parents with respect and gratitude, as the Qur'ān says:

“And We have enjoined on man (to be good) to his parents: in travail upon travail did his mother bear him, and in years twain was his weaning: (hear the command), “Show gratitude to Me and to thy parents: to Me is (thy final) Goal.”²⁸

In the event that conflict occurs within marriage, the Qur'ān requires it be resolved through mutual consultation and open discussion. Allah (SWT) warns the believers regarding the possibility of disaster in family and then prescribes methods to prevent such disaster. The Qur'ān says,

“O ye who believe! Truly, among your wives and your children are (some that are) enemies to yourselves: so beware of them! But if ye forgive and overlook, and cover up (their faults), verily Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”²⁹

Allah (SWT) is warning the believers not to let their own family members be their enemies. In order to prevent that forgiveness, overlooking each other's minor faults and asking Allah's forgiveness for each other have to be made a regular practice within the family.

Here are some references of Islamic family values, which have been found in the Qur'ān and *Hadīths*:

Aim of Life: First of all, a Muslim family must determine its aim and objective. What is the ultimate goal of this family? The ultimate goal of a believer's life is pleasure and forgiveness of God and salvation in real life in the hereafter.

“Say: “Truly, my prayer and my service of sacrifice, my life and my death, are (all) for Allah, the Cherisher of the Worlds: No partner hath He: this am I commanded, and I am the first of those who bow to His will.”³⁰

Strong Base of Knowledge: In order to determine aim in life, Muslims need authentic knowledge, in order to implement in lives and

enhance qualifications. Knowledge seeker welcomed by Angels mentioned in a *ḥadīth*, it was narrated that Zirr bin Hubaish³¹ said: “*I went to Ṣafwān bin ‘Assāl Al-Murādi and he said: What brought you here?’ I said: ‘I am seeking knowledge.’ He said: I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) saying: ‘There is no one who goes out of his house in order to seek knowledge, but the angels lower their wings in approval of his action.’*” Seeking knowledge of the Qur’ān and *Sunnah* has to be a continuous, regular program in the schedule of a Muslim family. By seeking knowledge, a Muslim comes to know that Allah (SWT) has made His *Messenger* (ﷺ) as the true role model and that the *Messenger* (ﷺ) has encouraged Muslims to follow him.

Righteous Actions: A Muslim family obeys the commandments of its Lord. *Ṣalāt*, *Ṣaum* (fasting), *zakāt*, *ḥajj*, *ḥijāb* and other Divine injunctions have to be followed with complete sincerity and devotion. A Muslim family makes sure that its earnings and expenditure are all through *Ḥalāl* means. Family members, especially parents keep themselves away from any discrepancy between their speech and their actions because they are the ones who become examples for their children. Allah Almighty says:

“O ye who believe! save yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is Men and Stones, over which are (appointed) angels stern (and) severe, who flinch not (from executing) the Commands they receive from Allah, but do (precisely) what they are commanded.”³²

Family Education: A saying goes in English, “Charity begins at home”. In Arabic it says, *Al-Umm al-Madrasah* (Mother is the school). If you want to teach truthfulness to your children, but you make them sleep every night by scaring them of policemen, whereas there is no real policemen around-what kind of message are they receiving? If you want to teach respect to your children, but you and your spouse curse each other in their presence, how will they learn respect? Parents are responsible for the moral, ethical and the basic and essential religious teachings of their children which is their responsibility. Allah Almighty says in the Holy Qur’ān:

“And those who believe and whose families follow them in Faith –

to them shall We join their families: Nor shall We deprive them (of the fruit) of aught of their works: (Yet) is each individual in pledge for his deeds.”³³

Learn your role and responsibility in the family: Whether you’re a husband, wife, parent, child, sibling or relative, learn your position, role and responsibility in the family from the Qur’ān and *Sunnah*. If all family members strive to fulfill their obligations, they all automatically get their rights and the family runs smoothly. As example, the responsibility of guardianship, supervision, and management of the family, in Islam, have been set on the shoulders of men, as Allah, the Exalted, has stated in the verse IV:34 of the Holy Qur’ān.

Be Satisfied with Little: The Prophet (ﷺ) as a true role model, has taught us to look towards those who are less advantageous. Develop the culture of sacrifice and contentment with little (Islamic terminology: *qanā’ah*). Narrated Ibn ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه): Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) said, “A believer eats in one intestine (is satisfied with a little food); and a Kāfir (disbeliever) or a hypocrite eats in seven intestines (eats too much).”³⁴ This *qanā’ah* or contentment with little has been described as one of the characteristics of *Taqwā* (consciousness and fear of Allah) as Allah said in the Qur’ān about patience (*ṣabr*),

“Be sure We shall test you with something of fear and hunger, some loss in goods or lives or the fruits (of your toil), but give glad tidings to those who patiently persevere.”³⁵

This will manifest through the attitudes of family members that they will demand less as their own rights and strive more to give others their rights. They will sacrifice their own comforts, demands, money, will, opinions and luxuries for each other. The foundation of a happy family is mutual love and sacrifice.

Mutual Consultation (Shūrā): Family matters should be decided based on consultation. The Prophet (ﷺ) himself was asked to consult. If the person who was directly guided by revelation was commanded to consult, what about us? *Shūrā* (consultation) is a basic feature of Islamic way of life. As Qur’ān explains about consultation that,

“It is part of the Mercy of Allah that thou dost deal gently with them. Wert thou severe or harsh-hearted, they would have broken

away from about thee: so pass over (their faults), and ask for (Allah's) forgiveness for them; and consult them in affairs (of moment). Then, when thou hast Taken a decision put thy trust in Allah. For Allah loves those who put their trust (in Him)."³⁶

Help Each other: From the spirit of love and sacrifice, members of a Muslim family help each other. The Prophet (ﷺ) used to help His noble wives in household works besides doing his own chores by his own hand. Narrated Al-Aswad that he asked 'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها), "What did the Prophet (ﷺ) used to do in his house?" She replied, "He used to keep himself busy serving his family and when it was the time for *Aṣ-Ṣalāt* (the prayer), he would go for it."³⁷

Communication: Family members should continuously work on improving the efficiency of communication among each other. This includes honest and open communication between spouses and between children. Family members need to take time to understand each other, be-friend with each other, develop closeness and emotional bond among each other and support each other at times of ease and difficulty alike. Narrated 'Abdullah bin 'Amru: The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "*Al-Wāṣil is not the one who recompenses the good done to him by his relatives, but Al-Wāṣil is the one who keeps good relations with those relatives who had severed the bond of kinship with him.*"³⁸

Criteria of Commitment on Islamic Values

Islam is a religion. Religion is seen as a system of thought, feeling and behavior that is owned by a group of people who are devoted, loyal; have a code of ethics or rules that are believed to be the truth and used as a guide in social interactions.³⁹ The values that are taught usually contain mercy, compassion and mutual help.

Hill defines religion as:⁴⁰

- Feelings, thoughts, experiences and behaviors that grew out of the search for something sacred;
- A search or conquest purposes that are not sacred, such as identity, ownership, meaning, health, or welfare;
- The quest for meaning which use certain methods such as rituals

or begging behavior, individuals who engage in this ritual identify each other and support each other as a group identity.

Religious commitment is defined as a level of values, beliefs and execution of religious teachings inherent in individuals in their everyday lives; where through the belief an individual evaluates his world through the religious eyes and belief that have become values that are integrated in many aspects of life (private, interpersonal and social life).⁴¹ The dimensions are: participation in religious activities, the daily behavior that guide the behavior of value based on religion, belief held about the values of the religion. Religious commitment has been operationalized and measured in several ways, including membership or nonmembership in religious organizations, the degree of participation in religious activities (such as frequency of attending mosque for Muslim and church for Christian), the attitudes and importance of religious experience, and belief in traditional religious creeds.⁴²

Several studies have shown that the benefits of religious commitment brings about an improvement in physical and mental health.⁴³ For example, individuals who have religious commitment are frequently present in a religious activity, where the presence in these activities from the results of research is mentioned as part of positive social behavior and the individuals involved have ties to support each other so as to improve the psychological well-being.⁴⁴

Wilson and Musick also found from their research a number of respondents who believe a particular religious doctrine and implement on teachings of that religion in many religious activities are experiencing an increase in the functions of family and marital satisfaction is relatively high.⁴⁵ Call and Heaton mentions the couples who participate in religious activities, tend to dislike divorce.⁴⁵ Involvement in religious activity was found to encourage individuals and couples to survive in facing difficult situations in life and avoid divorce.

Religiosity does have an important role to form attitudes in marriage. Value contained in a religion usually strictly against divorce. If confronted by difficult conditions in the domestic life, then this prohibition accompanied by a sanction of sin from God or social sanctions of religious leaders and environment. Value was also related to the behavior of the faithful and not having a free sex, be forgiving for acts of violence or infidelity of

spouse, full of love and respect. These values can transform individuals believed to be individuals who played by the rules and norms, avoiding the use of alcohol and/or drugs, and develop low stress, happiness and quality of life.⁴⁷

Brown, Orbuch, and Bauermeister found an association between religiosity and marital stability among Americans whites and blacks.⁴⁸ This study is based on the theory of religiosity improves problem-solving abilities in difficult situations and stressful situations,⁴⁸ at which time the individual is able to manage themselves when a situation like this it would be likely to make marriage more stable than individuals who do not have this capability.

In addition, participation in religious activities as part of a religious commitment is found also as a contributor to the marital stability.⁴⁹ Religious activities can be a social resource that can help improve the welfare of marriage and improve the resiliency during marriage life. Socializing with people who have the noble values and norms, can be a role model for the individuals to behave good also to his family members at home.

The individual's involvement in religious activities are proven to reduce the divorce rate, but only less likely to assure the quality of marriage;⁵⁰ means the individual's involvement in religious activities does not necessarily guarantee the quality of a marital relationship.*

Moreover, if an individual participates in religious activities along with one's partner, then it tends to be more stable than that just comes alone while his/her partner never participate in religious activities.⁵² Behavioral differences that appear between an individual and his partner is in fact can increase the risk of disunity in marital relationship. For if an individual is present as part of a couple he can increase solidarity as a couple and can be a deterrent from the distractions of household. Such individuals and couples have developed views, family values to be applied together in agreement.

Involvement in religious activities can foster the belief about the

*The reason is that their involvement is partial and not based on sincere and firm belief in the day of judgment. Moreover, each spouse should keep in mind this *ḥadīth*: The holy Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Allah has not permitted anything that is more detestable to Him than divorce" (*Sunan Abī Dā'ūd*, vol. III, Darussalm, Riyadh, 2008, *Book of Divorce*, p. 20, *Ḥadīth* No. 2177). Islam admonishes both the spouses to care each other and protect their mutual rights – *Ed.*

teaching of religious beliefs as well, so that individuals and couples have the positive spirit that any problems or pressures encountered in actual married life can be passed along, it can be maintained and there must be a way out. Strong beliefs about the poor decision to divorce, can make individuals directing partner to stay afloat in difficult situations.⁵³

Method

Participants

A convenient sampling procedure was used to draw a sample of newlyweds at Jakarta region. Respondents were initially recruited via E-mail, then we administered the scales of the Marital Stability scale and Commitment to Islamic Values scale. Respondents had to have been married for the first time within at least 6 months to 5 years of marriage. Forty seven respondents were initially selected in this study.

Measures and Material

Marital stability scale. Measures about global marital perceptions via eight dimensions-subcales (Fondness/Affection, We-ness, Expansiveness, Negativity, Disappointment and Disillusionment, Chaos, Volatility, and Glorifying the Struggle).⁵⁴ *Three of the subscales are positive in nature:* (a) Fondness/Affection: rates expressions of pride, fondness, and affection for partner, (b) We-ness: indicates unification in the marriage, and (c) Expansiveness: how expressive they respond to and expand on what their partner is saying. *Two of the coding dimensions are negative:* (a) Negativity and (b) Disappointment and Disillusionment. The Negativity scale indexes the extent to which spouses are critical of their partner, are vague about what attracted them to their partner, and display negative affect toward their partner. The Disappointment and Disillusionment scale assesses the degree to which each member of the couple has given up on the marriage by expressing depression about the relationship or not being able to articulate what makes a marriage work. *Three subscales evaluate information about how the couple reports handling marital conflict:* (a) Chaos, (b) Volatility, and (c) Glorifying the Struggle. The Chaos scale rates the degree to which the couple feels

out of control of their lives and buffeted about by elements outside of their control. Example items include “The couple has a lot of unexpected or out of control marital conflict” and “The couple believes that unexpected problems have weakened their relationship.” The Volatility scale measures the intensity, both positive and negative, of the spouses’ feelings for each other. Highly volatile couples express feelings of great passion and yet fight frequently. Examples of items that are used to measure this subscale include “The couple mention they like a good fight (having it out)” and “They feel emotions and other things intensely.” Glorifying the Struggle scale assesses the extent to which a couple has gone through difficult times but perceives the marriage to be stronger because of these experiences. Their marriage is the center of their lives, and they are proud of the struggles they have jointly gone through. Example items include “The couple expresses that marriage as a struggle, but it is worth it” and “The couple is proud of the hardships they have been through.”

Religious commitment defined as the degree to which a person adheres to his or her religious values, beliefs, and practices and uses them in daily living.⁵⁴ The supposition is that a highly religious person will evaluate the world through religious schemas and thus will integrate his or her religion into much of his or her life. Its dimensions are: participation in religious activities, the daily behavior that guide behavior based on religion, belief about values of marriage based on religion.

Dimension	Indicator
A shared conviction about the values of marriage	Believes that marriage is worship
	Making the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) as an example of behavior in domestic life
	Believes that all the good things and bad always are seen by God; so that all behaviours, thoughts and feelings can be controlled by attempts to have the best ratings in the eyes of God
	In times of difficulty, still believes that Allah is with those who are in trouble; not hopeless
Participation in religious activities	Diligent in studying religion and worship
	Invites couples to participate in religious activities
	Teaches religious values to their spouses and children

Dimension	Indicator
Daily behavior based on Islamic values	Behaviour based on Islamic values
	Grateful for anything that is brought by her husband; grateful for the gift of his wife under any circumstances (pretty/not pretty, etc.)
	Be patient on the behavior of couples
	Sincere
	Forgiveness
	Keeping their <i>hijāb</i> , restrict themselves from non- <i>maḥram</i> (a person with whom marriage is permissible)
	Trustworthiness (keep secrets households well)
	Respect partner
	Willing to serve her husband physically and mentally (as wife); support his wife physically and mentally as a gentle (husband)
	Faithful to accompany each other in times of joys and sorrows
	Maintaining the home and property of her husband
	Permission from her husband (when leaving the house, when they want to fasting)
	Communicate in every household problems
	Avoid the nature of mutual distrust
	Avoid selfish and overbearing
	Not speak loudly, or being rude and arrogant in behaviour
Maintain cleanliness, always taking care of themselves and dress/food	
Doing worship: Prayer five times, fasting <i>Ramaḍān</i> , <i>zakāt fiṭrah</i> , <i>Ḥajj</i>	
Doing <i>Sunnah</i> worship: performing <i>tahajjud</i> , <i>ishraq</i> , <i>duḥā</i> , <i>awwābīn</i> and other voluntary prayers, reading the Qur'ān, <i>Sunnah</i> fasting whenever possible.	

We used 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree, in these two kinds of scales. Simple regression analysis was run on the variables to determine whether there were significant contribution between Commitment to Islamic values and Marital Stability.

Results

The main results of this study indicate that commitment to Islamic values significantly predict marital stability, indicated by F-count = 42.707 is more than the F-table = 4.06 , P-value = 0.000 which is much smaller than = 0.05.

ANOVA (b)

Model		Sum of squares	Df	mean square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	8903.701	1	8903.701	42.707	, 000 (a)
	Residual	9381.704	45	208.482		
	Total	18285.404	46			

a) Predictors: (Constant), COMMITMENT

b) Dependent Variable: STABLE

Value R^2 (R Square) of the model summary below shows that 48.7% of the variance of marital stability can be explained by changes in the variable of commitment. It's mean commitment variable contributed 48.7% to the creation of marital stability and the rest is determined by other variables, which is not measured in this study.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R square	Std. error of the estimate
1	, 698 (a)	, 487	, 476	14.43892

In addition to determine the relationship between the variables, the researchers also conducted additional analysis about gender differentiation. The results can be seen in the table below:

Gender Differentiation

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	t	Sig	Mean difference
Commitment to Islamic values	M	13	156.8462	2086	0.043	12.8756
	W	34	143.9706			
Marital stability	M	13	143.3846	1999	0.052	12.5905
	W	34	130.7941			

The table shows that the variables that have a significant level $p < 0.05$ is variable commitment. Based on this we can conclude that there is a differentiation in the average rate of commitment. Then, by comparing the average of the two types of gender on variable commitment can be concluded that the men have an average commitment higher than women with the average difference 12.8756

The Relationship Between Respondent Ages with the Commitment ANOVA (b)

Model		Sum of squares	Df	mean square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	361.684	1	361.684	, 940	, 337 (a)
	residual	17314.018	45	384.756		
	Total	17675.702	46			

a) Predictors: (Constant), AGE

b) Dependent Variable: COMMITMENT

The table showed no significant relationship between age of respondents with the 'commitment on Islamic values', indicated by $F = 0.940$, $P\text{-value} = 0.337$ bigger than $= 0.05$. It can be interpreted that a person's religious commitment is not influenced by age.

Discussion

The main result of the study proves that the commitment of Islamic values significantly maintain marital stability. A respondent who believes in the values of Islam and implements the values of those in many activities, has experienced an increase in functions of the family and the stability in his/her marriage is relatively high. The commitment to the Islamic values does have an important role to shape attitudes in marriage. The values of this prioritizing avoids divorce when confronted by any difficult conditions in the household.

With commitment on religious teachings, an individual also has the ability to problem-solving in a difficult and stressful situation: he is patient

and find a way out to pray and avoid negative emotions. When individuals are able to manage themselves in a situation like this it would be likely to make their marriage more stable than individuals who do not have this capability.

In addition, participation in religious activities as part of a religious commitment is found also as a contributor to the marital stability.⁵⁶ Religious activities can be a social resource that can help improve the welfare of a marriage and improve the resiliency during marital life. Socializing with people who have the noble values and norms, can be a role model for the individuals to behave in a good manner and also with one's family members at home.

Involvement in religious activities can foster the belief about the teaching of religious beliefs, so that individuals and couples have the positive spirit that any problems or pressures encountered in actual married life can be passed along, it can be maintained and there must be a way out. Whenever the individual participates in religious activities along with her/his partner, then it tends to be more stable than the one who just comes alone while her partner never participates in religious activities.⁵⁷ Behavioural differences that appear between an individual and his partner, in fact could increase the risk of disunity in marital relationship. If an individual is present as part of a couple it can increase solidarity of the couple and can be a deterrent from the distractions faced in the household; such individuals and couples develop views and family values to be applied together in agreement.

Lastly, the results of additional analysis, it was concluded as follows:

- From the average rate of religious commitment, men have a higher commitment than women. We can make a premise: due to factors of male involvement in the religious activities more regularly than women (eg, in every Friday prayers, men receive spiritual recharging; while the female does not). As well as factors of value investment of men as priests in the household that requires getting the process '*tarbiyah*' (internalization of religious values) in depth, and then acquired religious knowledge must be transferred back to his wife; then in this case has happened twice cognitive processes in males that is getting knowledge from the teacher and also by teaching

back it to his wife. However, ideally these premises can be used as a basic reference for further research.

- Additional results showed no significant association between age of respondents with religious commitment. It can be assumed that one's commitment in religion is not influenced by the age factor. The older learners is not necessarily more committed to religion, and vice versa younger age is not necessarily less committed to the teachings of the religion. It is likely influenced by the learning process and religious experience that are not only influenced by age, that older people not necessarily have more knowledge than younger people, or vice versa.

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