# POLITENESS IN MARITAL RELATIONSHIP DEPICTED FROM HOLY QUR'AN: PRAGMATIC STUDY AND CULTURAL INTELLIGENT PERSPECTIVE[*)]

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## ABSTRACT

The goal of this study is to examine the strategies of politeness used in the Qur'an regarding marital relationship and relate it with the cultural intelligent perspective. Marital relationship here refers to the sexual intercourse between man and woman after getting married. Marital relationships have been represented negatively in different types of cultures which forced marriage is concerned. Two aspects are examined herein: the politeness of Al-Qur'an interacts with sensitive issue in relation to sexual intercourse and how it relates with cultural intelligence. A qualitative approach is used to provide interpretations of the hidden meanings in the selected excerpts, adopting Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness and Leech's maxims of politeness and relate it with cultural intelligent perspective as the guides for the analysis. The analysis has revealed that the Al-Quran address this sensitive issue with decent and polite. The use of off-record strategies and positive and negative face strategies of politeness have been found to be dominant in discussion of issues related to sexual intercourse. These strategies have been used to

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avoid unpleasant communication and causing any embarrassment, and thereby saving the face of recipients, both men and women. This study will contribute to the field of pragmatics and will lead to cross-religious and cross- cultural understanding during a period where Islam and its teachings are being widely questioned and examined.

**Keywords:** *Marital Relationship, Pragmatic, Politeness, Intercultural Intelligence, Off-Record, Positive Face, Negative Face.*

## 1.0    INTRODUCTION

In transmitting our intention to others, we use strategies in our communication as it is a part of the language user's communicative competence. The speaker communicative competence deals with pragmatics.[5] Pragmatics is something to do with choosing the right wording and interpretation of language in various contexts. For example, the awareness of how we use the language in addressing something that is considered *taboo* in some societies, and it may require us to depict a proper wording for different cultures. Therefore, pragmatic also plays a vital role in intercultural communication. In the literature, such sensitivity and ability with regard to different cultures has been placed under the label of "Cultural Intelligence".[6] "Intelligence" is commonly defined as the ability to solve cognitive problems, to make connections, and thus to comprehend or make sense of something[7]. "Cultural Intelligence" is thus the ability to work effectively and communicate effectively across cultures, partly because you can comprehend how people from other cultures are likely to think and thus react in each situation.

Pragmatics has various fields and politeness is one of them. Politeness is universal and best uttered as the practical application of good manners (*husnul khuluq*) or etiquette. Leech defines politeness as strategic conflict avoidance, which can be measured in terms of the degree of effort and placed into the avoidance of conflict, situation, maintenance, and establishment of comity.

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[5]    Glaser, K. (2009). *Acquiring Pragmatic Competence in a Foreign Language-Mastering Dispreferred Speech Acts.* Topics in Linguistics. pp.1.

[6]    Ang, S., & Van Dyne, L. (2008). *Conceptualization of cultural intelligence: Definition, distinctiveness, and nomological network.* In S. Ang & L. Van Dyne (Eds.), Handbook of cultural intelligence: Theory, measurement, and applications (pp. 3–15). M.E. Sharpe.

[7]    Lynn, R. (2015). *Race differences in intelligence: An evolutionary analysis.* Washington Summit Publishing.

Avoidance is characterized as a conscious effort on the part of the person to be polite. Politeness strategies are ways to send speech acts as polite as possible.[8] Here we can see how Al Quran relates the Cultural Intelligence with politeness whereby Allah used various types of wording in conveying messages related to marital relationship. This study is an attempt to investigate how sexual intercourse between husband and wife are addressed and represented in the Al-Qur'an. It investigates these wordings through the use of politeness strategies proposed by Brown and Levinson and the maxims of politeness of Leech with Intercultural Intelligence perspective, trying to describe the various strategies employed in addressing sexual intercourse.

## 2.0      MARRIAGE IN ISLAM

Marriage in Islam is considered a sacred and essential institution that is highly valued in the Islamic faith. Marriage is not only a social contract but also a spiritual union. It is viewed as a means for spiritual growth and companionship. Certain conditions must be met for a marriage to be valid in Islam. These include the presence of witnesses, a dowry (Mahr) agreed upon by the parties, and the absence of any legal impediments. Islam defines specific roles and responsibilities for both spouses within the marriage.  The marriage contract must be public, and the parties involved must be eligible for marriage. Marriage in Islam is seen to protect oneself from sin and immorality by promoting a lawful and disciplined lifestyle. Additionally, marriage is considered a means to establish a family and contribute to the continuity of the Muslim community.

Husbands are obligated to provide for the family's financial needs, while wives are entrusted with the care of the household. However, Islam emphasizes partnership, mutual consultation, and shared responsibilities in family matters. The Quran describes the relationship between spouses as one of love, mercy, and tranquillity.

In Islam, sexual intercourse is an act that can only be legitimated through marriage ties. Islam differentiates between sex in marriage and sex outside of marriage to make clear the difference between what is permitted and forbidden (*halal* and *haram*). The sacrament of marriage (*nikah*) relates to the regulation of

sexual practices. Islam dichotomises sexual life into sex as religious duty (*ibadah*) and sex as fornication (*zina*). The legalize sexual practices can be accomplished through marriage and brings reward (*al-ajr*), while the latter is conducted outside of legalized marriage and brings punishment from Allah. According to Islam, marriage has its objectives, and they are; to complete man's and woman's life, to balance their emotions, to achieve the love and passionate between them, to legalize sexual practices, to have children, and to achieve a peaceful life.[9]

## 3.0     AIM OF THE STUDY

The study aims to investigate the strategies of politeness used in the language of the Qur'an to address the wordings of sexual intercourse. It will assess how the politeness theory of Brown and Levinson and the maxims of Leech are relevant to this analysis and will further relate it with cultural intelligence.

## 4.0     OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

This study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What are the politeness strategies that have been used in addressing the sensitive issues related to sexual intercourse?

2. What are the forms of address and reference that have been used to address sexual intercourse?

3. What is the cultural intelligence that can be applied from these strategies?

## 5.0     METHODOLOGY

Seven verses from Al-Qur'an were chosen for the purpose of this study. These verses were collected from same and different chapters of the Holy Qur'an indicating marital relationship with regard to sexual intercourse. The selection of the verses was based on the following reasons: (a) they reflect politeness strategies; (b) these strategies are self-identified; and (d) they are thought to serve the purposes of this study against the theoretical frameworks chosen for investigation.

The chosen verses were analyzed qualitatively through Brown and Levinson theory of politeness, which aims at saving face and making the receiver

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[9] Islahi, Sadruddin. (1998). *Islam at a Glance.* Delhi: Markazi Maktaba Islami Publishers. p.p: 118-121

feel good. In particular, the researchers examined here how the linguistic strategies used in the verses conform to politeness principles. This research also highlights the maxims of Leech with Cultural Intelligence through analysis whereby the researcher will be going to look into how all these seven verses of Al-Quran have been interpreted with regards to practice considering the cultural intelligent aspect of how we can translate whatever that has been infused in the Al-Quran as part of human relationship.

## 6.0     THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

### 6.1     Politeness theory of Brown and Levinson

Brown and Levinson have proposed their universal model of linguistic politeness and have claimed that politeness is realized across cultures by means of various linguistic positive and negative strategies to avoid face- threatening acts. The authors have identified two main strategies, namely off- record and bald-on-record. The latter strategy is divided into two actions: bald on-record without redressive action, and bald-on-record with redressive action, which in turn is subdivided into positive politeness and negative politeness.[10]

In the bald on-record strategy without redressive action, no effort is made to avoid or minimize a face-threatening act. The audience might be embarrassed or shocked due to the clear, unambiguous way of addressing, such as in the case of imperatives. This strategy is often used when speakers are close to their audiences or when there is an asymmetric relationship between the speaker and the addressee in terms of power.

While off-record strategies are a nuanced form of indirect communication that plays a crucial role in human interactions. By allowing for subtle communication and interpretation, these strategies contribute to the maintenance of politeness and positive social relationships, while minimizing the potential for face-threatening situations.

**Key Aspects of Off-Record Strategies:**

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[10] Brown, Penelope & Steven Levinson. (1978). Universals in language usage: Politeness phenomena In E. Goody (ed.), *Questions and politeness: Strategies in social interaction*, 56–310. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

1. **Types of Off-Record Strategies:**

   - a. **Bald on-Record:** This is the most direct and least polite form of communication, often involving straightforward requests or statements.

   - b. **Positive Politeness:** Emphasizes shared interests, solidarity, and friendliness to establish rapport and reduce the threat to positive face.

   - c. **Negative Politeness:** Focuses on minimizing imposition and respecting the listener's autonomy to reduce the threat to negative face.

   - d. **Off-Record Indirectness:** Involves not making a direct request or statement, leaving the interpretation of the message up to the listener.

2. **Examples of Off-Record Indirectness:**

   - a. **Hinting:** Dropping subtle hints or clues without explicitly stating what is desired.

   - b. **Vague Language:** Using ambiguous or unclear language that requires the listener to infer the intended meaning.

   - c. **Nonverbal Cues:** Conveying the message through nonverbal means such as gestures, facial expressions, or body language.

   - d. **Irony or Sarcasm:** Using ironic or sarcastic statements to imply the opposite of what is said, allowing the listener to interpret the intended meaning.

3. **Purpose of Off-Record Strategies:**

   - a. **Minimizing Face Threat:** Off-record strategies are employed to avoid directly imposing on the listener and threatening their positive or negative face. The indirect nature of these strategies aims to maintain harmony and avoid conflict.

- b. **Preserving Politeness:** By providing the listener with the freedom to interpret the message, off-record strategies allow for a more tactful and diplomatic form of communication.

- c. **Preserving Social Relationships:** Indirectness is often used to preserve social relationships by avoiding direct confrontation or disagreement.

4. **Cultural and Contextual Variations:**

- a. **Cultural Norms:** The acceptability and effectiveness of off-record strategies can vary across cultures. In some cultures, indirect communication may be more prevalent and well-received, while in others, directness may be preferred.

- b. **Relationship Dynamics:** The nature of the relationship between the speaker and the listener can influence the choice of off-record strategies. In more familiar relationships, subtle hints or nonverbal cues may be better understood.

5. **Potential Challenges:**

- a. **Misinterpretation:** Off-record strategies run the risk of being misinterpreted by the listener, leading to confusion or misunderstanding.

- b. **Cultural Sensitivity:** In multicultural settings, individuals need to be aware of cultural differences in communication styles to avoid unintended face-threatening acts.

In the off-record indirect strategy, a face-threatening act is avoided by averting direct requests and by employing, instead, indirect statements that can be inferred by the addressee as a request. The disadvantage of this strategy is the possibility of misinterpreting the utterances by the addressee. Different options are used to apply the off-record indirect strategy such as giving hints, being vague and being sarcastic.[11]

### 6.2    *Leech's theory on how to avoid conflict.*

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[11] Ibid, 56-310

In Leech's theory (1983), he looked at the strategy on how to avoid conflict and how he measured this conflict avoidance by the degree of effort that is projected in the discourse or in communication focusing on three different items: situation, maintenance, and consideration of establishment of comity where courtesy and the consideration of one should have towards another. Leech's (1983) views the function of politeness in maintaining social balance and relations, and it assumes that interlocutors are being cooperative in the first place.[12]

Leech's politeness theory provides a nuanced understanding of how individuals employ different strategies to avoid conflict and maintain positive social interactions. The selection of a specific politeness strategy is influenced by the desire to save face, both positive and negative, and the situational context.

**Conflict Avoidance and Face Threatening:**

- **Face Threatening Acts (FTAs):**

    - Leech's theory revolves around the concept of face, which is a person's positive social value and the need to be liked and approved (positive face) and the desire to be unimpeded and free from imposition (negative face). Face-threatening acts (FTAs) are actions that could potentially damage one's face.

- **Politeness as Face-Saving:**

    - Politeness strategies are used to mitigate FTAs. Positive politeness saves positive face by emphasizing friendliness, shared interests, and approval. Negative politeness saves negative face by showing respect for autonomy and minimizing imposition.

- **Choosing Politeness Strategies:**

    - The choice of politeness strategy depends on the social context, relationships between speakers, cultural norms, and the severity of the potential face-threatening act. Individuals often navigate between these strategies based on the specific circumstances.

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[12] Leech, Geoffrey N. (1983). *Principles of Pragmatics*. London: Longman.

## 6.3    Cultural Intelligence by Ang & Van Dyne, (2008)

Cultural Intelligence (CQ) is a concept introduced by researchers Christopher Earley and Soon Ang, and later expanded upon by Ang and Linn Van Dyne in their 2008 book "Handbook of Cultural Intelligence: Theory, Measurement, and Applications." Cultural Intelligence refers to an individual's capability to function effectively in culturally diverse settings. It involves understanding cultural differences, adapting to diverse cultural contexts, and effectively managing cross-cultural interactions. "Cultural Intelligence" refers to the ability to work effectively and communicate effectively across cultures. CQ employed in business, education, and meta-academic research was conceived of a specific kind of competence. It much more towards how we practice it.[13] The four dimensions of Cultural Intelligence are:

1.    **Cognitive CQ (Cognitive Cultural Intelligence):**

- *Definition:* Cognitive CQ refers to an individual's knowledge about culture and cultural differences. It involves understanding cultural norms, values, customs, and the ability to interpret and make sense of unfamiliar cultural behaviors.

- *Skills:* Individuals with high Cognitive CQ are knowledgeable about various cultures and can analyze and interpret cultural situations effectively. They are curious about different cultures, seek to understand cultural dynamics, and are aware of their own cultural biases.

2.    **Metacognitive CQ (Metacognitive Cultural Intelligence):**

- *Definition:* Metacognitive CQ involves an individual's ability to plan and strategize for intercultural interactions. It includes self-awareness and the ability to monitor and adjust one's thinking and problem-solving processes in cross-cultural situations.

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[13] Ang, S., & Van Dyne, L. (2008). *Conceptualization of cultural intelligence: Definition, distinctiveness, and nomological network.* In S. Ang & L. Van Dyne (Eds.), Handbook of cultural intelligence: Theory, measurement, and applications (pp. 3–15). M.E. Sharpe.

- *Skills:* Individuals with high Metacognitive CQ are reflective and aware of their own cultural assumptions. They can adapt their thinking and problem-solving approaches in response to different cultural contexts. They are also open to feedback and continuously strive to improve their cultural understanding and adaptability.

3. **Motivational CQ (Motivational Cultural Intelligence):**

   - *Definition:* Motivational CQ pertains to an individual's interest, confidence, and drive to engage with people from different cultures. It involves a positive attitude towards cultural diversity, a willingness to adapt, and an eagerness to learn from and about other cultures.

   - *Skills:* Individuals with high Motivational CQ are enthusiastic about engaging with diverse cultures. They are motivated to build relationships across cultural boundaries, are willing to invest time and effort in cross-cultural interactions, and remain resilient in the face of intercultural challenges.

4. **Behavioral CQ (Behavioral Cultural Intelligence):**

   - *Definition:* Behavioral CQ refers to an individual's ability to exhibit appropriate verbal and non-verbal behaviors in intercultural interactions. It involves adapting communication styles, interpersonal behaviors, and decision-making approaches to fit the cultural context.

   - *Skills:* Individuals with high Behavioral CQ can effectively adjust their behavior to match the expectations of different cultural settings. They are skilled in cross-cultural communication, are capable of building rapport with people from diverse backgrounds and can navigate diverse social norms.

Cultural Intelligence by Ang and Van Dyne, emphasizes a holistic and multi-dimensional approach to cultural competence. It recognizes that cultural intelligence is not just about knowing cultural facts but also involves the ability to adapt cognitively, metacognitively, motivationally, and behaviourally in

various cross-cultural situations. Developing Cultural Intelligence is crucial for individuals working in diverse and multicultural environments, as it enhances their ability to communicate, collaborate, and lead effectively across cultural boundaries.

## 7.0    RELATED STUDIES ON QUR'ANIC LANGUAGE

Few studies have been conducted on politeness in religious texts but not relate it with cultural intelligence. Al-Momani employs Brown and Levinson politeness theory and Leech's maxims of politeness related to women in Al Qur'an. Despite Brown and Levinson belief in the universality of the notion of face, they have explicated that self-image (face) is expected to be influenced by the culture of any society.[14]

Al-Fayyad also investigates politeness related to the traditions of Prophet Mohammad in the light of Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness and Leech's conversational maxims. The author finds that the bald-on-record strategy prevails in those traditions and sayings, ascribing the abundance of this strategy to the theological type of communication in religious discourse.[15]

Previous studies in religious sources have not focused on politeness strategies and cultural intelligence used to address sensitive issues like sexual intercourse. The present study contributes to filling this gap. The theory of politeness with cultural intelligence perspective is used here as a guide to assess the strategies used in communicating messages related to marital relationships.

## 8.0    DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The researcher will discuss this topic by focusing on two different studies and they are pragmatic study and intercultural intelligence perspective and how both are inter-related. The discussion will first look into the verses of Quran depicting words used by Allah to signal how Allah's views in related to marital relationship

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[14] Momani, Kawakib, Muhammad A Badarneh & Fathi Migdadi. (2009). Gender metaphors in Middle Eastern politics and the Arab receiver. *Social Semiotics.* 19(3). 293–310.s

[15] Al-Fayyad, H. (2016). *Politeness in Al-Hadith Al-Sharif: A pragmatic and sociolinguistic perspective Unpublished M.A. thesis Supervised by Al Momani 2016.* Jordan University of Science and Technology, Irbid, Jordan.

in Islam by elaborating it with politeness theory (off -record strategy) by Brown and Levinson. And the second one is to investigate how it is going to be interpreted with regards to practice considering the cultural intelligent aspects of how we can translate whatever that has been infused in the Al Quran as part of human relationship. For this second stage the researcher will use politeness theory by Leech and relate it with cultural intelligence perspective.

1- *Politeness strategy: Off-record strategies*

The *off-record strategy* is one of the politeness strategies indicated by Brown and Levinson. It is a form of indirect communication that involves conveying a message without making a direct, explicit request or statement. This strategy is characterized by subtlety, and it allows the speaker to communicate while providing the listener with a certain degree of freedom to interpret and respond to the message. Off-record strategies are used to minimize face-threatening acts (FTAs) and maintain positive social relationships.

Indirectness has a prominent role in human interactions. It refers to addressing a specific issue in an indirect way or it can be defined as a speech act that does not match the structure for examples: using metaphor, understatement, and overstatement (Al- Momani, 2018). Euphemism can be classified as an indirect phrase or word, often used by people when referring to something awkward or unpleasant. The use of euphemistic metaphors makes unpleasant phrases or words more suitable and tolerable. Al- Momani, (2018) has indicated euphemism as politeness strategy.

In this study, the focus will be directed toward metaphors as an *off-record* strategy in addressing sensitive issues in marital relationship; sexual intercourse.

These following sentences in Al Qur'an utilized metaphors referring to sexual intercourse. The use of metaphors in these verses serves to convey spiritual and ethical lessons while maintaining a level of discretion.

نساؤكم حرث لكم فأتوا حرثكم أنىٰ شئتم

Your wives are as a tilth unto you; so approach your tilth when or how ye will; but do some good act for your souls beforehand]

(The Qur'an, chapter 2:223)

أَحَلَّ لَكُمْ لَيْلَةَ الصِّيَامِ الرَّفَثُ إِلَى نِسَائِكُمْ

Permitted to you, on the night of the fasts, is the approach to your wives.

(The Qur'an, chapter 2:187)

هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَّكُمْ وَأَنتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لَّهُنَّ

"They are your cover and you are their cover."

(The Qur'an, chapter 2:187)

بَاشِرُوهُنَّ وَابْتَغُوا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ

So now, have relations with them and seek that which Allah has decreed for you.

(The Qur'an, chapter 2:187)

وَلَا تُبَاشِرُوهُنَّ وَأَنتُمْ عَاكِفُونَ فِي الْمَسَاجِدِ

And do not have relations with them as long as you are staying for worship in the mosques.

(The Qur'an, chapter 2:187)

تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَقْرَبُوهَا

These are the limits (set) by Allah, so approach them not.

(The Qur'an, chapter 2:187)

وَلَا تَقْرَبُوهُنَّ حَتَّى يَطْهُرْنَ

and do not approach them till they are clean.

(The Qur'an, chapter 2:222)

Each of these verses uses metaphorical and symbolic language when discussing intimate matters, maintaining a level of discretion and reverence. When the Quran addresses issues related to sexuality, it does so with respect and consideration for the dignity of individuals. The language used is intended to

convey guidance without causing discomfort. This shows that the Quran recognizes the private nature of sexual relations and encourages believers to guard their modesty and keep such matters within the bounds of lawful relationships. From these verses we may conclude that the Quran avoids the use of vulgar or explicit language when discussing matters related to intimacy. Instead, it employs refined and dignified expressions.

In the first verse, the word *harth* "field" (tilth) is used to represent the uterus where seeds/ sperm can be implanted. This verse employs the metaphor of "tilth" or cultivated land to describe the relationship between spouses. The metaphor emphasizes the idea of mutual cooperation, care, and cultivation in the context of intimate relations. The use of this metaphor encourages a respectful and consensual approach to marital relations. This metaphor refers to sexual intercourse between husband and wife to secure the emotions and feelings of the addressee.

The word *al-rafth* "obscenity" also referring to having sex between husband and wife. Similarly, expressions like "don't approach them until they are cleansed (from their menstruation)" and "These are the limits (set) by Allah, so approach them not." are all euphemistic metaphors that refer to sexual intercourse. As for the verse (2:222), the explicit mention of limits and cleanliness underscores the importance of respecting certain guidelines related to intimacy, such as refraining from sexual relations during periods of ritual impurity and when engaged in acts of worship. These guidelines are designed to preserve personal boundaries, emphasizing the importance of respecting one another's autonomy within the context of intimate relations.

When we look at the word *basyiruhunna* it is derived from the word *basyarah* which means "skin/epidermis". This indirect word refers to having sex between husband and wife replacing taboo words to save the addressee's face. The use of metaphorical language adds a layer of discretion and indirectness, mitigating the potential sensitivity of the topic.

The verses (2:187) address the permissibility of sexual relations, the mutual protection and support between spouses, and the importance of adhering to the limits set by Allah. The metaphors of "cover" and "approach" are used to convey the idea of mutual care, protection, and the recognition of lawful boundaries.

All these verses utilize metaphors related to agriculture, cover, and approach to convey the ethical and spiritual dimensions of marital relations in Islam. The metaphors contribute to the Quranic emphasis on modesty, mutual respect, and adherence to divine guidelines in the realm of intimate relationships. Interpreting these verses requires consideration of the broader context of Islamic teachings and the scholarly tradition within Islam.

In summary, these strategies have been used to avoid unpleasant communication and causing any embarrassment, and thereby saving the face of recipients, both men and women and it shows how Islam stress on the importance of good values. The use of polite words reflects one's humanity. This is why, in order of merit, next to spiritual system comes the moral system. This contention is also endorsed by religion as it attaches a high degree of importance to the decency of behavior. Here we may see how the Holy Quran emphasise on modesty and decorum in language. It is important to note that discussions about sexual matters in the Quran are generally presented within the context of lawful relationships. Allah encourages believers to approach matters related to intimacy and personal relations with modesty and decency. It emphasizes the sanctity of the marital relationship. Brown and Levinson define face as the positive social value a person effectively claims for themselves in each interaction. In the Quranic verses, the emphasis on mutual care, respect, and adherence to divine guidelines aims to preserve the face of both partners involved in intimate relations. By providing clear guidelines and framing the discussion in a context of shared values, the Quran seeks to protect the dignity and face of individuals within the marital relationship.

2- *Politeness strategy (human interaction) and Intercultural intelligence (practice)*

Here we can see how the Al-Quran infuses the Cultural Intelligence where politeness is concerned. Allah uses various types of terms in conveying messages related to "marital relationship". In Islam, sexual intercourse is an act that can only be legitimated through marriage ties.

Islam differentiates between sex in marriage and sex outside of marriage to make clear the difference between what is permitted and forbidden (halal and haram). The sacrament of marriage (nikah) relates to the regulation of sexual practices. Islam dichotomizes sexual life into sex as religious duty (ibadah) and

sex as fornication (zina). The legalized sexual practices can only be accomplished through marriage and bring reward (*al-ajr*), while the latter is conducted outside of legalized marriage and brings punishment from Allah.

The research has selected Leech's theory (1983) where politeness is concerned and put it together with cultural intelligence where practice is concerned. In Leech's theory, he looked at the strategy on how to avoid conflict and how he measured this conflict avoidance by the degree of effort that is projected in the discourse or in communication focusing on three different items: situation, maintenance, and consideration of establishment of comity where courtesy and the consideration of one should have towards another.

When we translate where marital relationship is concerned regarding situation, we are looking at sexual intercourse in marriage which it is supposed to be appreciated, acknowledged, and enjoyed by both parties and not only one party. Leech's politeness strategies, which focus on the effort made to avoid conflict, relate to the behavioural aspect of cultural intelligence. Individual with high cultural intelligence possess effective communication skills that enable them to navigate diverse cultural situations without causing unnecessary conflict. The husband is obliged to treat his wife in a kind and reasonable manner and so does the wife because Islam does not discriminate between human beings because of gender, and different functions in life does not mean the elevation or relegation of one or the other sex.

In sexual attitude, feeling, attractiveness and excitement are all natural to human beings, Islam promotes modest, humane, rational, purposeful, disciplined and contained sexual behaviour in both man and woman. In order to attain this conduct, Islam commands Muslims (men and women) to lower their gaze, together with his command to guard their sexual parts (24:30-31), for the eye is the key to the feelings, and the look is a messenger of desire, that may lead to unlawful sexual relationship.

As for second item where maintenance is concerned, we look at how politeness is needed and to be consistent throughout the whole process from the beginning until the end. It should be noted to that the importance placed by Islam on the satisfaction of both man and woman, is a clear indicator of the justice and fairness of Allāh (SwT). The husband provides sexual security to his wife, and the wife guards her chastity in order to provide sexual security to her husband, and both of them complement each other to attain sexual satisfaction

according to their needs. Both of them are to ensure the sexual satisfaction of the other party. The *hadith* forbids a woman from refusing to meet the husband sexual needs, while the husband is ordered to seek his wife's consent before coitus interruption (*'azl*).

In Islam, sexual intercourse must be performed on the basis of etiquettes, and is considered an act of '*Ibadah,* if it is within a legal marriage in accordance with proper Islamic guidelines that are disciplined and contained. As such, there is no place for beastly satisfaction of the sexual urge. The *hadith* refers to rewards in having lawful sexual activity with one's wife: "…and in sexual activity that you perform legally, there is a *sadaqah.*" (Muslim, *hadith* no. 1674)

The husband and wife are free to have sexual activity whenever they desire, and in situations they prefer, according to norms, provided that it is not during menstrual periods (2:222), and not in the afternoon on the fasting month, nor should men have sexual intercourse while he is observing *i'tikaf* in the mosque (2:187). On the other hand, they are advised to guard their modesty, and to consider that as one of the qualities of believers who are to succeed and be admitted into paradise (23:5), (33:35).

And when we talk about establishment of comity where marital relationship is concerned, it must be attuned and to be sensitive towards each other reactions with regards to emotions, mutual understanding, respect, comfort, and satisfaction. The mention of being attuned and sensitive toward each other's reactions with regards to emotions reflects the significance of emotional intelligence within the marital relationship. It suggests that partners should be mindful of each other's emotional states, ensuring that the intimate interactions contribute positively to the emotional well-being of both individuals.

It emphasizes the importance of establishing a harmonious and supportive connection between spouses, particularly in the realm of sexual intimacy. The idea is to foster an atmosphere of mutual pleasure, understanding, and consent while avoiding actions that might be mutually displeasing. Whatever in sexual intercourse is mutually pleasing is right, and likewise, whatever is mutually displeasing should be avoided. Conversely, the statement also underscores the importance of avoiding actions that are mutually displeasing. This highlights the idea of respecting each other's boundaries, preferences, and comfort levels. Open communication about desires, preferences, and any potential discomfort is crucial to maintaining a healthy and consensual intimate relationship.

The emphasis on comfort and satisfaction indicates that a successful marital relationship involves creating an environment where both partners feel physically and emotionally comfortable. This includes considering each other's physical comfort during intimate moments and ensuring that both partners experience satisfaction in the relationship.

Leech's consideration of comity, which involves courtesy and the consideration of one's position towards another, aligns with the motivation aspect of cultural intelligence. Individuals with high cultural intelligence are motivated to approach intercultural interactions with respect, empathy, and a genuine desire to establish positive relationships. The mutual agreement, understanding, and willingness of both partners are vital for creating an environment where both feel valued, respected, and fulfilled within the marital relationship.

It has been mentioned in the Al Quran regarding politeness in marital relationships and it must be practiced in our daily life. When we talk about practice, how do we relate it with regards to culture? As a muslim, that is how we do it and it also recommended across the board.

In Islam, this sexual intercourse is based on the principle of 'knowing good manners' *mu'asyarah bil-ma'ruf.* The term *mu'asyarah* derived from the word for family, relative and close friend, whereas the term *al-ma'ruf* is derived from the root *urf*, which means: custom, habit, or culture. Thus, the phrase *mu'asyarah bil-ma'ruf* can be translated as social intercourse based on religious values and human culture.[16] It is actually a shared value where it goes across the culture and whereby every culture should be practiced it as a form of politeness.

This perspective aligns with broader principles in Islam that encourage mutual respect, kindness, and consideration between spouses. The guidance provided seeks to promote a healthy and consensual approach to intimate relations within the framework of a marital relationship. It underscores the importance of open communication, emotional intelligence, and a shared commitment to each other's well-being and satisfaction.

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[16]  KH. Husein Muhammad. (2001). Fiqh Perempuan; Refleksi Kiai atas Wacana Agama dan Gender. *Lkis Pelangi Aksara.*

## 9.0     CONCLUSION

The research has examined 7 verses from Al-Qur'an with regards to marital relationship: sexual intercourse. The goal of this research was to see how Al-Qur'an addresses sensitive issues like sexual intercourse and how it was being discussed in pragmatic and cultural intelligence perspective. The analysis has shown that this issue was addressed in polite language to save the face of addressees. Applying Brown and Levinson (1978; 1987) theory of politeness, it has been found that off-record strategies are used in addressing sexual intercourse issue by utilizing metaphors to save the addressee's face. As for Leech's (1983) maxims where intercultural intelligence is concerned it can be concluded that strategy to avoid conflict with regards to politeness in sexual activity is by the degree of effort that is projected in the communication and they are: situation, maintenance, and consideration of establishment of comity where courtesy and the consideration of one should have towards another. That is how we do it and it is considered a shared value where it goes across the culture and whereby every culture should be practiced it as a form of politeness.

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