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Cross-Cultural Conceptualizations of Love: Cognitive Linguistic Analysis of Metaphors in Poems of Kabir and Rumi

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Abstract

This study explores the conceptual metaphors of love in the selected thirty Hindi poems by 15th-century Indian mystic poet Kabir and thirty poems by 13th-century Persian Sufi mystic poet Rumi. This research involved the thematic analysis with an emphasis on Identifying Conceptual Metaphors of Love in the poems of the two renowned poets. The findings reveal that poems by Kabir employed thirteen conceptual metaphors, while that of Rumi utilized eleven, revealing commonalities in eight metaphors such as LOVE IS MERGER, LOVE IS MATERIAL, and LOVE IS DRINK/DRUG. Employing Conceptual Metaphor Theory by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and Metaphor Identification Procedure developed by the Pragglejaz Group (2007), the research provides a cross-cultural analysis of divine love conceptualization. The findings support cognitive linguistic theses on conceptual metaphors, contributing to a nuanced understanding of love across two distinct cultures.

Keywords: Love Metaphors, Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), Kabir's Couplets, Rumi's Love Poems, Cognitive Linguistics, Bhakti and Sufi Movement, Cross-Cultural Study

INTRODUCTION

This research undertakes a comparative analysis of Kabir's love poem and Rumi's love poem through the framework of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) introduced by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) in their seminal work, "Metaphors We Live By." This investigation proves to be intriguing as it delves into the perspectives of two distinct movements: Kabir's affiliation with the Bhakti movement and Rumi's association with the mystical Sufi movement in Islam. Both movements, dissatisfied with prevailing social and religious norms, embody a spirit of rebellion and a yearning to transcend the confines of sectarianism and religious dogmatism. Regardless of emerging in diverse cultural and religious circumstances, the Bhakti movement and Sufism both place a firm emphasis on love, devotion and a close relationship with the divine beyond religious formalities and rituals. Both of these movements are remarkable in propagating universal brotherhood and societal harmony.

The key research objectives addressed in this work are the following:

1. Examine the conceptual metaphors pertaining to love present in the chosen couplets of Kabir.
2. Analyse the conceptual metaphors associated with love found in the selected poetry of Rumi.
3. Conduct a comparative analysis of the conceptual metaphors employed for expressing love in the chosen couplets of Kabir and the poems of Rumi, aiming to identify both similarities and differences between them.
4. Classify the types of metaphors, specifically Orientational metaphors, Ontological metaphors, and Structural metaphors as proposed by Lakoff and Johnson in "Metaphors We Live By" (1980), utilized in the portrayal of the emotion of "love".

The main goal of this study was to examine the use of conceptual metaphors in Kabir's couplets and Rumi's poems, specifically in conveying the complex and abstract notion of love. Furthermore, the study sought to identify any potential similarities or differences in how conceptual metaphors were employed to articulate the theme of love in Kabir's couplets and Rumi's poems.

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Saint Kabir: Life and Notion on “love”

Kabir resided in the city of Varanasi, located in North India around the fifteenth century. He is a highly esteemed personality in the realm of religious history, renowned for his iconoclastic mysticism that encompassed elements of both Hindu and Muslim traditions, although he vehemently shunned affiliation with either. (Hess, 2015). The literary works which broadly comprise poetic renditions by Kabir are *Kabir Bijak*, *Kabir Parachai*, *Sakhi Granth*, *Adi Granth (Sikh)*, and *Kabir Granthawali*. He played a pivotal role in the Bhakti movement and expressed a unique philosophy on love. His teachings emphasised the power of love as a transformative and unifying force that transcends religious, social, and cultural boundaries. He advocated for a syncretic and all-encompassing approach to spirituality, focusing on the similarity of all religions and the unity of God, demolishing superstitions, absurd dogmas, and rituals across India's then-dominant religions simultaneously. Through his poetry, Kabir fostered love, compassion, and humility, and staunchly rejected the irrational doctrines and practises that divide and discriminate people from people. He criticised religious hypocrisy and exhorted seekers to look within themselves for the truth. Kabir's teachings profoundly influenced Indian consciousness and culture, and his legacy continues to motivate people of all faiths. His poetry exhibits a prominent element of societal critique, wherein incisive insights are offered regarding issues such as discrimination based on social hierarchy, divisions stemming from religious affiliations, the presence of insincerity, an inflated sense of superiority, and acts of aggression. Simultaneously, it has a deep inclination towards introspection. This work scrutinises the inherent characteristics of the mind and body, elucidates the intricate web of misconceptions that permeate our existence, and advocates for the imperative awakening and cultivation of consciousness. (Hess, 2015). Some contemporary writers have attempted to portray Kabir as a synthesis of Hinduism and Islam, but Linda Hess (2015) argues that this is a misleading portrayal. Kabir firmly announced his independence from both of his countrymen's major religions, vehemently attacked what he believed to be the follies of these religions, and attempted to ignite the fire of the same rebellion and scepticism in those who claimed to be his disciples while drawing on various traditions as he saw fit. He actively advocated for the interrogation of various rituals and forms of formalism, including those that he practised. (Agrawal, 2018).

Kabir often employs the metaphor of worldly love or romantic love to elucidate divine love or love for the almighty. He emphasised that true love is not limited to any specific deity, religious practice, or social group. Instead, he advocated for a love that encompasses and embraces all aspects of existence, transcending distinctions of caste, creed, religion, and other superficial divisions.

In the words of famous Indian thinker-philosopher, “*Love is a door to God. It is the ultimate word; nothing is above or beyond it. It is prayer, it is meditation, it is worship, it is adoration, it is penance, it is yoga, it is tantra, it is the mystic mantra – all is included in love. Love is the quintessence and ultimate accomplishment*” (Kabir – Love – Completion — OSHO Online Library, n.d.).

In one of his couplets, Kabir says that love cannot be felt till one fear death, that is love grows in a mind which is fearless. The abode of love is very distant. Kabir is considered one of the doyens of the Bhakti movement that sought to bring socio-religious reforms across the society. Emerging in the region of *Tamilakam* in the 6th century CE, this cultural phenomenon gained significance through the poetic compositions and spiritual teachings of the *Vaishnava Alvars* and *Shaiva Nayanars*, afterwards expanding its influence towards the northern regions. The phenomenon of its expansion occurred over the eastern and northern regions of India, commencing in the 15th century and attaining its pinnacle during the 15th and 17th centuries of the Common Era.

For Kabir, love was a means of experiencing the divine presence in all things and recognising the inherent unity in the diversity of creation. He believed that love could dissolve the illusion of separation and awaken individuals to their true nature. Kabir often used the metaphor of the lover and the beloved to articulate the longing for union with the divine as the ultimate goal of human existence. In the words of a famous Indian mystic and philosopher, Acharya Rajneesh (famously known as *Osho*):

“Kabir is a devotee; he is on the path of love. He will talk of love repeatedly, but what he means by love must be understood well. By love he means an intense desire to disappear into the whole. It is not the love you know of, that you talk about;

it is a totally different phenomenon. Your love is an effort to dominate the other; it is a strategy to possess the other, to exploit the other. Kabir is not talking about that love. You can not possess God; you can only be possessed by God.” (Osho, “Kabir, Kabir, where are you going?”)

Kabir's teachings on love were often expressed through his poignant and metaphorical poetry, known as "bhajans" or "dohavali." These compositions conveyed profound spiritual insights and emphasised the importance of love, devotion, and inner realisation. Kabir encouraged individuals to cultivate love and compassion, treat all beings equally and respectfully, and recognise the divine presence within themselves and others through his poetry.

To sum up, Kabir's message centred on the power of divine love to unite humanity and transcend arbitrary boundaries. His teachings emphasised the ubiquitous nature of love, the unity of all beings, and the transformative potential of love to awaken individuals to their true spiritual nature.

Rumi: His life and Notion on “love”

Rumi, alternatively referred to as Jalāl ad-Dīn Muḥammad Rūmī, is recognised as a prominent figure among Sufi mystics and poets within the Persian language. Renowned for his lyrical compositions and didactic epic titled *Masnavi-yi Ma'navi* (Spiritual Couplets), Rumi's works have exerted a significant influence on mystical contemplation and literary expressions across the Muslim sphere (Schimmel, 2023). During the formative decades of Islam, a cohort of devout individuals known as Sufis adopted asceticism and mysticism as a means of expressing their dissent with the increasing materialistic tendencies inside the Caliphate, which served as both a religious and political establishment. The individuals expressed their disapproval towards the dogmatic interpretations and scholastic approaches employed by theologians in understanding the Qur'an and the sunna (the traditions of the Prophet). Conversely, their focus was directed towards the pursuit of redemption through fervent love and devotion towards God, demonstrated by adherence to His instructions and emulation of the exemplary life of the Prophet Muhammad, whom they revered as an embodiment of moral perfection. The Sufis, therefore, endeavoured to derive an interpretation of the Qur'an by drawing upon their individual experiential knowledge.

Rumi was born in what is now Afghanistan and spent some time living in Turkey. Rumi's desire for oneness with the Divine is expressed in his poetry. Although Rumi's poetry is diverse and includes a wide range of concepts, the ultimate theme that permeates all of his works is the desire to be one with the almighty. Rumi was a master mystic in his own right. His poetic creations served as a window into his own inner world. Ironically, Rumi claimed that there are no words that can fully capture the sense of spiritual oneness. However, his words serve as uplifting compass points that direct us to the divine.

Rumi's utilisation of the Persian and Arabic languages in his poetic works, alongside a limited incorporation of Turkish and Greek, has led to his association with both Turkish and Persian literature. This dual attribution is indicative of the significant impact he has had in both Iran and Turkey, highlighting the extent of his influence. The impact of his literary works in the Indian subcontinent is equally significant. Towards the conclusion of the 20th century, the individual in question had garnered immense fame on a global scale, as evidenced by the widespread dissemination of his poetic works throughout western Europe and the United States.

Rumi regularly employs images in his poems that can be unexpected. He frequently mentions the feeling of being "drunk and intoxicated with ecstasy for his beloved," despite the fact that Islam prohibits alcohol. Here, being intoxicated alludes to the ecstasy of heavenly consciousness. Rumi frequently addresses the issue of love in his poetry; nevertheless, he often refers to romantic love as an illusion compared to all-encompassing, pure, heavenly love. Other Sufi poets, including Omar Khayyam, Hafiz, and Attar, frequently use similar metaphors.

Love as a Complex Emotion in Psychology

According to Oxford learner's dictionary, *“love is a very strong feeling of liking and caring for somebody/ something, especially a member of your family or a friend.”* In the realm of Psychology, Love has been defined as an action (Swensen, 1972), attitude (Rubin, 1970), experience (Skolnick et al., 1978), and even as a prototypical emotion (Fehr and Russell, 1991; Post et al., 2002; Sober, 2002; Wyschogrod, 2002). Collectively, these definitions suggest that

love is a multifaceted phenomenon (Ekman, 1971; Izard, 1977). Social philosopher and psychoanalyst Eric Fromm (1956) in his masterpiece “The art of Loving”, gives a realistic and vivid description of love:

“The main condition for the achievement of love is the overcoming of one's narcissism. The narcissistic orientation is one in which one experiences as real only that which exists within oneself, while the phenomena in the outside world have no reality in themselves but are experienced only from the viewpoint of their being useful or dangerous to one. The opposite pole to narcissism is objectivity; it is the faculty to see other people and things as they are, objectively, and to be able to separate this objective picture from a picture which is formed by one's desires and fears.” (Fromm, 1956)

American Psychological Association (APA) dictionary of Psychology defines love as a complex emotion involving strong feelings of affection and tenderness for the love object, pleasurable sensations in their presence, devotion to their well-being, and sensitivity to their reactions to themselves. Although love takes many forms, including concern for one's fellow humans (brotherly love), parental love, erotic love, self-love, and identification with the totality of being (love of God), the triangular theory of love proposes three essential components: passion, intimacy, and commitment. Social psychological research in this area has focused largely on passionate love, in which sexual desire and excitement predominate, companionate love, in which passion is relatively weak and commitment is strong.

Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT)

With the publication of ‘*Metaphors We Live By* (1980)’ by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, the perception towards metaphors changed dramatically. Metaphors, which had been considered as ornamental devices in language, were now started to be seen as conceptual tools for structuring, restructuring, and even creating reality. The theory goes back a long way and builds on centuries of scholarship that takes notable philosophers in this history, including, for instance, Friedrich Nietzsche and, more recently, Max Black. It suggests that abstract or complex concepts are often understood and expressed in terms of simpler, more concrete concepts called “source domains.” This theory posits that we use metaphors to structure our understanding of abstract ideas by mapping them onto more tangible experiences. For example, we might use metaphors like “love is a journey” or “time is money” to convey and comprehend complex concepts related to love or time. Conceptual metaphor theory highlights the role of metaphorical thinking in shaping human cognition and language.

According to Lakoff (1993: 203), the focus of metaphor is not within language itself, but rather in the process of conceptualising one mental area in relation to another. Metaphors establish a connection between two distinct conceptual domains, namely the source domain and the target domain. Conceptual metaphors propose two primary functions for the conceptual domains they posit. The source domain refers to the conceptual area from which metaphorical expressions are derived, such as the metaphor “*love is a journey*.” The target domain refers to the conceptual realm that we aim to comprehend, such as the notion that love can be likened to a journey. A mapping refers to the manner in which a source domain aligns with and characterises certain elements of the target domain. Mappings refer to the cognitive structuring of information within certain domains, serving as the fundamental mechanism that underlies the utilisation of metaphors in language. An instance of conceptual metaphor can be observed in our day-to-day phrase “*over-browsing the internet will waste your time*” whereby the conceptual metaphor employed is TIME IS MONEY, where time is conceptualised as money, as proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (2003;7). Lakoff and Johnson (1980) broadly divided conceptual metaphors into three types:

1. **Ontological metaphors:** An ontological metaphor refers to the mapping of abstract concepts, such as activities, emotions, or ideas, in terms of concrete entities, such as objects, substances, containers, or individuals. For example, LOVE IS BIRD, LOVE IS CLOUD, etc.
2. **Structural metaphors:** Structural metaphors encompass the representation of intricate concepts, typically of an abstract nature, through the utilisation of more tangible concepts. For example, LOVE IS JOURNEY.
3. **Oriental metaphors:** An orientational metaphor refers to a type of metaphor that establishes spatial relationships between the two concepts. For example, HAPPINESS IS HIGH, SADNESS IS LOW, etc.

The entire paper is divided into six sections, including Introduction, Methodology, Literature review, Results and discussion, and conclusion. The first section briefly introduces Saint Kabir, Mawlana Rumi, their notion of love, love as emotion from the purview of psychology, the Conceptual Metaphor theory (CMT), and puts forth the research objectives. The next section deals with the corpus for the study and the methodology followed to analyse them. The fourth section briefly gives an overview of the related research works and the justification of the present study, The Fifth section presents the results of the analysis and discussion based on that. Finally, the last section concludes the work with its implications.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

This research involved the thematic analysis with an emphasis on Identifying Conceptual Metaphors of Love of thirty love-themed couplets by Saint Kabir, characterized by a penchant for metaphoric expression, and an equivalent number of love poems by Rumi, translated into English and sourced from <https://www.rumi.org.uk/>. The selection criteria were based on the central theme of love. The chosen Hindi couplets by Kabir underwent transliteration and transcription as per the "Indian languages Transliteration" (ITRANS) schema, an American Standard Code for Information Interchange (ASCII) transliteration scheme particularly for the Devanagari script. Additionally, English translations were provided for Kabir's selected couplets. However, the existing English translations of Rumi's poems curated from the website, originally in Persian, were also transcribed for analysis.

Subsequently, a thematic analysis of the Hindi couplets and English translation of Rumi's Persian poems was conducted through the lens of the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). This analysis aimed to identify the various source conceptual domains onto which the concept of love, serving as the target domain, was mapped in the works of these two distinguished poets. A compilation of source domains for conceptual metaphors employed in expressing love was created for both Kabir and Rumi, using the Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) developed by the Pragglejaz Group (2007). Following this, a comparative analysis was undertaken to discern similarities and differences in the conceptual metaphors of love between Rumi and Kabir.

Thirty poems themed on spiritual love by Saint Kabir from India, and the same number of poems by Mawlana Rumi, a famous Sufi saint from Balkh (Presently in Afghanistan) were collected from various books and websites and then analysed for conceptual metaphors of love using the framework of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) posited by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) in their book *Metaphors We Live By*. Conceptual metaphor is a cognitive mechanism of understanding an abstract concept (known as target domain in Cognitive Linguistics) in terms of a concrete domain or less abstract domain (source domain). For example, the conceptual metaphor "ARGUMENT IS WAR", argument is understood /conceptualised in terms of war (defending in argument, attacking the opponent in argument, etc.). In another example, LOVE IS JOURNEY, love is understood in terms of as a journey with stages like "falling in love" and "reaching a crossroads."

Method Applied in The Study for Identifying Conceptual Metaphors

The researchers employed the Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) developed by the Pragglejaz Group (2007) to identify metaphors present in the corpus. Moreover, the use of the notion of conceptual metaphor, as proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), was utilised as the theoretical framework to determine the conceptual metaphors present within the corpus of poems.

The researchers utilised the metaphor identification approach (MIP) developed by the Pragglejaz Group (2007:3) as a technique to identify the metaphorical terms in the source text. The procedure involved the following steps:

- (1) reading the source text, and the translation text rendering carefully,
- (2) identifying potentially metaphorical lexical items in the source text and the target texts,
- (3) determining the contextual meaning for each lexical unit in the source text,
- (4) searching for a more basic meaning of each lexical unit in the source text and the target text,

- (5) comparing the contextual meaning and the basic meaning of the lexical units and determining the extent to which they contrast.

The MIP approach does not address the cognitive processing of metaphors by readers or listeners. The MIP (Metaphor Identification Procedure), as a dependable method for discerning metaphorical expressions, serves to mitigate the researcher's tendency to perceive instances of conceptual metaphors in every concrete manifestation (Steen; 2007:27). When employing MIP (Metaphor in Discourse) to identify metaphors, words that are employed metaphorically are seen as a foundation for creating connections between different domains (Crisp, 2002:7).

LITERATURE REVIEW

There are plenty of scholarly works probing the nature and depiction of 'love' in the poems of Saint Kabir (Bhawuk, 2021; Orsini, 2013; Bose, 2011; Bhutta, 2008) and Rumi (Azizi et al., 2022; Shabanlu, 2022; Basuki & Saputri, 2021; Mannai, 2010). Moreover, there are also studies where the literary renditions of Rumi have been compared with other western and eastern literary figures (Firouzabadi & Islami, 2022; Khelil, 2020; Gayas, 2016; Parveen & Anwar, 2021; Ahmadi, 2014). However, we found no substantial work on the comparison between poems of Kabir and Rumi.

In his doctoral dissertation titled "A Cognitive Linguistic Analysis of Conceptual Metaphors in Hindu Religious Discourse with Reference to Swami Vivekananda's Complete Works," Naicker (2016) examined the utilisation of metaphorical language within The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda. The study involved the analysis of Vivekananda's Complete Works using the AntConc software, with a focus on water-related phrases that shown a tendency towards metaphorical usage. The present study aimed to examine the utilisation of metaphors in Hindu religious discourse for the purpose of elucidating abstract religious concepts, and to compare this phenomenon with its occurrence in Judaeo-Christian traditions. The main findings of this study provide overall support for the assumptions described earlier, with the exception of the concept of 'invariance', which generated considerable disagreement among researchers. The available evidence facilitated the formulation of underlying conceptual metaphors, which exhibited certain variations in comparison to those employed in conventional Judaeo-Christian philosophy.

In his thesis titled "Cognitive Linguistic Analysis of Love Metaphors in Ed Sheeran's Songs," Pradikta (2017) examines the conceptual metaphors pertaining to love that are present in the lyrics of Ed Sheeran's songs. This analysis is conducted by employing the theoretical frameworks of Lakoff and Johnson (1980) in relation to conceptual metaphors, as well as Kovecses' (1986) theory on metaphors of emotion. In this study, a total of twenty-five songs were carefully chosen from a selection of three albums by the renowned artist, Ed Sheeran. This qualitative study examines the conceptual metaphors employed in the song to portray the notion of love, as well as the source domains utilised for this purpose. The results reveal twenty-two source domains of conceptual metaphors used to express love. They are *journey, hidden object, fire, captive animal, food, closeness, game, beauty, unity, rapture, high, madness, etc.*

Abdulla, Ismile & Abbas (2021), in their paper titled Cognitive Semantic Analysis of Conceptual Metaphors in Donne's "A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning" aim at analysing poetic language in terms of the renowned cognitive semantic model known as conceptual metaphor theory which was first proposed for the analysis of everyday language and cognition. Another aim of this study is to prove the fallacy of the traditional view that treated metaphor as an ornamental literary device and one source of linguistic or semantic deviation. Adopting the conceptual metaphor theory, the present research hypothesises that the conceptual metaphor theory applies to poetic language. It is also hypothesised that the traditional view toward metaphor is entirely false. To achieve the above aims and check the hypotheses, the researchers have analysed one of the most renowned metaphysical poems by John Donne, titled "A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning." Through the analysis, it has been concluded that the conceptual metaphor theory applies to poetic language as it is to everyday language. The conceptual metaphors are fundamental, rather than ornamental, for understanding poetry and for the meaning construction in poetic language they are in non-poetic one.

Bhawuk (2021), In his paper titled “Prema in kabIr’s sAkhI: Indigenous Perspectives on Love”, has analysed how Saint Kabir employs prem (love) in his teachings. The analysis reveals eight main themes which describe love. They are: Love is non-transient, Love cannot be hidden, Love is difficult, Love is a drink, Love for God is superior to material love, Love without understanding is useless, Love, detachment, and *sadguru* (Spiritual master) are intertwined. This study makes a valuable contribution to the field of global psychology by presenting an indigenous perspective, so enhancing our understanding of love as a construct. The findings of this research also contribute to the development of a more nuanced comprehension of love.

To the best of our knowledge and the literature survey conducted, visibly, there is dearth of work on analysing Asian and particularly Indian poets using the framework of Cognitive Linguistics. Also, there is no study on comparative analysis of poems by Kabir and Rumi, where the former represents Bhakti movement, and the latter - Sufi movement. Hence this study not only compares two poets but also two historic movements of immense and intense socio-religious impact. This study aims to address the gap and would be a novel endeavour in conceptualising love from a spiritual standpoint. The findings will enrich the contemporary conceptualisation of love as well.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the analysis of Kabir’s couplets and Rumi’s love poems using the framework of Lakoff and Johnson’s (1980) Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), it was found that in the chosen couplets of Kabir themed on love, there were as many as thirteen (13) conceptual metaphors demystifying love. On the other hand, In Rumi’s selected poems, we found eleven (11) conceptual metaphors for love. It was remarkable that when we compare the metaphors found in each of the poets, amazingly, most of the metaphors were common in both the poets, which reveals the identical nature of their conceptualisation of love.

Looking at the types of conceptual metaphors employed, mostly ontological and structural metaphors are prevalent out of the three types of conceptual metaphors posited by Lakoff & Johnson (1980). The table (Table1) below enlists the various source conceptual domains for love.

Table 1: List of various source domains of the conceptual metaphor for love in Kabir’s couplets.

CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS OF LOVE IN KABIR'S POEMS	
CONCEPTUAL METAPHOR	INSTANCES WITH ENGLISH TRANSLATION
LOVE IS RASA (JUICE)	<i>hari ras.Ayan prem ras, plbat adbhik rasAl</i> <i>kabIr piban duralabb bai, mAMge sbIsb kalAl</i> Translation: The medicine of God with juice of love is lovely to drink. Kabir says its drinking is rare, it demands sacrifice of one's ego.
LOVE IS DRINK/DRUG	<i>kabIrA ishk kA mAlA, dul ko dUr kar dil se,</i> <i>jo chalanA rAb n.Ajauk bai, haman sir boj bhArI kyA</i> Translation: Kabir, get drunk on love, Rid the heart of duality. Such a delicate path to tread, why lug a heavy load anymore?” (translation by Vipul Rikhi)
LOVE IS A JOURNEY	<i>prem paMib me pag dharai, det nA sbIsb DarAy</i> <i>sapane moh byApe nabi, tAko janam nasAy</i> Translation: The one who stepped on the path to love is not afraid of losing one's ego, one who is in love is not in delusion even in sleep and transcends the cycle of birth and death.
LOVE IS PERSON	<i>yab to ghar hai prem kA, kbAlA kA ghar nAbIM</i> <i>sIs ut.Are bhoIM dhare, tab baiThe ghar mAMbI</i> Translation: Love is not an easy task that everyone can take up, it is not a relative's (<i>kbAlA</i> 'Aunt') house where one can enter without any effort. One has to cut one's head (ego/arrogance) and only then can one be allowed to experience that love.
LOVE IS A FLUID	<i>prem prem sab koI kabai, prem nA chimbai koI</i> <i>ATb pabar bhInA rabai, prem kabAbai soI</i> Translation: Everyone speaks of love, but no one recognises love. A state in which one is drenched every moment is called love.
LOVE IS A MEDICINE	<i>sabai ras.Ayan ham kijA, prem samAn nA koye</i> <i>raMchak tan me saMcharai, sab tan kaMchan boye</i>

	Translation: I took all medicines but none was like love. Even if a trace amount of love runs in the heart, the whole body turns gold/glorified.
LOVE IS MERGER	<i>jo biChnRe haiM piyAre se, bhaTakate dar-ba-dar phirate,</i> <i>hamArA yAr hai bam meM baman ko iTajArI kyA</i> Translation: Those who are separated from their beloved wander door to door. My beloved resides in my heart. What is the wait for?
LOVE IS CLOUD	<i>kabir bADal prem kA, ham par barsA AI</i> <i>aMtar bhIgI AtmA, harI bbaI banrAI</i> Translation: Kabir says – The cloud of love came and rained on me – which drenched even the soul, the whole environment became green.
LOVE IS JOURNEY	<i>jab mai thA tab harI nabiM, ab harI hai mai nAhiM</i> <i>prem gall ati sAMkeri, tA meM do na samAni</i> Translation: Kabir says, as long as there was ego in the mind, till then there was no realisation/union of God, when the ego subsided then only God was realised. There can be no duality in love, only one can fit in the narrow lane of love - ego or the ultimate reality. Annihilation of ego is essential to attain the supreme reality.
LOVE IS BIRD	<i>jahAM bAj bAsA karai, paMChI rabai nA aur</i> <i>jA ghaTa prem paraGaT bhayA, nAhi karam ko thaur</i> Translation: Kabir says that in the place where a hawk starts residing, other birds don't stay. Similarly, the heart where love emerges, other unnecessary stuff (vices) vanishes from there.
LOVE IS ORNAMENT	<i>prem pAvari pahri ke dbIraj kAjar de,</i> <i>sbII sindUr bhAray ke yoM piya kA sukh lev</i> Translation: Kabir advises to put on the anklet of love, the kajaal (Kohl) of patience, to put the <i>sindUr</i> (a traditional vermilion red or orange-red cosmetic powder from the Indian subcontinent, usually worn by married women along the part of their hairline.) of virtues, and then one can experience the bliss of union with the beloved. Just as a newly married bride is clad with various ornaments in order to please her husband, similarly Kabir says that one who is yearning for supreme bliss must put on the ornament of noble character, patience, love, and devotion to please the divine.
LOVE IS DIFFICULT RELATIONSHIP	<i>Agi AMchi sahanA sugama, sugama khaDaga kI dbAra,</i> <i>neh nibAbana aika rAs, mahA kaThina byababAr</i> Translation: Bearing heat of fire is easy and even the blade of sword is easy. But, sustaining love is a tough task.
LOVE IS WISDOM	<i>pothI pa.Dhi pa.Dbi jag muA, paMDit bhayA nA koy,</i> <i>DhAI Akhar prem kA, pa.Dhe so paMDit boy</i> Translation: The entire world is engrossed in reading scriptures, but as per Kabir, no one has become 'wise' by doing so. The one who understands two and a half alphabets of love attains wisdom.

Source: Authors

The table (Table 2) below enlists the various source conceptual domains for love along with supporting instances from the corpus of Rumi's love poems.

Table 2: List of various source domains for love in Rumi's poems with instances.

CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS OF LOVE IN RUMI'S POEMS	
CONCEPTUAL METAPHOR	INSTANCES
LOVE IS MEDICINE	<i>Love is the cure,</i> <i>for your pain will keep giving birth to more pain.</i>
LOVE IS A DRINK/DRUG	<i>You are the Essence of the Essence,</i> <i>The intoxication of Love.</i>
LOVE IS FLUID	<i>Love is the Water of Life</i> <i>Everything other than love for the most beautiful God</i>
LOVE IS PERSON	<i>If love withholds its strengthening care,</i> <i>the lover is left like a bird without care,</i> <i>the lover is left like a bird without wings.</i> <i>Love comes and finds a heart</i> <i>Love lights Her fire from that flame</i>
LOVE IS MERGER	<i>I merge with my Beloved</i> <i>when I participate in love</i> <i>Lovers don't finally meet somewhere.</i> <i>They're in each other all along.</i>
LOVE IS FIRE	<i>My heart has burned with passion</i> <i>and has searched forever</i>

	<i>for this wondrous beauty that I now behold</i>
LOVE IS CLOUD	<i>Don't ask anyone about Love; ask Love about Love. Love is a cloud that scatters pearls.</i>
LOVE IS CONTAINER	<i>This is how I would die into the love I have for you: As pieces of cloud dissolve in sunlight</i>
LOVE IS MATERIAL	<i>A house of love with no limits, Without Love's jewel inside of me, let the bazaar of my existence be destroyed stone by stone.</i>
LOVE IS JOURNEY	<i>This is love: to fly toward a secret sky</i>
LOVE IS TREE	<i>Love is a tree, and the lovers are its shade.</i>

Source: Authors

The analysis reveals that the poems on love by Saint Kabir and Mawlana Rumi employ diverse conceptual metaphors, most common across both poets except a few. Moreover, our findings reinforce the perspective that conceptual metaphors play a crucial role in facilitating metaphors not only in ordinary language but also in poetic, figurative language across different cultures. This study defends most of the principles outlined in conceptual metaphor theory (CMT).

Besides, in both poets, we found that they have dominantly employed ontological metaphors while expounding their notion of love in their respective poems. Ontological metaphors in which an abstraction, such as an activity, emotion, or idea, is represented as something concrete, such as an object, substance, container, or person - are considered easily comprehensible to the common mass. It might be the reason for their frequent usage.

There are remarkable similarities between the usage of conceptual metaphors for love in the poems by Saint Kabir and Mawlana Rumi. Metaphors like LOVE IS MERGER, LOVE IS MATERIAL, LOVE IS DRINK/DRUG, LOVE IS CLOUD, LOVE IS PERSON, LOVE IS CONTAINER, LOVE IS FLUID, and LOVE IS MATERIAL. These similarities can be accounted for by the hypothesis from Cognitive Linguistics that some metaphors are ubiquitous across cultures.

One universal conceptual metaphor which appears in the poems of both poets is "LOVE IS PERSON" (Personification). Kövecses (2002) has explained this phenomenon satisfactorily, positing that personification uses one of the best source domains we have, "ourselves". He further adds that by conceptualising non-human entities (emotion, feelings), we can understand abstract notions a little better.

Although most conceptual metaphors have been found to be common across the selected poems of the two poets, there are also some differences. This can be due to the Cognitive Linguistic hypothesis that some conceptual metaphors are culturally conditioned. So, it is imperative that there would be some conceptualisations exclusive to a culture. Metaphors exclusive to Kabir are: LOVE IS WISDOM, LOVE IS JUICE, LOVE IS DIFFICULT, LOVE IS ORNAMENT, LOVE IS MEDICINE. Conceptual metaphors exclusive to Rumi are: LOVE IS FIRE, LOVE IS TREE, LOVE IS MUSK, etc. We found as many as thirteen conceptual metaphors for love based on our analysis of Kabir's couplets themed on love. Notably, our list captures almost all the themes of love in Kabir's love poem stated by Bhawuk (2021) in his paper titled "Prema in kabIr's sAkHī: Indigenous Perspectives on Love". Moreover, our study adds more themes to his list of eight main themes.

Kabir comes from the Bhakti movement, and Rumi from the mystic movement in Islam known as Sufism. These movements arose from rebellion against their time's religious sectarianism and dogmatism. After examining the poems by Kabir and Rumi, we come to know certain postulates about love which are common in them. Both have voiced their messages and teaching in a crisp, clear and easy-to-understand manner. They advocated and prioritised love, devotion, equality and universal brotherhood as the path to supreme realisation. They highlight the indispensable role of love in pursuing divine realisation. According to them, love is not an

easy task because the eligibility for walking on the path of love is first getting rid of one's arrogance. Furthermore, love is like a philosopher's stone. Anyone who tastes the elixir of love is transformed and redeemed at once. Love is like a door to salvation. Unlike romantic love, these poets do not talk of falling in love, but the love they sing and adore - elevates the spirit and consciousness. For them, love is God, and God is love, which also resembles with the teaching of Christ. Remarkably, we find a similar voice in social philosopher and Psychoanalyst Eric Fromm (1956) when he posits that the primary condition for achieving love is overcoming one's narcissism.

CONCLUSION

This paper makes an exhaustive analysis of love poems for the conceptual metaphors they carry. To sum up, the results of this study reveal that love poems by Kabir and Rumi vividly employ conceptual metaphors in order to understand the most enigmatic and complex emotion called love. The comparison of Kabir's and Rumi's love poems reveals that they share the majority of conceptual metaphors for love such as LOVE IS MERGER, LOVE IS MATERIAL, LOVE IS DRINK/DRUG, LOVE IS CLOUD, LOVE IS PERSON, LOVE IS CONTAINER, LOVE IS FLUID, and so on. Both the poets employ the metaphor of bridegroom to symbolize the relationship between the devotee and the divine, using marriage as a metaphor for spiritual unity. However, an intriguing distinction arises when examining the selected poems. In Kabir's works, the devotee is portrayed as the female counterpart, while Rumi perceives the Almighty as feminine, with the devotee taking on the role of the male who earnestly seeks to appease and captivate the divine. The study establishes the fact that conceptual metaphors are as ingrained in poetic figurative languages as they are in everyday language. This study presents a cross-cultural picture of how divine love is conceptualised and cognised across the poets of two different cultures. The similarities that we found in terms of conceptual metaphors between Kabir and Rumi provide support for the universality of certain conceptual metaphors. Conversely, differences have arisen from cultural beliefs that are grounded in respective sociocultural settings. The findings of this research, drawing from two cultures, also contribute to the development of a more nuanced comprehension of love. It is recommended that other studies that examine other emotions or concepts in the poems of such renowned poets be carried out to shed more light on the way conceptual metaphors can shape the human conceptualisation system.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

The author declares that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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