



RESEARCH PAPER

Unveiling the Veil: Understanding the Impact of Adultery and Fornication on Societal Discontent and Remedies Suggested in a Pakistani Context: A Comprehensive study

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this research is to explore the effects of sexual repression in Pakistan and its potential connection to sexual crimes, such as rape, child molestation, and incest. Sexuality is a fundamental human inclination, but in many cultures, including Pakistan, societal, religious, and cultural constraints have historically limited open discussions about this topic. These constraints often result in sexual repression and may have unintended consequences on individuals and society as a whole. Repressed desires may contribute to sexual crimes, posing a significant threat to public safety. For comprehensive understanding about the issues of adultery, in depth interviews were conducted and data was collected from different stakes of allied areas such as advocates, religious scholars, parents, media persons etc. For the collection of facts purposive sampling was carried out by the researcher. Current study explored a comprehensive approach to address the issue of zina within an Islamic framework, emphasizing the importance of compassion, justice, and adherence to Quranic principles. It is suggested that instead of punitive measures, addressing the root causes and dissatisfactions that lead to zina is essential. It is recommended that teachings of Islam should be added in secondary school level curriculum for the awareness of the youth. Further research is recommended to better understand and eliminate these underlying causes.

KEYWORDS

Adultery, Dissatisfaction, Forbidden Sins, Fornication, Individual Freedom, Moral Responsibility, Repression, Sex Crimes

Introduction

Zina and fornication are terms often used to describe unlawful sexual relations in various cultural and religious contexts. Zina typically refers to sexual intercourse between individuals who are not married to each other, and it is strictly prohibited in Islam and other religious traditions. Fornication, on the other hand, is a more general term that encompasses sexual relations between unmarried individuals. Both concepts raise moral and ethical questions, and their definitions and consequences can vary across different societies and legal systems. This introduction provides a brief overview of these terms, setting the stage for a deeper exploration of their societal and cultural implications.(Merriam-webster, 2013).

Exploratory sexual activity before marriage is prevalent among adolescents (Wong & O'Connor, 2012; Yip et al., 2013). This often includes engaging in behaviors like having multiple sexual partners (Kazaura & Masatu, 2009; Teferra et al., 2015)

Literature Review

Sex! A Taboo for Pakistani Society

Sex is the strongest instinct in human being which sometimes rides roughshod over the individual's life. This inclination is complex to control by intellect and even religion that is why the problem recurs despite its prohibition since the history of mankind. In Pakistani society, sex is considered as a taboo (Bradley, 2012) and sin which is often controlled by the social institutions (such as family and religious institutions); intellect and cultural boundaries. But due to modern living chic of individuals the dissatisfaction among them cannot be controlled. This has led them to indulge in one night stands and love making with some reasonable justifications that are viewed in terms of psychological perspective in my research. The reason behind the activity itself is complex to allocate, but one justification could be the social pressure upon individuals.

Societies have norms for each and every chore in an individual life. Although it possess its merit but it can also undermines individuality and an individual's freedom of choice. The effects of such psychological conflicts bring forth feelings of dissatisfaction in individuals which lead them towards the dark side of their life. This dissatisfaction from routine, spouse or due to some other imposed social factor overshadows the best elements within humans. Here the need arise to find out the reasons behind the scenario of *zina*, so it could help us to eradicate the root causes; and bring the life of individuals to normal mode which is in accordance to the Islamic code of conduct. For a fundamentalist and rigid mind set, these justifications have no room in an Islamic law that's why *zina* is considered an illicit activity in Pakistan. But I realized during my research that if we would not natter about the *zina* and its justifications given by people then we won't be able to stumble on its causes. Followed by this is an even shocking realization that rigid scholars are eventually wrong in maintaining that justifications have no room in Islam. to this we shall return in later sections of the paper.

Diminishing the ratio of *zina* in our society is the basic motivation behind my research. For this first step is to root out the causes which drove people to commit *zina*; since without knowing those causes we cannot terminate them from our society. According to me, repression of sex in any society causes dissatisfaction and results into sex crimes to a far worst level than among a free sex society. Thus, I feel it is my social and moral responsibility to highlight the causes for dissatisfaction in human lives, because if we reduce or eradicate the root causes from an individual's life than the chances of *zina* in Pakistani society would be less.

Factor and Causes of *Zina*

Puritanism is the theoretical loom to my research. It remind us of the covenant man has done with God that Allah is our Lord and we shall refrain from all sins. There is a certain amount of religious savor in this theory. It entails that apart from a covenant between man and God, there is an evil entity (Satan) who spread evil in the world and tries to obscure men from the right path. It provides an aid to my research in elucidation that *zina* is a dark side of human inclination i.e. sexual activities (beyond legal ways proscribed by Allah) are devilish activities and such souls (who often commit sinful acts) are often controlled by Satan who forced them to destroy their life hereafter.

Prettiness, attractiveness or exquisiteness and arrange marriage transport dissatisfaction in life of human beings causes *zina* (fornication) for the first time on Earth. The Islamic historical background of fornication prove that *zina* did not came in alienation or under biological inclinations but through our own choosing i.e. social interaction as explained in action theory of sociology. This chronological background is narrated in *Surah-e-Maida* through the anecdote of Abel and Cain. It narrates that Allah Almighty gave Adam

and Eve children, the first twin was Cain and his sister. Cain was not handsome but his twin sister was beautiful; whereas the second twins were another boy and girl. Abel was born as a handsome boy but his sister was average. Adam arranged the marriage between Cain and Abel's sister and vice versa. Unfortunately, Cain was not satisfied by this arrangement because he is not warmth by the attractiveness of Abel's sister. So he refused and had developed grudge against his brother Abel. Cain further failed in sacrifice test prearranged by Adam for both of his sons. He resented his brother to an extent that he killed Abel. When Adam heard the news from Eve he alleged that this will be inherent trait of our daughters. Allah gave another son to Adam, Sheeth who spread goodness among people living around the mountains where as Cain was spreading evilness (haram activities) on another land. Life augmented on the flat surface of Earth on both sides. Sheeth order his people that no one will mix up with the tribe of Cain. Men of Cain's tribe were not as good looking as their women; whereas, women of Sheeth's tribe were not good looking as compared to men. Satan served his evil role and brought the flute among the people of Cain. This flute was so melodious that it was used in their twelve-monthly celebrations. They sang and dance on its beat. This sound was heard by mountain people of Sheeth. The Sheeth men saw the women of Cain and starts mixing up with them. Here Quran narrates that *zina* begun on the surface of Earth. (Islamic, 2015)

This whole narration show that how *zina* (fornication) began on Earth and also proves rationally that how prettiness, attractiveness or exquisiteness directly; and arrange or forced marriages indirectly transports dissatisfaction in human beings promotes *zina* among society. On the other hand, it provides us the clue to link *zina* with dissatisfaction and dark side of human beings (i.e. the role of Satan in our life provoking us to choose the evil side rather than righteous one).

Following are the causes that are inter-related to create the desire to commit *zina*.

Psychological Dissatisfaction

For *zina* body is purely an instrument for committing the sin. People who admit that they have committed fornication/adultery reported of their psychological dissatisfactions prevailing in them such as loneliness, boredom, lack of affection, need of revenge, ego and emotional disturbance. (Coelho, 2014) Loneliness occurs when someone was occupied with a lot of people or company, but eventually feels alone due to absence of their parents, siblings, couples, spouses because they are busy in their professional lives or ignoring that person due to some reasons. When one partner spends a lot of time outside the home whether due to business issues, giving more importance to his or her social circle, career or to their ambitions they consciously or unconsciously cause loneliness in the other partner to such an extreme that they lose control on their selves and move on to seek love and affection from people outside their legal relationship.

The Role of Media

Media is a well-built medium which occupies people's wit and build new traits in their personalities at both cognitive and social level. It is a source which can cause disastrous change in our society in the name of entertainment. Media screening daily soaps presenting elite class, their lifestyles etc. increase outlook of deprivation in middle class individuals in various ways. These includes unethical videos, lewdness, exhibitionist movies, sexual crimes, intense love making scenes, shows and sexual immorality which are indirectly creating dissatisfactions, pleasure seeking behaviors and greed among people in one way or the other as media is an immense origin of imitation, addiction and diversion.

Pornography

On the other hand pornography, books, videos and debates on varieties of sex positions, immodesty, BDSM and illicit sex stimulate lust and sexual dissatisfactions among bachelors as well as married men and women to commit sex crimes or adultery when other spouse is not ready to make love in the same way they fancy and crave. (Siegel, 2013) In consequence, dissatisfaction make home in a spouse relationship which at last ends in *zina* for physical, mental and sexual satisfaction. (Stewart, 2005) A shoddier case for craving of virgin women illustrated by media needle dissatisfied men to trap young girls (easy medium for trapping) in love causing increase ratio of *zina* in our Pakistani society. It can be eradicated by banning and blocking such stuff in Pakistan's media industry.

Pleasure Seeking Instincts

People with loneliness, individuals carry on masturbation to satisfy their physical, emotional and mental needs which eventually grounds them for seeking more pleasure with opposite sex. In some cases, teenagers report with guilt that they have learned such sinful practices during their childhood occurring around them in their day-to-day life. Some even went as far as to watch porn movies to fulfill their pleasure seeking instincts. These activities were imprinted in their memories and provoke them to practice.

On the contrary, media and internet has spread sensuality and sexuality to extremes that men and women have become merely a sex symbol of masculinity and femininity. For normal people this have created desire to possess an attractive spouse, zero-figure even after child birth etc. obviously these ideals are difficult to maintain so men and women find it outside their marital lives. Pornography and media has introduced novel and exciting positions to mate. Women who are unable to submit to their husbands in this regard turn their relationship with husbands sour. This also drove men to seek pleasure from somewhere else.

Divorce and Separation of Parents

In some cases many blamed their single parents after divorce or separation; and others adult group blamed their couples or spouse's infidelity which brought feelings of dissatisfaction and anger in them. (Kingdon, 995) In addition, psychologists revealed that among poor families where joint families are living and sleeping in house of single room. Their legal sexual activities are easily observable by children who can cause psychological and emotional disturbances as well as the chemicals related to sex hunger arose to such extent that they strongly wanted it regardless of it being moral and immoral. The dreadful thing which psychologists and social researchers unfolded was that those children practice such unlawful sexual activities majorly with their siblings or street friends.

Conflict between Love and Sex

Love is a divine act_ people often commit *zina* (adultery) who fall in love with some other out of marriage (either before marriage or after marriage). The sense of dissatisfaction here is losing someone who is running in their flow of blood, but destiny did not allowed them to bond in a spiritual relationship of marriage. This is frequently experienced in arrange marriages, forced marriages and status quo marriages creating worst conditions in this perspective. When one is not getting enough love from their spouse it creates a sense of incompleteness and emptiness in their Being causing dissatisfaction within them. This dissatisfaction gives a reason or we may say an opportunity to commit adultery.

Samael Aun Weor alleged in his book *The Perfect Matrimony*:

You, who are in love, do not confuse love with passion. Analyse yourself in depth. It is urgent to know if your beloved belongs to you in spirit. It is necessary to know if you are in complete affinity with your loved one in the three worlds of thought, feeling and will. Adultery is the cruel result of the lack of love. The woman who is truly in love would prefer death to adultery. The man who commits adultery is not truly in love. Love is terribly divine. (Weor, 1950) Unfortunately in this day and age, meaning of love is diffused into passion and lust. Since majority people feel relaxed and satisfied in pleasure seeking pursuit because all of us have a curious tendency to try new things; and likes to break rules for fun which cause addiction of doing it over and over again. Moreover late marriages, rejections, economical stress, hunger, poverty and innate need of appreciation (mostly in women) grounds depression and dissatisfaction which leads to sex crimes. But we can reduce it by increasing awareness among youth through different mediums like writings, debates, teenage counseling and healthy television programs. It is important to teach elders as well that they should teach to be chaste and not indulge in lustful deeds rather than teaching their children not to fall in love. This is a sorry state that even our elders are fundamentally confusing love and sex.

Love is the purest and deepest emotion that Allah has blessed man with, whereas sex is a natural human instinct. God have prescribed strict guidelines to have legal sex. Marriage is a sacred way to have sex with his or her spouse, but blessed is that marriage where individuals are in love and hold mutual respect and care for each other. This is the reason, why Islam promotes marriage by choice over marriage by force. Our beloved religion provides clear-cut examples where a woman can sent a marriage proposal (Hazrat Khadija R.A.); a young man could marry an elder woman (Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H); a woman could demand and have the right to divorce if they do not have mutual understanding (Hazrat Zainab R.A and Hazrat Zaid bin Haris R.A). Yet, majority of Muslim states (including Pakistan) do the opposite in the name of Shari'ah. They consider these sorts of arrangements as taboos and can go as far as to impose punishments such as *karokari*, honor killings, marriage with Quran if a person fell in love. This increases adultery in retaliation_ a clear case of dissatisfaction.

The Quality of Being a Perfect Person

During my research I came across another case where the subject was doomed to psychological dissatisfaction because of his continuous struggle to be a perfect son, husband and father. The daily routine and inability to express his true emotions to his family have made him addicted to sleeping pills. The subject also reported memory loss due to taking pills. Later on, I discovered that many people indulge in *zina* to remove the sense of boredom and emptiness from their lives. They need someone who could understand their inner conflicts and needs apart from being a relation to people. They want other people to deal them as an individual rather than a mere son, daughter or husband etc. Thus, their endeavors to be a perfect human being cause them to be dissatisfied from their lives.

Forbidden Sex

We have seen in previous sections how *zina* has been observed in Pakistani society. Six out of every ten couples are committing adultery in their day-to-day life. Even here we observe multiple forms of dissatisfaction which are root causes of *zina* in our Pakistani society, these must be reduced or eradicate before it's too late. The multiple forms of dissatisfaction vary in intensity over a long period of time but they cause adultery in either single or both of the spouses. (Adultery, 2003) The factors which people experience with high intensity among these multiple forms of dissatisfaction are lack of love, affection and intimacy, boredom, communication and emotional gap, rebellion act, poor sexual relationship, feelings of grudge and revenge for other spouse. We can say without a doubt now that *zina* prevails in our society like a parasite and well hidden in this so called society

that people rarely discuss. Let us discuss punishments and laws against *zina* that are well grasped in our rigid mind set. Followed by these will be the demerits of those punishments.

Laws and Punishments for Zina

Islam forbids illegal sex i.e. *zina* (fornication and adultery). Before the advent of Islam, the punishment for *zina* is stoning to death. It was given under the abiding of the Mosaic Law. Homer Hailey wrote in *Adultery Destroys the Soul*:

Adultery is described as fulfilling an extremely wicked plan, committing an outrageous crime. It was an offense worthy of condemnation by the judges God and man. Under the Mosaic Law it was punishable by death (Lev. 20:10); and under the new covenant, the furnace of fire (Rev. 21:8, 'fornicators' include all sexual perversions and violations). Figuratively, it is a fire that consumes the whole person, body, soul, and spirit (cf. Prov. 6:20-35; ch. 7). Also, when such immorality becomes the accepted conduct of a nation, it brings that nation to destruction (cf. Israel and Judah). (*Adultery: It Destroys The Soul*) However, the punishment for *zina* in Quran is of hundred lashes. Quran clearly reveals that *zina* is the gravest sin (*Gunnah e Kabira*): "And come not near to unlawful sex. Verily, it is *fahishah* (i.e. anything that transgress its limits: a great sin), and an evil way." (*Al-Isra* 17:32)

On another occasion Quran states

The woman and the man guilty of adultery or fornication - flog each of them with a hundred stripes: Let not compassion move you in their case, in a matter prescribed by Allah, if ye believe in Allah and the Last Day: and let a party of the Believers witness their punishment. (*Al-Nur*24:2)

This punishment, according to Islamic *fiqh* (jurisprudence) has been devised for unmarried couples, but for married couples the punishment is doubled to stoning until death. 'Abdullah b. 'Abbas reported that 'Umar b. Khattab sat on the pulpit of Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) and said: Verily Allah sent Muhammad (Peace be upon him) with truth and He sent down the Book upon him, and the verse of stoning was included in what was sent down to him. We recited it, retained it in our memory and understood it. Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) awarded the punishment of stoning to death (to the married adulterer and adulteress) and, after him, we also awarded the punishment of stoning, I am afraid that with the lapse of time, the people (may forget it) and may say: We do not find the punishment of stoning in the Book of Allah, and thus go astray by abandoning this duty prescribed by Allah. Stoning is a duty laid down in Allah's Book for married men and women who commit adultery when proof is established, or it there is pregnancy, or a confession. (Al-Hajjaj, 1691). From the comparative study of Quran and *Sahih Muslim Bukhaari*, it is clearly evident that death penalty (stone to death) is not commanded by Allah in the holy Book. It is the Jewish way of punishing the *za'ani* (adulterer/ fornicator) which was later adopted by Muslim scholars. It is noteworthy that if Allah has prescribed death penalty to an adulterer or fornicator why He would explain in detail about marriages with them in verse 24:3. I strongly agree with the view that we should rely on Quran rather than traditions and Sunnah because they could be mistaken and misrepresented.

Demerits of Punishments

The purpose of punishment serves two main objectives: first, to reform the behavior of the offender and serve as a deterrent to potential offenders by setting an example, and second, to reduce the overall crime rate in society. Psychological research has shown that states or jurisdictions that impose severe punishments often experience an increase in crime rates compared to those with more lenient penalties. This is a significant factor behind the abolition of capital punishment in many developed countries.

In the case of severe punishments for crimes like zina, it appears that such measures have not effectively decreased the incidence of sex-related crimes. Instead, there has been a disturbing rise in brutal crimes such as rapes, gang rapes resulting in fatalities, and other heinous acts like mutilation and invasive assaults on women. The continuous repression of natural desires may be contributing to increased levels of violence and aggression in society. This, in turn, has led to a surge in other forms of violence, including child abuse, domestic violence, marital rape, pedophilia, and necrophilia, particularly affecting vulnerable individuals.

Hence, it becomes evident that severe punishments, as seen in cases of zina, may be ineffective if they fail to achieve their intended goal of reducing crime rates as initially believed. Furthermore, the abuse of the legal system unfortunately remains a pervasive issue in Pakistan. As noted by Haider in 2013, many regions in the country, including villages, areas ruled by feudal lords, and rural communities, administer punishments such as Karokari and honor killings (as highlighted by Spechuho in 2010) without proper verification of the alleged crimes. In these cases, victims often find themselves deprived of the opportunity to exercise their rights to present their case and provide a defense. Tragically, many individuals lose their lives in the name of "honor," not because they engaged in zina, but simply because they fell in love and wished to marry someone of their choice or were already married to a person they loved.

Similar to the practice of witch hunting, feudal lords resort to violence against women in the name of "honor" when these women refuse to engage in fornication or due to disputes related to property and personal grievances. What compounds this issue is the lack of demand from Islamic scholars for substantial evidence to support these accusations, and the government's failure to effectively protect women's rights against honor killings. Consequently, a significant portion of the punishments for zina is carried out based on unfounded allegations and assessed against spurious criteria.

Material and Methods

Study area

The current research adopted a qualitative approach and employed a descriptive research method. Data were gathered from a diverse group of participants, including lawyers, religious scholars, psychologists, and educators. The sample size consisted of 200 individuals, ensuring a comprehensive collection of insights and perspectives to address the questions posed. The researcher summarized the responses obtained from the participants in a descriptive report.

Sampling Procedure

The researcher employed a purposive sampling technique to select the sample size. The selection of experts from related fields was done at random by the researcher. A total of 200 adults were included in the study through purposive sampling to respond to the study's central questions.

Data collection

Data collection for this study involved conducting in-depth interviews. The interview questions were open-ended to encourage participants to share their thoughts freely. To ensure reliability and objectivity, researcher pretested and reviewed the interview schedules. Participants were provided with clear explanations about the study and their participation and were asked to provide consent. Researcher assured participants of voluntary participation and the confidentiality of their information. The interviews were conducted in English, and with

permission, responses were both noted down and recorded using our phones. Each interview lasting between 45 to 50 minutes.

Data Analysis

The collected data were organized into themes, and cross-referenced with the recorded notes to ensure comprehensive coverage. The researchers independently reviewed and revisited the interview transcripts to become familiar with the data. Subsequently, the interviews were imported into NVIVO software for analysis. Data was systematically analyzed by the researcher and team of experts. The resulting thematic analysis revealed major themes, such as factors influencing premarital sex practices, the adverse consequences of these practices, and the roles played by health providers, educators, Forced arrange marriages, social media etc. . These themes emerged from the analysis process and were aligned with the research questions.

Struggling with the external world is less challenging than confronting one's inner turmoil, which can be especially difficult when there's a lack of open dialogue, as seen in the case of discussing one's sexual life (Schilder, 1938). The religious authority's injected fear further hinders the basic human need (Bethel, 2008). This paper intends to examine various perspectives on zina and their consideration of human emotions, with a focus on the Pakistani context to maintain brevity.

While adultery and fornication are generally viewed negatively even in secular societies, they are considered especially sinful in religious communities like Pakistan, where Islam strictly prohibits such acts (Suwaylim, 2001). Abdullah Yusuf Qasmi has emphasized Quranic verses forbidding these behaviors in his article "Zina and Islam" (Qazmi, 2012). This viewpoint is supported by another article, "The Evil Consequences of Adultery and Fornication" by Muhammad Ibrahim Al-Hamad. Both articles emphasize the fear of earthly and hereafter penalties for those engaged in these acts but often overlook the associated emotions. Current research will impartially consider these emotions and explore alternative perspectives within Islam that religious scholars may have disregarded.

In Pakistan, traditional arranged marriages take precedence over love marriages, a topic often overshadowed by the ongoing debate on zina. Additionally, the just implementation of penalties in the country is a subject that warrants discussion. Honor killings, for instance, are on the rise without legal measures to curb them. Current perspective has been drawn from the thought-provoking insights found in the book "Control and Sexuality: The Revival of Zina Laws in a Muslim Context." It is also appreciated the research of Ziba Mir-Hosseini and Vanja Hamzić, which delves into the criminalization of sexuality. The criteria used to evaluate zina cases appear both absurd and more inhumane than the act itself, making this book valuable for its comparative analysis and the reexamination of zina-related laws.

Exploring these interconnected questions was helpful in investigation of whether zina arises from a sense of life dissatisfaction or is simply a morally wrongful choice by the individual. Instead of seeking the complete rejection of the person (in this case, the adulterer), our approach should prioritize rectifying their errors and eliminating the underlying factors that lead them to a potentially destructive path in this world and the hereafter. This perspective aligns with the viewpoint presented by Ellen G. White in her book "Testimonies on Sexual Behavior, Adultery, and Divorce." How little do we enter into sympathy with Christ on that which should be the strongest bond of union between us and Him--compassion for depraved, guilty, suffering souls, dead in trespasses and sins! The inhumanity of man toward man is our greatest sin. Many think that they are representing the justice of God while they wholly fail of representing His tenderness and His great love. Often the ones whom they meet with sternness and severity are under the stress of temptation. Satan is wrestling with these souls, and harsh, unsympathetic words discourage them and cause them to fall a prey to the tempter's power.(White, Testimonies on Sexual Behavior, Adultery, and Divorce, 1989)

Some conservative elements within the society and religious groups have opposed comprehensive sex education, viewing it as against cultural and religious values. This has led to limitations on the inclusion of sex education topics in the curriculum in some regions.

Islamic studies typically aim to provide students with a general understanding of Islamic principles and values, including those related to personal conduct and morality. However, the specific content and emphasis on topics like zina within Islamic studies can differ. As per the knowledge of the respondent it is clear that this subject is added in bachelors.

Conclusively following factors are considered as contributing factors in fornication.

Contributing factors in fornication

Fornication, or engaging in sexual relations between unmarried individuals, can be influenced by a variety of factors.

Lack of Comprehensive Sex Education: Insufficient or inadequate sex education can lead to a lack of awareness and understanding about the consequences and risks associated with sexual activity, which may contribute to fornication.

Peer Pressure: Pressure from peers to conform to societal norms or expectations regarding sexual behavior can be a significant factor in engaging in fornication, especially among young adults.

Media and Culture: Media portrayals of sex and relationships, along with cultural influences, can shape attitudes and behaviors, potentially leading to more permissive views on premarital sex.

Relationship Issues: Fornication may occur within relationships where individuals are not yet married but feel emotionally connected, or in cases where individuals use sex as a way to establish or maintain a relationship.

Lack of Religious or Moral Constraints: Some individuals may not have strong religious or moral beliefs that prohibit premarital sex, making them more inclined to engage in fornication.

Accessibility to Contraceptives: The availability of contraceptives and safer sex practices may lower perceived barriers to fornication, as some individuals may feel more confident in avoiding unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections.

Societal Changes: Evolving societal norms and changing attitudes towards sexuality can contribute to more permissive views on premarital sex, making it more socially acceptable.

Emotional and Psychological Factors: Emotions such as love, desire, and peer acceptance, as well as personal psychological factors, can play a role in the decision to engage in fornication.

Alternative approach

Imposing severe punishments to instill fear and compliance may suppress one's desires, but it doesn't foster genuine change or inner willingness and happiness. The roots of impure thoughts reside in people's consciousness, and they cannot be transformed through punitive measures alone. Instead, addressing the underlying factors that contribute to adultery is crucial. Counseling, conferences, and constructive debates can have a positive impact on individuals engaged in fornication or adultery. Therefore, this manuscript aims

to eradicate the root causes of zina before it becomes a pervasive issue in Pakistani society. Before delving further, it's essential to consider whether punishment is the sole option outlined in the Quran. After careful discussion with a religious scholar, it becomes evident that potential alternatives mentioned in the Quran have been overlooked. Islam unequivocally prohibits false accusations and arbitrary criteria for punishing the offense of zina. This is reflected in the following Quranic verses:

"And those who do not invoke with Allah another deity or kill the soul which Allah has forbidden [to be killed], except by right, and do not commit unlawful sexual intercourse. And whoever should do that will meet a penalty. Multiplied for them is the punishment on the Day of Resurrection, and they will abide therein humiliated. Except for those who repent, believe and do righteous work. For them Allah will replace their evil deeds with good. And ever is Allah Forgiving and Merciful. And he who repents and does righteousness does indeed turn to Allah with [accepted] repentance. And [they are] those who do not testify to falsehood, and when they pass near ill speech, they pass by with dignity." (Quran, Al-Furqan 25:68-72)

These verses emphasize that Islam condemns false accusations and promotes repentance, faith, and good deeds as a means to rectify one's actions. Additionally, they emphasize the importance of not bearing false witness and maintaining one's dignity in the face of inappropriate speech or actions.

The Quran stipulates that an adulterer should not marry anyone other than an adulteress or a polytheist, and this act is forbidden for the believers. Moreover, those who falsely accuse chaste women of wrongdoing must present four witnesses to support their claims; otherwise, they are to be given eighty lashes and their testimonies will be rejected indefinitely. Such individuals are considered as disobedient and untruthful in the eyes of Allah. However, those who genuinely repent and amend their ways will find Allah to be Forgiving and Merciful. In cases where a husband falsely maligns his wife, and there is no evidence other than his own testimony, he is required to swear by Allah four times that he is telling the truth. Furthermore, he must invoke the curse of Allah upon himself if he is lying. On the other hand, if the wife bears witness four times in the name of Allah that her husband is lying, she will be spared from punishment. (Quran, An-Nur 24:3-8)

And those of your women who commit adultery; take the evidence of four males specially from amongst you against them; then again if they give evidence then confine those women to the houses until death take them or Allah envisages some way for them. And those males, female of you commit such act, torture them, and then again if they repent and amend, then leave them alone. Undoubtedly Allah is most Relenting, Merciful. (*An-Nisa* 4:15-16)

Following commands have been given in lucid and transparent manner mentioned in above verses of the Quran. These are:

- The punishment for *zina* is hundred lashes not stoning to death.
- Before implementing punishment, the accuser must bring four witnesses that testify him. The witnesses must testify that they have seen man and women while they were committing the exact act of *zina* (man inserting his phallus in the vagina is the exact act of intercourse).
- In case of false accusations, the accuser must be punished with eighty lashes instead of the accused.
- Only witnesses or the accused person (*za'ani*) himself can testify to the crime.
- If there are no witnesses than the woman should bear Allah as her witness four times that she is pure from the sin of *zina*. Then no punishment should be inflicted upon her for Allah is the fifth witness who testifies to her chastity.

- A victim of rape should not be considered a *za'ani*. Therefore, she should not be punished. But a rapist should be charged with severe penalties and punishment in accordance to Quran.
- If the crime is proved then for women it is prescribed to torture her and confine her at home is another alternative given by Allah until she repents.
- There is always room for repentance in Quran. This entails that those who seek sincere forgiveness from Allah and refrain from all sins. Allah is most merciful and forgives them.

It is worth mentioning here that how God treat sinners? And how do we as human beings treat a sinner? As a Muslim, none of the jurists and people who implemented the punishment of zina has followed instructions which Allah have given to us. Ellen G. White expresses that these people are doing the devil's work.

A Crime in God's Sight

There are many who profess to believe the truth who are corrupt in morals and who tarnish the purity in thoughts and impulses of others, who ruin souls under the pretense of saving souls, who utter words to the unwary, Satan speaking through them, as he spoke through the serpent when he tempted Eve. For all such there is a terrible retribution. They will reap that which they have sown. It is a terrible thing to use God's entrusted gifts, lent to bless the world, and perverted in their use, leaving blight, a woe, a curse, instead of a blessing. (White, Testimonies on Sexual, Behavior, Adultery, and Divorce, 1989)

She further narrates an incident quoted in holy Bible under her writings about God's love for sinners:

The woman had stood before Jesus, cowering with fear. His words, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone," had come to her as a death sentence. She dared not lift her eyes to the Savior's face, but silently awaited her doom. In astonishment she saw her accusers depart speechless and confounded; then those words of hope fell upon her ear, "Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more." Her heart was melted, and she cast herself at the feet of Jesus, sobbing out her grateful love, and with bitter tears confessing her sins. Beginning of a New Life: This was to her the beginning of a new life, a life of purity and peace, devoted to the service of God. In the uplifting of this fallen soul, Jesus performed a greater miracle than in healing the most grievous physical disease. (White, Testimonies on Sexual, Behavior, Adultery, and Divorce, 1989, p. 68). Likewise, Allah forgives those who repents sincerely and refrain themselves from committing further sins. He is the most Merciful (*Rah'im ul Karim*). "But as for him who repented (from polytheism and sins), believed (in the Oneness of Allah, and His Messenger Muhammad SAW), and did righteous deeds (in the life of this world), then he will be among those who are successful." (*Al-Qasas* 28: 67) Thus, if Allah is so forgiving, why can't we be as forgiving as Him? We should give opportunity to others to repent their sins and live a better life. We need to pull them out from their dissatisfied lives and only then can we have a crime free society.

Discussion

The data presented raises important issues and concerns regarding the punishment for zina (adultery and fornication) in Pakistani society. The analysis of the data suggests that the severe punishment for zina may not be effective and could potentially lead to worse consequences. It highlights that fear-based punishment alone does not address the root causes of such behaviors. Moreover, Instead of solely focusing on punishment, it's crucial to consider and address the factors that lead to dissatisfaction among individuals, which may contribute to the practice of zina. This could include examining societal pressures, lack of opportunities for love marriages, and other cultural and social issues. Further, The data emphasizes the importance of providing individuals who have committed zina with an opportunity to repent

and seek guidance. It suggests that a more compassionate approach, in accordance with Islamic teachings, might be more effective in helping individuals return to the right path. It is essential to critically assess whether the punishments for zina in Pakistan align with the teachings of the Quran. The data highlights concerns about the implementation of punishments that may not be in accordance with Islamic principles. This raises questions about the justice and fairness of the legal system in these cases. Moreover, it also touches upon the issue of repression in a conservative society, which can lead to dissatisfaction and, in some cases, contribute to sex crimes. The discussion can delve into the reasons behind the repression of love marriages and the potential consequences of such restrictions on individual behavior and societal norms.

Alternative solutions to the current issues of Zina, includes prompts consideration of alternative approaches and interventions that are in line with Quranic teachings. These may include Psychological counseling, education, and community support to prevent zina and guide individuals toward moral and ethical behavior.

Conclusion

Zina is a problem that is afflicting our Islamic cultural system, causing detrimental effects on our lives. However, the approach of punishing zina has often led to unintended and severe consequences. To combat this issue, it's crucial to reduce or eliminate the underlying factors that contribute to dissatisfaction among people, ultimately eradicating the practice of zina from our society. When someone has committed a sin and feels remorse, providing them with a chance to repent before Allah or guiding them toward the right path can be more effective than imposing severe punishments. It's essential to examine whether Pakistani society is implementing punishments in line with the teachings of the Quran, as many punishments in different areas of Pakistan may not align with these teachings. To ensure justice, we should consider three critical questions:

- Was the accusation of zina justified before administering punishment?
- Have other, less severe alternatives prescribed by Allah been explored before resorting to the death penalty?
- What are the criteria used by courts or individuals to judge cases of zina (adultery and fornication)?
- **Conclusively, To reduce the prevalence of zina in our society, the following measures can be considered:**
 - Discourage marriages based solely on caste, fiqh, and creed.
 - Accept love marriages as an alternative to arranged marriages, as choosing one's spouse over resorting to honor killings is a far more preferable option.
 - Emphasize the rights granted to Muslims for divorce in Islam, allowing individuals to seek divorce if they are dissatisfied with their spouse.
 - Implement punishments in accordance with Quranic teachings, making local punishments without a court verdict illegal.
 - Enact strict laws to penalize false accusers, particularly if they fail to prove their accusations.
 - Prioritize the use of less severe alternatives to the punishment for zina, reserving severe punishments for those who are beyond reform, such as rapists and habitual adulterers.
 - Understand that forgiveness is a fundamental aspect of Islam, and it is permissible for a person to forgive their spouse for committing adultery for the sake of Allah.

In conclusion, rather than condemning a specific group of individuals (za'ani - adulterers and fornicators), we should focus on correcting their mistakes and addressing the factors that drive them toward such actions in this world and the hereafter. It's vital to distance ourselves from orthodox traditions that breed dissatisfaction in society, as these

are often cultural rather than religious in nature. Zina is indeed a manifestation of dissatisfaction with life, and it's our moral duty to help those struggling with their inner demons. Further research is recommended to better understand and eliminate the root causes of this issue.

Current Research has both theoretical and practical implications. The recommendations outlined above have significant implications for future studies and research in the context of addressing the issue of zina in Pakistani society. Conducting research in these areas can help refine and improve the effectiveness of policies and initiatives aimed at reducing the prevalence of zina and its adverse consequences. Current research anticipates for assessing the impact of comprehensive sex education programs that emphasize moral and ethical values in alignment with Islamic teachings. Research can examine the effectiveness of these programs in influencing students' attitudes and behaviors regarding zina and ethical decision-making. Present study aids strongly on the implementation of legal and judicial reforms aimed at ensuring that punishments for zina align with Quranic teachings. It is important to assess whether these reforms lead to fairer trials and more just outcomes for those accused of zina. Current research will help the researchers to examine the impact of eliminating social and cultural barriers on individuals' decisions regarding marriage and the potential reduction in zina cases. Moreover, this study can be influential in creating an awareness about the importance of counseling on the pertinent issue of zina/fornication. Future research can explore the role of forgiveness and reconciliation in cases of adultery and its impact on individuals' well-being and community dynamics. The study can also investigate the cultural and religious factors influencing forgiveness and reconciliation.

In summary, by using current research further research in these areas is essential to inform evidence-based policies and interventions. These studies can help policymakers and stakeholders refine their strategies and create a more effective framework for reducing the prevalence of zina and its associated adverse consequences in Pakistani society.

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