



The Implications of the Concept of Soulmates in the Qur'an on the Ta'aruf Phenomenon in Indonesia

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Abstract: Marriage is a topic that remains highly relevant in Islamic studies because it is a long-term act of worship that plays a significant role in social life. One of the purposes of marriage is to seek peace in life, which can only be achieved if the partner is the right person. This research discusses the concept of "soulmates" in the Qur'an, specifically in Surah An-Nur, verse 26, and its implications on the phenomenon of ta'aruf in Indonesia. The research method used is a literature study with a qualitative-descriptive approach, reviewing previous literature and studies on soulmates and ta'aruf. The research findings show that the concept of soulmates in the Qur'an emphasizes the importance of equality and compatibility between partners to build a harmonious household. The ta'aruf phenomenon in Indonesia allows individuals to get to know potential partners more deeply before marriage, in accordance with religious values and Qur'anic principles. In conclusion, understanding and applying the concept of soulmates in the Qur'an through the ta'aruf process can help reduce the risk of incompatibility, slander, and conflict in marriage, and contribute to building a quality and harmonious family.

Keywords: Equality; Islam; Marriage; Soulmate; Ta'aruf

Introduction

Marriage is a theme that remains continuously relevant for discussion in Islamic studies. This is because it is one of the longest forms of worship and is timeless, practiced throughout every era (Chozin & Untoro, 2019). Unlike prayer or other acts of worship, which are easier to practice and have a less significant impact on social life and society, this form of worship has a profound effect on individuals, which may even affect and involve others. Therefore, the Qur'an, as guidance for Muslims, provides clear regulations to ensure a happy life in this world and the hereafter, including matters of marriage and everything related to it.

One of the purposes of marriage is to seek peace in life (Ilhami, 2019). Logically, attaining peace in this longest form of worship can only be achieved if the partner or soulmate is the right person. One way to achieve this is through ta'aruf (pre-marital acquaintance), which allows both parties to assess

whether they are compatible. This is crucial because many marriages in Indonesia fail due to incompatibility between husband and wife in various aspects (Ilhami, 2019).

Surah An-Nur, verse 26, explains that a woman with bad character is for a man with bad character, and vice versa, those with good character will find partners with good character as well (Ath-Thabari, 2022). This research will explain in more detail the ideal concept of soulmates to be sought through the ta'aruf process and its impact on the ta'aruf practice in Indonesia, based on previous studies.

The researcher will specifically discuss in this article the concept of soulmates or partners, which is highly important in the context of marriage. The Qur'an, in Surah An-Nur, verse 26, explains that good partners are for good people, and vice versa. If understood explicitly, this verse explains that a good person will surely have a good partner.

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The researcher also highlights the phenomenon of ta'aruf in Indonesia as an effort to get to know a potential life partner before marriage. Ta'aruf is a significant part of this context because it gives individuals the opportunity to know each other better before deciding to marry. In the context of ta'aruf, the concept of soulmates in Islam becomes relevant as it helps individuals in choosing a partner that aligns with religious teachings and values they hold dear.

However, in practice, ta'aruf in Indonesia is often influenced by various cultural, social, and economic factors that can affect the process (Fathorrahman & Zulhaqqi, 2020). Therefore, it is important to understand the implications of the concept of soulmates from the perspective of the Qur'an on the phenomenon of ta'aruf in Indonesia. This will not only provide a deeper understanding of the principles that should be considered in finding a soulmate, such as the boundaries of interaction between men and women before marriage, but also help improve the quality of marital relationships and reduce the potential for divorce in society.

Through an analysis of Qur'an Surah An-Nur, verse 26, this article will explore the ideal criteria for a life partner in Islam and how this concept can be implemented in the context of ta'aruf in Indonesia. Thus, this article is expected to make a positive contribution to the understanding and practice of marriage according to Islamic teachings, as well as help address the challenges faced in the ta'aruf process in Indonesia.

Previous research on soulmates and ta'aruf has been presented by several researchers, such as Hidayat & Wardana (2018) in their study "Ta'aruf and Efforts to Build Islamic Matchmaking Among Young Muslim Couples in Yogyakarta," published in the Journal of Sociology Education. This study aims to explore ta'aruf (acquaintance) as a form of Islamic matchmaking for Muslim men and women to find partners and build a loving family according to Islamic law in Yogyakarta. The research method used is descriptive qualitative with semi-structured interviews, observation, and documentation. The results show that Muslims in Indonesia are working to develop a method of matchmaking that aligns with Islamic law, with the help of mediators or third parties through certain processes and procedures, and involving the families or parents of both parties as a means to build and develop a Muslim family (Hidayat & Wardana, 2018).

Another relevant study is the thesis by Khasanah (2022), titled "Soulmates in the Qur'an," from the State Institute of Islamic Studies Ponorogo. This thesis discusses the concept of soulmates from the perspective of the Qur'an as guidance for life. The purpose of this research is to explain the terminology of soulmates, the objectives of matchmaking, and how the Qur'an guides

the selection of a soulmate. The study employs a thematic exegesis method focused on the theme of soulmates, using a library research approach with a qualitative perspective. The findings of this research include the terminology of soulmates as explained in Surah As-Syura, verse 11; Surah Az-Zariyat, verse 49; Surah An-Najm, verse 45; and Surah An-Nisa, verse 11. The objectives of marriage are to follow the commands of Allah, adhere to the Sunnah of the Prophet, preserve lineage, and bring peace to the heart (Khasanah, 2022).

The previous research and the current study share similarities regarding ta'aruf and soulmates. However, the current study aims to connect the concept of soulmates in the Qur'an and its implications with the phenomenon of ta'aruf widely practiced in Indonesia.

Method

This research is a library research study. According to Nazir, library research is a technique for collecting data by reviewing books, literature, records, and reports related to the theme or problem being addressed. Sarwono describes this type of research as a study that examines various reference books and findings or similar previous research, providing a theoretical foundation for the problem being investigated. Another expert, Mardalis, describes library research as a study useful for gathering information and data from various sources such as materials available in libraries, including documents, books, magazines, historical accounts, and others (Sari & Asmendri, 2020).

The analysis model used is descriptive-qualitative analysis. According to I Made Winartha, descriptive-qualitative data analysis involves analyzing, describing, and summarizing various conditions and situations from the collected data, such as interview results or observations related to the research problem (Khasanah & Davita, 2021).

The Concept of Soulmates in the Qur'an: Context of Surah An-Nur, Verse 26

The term "soulmate" according to the Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia (Indonesian Dictionary) refers to a person who is suitable to be a husband or wife; a life partner. It also means something that fits well to form a pair. In Arabic, this concept is referred to as "zaujun," which is mentioned 52 times in the Qur'an. In the context of human relationships (as husband and wife), it is specifically mentioned in four verses: Surah Asy-Syura, verse 11; Surah Az-Zariyat, verse 49; Surah An-Najm, verse 45; and Surah An-Nisa, verse 1.

Additionally, the term "nakaha," which corresponds to marriage in Indonesian, is discussed 23 times in the Qur'an and is specifically relevant to the concept of soulmates in this article in four verses: Surah

Al-Baqarah, verse 221; Surah An-Nisa, verse 22; Surah An-Nur, verse 3; and Surah An-Nur, verse 32. Previous researchers have concluded that the purpose of marriage is to follow the commands of Allah and the Sunnah of the Prophet, preserve lineage, and seek peace of heart. These indicators can be achieved by choosing a soulmate in Islam based on criteria such as: having the same faith, not being of the same gender, not being mahram (close relatives), not being an adulterer, being unmarried (especially for women), being compatible (sekufu), and not marrying two sisters (Khasanah, 2022).

In this regard, the current research aims to delve deeper into the concept of soulmates, particularly focusing on one of its objectives: to bring peace to the heart, with one of the criteria being compatibility (sekufu). This is in accordance with the context of Surah An-Nur, verse 26, which states:

الْخَبِيثَاتُ لِلْخَبِيثِينَ وَالْخَبِيثُونَ لِلْخَبِيثَاتِ وَالطَّيِّبَاتُ لِلطَّيِّبِينَ
وَالطَّيِّبُونَ لِلطَّيِّبَاتِ أُولَئِكَ مُبَرَّءُونَ مِمَّا يَقُولُونَ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ وَرِزْقٌ
كَرِيمٌ {٢٦}

Evil women are for evil men, and evil men are for evil women. Good women are for good men, and good men are for good women. They are innocent of what they say. For them is forgiveness and a noble provision." (Qs. An-Nur, 24:26)

Some findings from research on this verse are as follows: This verse is seen as a defense of Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her), who was falsely accused of adultery with Safwan. The interpretation concludes that good women are only for good men and vice versa, thus clearing Aisha and Safwan of the accusation. It also highlights the understanding of soulmate compatibility, interpreted as inclination or tendency (Fauziah & Hasan, 2023). In this context, it is inconceivable for the wife of the Prophet to commit such a grave sin as adultery.

Research referring to Tafsir Ibn Kathir and al-Mishbah finds that the concept of kafaah (compatibility) in this verse refers to balance, equality, or equivalence. This means that spouses should complement each other and be balanced and equivalent in terms of material, religion, social status, and other factors. According to Tafsir al-Mishbah, this verse clarifies Surah An-Nur, verse 2, which prohibits a woman who has committed adultery from marrying anyone other than a man who has also committed adultery, and vice versa. The concept of kafaah in this verse also broadly covers various aspects such as worldview, religion, profession, and more (Jamarudin et al., 2023).

This verse addresses the concept of kafaah or compatibility in terms of moral character and religious quality when seeking a life partner. This is emphasized to ensure the establishment of a harmonious family,

although kafaah is not a requirement for the validity of marriage (Maliki, 2022).

A comparative study of Tafsir al-Azhar and al-Mishbah concludes that both interpretations agree that this verse emphasizes equality or similarity as a foundation for a relationship between two individuals. However, Tafsir al-Azhar views a mismatch between a good person and a less compatible partner as a test and encourages efforts to guide the partner to improvement. In contrast, Tafsir al-Mishbah requires both parties to start with equality to build a good relationship in the household, allowing them to navigate four phases: approach, disclosure, dependence, and willingness to accept shortcomings (Haris et al., 2016).

It can be concluded that this verse explains that a good person, in terms of both words and actions, will be matched with another good person, while a bad person will be matched with another bad person. This principle serves as a guideline for those seeking a partner to deeply understand their prospective spouse. According to previous research, the concept of a soulmate recommended by the Qur'an in the context of this verse is that two individuals who are compatible should come together to build a household, based on the principle of kufu (compatibility). Therefore, compatibility in a marital relationship is indeed necessary.

Fenomena Taaruf in Indonesia

Allah says in Surah Al-Hujurat, verse 13 as follows :

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ
لِتَعَارَفُوا ۗ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَىٰكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ {١٣}

"O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted." (Surah Al-Hujurat, 49:13)

The term لتعارفوا (lit-ta'arafoo), which can be translated as "to know one another" in this verse, is derived from this root and has been adopted into Indonesian as "ta'aruf," meaning introduction. (Language Development and Fostering Agency of Indonesia). In Indonesian society, ta'aruf is used as a method or way to get to know a prospective spouse before the marriage, both from a religious and legal perspective. In practice, ta'aruf is facilitated by a third party, such as an Islamic teacher, ustadz, ustadzah, or a specialized ta'aruf institution. The intermediary should be knowledgeable about religious matters, trustworthy, preferably married, and personally acquainted with the prospective spouse. Additionally, the ta'aruf process before marriage is confidential and limited to the parties

involved, and it is not advisable for it to be prolonged. (Hidayat & Wardana, 2018).

One study in Tambang District, Kampar Regency, Riau, explains that ta'aruf plays a significant and efficient role in preventing or reducing the risk of divorce. Ta'aruf helps individuals to be more selective in choosing a partner, facilitates the process toward marriage, avoids defamation, and minimizes compatibility issues between partners. Ta'aruf serves as a means to understand the strengths and weaknesses of a potential partner, thus building trust before making the decision to marry.

Another study on the Wahdah Islamiyah organization shows that the ta'aruf process conducted by the organization positively impacts marital stability after marriage. This is also due to the chemistry between the couples, as in practice, those who marry are often participants in Wahdah Islamiyah's programs, allowing them to find compatibility and move towards marriage in a shorter period (Utami, 2023).

Implications of the Concept of Soulmates in the Qur'an for the Phenomenon of Ta'aruf in Indonesia

As the Qur'an has explained in Surah An-Nur, verse 26, which has been discussed earlier, the selection of a life partner should be guided by the aim of establishing a harmonious household. Ta'aruf serves as one of the solutions for getting to know a partner before marriage in order to find an ideal match according to each individual's personal criteria. Thus, a good individual can meet a good partner. The following are some conclusions related to the discussed article.

Understanding the Ideal Criteria: The concept of soulmates in the Qur'an emphasizes the importance of equality and similarity between partners. With the phenomenon of ta'aruf in Indonesia, individuals have the opportunity to get to know their prospective partners better before marriage. This allows them to seek partners who align with their personal and religious values, as outlined in the Qur'anic verses related to equality and compatibility.

Choosing the Right Partner: Through ta'aruf, individuals can select a life partner who aligns with the Islamic principles described in the Qur'an (Nisa, 2021). This process helps minimize the risk of incompatibility or inequality between partners, as emphasized in the Qur'anic concept of soulmates. Therefore, ta'aruf can be an effective tool for achieving a harmonious and enduring marriage.

Building a Quality Family: The concept of soulmates in the Qur'an stresses the importance of creating a harmonious and high-quality household. Ta'aruf provides individuals with the opportunity to learn more about their potential partners and assess

their ability to build a family based on religious values and Qur'anic principles.

Preventing Potential Marriage Issues: By understanding the Qur'anic concept of soulmates and adhering to the ta'aruf process aligned with religious values, individuals can avoid various potential issues in marriage. Ta'aruf helps reduce the risk of incompatibility, defamation, or conflicts in the household by ensuring that the chosen partners have the desired compatibility and similarities.

Given these considerations, communities or organizations have emerged to facilitate and guide the youth in Indonesia, aligning their vision and mission with the concept of soulmates in the Qur'an. These organizations provide services ranging from pre-marital education to ta'aruf facilitation, connecting men and women in accordance with Islamic principles. Some of these communities include:

Taaruf Online Indonesia

The digital era has brought many innovations that facilitate various aspects of life, including finding a soulmate through online ta'aruf, even across different parts of the world. However, this also comes with its own set of challenges, such as some individuals seeking only friendships or exploiting the platform for personal gain (Hildawati & Lestari, 2016).

In response to these challenges, several communities have emerged that offer features claiming to implement ta'aruf before marriage according to Islamic principles. One such community is Taaruf Online Indonesia. Taaruf Online Indonesia is a form of ta'aruf conducted through an online application. This application prioritizes the personal qualities of its users, such as character, over physical appearance. In practice, users of this application cannot see clear photos of their potential partners due to a blur effect, which can only be removed after their CV submission is accepted (Bagaskara, 2023).

Productive Marriage

Productive Marriage offers an intensive pre-marital preparation program designed to help individuals prepare for a productive and happy marriage. This program has been attended by over 1,500 people. It provides intensive mentoring from experienced married mentors, ensuring that the knowledge shared is not only theoretical but based on real-life experience. The program covers a comprehensive range of topics, including intention, the technical aspects of finding a prospective partner (ta'aruf), and household management. In addition to theoretical knowledge, participants are also engaged in practical exercises, such as self-discovery and finding a partner. Intensive consultation facilities are also provided with mentors

and separate discussion groups for men and women. The program includes pre-marital preparation worksheets, to-do list templates, communication cheat sheets with prospective partners, and partner search facilities.

Both examples illustrate classes or communities with online matchmaking facilities operating in Indonesia. The search for a life partner in the digital era is facilitated by online matchmaking agencies, offering practical and convenient solutions for those struggling to find a partner due to busy schedules. These services maintain user privacy, which is increasingly popular.

However, the use of online matchmaking agencies is not without risks of gharar (ambiguity) and fraud, as discussed in the article on online ta'aruf. Gharar can include various aspects such as discrepancies in names, occupations, photos, religion, marital status, and health. Such fraud, if done intentionally for personal gain and discovered only after the marriage contract, can lead to the annulment of the marriage according to the Civil Code and Marriage Law (Musthofa & Laily, 2022).

Conclusion

The concept of soulmates in the Qur'an, as explained in Surah An-Nur (24:26), emphasizes the importance of equality and similarity between life partners. Choosing a spouse in accordance with Islamic principles is advised to achieve a harmonious marital relationship. The phenomenon of ta'aruf in Indonesia serves as a method or means for getting to know a prospective partner before marriage, based on both religious values and personal criteria. Ta'aruf helps individuals select a life partner that aligns with their ideal criteria, minimizes the risk of incompatibility or inequality between partners, and builds a quality family in accordance with Qur'anic principles. By understanding the concept of soulmates in the Qur'an and through the process of ta'aruf, individuals can avoid potential marital issues such as slander, conflict, and partner incompatibility. Thus, this article concludes that understanding the concept of soulmates in the Qur'an has significant implications for the phenomenon of ta'aruf in Indonesia. Ta'aruf is an effective means to realize the Qur'anic principles related to choosing a life partner and establishing a harmonious and high-quality household. The two examples presented reflect the awareness among Indonesian society regarding the importance of choosing a soulmate in accordance with Allah's will as outlined in Surah An-Nur (24:26) related to the concept of soulmates in the Qur'an. This study has limitations and requires further development in the future.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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