
Family Communication Amongst Conventional Malay Man

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ABSTRACT

Communication is an essential tool for successful family functioning. Communication in the family is very important as it allows members to express their needs, wants, concerns and loves. Effective communication creates an atmosphere that allows family members to express their differences as well as love and admiration for one another. Love is the basis of happy and successful family. Each culture has their own way of expressing their love. Thus, the present research aimed to understand on how the conventional Malay men communicate their love in the family. A grounded theory approach in qualitative research design was used to answer the research question. The data collection involved semi-structured interview, observation and document analysis. As a result, seven main themes emerged. The themes are academic supervisor, personal advisor, financial provider, educator, positive role model, discipline maintainer, and spiritual leader. In summary, the conventional Malay Men communicate their love via a high commitment to the family especially to their children. As a result, the children appreciate their father's love and make it as a reason to be successful in life. Good communication helps family members come to an understanding, which is the basis for all healthy familial relationships. Communication is a key way to show our family members how to love each other.

Keywords: *Family communication, parenting, educational psychology, fatherhood, Malay psychology.*

INTRODUCTION

Love is one indicator of happy and functional family. Without love, the family climate becomes dull and empty. According to Sternberg (1986), there were three dimensions of love: intimacy, commitment and passion. Intimacy is the feeling closeness and connectedness. Commitment is one's efforts to maintain the love. Meanwhile, passion is sexual attraction and romance.

Marriage is the basis of family development. Research has reported that married women are less stressful than single and divorced women (Jamsiah, 2010). However, family strength and happiness is greatly depending to the character and status of the husband (Sidek, 2010). *Ibu Mithālī* required a great spouse to achieve the mission and vision in educating the children and the family. Father played a more important role to nurture their children especially when more mothers involve in the workforce (Magill-Evans et al., 2007). Great spouse in this context is religious, loyal and responsible husband who assumes their role as a father, good educator, leader and activist to the society. These also augurs well with the *Rasūlullāh* advice in selecting a husband:

When someone comes to ask for marriage, with whom you're pleased with his religion and good ethics of conduct, gives him the permission to marriages, if you fail to do this, there will be a calamity (Narrated by Tirmidzi and Baihaqi).

Good selection of spouse is also important to prevent any potential long-term disagreement between husband and wife. The fight could lead towards moral corruption among their children (Abdullah, 2010). This is because the best among people is the best to his family (*narrated by Ibn Majah and al-Hakim*) and the most perfect believers in faith are those who have the best morals and gentle to their family (*narrated by Bukhari and Muslim*). Marriage for the believers is to complete half of his religion. The other half is executed with solid piety to Allāh by implementing the trust and responsibilities as a husband, as a wife and parents in the family.

True love, happy marriage and functional family are the foundation of human happiness. However, conventional Malay men have their own ways in expressing their loves to their family. Most of them born before independent day (1957), have serious character, very dominant, and religious. Thus, a robust research on how the conventional Malay men communicate their loves to their family is needed to a get better understanding towards them. This is important to avoid misunderstanding towards the conventional Malay men, which always becomes a source of conflict in the family.

METHODOLOGY

The researcher applied Grounded Theory approach in qualitative research method to answer the research question. Data were collected from a series of interviews, document analysis and observation. The data were then analysed line per line using thematic analysis approach. In thematic analysis, 40 codes were emerging. The codes were then merged into seven sub themes. Finally, the themes were intertwined with the previous theory to develop a simple model: *The Model of Love Communication of Conventional Men to Their Family*

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The conventional Malay men communicate their love to the family by playing their role as a supportive spouse and dedicated father to the family. They are rarely expressing their love by saying 'I love you' like the modern Malay father nowadays. However, their families especially their children could feel their love through his support and commitment to their family. They appreciate their father's sacrifice and associate it as the best indicator of their father's love towards them. Research found that the conventional Malay men express their love by giving their commitment as an academic supervisor, personal advisor, financial provider, educator, positive role model, discipline maintainer, and spiritual leader.

Academic Supervision

Ibu Mithālī's spouse was very concern about their child academic achievement. Academic supervision is important to ensure the children are truly learning, focus and preoccupied with reading material that is immoral and puppy love (Abdullah, 2010). Oversight for learning and studying, particularly in adolescent may affect the nature and future of our children. The malpractice and neglect which are not eradicated as soon as possible will make the children becomes stubborn and difficult to set up (Abdullah, 2010).

Ibu Mithālī's spouse supportiveness had a significant interaction with their children's school readiness and academic competencies. This is aligned with Martin and friends (2010) research finding among children in the United States.

Madam Maimon's spouse ensured that the children attended school every day, did their homework and scored in the examination.

Abah, when it comes to (examination) result, he would be very fierce... Our rule of thumb in education was not to commit truancy... failure to do homework... He would be angry if we fail to perform well in the examination... (Mrs. Azizah, Former Teacher, Madam Maimon's daughter).

Mr. Sulaiman, Madam Esah's spouse, also very concerned about his child's formal education. He complimented his wife in educating their children.

Mother educated us indirectly... father in-directly, but my family strength was more on formal education because he was very strict in school education... while mother imparted knowledge to us, but it was more on religion... if we want to learn in school, it was father (Mrs. Rosilah, Teacher, Madam Esah's daughter).

Mr. Sulaiman ensured that his children study hard and pay attention to the teacher during study.

You must become a useful person, don't be playful, don't quarrel with the teacher, mad at the teacher, follow what the teacher said... (Mr. Sulaiman, Farmer, Madam Esah's spouse).

He monitored the children's activities during the examination weeks. He would switch off the television for a while to ensure the children focus on their study. Controlling children's time to watch the television is also good to prevent the children from learning aggressive behaviour from the television programs (Gonzalez-Mena, 2006).

What I did last time, when the children about to take the examination, I would not allow them to watch television especially during the final month prior to the examination... during the examination period... (I) switched it off... (Mr. Sulaiman, Farmer, Madam Esah's spouse).

He always looked for good opportunities that would benefit his children.

I did not mind talking to the District Officer... I did not care because (I) wanted the application to run smoothly... I met (him) because I wanted to enquire about the children; I was not embarrassed because it was for a good reason. We wanted to look for any good opportunities (for the children) ... (Mr. Sulaiman, Farmer, Madam Esah's spouse).

Mr. Sulaiman always monitored his child's progress at school and in constant contact with the headmaster. He provided all of his children the opportunities to learn. He believed that financial support for the education of the children were the primary task for any father.

My children, not all of them were good, some had to re-take (the examination or the education) again that we had to sell our land (to cover the expenses). I gave all of them equal opportunities. I would ask whether they want to continue study or not? When it comes to provide education, I would try my best... after all, it is my duty (Mr. Sulaiman, Farmer, Madam Esah's spouse).

Mr. Sulaiman always thought big for his children. He did not allow them to help him in the orchard during the school day. It was different with the trend of other villagers that time, as they preferred the children to skip school and help out in the farm.

The problem with most parents back then was that they allowed the children to skip school and helped them to do the work. And, it only earned them so little rather than make the children attended school so that the future would be much better and that the children could earn more when they started working... the problem in my village, parents asked their children to help them tapping the rubber trees, collect the scrub, if they have oil palm, helped them to take care of the orchard even during school days... then the children would be paid for only a penny. If not, they would just ask the children to work for free... most youths in my village were dropped-out because of this... It was because the parents encouraged them to work when they were supposed to be at school (Madam Rosilah, Teacher, Madam Esah's daughter).

Mr. Ismail, the husband of Madam Kalsum motivated and instilled the interest of the children toward knowledge. He used most of his time to guide them in academic and life achievement.

Her husband, Tuan Haji Ismail (Madam Kalsum husband, the 8th 'Ibu Mithālī') utilized most of the time to influence the children to love knowledge. The effect to this day, the children grew up as adults that appreciated the culture of mutual love, and respectful of knowledge (Noor Aziah, 2011a).

Although Nik Omar, Madam Wan Mas's husband was not well verse in the English language, it was not an obstacle for him to monitor all school works until completion. As a teacher, he had the advantage to understand the latest development that took place at school and ensured all of his children memorized multiplication formula stimulate the children to be successful in mathematics and other subject in school.

Every night... the children would be gathered... prepared for school work. Nik Omar became the group leader and taught them to revise schoolwork. Before they begin with the schoolwork, he would make it routine that the children recited the multiplication formula or tables (Nik Safiah & Rokiah, 2004).

He also communicated his own target for his children which stimulate them to become a successful graduate at the university.

Nik Omar had a vision for his children that if they opted to be a teacher, then let them be teachers with qualification and graduated from universities or colleges (Nik Safiah & Rokiah, 2004).

Advisory Role for the Children

Mr. Ismail (Madam Kalsum's husband) acted as advisor in helping the children to choose the spouse. He was very particular of his child's selection. This was because since the mother is like one educational institution, then Mr. Ismail on the other contrary was very concerned on religious matters. It is in line with Islamic guideline in choosing a Muslim wife:

A marriage with a woman is based on four factors: because of her wealthy, descent, beauty and religion. So, choose religious woman, surely you'll be fortunate (Bukhari & Muslim).

A pious and ethical mother nurtures a pious and high ethical child (Aidh, 2005). The pious and intelligent mother would also tend to bring prosperity to the family through loyalty towards the husband, wisdom in managing the family wealth, and love in nurturing her children towards Allāh's love and mercy (Muhammad Nur, 2005) and, vice-versa. Thus, it is important for the family to identify themselves with religious, personality and ethics of the future wife of the son and the future mother of their grandchildren.

When we wanted to get married... father would truly search for us... the parents of his daughter in law must be a religious person, if not a learned men... as for me, I would bring him to meet her... we would go... meeting the future wife... my father would also go to school where she teaches... (Since my wife is a teacher (Ustaz Ashraf, Lecturer, Madam Kalsum's son).

Mr. Sulaiman, Madam Esah's spouse, always gave advice to his children. He also provided reasons for each of the punishment given to the children.

Father always gave advice... always remembered, if he was angry, he would tell what angered him... and he pointed out the children's mistake (Madam Rosilah, Teacher, Madam Esah's daughter).

He also helped the children to manage their property.

He gave opinion... (Even though) I have money; father would tell there's a land... He would help... Dad would still monitor his children... even at the orchard, father still helped... He would still want to help his children even now (that we have grown up) ... (Madam Rosilah, Teacher, Madam Esah's daughter).

Financial Provider

The spouses of *Ibu Mithālī's* became the main financial provider for the family. This is aligned with the role of the father to give sustenance for their wife (al-Baqarah: 233) and family (narrated by Muslim). Family sustenance includes good food, shelter and clothes (Abdullah, 2010).

In 1968, Madam Maimon's husband was retrenched from his job. But, the family was lucky as he was able to secure new job as retail shop assistant at grocery stores in Johor Bharu (Mastura, 2011).

Mr. Sulaiman, Madam Esah's spouse, also provided the family sustenance. However, the first priorities for the family budget were for the children education.

Family sustenance... focused on child education... (Mrs. Rosilah, Teacher, Madam Esah's daughter).

He tapped the rubber trees and collected coconut and areca nut to earn extra income.

That time... I would tap (the rubber trees)... collecting coconuts... picked the areca nut... and I could sell... for 600g of areca 15 penny... 15 cents (Mr. Sulaiman, Farmer, Madam Esah's spouse).

All school fees were paid by the father. So did the transportation fees.

All was paid by their father... the fees... The father would pay directly to the driver RM9 (Madam Esah, the 9th *Ibu Mithālī*).

Mr. Sulaiman was the main source of living for the family.

Father more on paying the daily expenses and our living condition, mother would always come to help... (Madam Rosilah, Teacher, Madam Esah's daughter).

Mr. Sulaiman would also fish to provide sufficient protein for his children.

My father could fish, that was the reason why 17 children could be supported... (Madam Rosilah, Teacher, Madam Esah's daughter).

He also planted banana trees, which served as a main food supply. He provided three gunny sacks of wheat flour per month for his child's carbohydrate source.

During my time...our staple food was banana...food for breakfast was wheat flour...we provided the family with milk... banana... we grew our own food... (Mr. Sulaiman, Farmer, Madam Esah's spouse).

Mr. Ismail, Madam Kalsum's spouse, worked as dispatch at Sekolah Kebangsaan Lunas.

So in the evening, he returned back from his works as dispatch at the primary school in Lunas... (Ustaz Ashraf, Lecturer, Madam Kalsum's son).

In the evening, he worked at farm. He planted rubber tree, fruits, sugar cane, corn and tapioca.

He worked on an orchard... he utilized the rubber trees... he used to tap rubber trees... ancillary works... planting watermelon... He had 10 acres of sugar cane plantation... extra income... planting corn... planting cassava... 10 acres... (Ustaz Ashraf, Lecturer, Madam Kalsum's daughter).

Mr. Ismail was also smart in taking advantages of the opportunities. He bought two storey bungalow house for the comfort of his big family. His house is located in a strategic location, so he opened a shop on the ground floor and started a business. The exposure towards the business world gave good influence to his children. Now, one of his children is a successful entrepreneur in Malaysia.

He bought land with house... Three acres of land... with fish pond... double story house... my father opened a grocery store at the house because he was involved in the business... that was also why he made a shop below... (Ustaz Ashraf, Lecturer, Madam Kalsum's daughter).

Mr. Abang, Madam Ayot's spouse, worked as a custom officer. During the Japanese occupation, he lost his job. As a result, he performed multiple jobs such as fisherman, farmer and factory worker and when he was reinstated, he continued with part-time work to sustain his family. This is because, the salary was small (RM 35 per month) and was not enough to accommodate the children and families need.

Her husband lost his jobs during the Japanese occupation, and they had a son, his eldest son was two years old. They moved to Samarahan where he (Abang bin Jonet) fish shrimps, sell coconuts and work at Japanese factories (Siti Rogayah, 2011).

He also benefited the forest resources as a food supplies for his family.

During weekends, he and our father used to go to the forest to look for bamboo (bamboo shoots) and other forest products for food (Dr. Ahmad, Dentist, Madam Ayot's son).

Mr. Nik Omar too benefited the agricultural activities as additional food sources for the children. He reared chicken, rabbits and birds.

Nik Omar reared poultries, from rabbits to birds. During the flood season, Nik Omar asked his children to hold the link in the field, to catch fish. In fact, Nik Omar would sometimes go down to the sea to catch fish (Nik Safiah & Rokiah, 2004).

Positive Role Model

The father must illustrate a good example to their children (Aidh, 2005). A good character and high credibility would make the children adhere to it.

Mr. Sulaiman, Madam Esah's spouse, was a respectful figure in his village. He always gave advice to the younger generation. This indicated Mr. Sulaiman had high self-esteem and eventually increased the children's self-esteem. This is because adult's high self-esteem will influence the children to build high self-esteem too (Gonzalez-Mena, 2006). People with high self-esteem always optimistic and able to communicate positive messages with others. Parents' optimism and positive message would enhance the ability of the children to build high self-esteem.

Even though he changed, the children would still respect him regardless... He was the pillar of the family, and we would respect him... the villagers also acted the same way... the villagers respected my father and my family... these people respect my dad because my dad would only say something that he experienced in.... and he always gave advice to the drug addict... he motivated them... he would reprimand everybody even if it was committed by one person... and people would not dare to protest (Madam Rosilah, Teacher, Madam Esah's daughter).

Mr. Sulaiman was awarded as *Tokoh Maal Hijrah* on 2003. The award indicated his status and contribution to the nation.

I (received in) 2003... Maal Hijrah Awards... (Mr. Sulaiman, Farmer, Madam Esah's spouse).

Mr. Nik Omar, Madam Wan Mas's spouse, had a charming personality.

My father was a handsome man... His eyes were just like mine, hazelnut... (Mrs. Nik Mastura, Educational Officer, Madam Wan Mas's daughter).

However, he remained faithful to the wife until his demise.

Nik Omar a handsome, fair-complexion, of good descent, and had an open opportunity, as a teacher. But Nik Omar remained loyal to Wan Mas to his death (Nik Safiah & Rokiah, 2004).

He was a family man who dedicated his life for his family prosperity.

Another privilege of Nik Omar was that he would not take advantage of busy wife to find second and third wife. Instead, Nik Omar used the free time to accompany the children and helped to increase family income (Nik Safiah & Rokiah, 2004).

He became the idol for his grandchildren.

All of our children adore my father even he was fierce. Now, everybody would always talk about Tok Ayah like a father and her idol was my father (Mrs. Nik Mastura, Educational Officer, Madam Wan Mas's daughter).

Mr. Ismail, Madam Kalsum's spouse, was a good speaker. He loved to deliver speech and disseminate his knowledge to others. And, the children inherited his talents too.

Father was a polished and good orator... He liked to talk ... And this trait was inherited to the children... he even loves to talk until now... He just loves to give opinion especially in this kind of interview... And his descendants too have the same traits... like to talk... (Ustaz Ashraf, Lecturer, Madam Kalsum's daughter).

He had a dominant character and some of the characters greatly influence his child's interest, personality and behaviour. His interest towards politics also influenced his children to actively involved in a political party to for the community well-being.

That is why in my family, some of them have my father temperament... others follow mother temperament... I tend to follow mom... Dato 'Firdaus tend to be like father... because he is politician... I have interest in politics as well... because Firdaus have more interest and skills to politic... he is indeed like father... he was born a politician... (Ustaz Ashraf, Lecturer, Madam Kalsum's daughter).

Madam Awiah's spouse excelled in Kelas Khas from Johor religious school. He was also bestowed the PPS award. This award indicated his contribution to the country.

Qualification: Standard 6, Special Religious Class.
Bintang Kebesaran/Gelaran/Anugerah: PPS.
Awards / Title / Recognition: PPS.
(Madam Awiah nomination form, YADIM, 24 May 2010).

Ibu Mithālī's husband had also actively involved with the society. Mr. Sulaiman, Madam Esah's husband was elected as the PIBG treasurer for five years. His involvement with the parent-teacher association enabled him to easily get update and supervise his children's activity and progress. Besides, he could also play as a mediatory role between the school and the community.

Pakcik, for 5 years served as treasurer... I was so active that people even asked why did (the teacher) put my children behind? (Mr. Sulaiman, Farmer, Madam Esah's spouse).

Meanwhile for Mr. Ismail, the husband of Madam Kalsum involved in politics.

So, my father was a politician... actively involved in politics... that he nearly contested in the election... (Ustaz Ashraf, Lecturer, Madam Kalsum's daughter).

Mr. Ismail also involved in the religious society. He was the president of Penang Ulama Society. As a president, he had reputable status in the society. According to Gonzalez-Mena (2006), family status affected children socialization in the society. It influences how the children see themselves when they grow up.

He was the president of religious scholar... that time, Persatuan Ulama Pulau Pinang... he actively involved in Penang that time... (Ustaz Ashraf, Lecturer, Madam Kalsum's daughter).

Apart from that, Mr. Ismail also involved with the community development. The children believed that their father deserved an award for *Bapa Mithali* or exemplary father.

Father, he was very active... he spent most of his time with societal matters... if there is such thing as exemplary father, and then we could talk about exemplary father (Ustaz Ashraf, Lecturer, Madam Kalsum's daughter).

Educator

Child education is the biggest duty of the parent. Parents should not hamper the children interest towards knowledge especially on religious knowledge. Religious understanding is very important to prosper in life (Aidh, 2005). *Rasūlullāh SAW* once said that:

Whoever Allāh wishes good for him, He graced him with an understanding of religion (Bukhari and Muslim).

Mr. Ismail was an educated person.

My mom... her knowledge was so much different from my father... (Ustaz Ashraf, Lecturer, Madam Kalsum's daughter).

He showed good examples on religious internalization. True knowledge brings people towards high god-consciousness as stated in the Qur'ān, *Sūrah al-Faṭir* (28): "*Surely the fear of God among His servants only those who have knowledge.*"

Father had deep appreciation of the religion... that he passed it down to us (Ustaz Ashraf, Lecturer, Madam Kalsum's daughter).

He also taught at pondok (non-formal religious school).

He was strict because he was a pondok teacher (Ustaz Ashraf, Lecturer, Madam Kalsum's daughter).

Mr. Abang, Madam Ayot's spouse taught his children to recite Qur'ān. Sometimes we learnt Qur'ān from father (Dr Ahmad Abang, Dentist, Late Madam Ayot's son).

Mr. Nik Omar, Madam Wan Mas's spouse shared the responsibility to educate their children until all of them are successful.

With her husband helped (Nik Omar), Madam Wan Mas educated her eight children successfully that they grew up and excel in their field (Nik Safiah, 2011).

Mr. Nik Yahya, Madam Wan Meriam's spouse, patiently educated and guided his wife to excel as a wife and a mother. Being married and having children at the young age with limited education were difficult for the wife without a strong support, understanding, and guide from a mature husband.

She (Wan Meriam) married when she was a teenager. Her husband, Nik Yahya bin Hassan, who was 22 years old at the time of marriage; guided his wife and taught her the role as a responsible wife (Faridah, 2011).

Father Figure and Maintenance of Discipline

Mr. Sulaiman, Madam Esah's spouse, observed the discipline of the children. He made sure the children avoided smoking. He advised, and punished the children to correct their mistakes and control their act of conduct. This is aligned with the responsibility of a man to discipline their family. Many problems occurred in the family because the husband or the father did not play their role to improve the moral and religious appreciation of the family. Husbands and fathers need to have a sense of jealousy when their children and wives commit a wrongful act and violate God's law (Aidh, 2005). This is in accordance to God's warning in the Qur'ān, *Sūrah al-Mā'idah (78-79): I cursed the unbelievers of the Children of Israel by the tongue of Daud and Isa, son of Maryam. That is because they are rebellious and transgressors. They are, to one another, often does not prohibit actions that they do wrong. Indeed, evil is what they always used to do.*

My father would get angry when we made mistakes... (Madam Rosilah, Teacher, Madam Esah's daughter).

He would openly criticized them if they did something wrong. As a result of his strictness, none of his children smoke. Even the son in law did not smoke and if they had smoking before they are married with his children, they would definitely quit smoking. Haji Sulaiman also often caned his children if they made mistake (Noor Aziah, 2011).

Her husband (Madam Esah) was very strict. In disciplining the children, the responsibility was given to their father (Noor Aziah, 2011).

Mr. Sulaiman used cane to discipline his children at any age.

Kalau dengan bapaknya anak takut. Rotan betul... dah besar saya rotan lagi.

The children would be afraid of the father. Real cane... I would still cane them even though they have all grown up (Mr. Sulaiman, Farmer, Madam Esah's spouse).

As for Mr. Nik Omar, Madam Wan Mas's spouse, he concerned more about the children religious practice.

Before prayer, he would hold the cane... my mother would say that my father was there as a reminder for us... to avoid from being caned...

(Mrs. Nik Mastura, Former Educational Officer, Madam Wan Mas's daughter).

He disciplined his children by strict rules in order to educate their children.

In the family of Wan Mas, the disciplinarian for the children was Nik Omar, with the strong support from his wife. All of the children said: "Dad was fierce and firmly disciplined us." Wan Mas herself said that her husband was a fierce person in his youth (Nik Safiah & Rokiah, 2004).

Monitoring Spiritual Matters

Mr. Nik Omar, Madam's Wan Mas's spouse, monitored the prayer of his children. He projected good role model and enquired them to perform congregational prayer at home.

Tahajjud prayer was just recently, but the Tasbīh prayer was performed earlier, many years ago.... and my father continuously prayed before Zuhor. They always pray, and in the morning the grandchildren would pray together... Şubuh, Maghrib and 'Isha' were a must... If we fail to pray, just get ready to receive the punishment... that was also why the house is full of prayer mat... my father was very strict (Mrs. Nik Mastura, Educational Officer, Madam Wan Mas's daughter).

Mr. Sulaiman, Madam Esah's spouse, also shared the same sentiment regarding the children religious practice especially the prayer.

(We would) educate them at night and day to pray... and the most important part in Islam is prayer... (Mr. Sulaiman, Farmer, Madam Esah's spouse).

Mr. Nik Omar was also very particular about his children's prayer.

(There were) only two things that Nik Omar would not compromise; school lessons and prayer (Nik Safiah & Rokiah, 2004).

SUMMARY

The conventional Malay men communication of love in the family could be divided into three levels of love: love towards Allah, love towards their spouse and love towards their children. Figure 1 shows the overall picture of their love communication pattern. The first level of love is love towards Allah. Love towards Allah brings them to love towards their family. In other words, they love their family for the sake of Allah. As a result, they become a functional family member to get Allah's bless. They believe that the paradise is human origin. Thus, their love mission is to bring back all of their family members to the paradise.

The second level of love is the love towards their spouse. Here, there are three elements of love in their relationship with their spouse: Passion, intimacy and commitment. Passion in this context refers to the longingness of being together with spouse as partners in the world and the hereafter (*akhirah*). Conversely, intimacy in this context refers to the strong bonding and warmth created between spouse while continuously working towards achieving *sakinah* or in other words, a calming, peaceful and tranquillity situation within a marriage. Lastly, commitment is the willingness of both spouses to remain together and to face challenges in their marriage in order to maintain achieve the goal of being together in the world and hereafter (*Jannah*). They have a very close relationship with their spouse and fulfil their responsibility as a husband and the backbone of the family as a reflection of their loves towards Allah.

The third level of love is their love towards their children. Here, there's only one element of love, which is a commitment and dedication to their children. This could be seen from their continuous effort to educate, supervise and support their children until the children grow up and become an independent adult. They are usually very strict to ensure that the children have self-discipline, good character and success in the world and hereafter. They know their limit of love towards their children because of their love towards Allah. They always keep the boundaries between them and their children as stated in the Quran and hadith. Some parents could not disseminate between true love and lust. They bring together the element of passion into their relationship with their children. As a result, they become the predator to their children via incest.

In the digital era, it is also pertinent for the conventional Malay men to communicate their love via social media. New media change the pattern of human interaction (Siti Ezaleila (2014). For example, Karim & Maslida (2017) found that social media such as WhatsApp's becomes the new platform for Javanese community to enhance and preserved their language. Meanwhile, Che Su & Nan Zakiah (2014), found that today's parents use Facebook to connect and monitor their children. Thus, the conventional Malay should take these opportunities to communicate their love to their family effectively via the new media.

In summary, the conventional Malay men communicate their love to their family especially to their children via full commitment and dedication. They educate their children, give them financial support and positive role model, maintenance of discipline, monitoring spiritual matters and nurture their children, together with their spouse to get Allah's bless. They never tolerate any family members deviate from the true path because they aim to bring them together to the paradise.

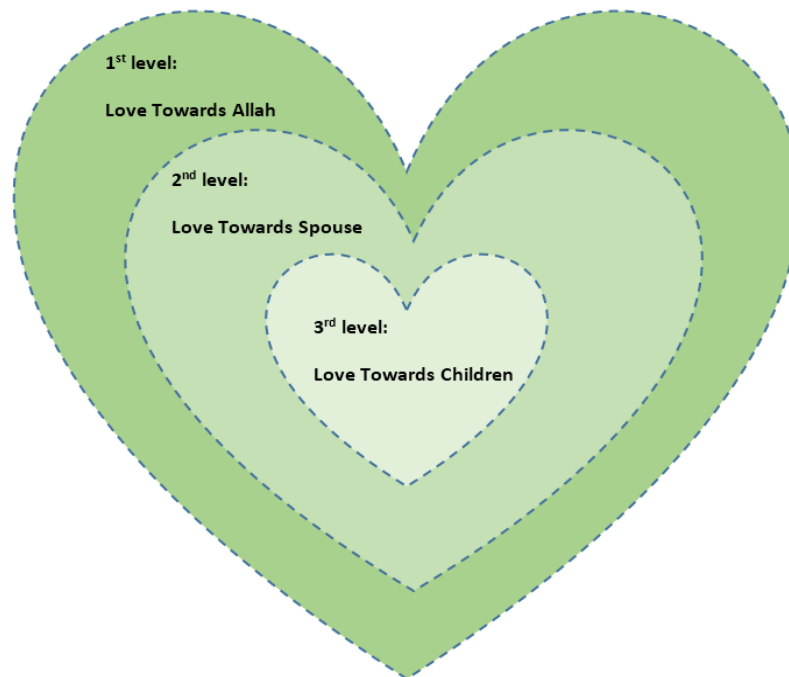


Figure 1: The Model of Love Communication of Conventional Men to Their Family

BIODATA

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