



Poetics of Love and Loss: A Thematic Analysis of Nazeer's Selected Poems

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Abstract

Imran Nazeer is a young Pakistani poet. In his writings, he focuses on a variety of issues and problems dominating the Pakistani society. Love and loss are the prominent themes of his work, yet unexplored. So, this research is intended to focus on the theme of love and loss in the selected poems of Nazeer. The selected poems include *Rejected Love, Tears, Hope, flowers, Autumn, Please Be Kind, Loving Partners, What Makes a Home, The Symbol of Love, The Blank Page, and Vacant*. Through a qualitative, descriptive approach, the selected poems are analyzed to shed light on the poet's capability to reveal the experiences of love and loss. All the selected poems are the outpourings of love and loss. The poet gives vent to the feelings and experiences of love and loss. The findings of the research indicate that Nazeer's selected poems depict the theme of love and loss in a vivid manner. The poems are the voice of the personal experiences of the poet as they provide a window to the personal experiences of the poet. This research is of great importance for future researchers who wish to explore the idea of love and loss in literature. It is a rich addition to the Pakistani literature on ideas of love and loss.

Keywords: Poetics, Love, Loss, Imran Nazeer, English Poetry, Thematic Analysis

Introduction

Imran Nazeer was born in Sargodha on August 08, 1993. He is a well-known Pakistani writer. He wrote an amazing story book titled *English Short Stories: Fifteen Short Stories*. He has authored many collections of poems entitled *Love and Dejection, Erotic Flames: A Spark of Romantic and Sensual Verses, Love and Affection: English Poetry, Love and Dejection: Short Poems, Dejected Verses: Verses that Sing the Melody of Emotions, Love Gestures: let's heal the wounds*. His poetry themes range from subjective to objective ones. He mostly focuses on themes of love, beauty, nostalgia, loss, optimism, pessimism, faith, life, death, spring, autumn etc. His poetry is mostly autobiographical as it draws its subjects from the authors' personal life. He tries to objectify the subjective feelings in his poetry and his poetry becomes a voice of universal ideas and themes. Nazeer (2022) claims that "Love and indolence are there for the adults to read. Sometimes, I tend to write too many sad ones, as everyone has moments of sadness in his life." (p. i)

Apart from other themes, Nazeer's poetry is also overloaded with themes of love and loss. Poetry is the best means to express deepest feelings as Nazeer articulates:

When we read poems, it reveals their truth to us. Poetry is an art and a way of revealing the truth, telling untold stories and stories inside stories. It doesn't know any borders but still, it knows many languages. It gives us independence and the power to speak freely. It gives us advice but stays quiet, whether we will follow or not, it's our choice. (p. i)

Love is a unique passion dominating human life. Almost every person must pass through the experience of love in his or her life. He or she must experience the agony of separation as well. Throughout history, love has continuously woven the fabric of society, binding individuals together in remarkable ways (Ehsan & Co., 2016). Nazeer projects the feeling of love in a poignant manner using appropriate vocabulary. Most of Nazeer's poems are based on exploration of the love-relationship from man's point of view. The poem *Rejected Love* is a beautiful poem in which the poet appears as a lover who finds nothing but defeat at the hands of love. The poem is an embodiment of sadness, continuous crying, and grief accompanying the rejected love. The poem ends with the hope and declaration of perpetual love, even in the face of rejection. *Hope* also deals with the idea of love amidst the transient nature of existence. The poem primarily captures a deep emotional attachment and a longing to convey the poet's feelings before the inevitable separation from the sweetheart. *Beauty* is an enchanting poem, thematizing love and loss (Abbas et al., 2025). The initial part of the poem projects the idea of love, and the end of the poem probes the idea of loss. In the poem *flowers* the poet uses flowers as an image to revive the memory of rejected love. Similarly, the poem, *Autumn*, expresses the sense of grief while describing the advent of autumn. The poem *Please Be Kind*, throws light on the imploring of the lovers in front of the beloved to shower her love on him. Poem, *Loving Partners* emphasizes the theme of love, connection, and the depth of a meaningful relationship through the beauty of a loving partnership. *What Makes a Home* throws light on the sense of emptiness and bareness in the house without the presence of a beloved. In *The Symbol of Love*, the poet captures the power of the emotion of love by using different images. *The Blank Page* captures the feeling of loss. The poem *Vacant* describes the theme of loss by highlighting the absence of love. In brief, Nazeer's poetry is a true and realistic portrayal of the theme of love and loss. Almost every poem gives hints of themes of love and loss when perused deeply.

Research Questions

1. How does Nazeer depict the theme of love and loss in the selected poems?
2. In what way does the poet bring forth the theme of love and loss?

Research Objectives

1. To examine the theme of love and loss in Nazeer's selected poems.
2. To assess how the poet brings forth the theme of love and loss.

Literature Review

Love is often shown as a strong bond with feelings, but it also differs from the normal loss of friends. In love stories, there's a sweet and exciting feeling but also sad parts like really missing someone or getting hurt. It also hurts when a loved one is away for some time without your care. This difference appears not just in matters of love, but also with family bonds and friendships. Here, the level of love makes disappointment about losing more intense. Love and loss make the heart of readers feel things, showing how human feelings can be easily hurt but are beautiful. It carefully examines our trips as individuals. "Love is universal human topic." (Ehsan & co., 2016, p. 136). Hence, love stands as a prevailing and prominent theme across diverse forms of poetry and literature throughout history. Petkoska (2015) claims that Donne's love poems reveal his metaphysical nature and sincerity as a poet. The poems with a gentle tone and

no hidden meaning are more sensitive, while those with a non-self-created speaker are full of metaphors and hidden meanings. The second group of poems elaborating on death reveals Donne's attitude towards death, as he was obsessed with it. He found ways to connect the two most opposite themes - love, the most beautiful feeling, and the feared state after life, death. Donne's ability to connect the two most opposite themes is remarkable, as seen in his poem about two dead lovers. Pandey (2021) points out that Donne is a famous love poet, throwing light on the theme of love in a variety of moods and variations. Donne's love poems are the embodiment of physical as well as spiritual love. "He dramatizes different moods and situations in love quite objectively" (Pandey, 2021, p.1). Deepak (2016) articulates that Dickinson's poetry about love and death is marked by maturity about different facets of lifespan. In her poetry, "The treatment of love and death occupy an imperative place" (p. 69). "The lovers meet, separate and realize that they cannot live together passionately as they would imagine" (p. 71). Dickinson relies on different figures of speech to reveal the idea of love and loss in her poetry. It makes her expression of love and loss intricate and ambiguous. Aravind and Ravikumar (2018) focusing on theme of love in the poetry of Kamala Das and Emily Dickinson point out that "Both the poets write on the theme of love with candor and sincerity. Almost all their love poems deal with either of the following modes: the physical aspects of desire or the despair and disappointment that love causes" (p. 160). Though their poetry is immensely autobiographical and subjective in approach, they attempt to universalize their poetry by translating subjective outpourings into objective ones. "From the very first day, love is being depicted in literature in different forms" (Ehsan & co., 2016, p. 135). Love emerges as a central theme in numerous dramas, finds expression in various poetic forms, and often positions protagonists as love's central figures in many novels. The treatment of this theme continually evolves, adapting to different eras and individual perspectives. Many researchers look deeply into the topic of loss, showing it with pictures and words. Often, they mix both together while doing this work. Losing one's sense, love or pride is shown clearly. This gives deep meaning and often teaches important lessons. In different types of art like poems, movies and books, loss is a big part. It makes people feel things deeply and adds meaning to the story. Literature often helps us think differently about real life, especially when talking about loss. In the writings of Shakespeare, Donne, Dickinson, and Angelou they often talk about death or loss. Each writer handles these themes with unique feelings.

In Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, sadness is a big part of the story from start to finish. It affects different people in various ways. Hamlet is deeply hurt by his father's death and shows anger towards Claudius. Hamlet's mom wants him to get over it, but his deep feelings for his dad make it take longer. Not getting sympathy from the people near him, like his mom, makes it hard for Hamlet to stop feeling bad. This shows different ways characters handle and show their feelings when they lose someone or feel sad. Maya Angelou's *When Great Trees Fall* shows feelings of loss well. It says reactions to death are like wild lions protecting themselves from danger, as a natural action. Time is shown as a healing power, slowly bringing happiness but it's still slow and full of sadness. Understanding that the fix is not complete, we learn to accept loss. But our senses are forever changed by this experience. The existing literature shows the gap in Nazeer's poetry so the present research will fill this gap. The research will show how Nazeer's poetry shed light on the theme of love and loss. Love and loss emerge as dominant themes of Nazeer's poetry. Nazeer deals with the theme of love in a realistic manner.

Theoretical Framework

Literature is a big world of writings that includes different types like poetry, story-writing, and plays. It has fiction (made up tales), real stories not made up, plus other forms as well. Poetry,

the way people write books in a special and creative form. It is marked by careful timing for words or beats used with strong feelings to tell something or explore ideas about life experiences. It usually uses organized words, pictures, and creative language. It makes people connect with its beauty and feelings through reading it. Poetry in writing helps us to express art. It gives special views of human feelings and life experiences. Nazeer (2022) describing the significance and nature of poetry elaborates:

Poetry is of immense appeal. When it is invisible, we can create pictures in our minds and discover them. It is a great metaphor and creates a simile of its own. It is not beautiful but a treasury of synonyms of the word beautiful. It is the best way to increase vocabulary. (p. ii)

In poetry, a theme is the main idea or message that the poem talks about. It is the main idea or big subject that runs all through the poem. It keeps everything together and gives a point for what the poet wants to share. Subjects in poems can be big and cover lots of things humans feel nature etc. They might also talk about social problems or deep thoughts. They usually help make the meaning of the poem deeper and richer. They invite readers to think more deeply about different ways it could be understood. In poetry, themes can be clearly told within the words or hidden and need to think about deeper meanings. Love is the source of bondage in society. It is something which is valued in every religion, society, in every culture and in every civilization. Love is valued in every part of the world. Love is the strongest feeling. It comes into being because of sympathies or attraction towards something. Defining the idea of love Moyes (2012) elaborates:

“Love is the driver for all great stories: not just romantic love, but the love of parent for child, for family, for country. It is the point before consummation of it that fascinates what separates you from love, the obstacles that stand in its way. It is usually at those points that love is everything” (p. 32).

According to Jackson Brown Jr, “Love is something invisible to eyes but visible to heart”. Sometime love takes the form of joy and happiness. Sometimes it is accompanied by sadness. The notion of love is different from person to person. It is something which is open to a variety of interpretations. Love takes on diverse forms within the universe, each leading to distinct outcomes. When directed towards one's country, it transforms into patriotism; a love for one's nation fosters nationalism. Similarly, devotion to one's religion can evoke mysticism. The love shared among individuals holds the power to elevate life from despair to joy or, conversely, from elation to anguish (Ehsan & Co., 2016). Loss refers to the sense of being cut off or separated from a dearest one. Loss is a key part of poetry. It includes many things like lost loved ones and broken dreams that cause different feelings. Poets use pictures and words to show how loss feels. They help us understand sadness that lasts a long time by using metaphors. This idea goes beyond just being gone, making people feel sad and changed. Their stories talk about sadness, making readers feel sorry and think. They show that you can be strong when someone or something is gone forever. Loss in poetry is always a message for everyone, no matter which culture or time. It makes people think and brings comfort by showing feelings that many share. Loss of love or Separation “is a challenging situation for lovers” (Bates, 2007, p. 49). It is something which is highly taunting and agonizing for the lovers.

Research Methodology

The study uses a qualitative method to look at common themes of love and loss in Nazeer's chosen poems. The study uses careful looking and sorting to make clear the subtle feelings in poetry. The relevant data is chosen and interpreted in the light of the theme of love and loss.

Textual Analysis

Love and loss emerge as dominant themes of Nazeer's poetry. Nazeer deals with the theme of love in a realistic manner. The poem *Rejected Love* is a beautiful poem, shedding light on themes of love and loss. The poet appears as a lover who finds nothing but defeat at the hands of love. The poet describes the pain of loss of love. It is a deeply personal outpouring of love and loss. The poet has loved the beloved passionately and enthusiastically. Despite it, he faces rejection and pain:

*My poor heart aches and is full of pain.
Pain of rejected love.
Rejected love as broken my heart,
It's torn my very soul apart. (p. 8)*

The title, *Rejected Love*, establishes the stage for exploring of emotions of love and loss. The poem begins with the portrayal of persistent, unreciprocated love. The poem weaves together the torment of unreciprocated love, and the enduring commitment that persists despite the pain. The poet's expression of loving someone for an extended period, despite facing constant rejection, stands for the unwavering nature of love. The imagery used in the poem adds the depth of emotional suffering and loss experienced by the lover. The theme of loss is well expressed in the poem. The poem ends with the hope and the declaration of perpetual love, even in the face of rejection. The contemplation of dying thoughts consumed by the beloved personifies the lasting impact of unrequited love, thus aligning with the overarching theme of loss.

*But I shall always love you dear,
Every day, every month and every year
And when at last my life is through,
My dying thoughts will be of you.
Pain of rejected love. (p. 9)*

In the poem *Tears* the theme of loss is a dominant one. The poem is a voice of sadness, continuous crying, and grief. Tears are streaming down the poet's face. The poet is continuously crying, showing the sense of grief:

*Hour after hour I cry and cry
And my pillows soaking wet, (p. 101)*

The poem starts with the depiction of 'sadness' overwhelming the poet, indicating the sense loss. Each night is spent in utter sadness. This emotional pain and sorrow resulting from the absence of the beloved is the lot of the poet's life:

*Sadness overwhelms me
And tears stream down my face. (p. 101)*

Though the poet's friends and other people console him, the pain the poet experiences in absence of the beloved is never relieved. Consolation does not come to the poet as each passing day is filled with sad feelings.

*Kind people say that time will heal
My heartaches and my sorrow,
But that's no consolation now*

And I dread every tomorrow (p. 102)

Insufficient consolation offered by others who suggest that time will heal the heartache highlights the inadequacy of such reassurances in the face of immediate grief. The dread of facing each new day without the beloved emphasizes the ongoing, persistent anguish that accompanies profound loss. In the poem, *Hope*, the poet celebrates the theme of eternal love. The poem is the outpouring of hope of the poet to have meeting with the beloved in the next world. *Hope* is a profound exploration of love amidst the inevitability of mortality. The poem starts with a contemplation of mortality, portraying a future where both the speaker and their beloved will no longer exist. It touches upon the transient nature of life. The poem primarily revolves around an enduring, profound love. The speaker expresses a deep emotional attachment and a longing to convey their feelings before the inevitable separation. Next life will be a life of bond of love.

*Hoping that one day you'll be there
To hold me close to your heart.
Then you and I will be a pair
When only death will keep us apart (p. 11)*

Both love and loss are the main themes of the poem *Beauty*. In the initial part of the poem, the poet projects the idea of love. Nazeer beautifully articulates the admiration and affection for the perceived beauty of the beloved. Nazeer advises that genuine beauty lies within one's actions and character rather than solely in physical appearance. However, the poem swiftly transitions into a portrayal of love, describing the profound beauty apparent in the beloved. The ending part of the poem depicts the theme of loss of love. The poet is separated from his beauty or beloved and is left with nothing but the painful memories:

*Now this beauty's gone from me,
Lost in a vale of tears.
All that is left are the memories
Of our magical past years. (p. 13)*

In the above verses, beauty signifies the theme of love whereas tears personate the rejection the lover faces in the pursuit of love. The lines portray the theme of loss, bringing the sense of sorrow and separation felt by the speaker due to the absence of the beloved. And the poet is left with the memories of his beloved. These lines encapsulate the bittersweet aspect of loss. Memories remain as a testament to the love shared, emphasizing the enduring impact of their time together. In the poem *flowers* the poet uses flowers as an image to revive the memory of rejected love. He captures the theme of loss by using flowers to become the source of memory of lost love. Flowers are the best source of expression of love when love is lost. The site of flowers reminds the lovers of the lost love. The poet captures the lost love as theme of loss as:

*Flowers blooming in Spring,
Maturing in April showers.
You get an aroma of love,
When you say it with flowers. (p. 22)*

In the poem, *Autumn*, the poet is expressing a sense of grief while describing the advent of autumn. The main reason behind the poet's grief is the rejection of love from his beloved. While writing in autumn the poet focuses on the hope to regain the lost and rejected love. He captures his hope of having reunion with the beloved as

It will burst forth with beauty.

Once again. (p. 29)

In the above lines the poet refers to his beloved as beauty which will shower its blessings upon the poet once again. In this poem both themes of love and loss are well expressed. The theme of loss is narrativized in the form of autumn season.

The poem *Please Be Kind* touches on themes of love and loss. It offers a bundle imploring of the lover before the beloved.

*Please be kind, I miss so much
The tender comfort of your touch,
It's like a sword right through my heart
This unseen wall, keeping us apart. (p. 43)*

In the poem *Please Be Kind*, the poet as a lover beseeches the beloved to shower on him the rain of love and never be away from him and never reject him. In the poem the portrayal of yearning for intimacy and companionship echoes the universal human experience of love and loss. The initial plea for kindness and the ache for physical touch sets a poignant tone. The imagery of a “sword right through my heart” vividly depicts the pain of separation, emphasizing the emotional toll of distance. Love is like a breath and oxygen for the poet. Without love there is no confidence, no emotion, no spark, and no action. The poet addressing the beloved announces.

*Please be kind, I need you so,
Your love, for me, gives life it's glow,
It gives me confidence to face
The highest peak or the darkest place. (p. 44)*

Poem, *Loving Partners* emphasizes the theme of love, connection, and the depth of a meaningful relationship through the beauty of a loving partnership. It celebrates the beauty and depth of a loving relationship focusing on the joys and richness that come from a strong, mutually respectful partnership. Mutual respect and mutual understanding are the key gradients to maintain love relations.

*To share the same ideals of life
And respect them every day,
To know his standards are the same
As yours, in every way (p. 45)*

What Makes a Home throws light on the sense of emptiness and bareness in the house without the presence of a beloved. In fact, it is the beloved that makes home. The poet is all alone in the home missing the company of his mistress passionately.

*But no, there's something missing still,
An important person too,
Without whom no day or night's complete,
The dearest person – YOU (p. 50)*

In the poem, *What Makes a Home*, the poet claims that though he has everything, yet he has nothing without the beloved. Physical comforts and soothing elements contribute to a welcoming environment but in the presence of loved ones that defines the essence of a home. Material comforts have no significance without the beloved. This suggests that while material elements

contribute to a welcoming space, the ultimate definition of home lies in the presence of the beloved.

In *The Symbol of Love*, the poet captures the power of the emotion of love by using different images. Love is as beautiful as a red rose, as strong as a rock, as deep as a sea, as beautiful as daylight and so on. Rose is the tool of poets to describe love due to its soft, red silky petals. Using different images, the poet captures the love as:

*The symbol of love, the deepest red rose,
The magic of love, in the way it grows,
The meaning of love, to give and to share,
The pleasure of love, the knowledge it's there,
The measure of love, it's as deep as the sea,
The perfection of love, that's how it should be,
The truest of love, lasts a whole lifetime through,
It's as firm as a rock, yet it's gossamer too. (p. 51)*

In the above stanza of the poem, *The Symbol of Love*, the poet describes the characteristics of love. According to him love never fades away and lasts forever if it is having truth and sincerity. Further in the next stanza he calls love “A hand to hold when you’ve lost the way”, “A harbor light on the darkest day”, “A comforting shoulder to lean upon”, and “A helping hand when the road is long” (p. 52). He also compares love with the idea of friendship who is always by his side through thick and thin. Nazeer (2022) articulates:

*A friend who'll always lend a hand,
A helpmeet who will be ever there (p. 52)*

The poem, *THE BLANK PAGE* signifies the feeling of loss. It captures loss of opportunities if one doesn't cherish and make the most of the present moment. The loss is like an empty, blank, and unwritten page. It is something which brings with it a sense of dejection and grief. The poet captures the theme of loss in the following stanza as:

*Awakening in the morning,
To feel this brand new day
Is a blank, unwritten page,
This day, that God has given, (p. 56)*

Though the poet is fully dejected, yet he ends with the note of optimism:

*Every hour can be an achievement,
Each moment can be for the purpose of giving,
May I fill today's page, wisely and with love,
For it will not return. (p. 56)*

The poem *Vacant* describes the theme of loss by highlighting the absence of love, memories, and the tangible elements that once filled the home, leaving behind a profound sense of emptiness and longing for what once was. Without love life is like an empty shell. The poet claims that:

*Once it was filled with love and warmth,
Now it's an empty shell (p. 65)*

The poem *Vacant* is highly nostalgic. It recalls the bygone days of love showered on the beloved. Now the poet captures the lost love through memories as:

*Each room unloved, deserted,
Where once they overflowed
With happiness, and loving care
On each item was bestowed, (p. 66)*

Moreover, the poet's home is barren without the presence of the beloved. In the poem *Vacant* the poet describes the barrenness of the home as without beloved as:

*Turn away, without regret
From the barren wall and floor,
Awaiting someone's loving care,
To make it home once more. (p. 66)*

Conclusion

In a nutshell, Nazeer's poetry offers a unique portrayal of the theme of love and loss. The poet conveys the said themes in a language that sounds natural, colloquial and everyday-like. The employment of a variety of images lends uniqueness to the theme of love and loss. The experiences of love and loss projected by the poet are saturated with the colorization of realism, subjectivity, and musicality. The analysis of Nazeer's poetry reveals a recurring exploration of the themes of love and loss. Across various poems, Nazeer delves into the complexities of love in a realistic manner, often portraying the agony and heartache of unrequited affection and the enduring pain of rejection. His work amplifies the theme of loss through the metaphor of the changing season, symbolizing the poet's grief and hope for regaining lost love. The depiction of autumn reflects the narrative of love's rejection and the poet's yearning for a reunion. Through verses of poems, he paints a picture of yearning and separation, imploring the beloved for love and companionship. The poem vividly captures the pain of distance and the yearning for intimacy, showcasing the ache caused by separation. The poet encapsulates the desolation and emptiness resulting from the absence of love. These poems symbolize the sense of loss felt when once-filled spaces become hollow due to the absence of cherished affection. Through poignant imagery and heartfelt expressions, the poet offers a profound exploration of the human experience of longing, rejection, and the enduring ache of lost love. He tries to objectify the subjective feelings in his poetry and his poetry becomes a voice of universal ideas and themes.

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