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Analysis Of Symbolic Metaphors In The Hidden Parables Of The Holy Quran; Cultural, Spiritual And Cognitive Influences On The Expression Of Quranic Concepts

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Article Einfo	Abstract
	According to scholarly classifications, the parables of the Noble Qur'an are divided into two categories: explicit parables—which clearly employ terms such as mathal or amthāl—and implicit (hidden) parables, which, though lacking these explicit terms, nonetheless possess a parabolic structure. This study aims to analyze the symbolic metaphors found in the implicit parables of the Qur'an and to examine their role in conveying Qur'anic concepts. The research adopts a descriptive-analytical method based on qualitative content analysis. The corpus consists of all verses of the Noble Qur'an, and purposive sampling was employed. Data were collected through interpretive texts, rhetorical sources, and linguistic references. The validity of the instruments was confirmed by experts in Qur'anic studies and rhetoric, and reliability was established through inter-rater agreement. The findings reveal that al-istiʿārah al-tamthīliyyah (allegorical metaphor), though less frequent than similes, plays a significant role in the hidden parables by visually expressing abstract ideas and making complex meanings more accessible to the reader. These symbolic metaphors not only enhance cognitive understanding and deepen the spiritual experience of the audience but also, from a cultural perspective, draw upon symbols and imagery rooted in the cultural context and social lifeworld of pre-Islamic Arab society to establish effective communication between the Divine text and its audience. On a social level, these metaphors address themes such as justice, honesty, loyalty, and communal responsibility, thereby contributing not only to individual moral refinement but also to shaping the social structure and ethical norms of the faith-based community. Nevertheless, identifying and interpreting allegorical metaphors in the Qur'an's implicit parables requires interpretive precision, literary sensitivity, and a deep command of Qur'anic rhetorical principles.

Extended Abstract

Introduction

In discourse aimed at deeply influencing the hearts and minds of the audience, alongside clarity and avoidance of ambiguity, certain aesthetic qualities such as conciseness and purposeful brevity are essential. From this perspective, metaphor—especially its allegorical type—holds a distinguished position as one of the most prominent concise rhetorical devices, enabling the transmission of intangible and spiritual concepts in a tangible and perceptible form. The Holy Quran, by utilizing explicit and allegorical parables, has effectively harnessed this rhetorical capacity to convey complex, abstract ideas in a simple and impactful manner. Despite the crucial role and significance of such metaphors in understanding and influencing religious discourse, comprehensive and independent studies on the use of allegorical metaphor in the Quran's allegorical parables remain limited and insufficient. This research seeks to address the question of whether and how allegorical metaphor is employed in the Quran's allegorical parables, as well as its rhetorical functions and effects. To this end, selected allegorical parables were extracted and their allegorical metaphors examined in detail.

Methodology

This study is descriptive-analytical and based on a qualitative content analysis approach. The statistical population includes all Quranic verses containing metaphorical and allegorical concepts, with a special focus on verses employed as allegorical parables. Samples were purposefully selected based on criteria such as the type and method of metaphor usage, its impact on audience comprehension, and semantic connection to the fundamental concepts of the Quran, ranging from approximately 30 to 50 verses. Data collection was conducted through reputable tafsir (Quranic exegesis) sources, rhetorical and linguistic texts, and lexicons. The validity of the instruments was confirmed through expert reviews in Quranic sciences and rhetoric, and reliability was ensured via inter-rater agreement tests. Data analysis was performed qualitatively and textually, with careful examination of the aesthetic structure and function of allegorical metaphor, as well as its effect on the understanding and rhetorical impact of the Quranic discourse—an endeavor requiring scientific precision and specialized approaches due to the linguistic and rhetorical complexity of the Quran.

Results and Discussion

Metaphor, as one of the most significant rhetorical tools in Arabic language and the Holy Quran, plays a crucial role in conveying deep and vivid concepts. This study, by examining the allegorical metaphors in the parables of the Quran, demonstrated that this type of metaphor expresses abstract ideas through tangible imagery by omitting one side of the simile and relying on semantic context. Various definitions of metaphor from classical and modern rhetoricians, including Abd al-Qahir al-Jurjani, Sa'd al-Din Taftazani, and contemporary linguists such as Kourosh Safavi, attest to the importance and complexity of this literary device. The findings indicate that the allegorical metaphor, through combining multiple features and creating compound similarities, significantly aids in conveying complex Quranic concepts. By analyzing 13 verses from the parables in the Quran, this study explored the role of allegorical metaphor in expressing concepts such as the treachery of hypocrites, the weight of sins, divine surveillance, and the dichotomy of truth and falsehood. The results showed that this metaphor, by transforming abstract ideas into concrete images, deepens the audience's understanding and makes the message more enduring. Moreover, the interpretive and multidimensional nature of allegorical metaphors renders the Quran a dynamic text adaptable to various contexts. This research recommends further studies employing modern rhetorical and linguistic approaches to uncover the hidden layers of Quranic metaphors.