

## An Investigation of the Concept of Love in Taghdis' *Masnavi* from the Perspective of Positive Psychology

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Received: 20/12/2024

Accepted: 16/12/2024

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### Extended Abstract

#### Introduction

Love is a central concept in mystical literature, representing a powerful cosmic force that transcends ordinary human emotions. It vividly expresses the spiritual path toward enlightenment and ultimate union with divine. This idea of love prominently appears in both Persian and Arabic mystical texts, including the timeless works of eminent mystics and poets such as Sanai, Attar, Rumi, and Ibn A'rabi. These texts portray love as the essence and foundation of existence itself, underpinning the entire cosmos. Within the framework of Islamic mysticism, love is understood to transcend mere romantic feelings or psychological states; it is considered to be the fundamental basis of creation, the driving force behind the perfection of the soul, and the ultimate truth guiding all beings toward spiritual fulfillment. This study critically examines the concept of love as articulated in *Taqdis Masnavi*, a significant mystical work, specifically from the perspective of positive psychology—a relatively new psychological approach that underscores human strength, virtues, and positive experiences rather than mere mental disorders or pathology. By integrating the rich heritage of classic mystical literature with insights from contemporary psychological theories, this research aims to uncover new and meaningful dimensions of love's pivotal role in fostering spiritual growth, psychological well-being, and holistic human flourishing.

#### Materials and Methods

This research employs a descriptive-analytical methodology that combines a detailed content analysis of classic Persian and Arabic mystical texts, focusing primarily on *Taqdis Masnavi*. The textual analysis methodically examined mystical expressions, allegories, and symbolism related to key concepts such as love, happiness, spirituality, and psychological strength as embedded within the text. This study deployed Martin Seligman's influential model of positive psychology (2011), which emphasized well-being, moral virtues, and the cultivation of personal strength as the foundations for flourishing. Through a qualitative content analysis, the research identified and elucidated central themes, connecting the mystical dimensions of love to psychological well-being factors, including life satisfaction, emotional resilience, and positive interpersonal relationships. Furthermore, the study explored how

spiritual virtues—such as gratitude, altruism, forgiveness, and kindness—served as essential resources, enabling individuals to overcome various emotional and spiritual obstacles to growth. Data were systematically gathered through comprehensive literature reviews of both classic mystical texts and contemporary psychological scholarship. This process facilitated rich interdisciplinary insights bridging Islamic mysticism and positive psychological constructs. Ultimately, this interdisciplinary approach significantly advances our understanding of love as a transformative power with profound implications for mental health, spiritual development, and holistic human flourishing.

## Results

This study revealed that love in *Taqdis Masnavi* functioned as a multi-dimensional force that nurtures both psychological and spiritual health. Divine love, love for the Prophet and holy family, and the universal love for humanity—as the manifestations of God's creativity—form a spiritual hierarchy that guides the soul's ascent. The emotional experiences of love transcend transient pleasures and pains, embodying a stable, pure joy that withstands internal and external adversities. By mastering egoistic desires and cultivating positive traits, love transforms from a mere emotion into an enduring spiritual reality. The study's findings aligned with Islamic mystical insights and positive psychology's features, highlighting how love fostered meaning, positive social bonds, and emotional resilience. Obstacles such as selfishness, fear, and worldly attachments are identified as barriers to love's growth, while practical virtues enhance spiritual and psychological development. Love is shown to strengthen social cohesion by promoting empathy and forgiveness, which improves mental health and social well-being. This integrative framework offered novel interventions to enhance life satisfaction through the cultivation of love-centered virtues.

## Conclusion

The study concludes that interpreting love in *Taqdis Masnavi* through the lens of Positive Psychology provides a valuable framework for enhancing spiritual fulfillment and psychological well-being. Love is portrayed as a profound catalyst for spiritual transformation and enlightenment as well as a powerful force for strengthening emotional resilience and nurturing social harmony among individuals and communities. The conscious practice of virtues such as gratitude, compassion, and forgiveness—qualities that are deeply rooted in the text—helps individuals overcome psychological barriers and emotional challenges. This enables them to achieve lasting happiness, inner peace, and meaningful connections with others. This integration of classic mystical literature with the theory of contemporary positive psychology effectively enhances mental health, turning love into a transformative power, promoting holistic healing and growth. This research emphasizes the importance of interdisciplinary approaches that bridge up the gap between ancient traditions of wisdom and current scientific understandings, ultimately pave the way for the emergence of a comprehensive human being, on both individual and collective levels.

**Keywords:** positive psychology, spirituality, *Taqdis* (sanctification), true love, well-being.