



Reconnaissance of the Islamic Perspective on the Use of Traditional Herbal Enhancement Substances (*Kayan Mata*)

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Abstract

Traditional herbal enhancement substances, commonly known as kayan mata, are widely used in Northern Nigeria, particularly among married women, to enhance sexual desire, intimacy, and marital satisfaction. While these practices are culturally embedded, Islam provides comprehensive ethical and legal guidance on matters relating to health, sexuality, and marital relations. As a result, the use of kayan mata raises important questions concerning Islamic law (Sharī'ah), morality (akhlāq), and the objectives of Islamic jurisprudence (maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah). This study examines the Islamic perspectives on the use of kayan mata by analysing relevant Qur'ānic principles, Prophetic traditions (Aḥādīth), and scholarly opinions, with the aim of determining the conditions under which its use may be considered permissible or impermissible in Islam. The study adopts a qualitative doctrinal approach, relying on textual analysis of the Qur'ān, authentic Aḥādīth, classical and contemporary juristic writings, and secondary literature on Islamic medical ethics. The analysis is framed within the principles of Islamic jurisprudence, particularly the concepts of permissibility (ḥalāl), prohibition (ḥarām), harm (ḍarar), and public interest (maṣlaḥah). The findings reveal that Islam generally permits the use of natural remedies and herbal substances for health and marital wellbeing, provided they are lawful in composition, free from harm, and used within the bounds of marriage. Islamic sources emphasize mutual satisfaction between spouses and encourage lawful means of maintaining intimacy. However, the use of kayan mata becomes impermissible when it involves harmful substances, deception, immodesty, unlawful exposure of the body, or causes physical or psychological harm. Scholars also caution against dependency, exaggeration of claims, and commercialization that exploits users. From an Islamic standpoint, kayan mata falls under the broader category of permissible traditional medicine, subject to ethical regulation. The absence of standardization and medical supervision in many preparations raises concerns related to the Islamic principle of "no harm and no reciprocating harm" (lā ḍarar wa lā ḍirār). Balancing cultural practices with Islamic ethical standards remains essential. Islam neither outrightly forbids nor unconditionally endorses the use of kayan mata. Its permissibility is conditional upon safety, lawful ingredients, sincere marital intent, and avoidance of harm or immorality.

Keywords: Islamic, Traditional, Herbal, Enhancement Substances (*kayan mata*).

Introduction

Islam is a dynamic religion, which accepts any change for the betterment of human being if it is not against the teaching of Islam. The same thing goes with any act or anything that man can do if it is not harmful to his life. The Qur'an as the divine Book of Allah and the basic source of Islamic teaching and laws deals with a variety of subjects ranging from religion, social, leadership, society, medical and other spheres of life. It has therefore, brought to human race guidance and healing both physical and spiritual through Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W). Allah says:

And we reveal in the Qur'an that which is healing and mercy for the believers...¹

Allah (SWT) disclosed in another verse that Qur'an is a cure and a mercy to believers where He says:

O people, there has come to you an admonishment from your Lord and a cure for that which is within the breasts and a guidance and a mercy for the believers.²

Prophet Muhammad (S.W.T) commanded his followers to seek for medical treatment. This can be seen where Prophet Muhammad said;

Seek medical treatment, O Allah's servants, for Allah Has created no disease except that He has created its cure apart from old age³

And, in another Hadith, the Prophet said;

There is no disease that Allah has created without creating its treatment.⁴

Therefore, the use of traditional herbal enhancement substances "*kayan mata*" can be cited an example to all the above statements. If it is made up from pure *halal* ingredients as well as used to seek for treatment. Islamic Jurisprudence (*Fiqh*) addresses various aspect of human life, including sexual ethics and the use of substances to enhance sexual experience the stance of *Fuqaha* (Islamic jurist) on the use of sexual enhancement substances "*kayan mata*" can be categorised based on different consideration such as intention, ingredient and potential harm or benefit. Here are some key points based on the saying of *Fuqaha*. Therefore, base this reason the used of "*kayan mata*" can be accepted in Islam if attains the following requirements:

1. Seeking Treatment and Remedies: Islam encourages seeking treatment for illness both physical and psychological issues. The use of herbal substances for health or enhancement can be considered part of seeking treatment, as long as it does not involve anything haram (forbidden). As reported in one hadith of Prophet (SAW) said:

"There is no disease that Allah has created, except that He also has created its treatment..."⁵

These Hadith indicate that using remedies, including herbal ones like "*kayan mata*", is permissible as long as they are effective and do not cause harm.

However, another reason can be seen, as indicated in the following verse where Allah says;

O mankind there has come to you indeed an admonition from your Lord and a healing for the (disease) in your heart, and for those who belief, it is a Guidance and a mercy.⁶

Also Allah said:

We send down (stage by stage) of the Qur'an that which is a healing and a mercy to those who believe...⁷

As shown in the verses above, there is a cure for any disease ranging from physical disease and psychological unless it is not known. Therefore, some parts of traditional herbal substances "*kayan mata*" is considered to be part of the bounty of

¹ Qur'an, chapter 17, verse 82

² Qur'an, chapter 10, verse 57

³ M. Mahdi al-Sharf, *Sunan IBN Majah*, the sixth corrected tradition of the prophetic Sunnah, vol. iv, Dar Kotoob Al-Ilmiyyat, Lebanon, 2008, P.1

⁴ I. Mohammad, *Al-Bukhari, the correct tradition of Al-Bukhari*, Dar Al-Kotoob AL-Ilmiyah, Lebanon, Vol. IV, 2007, p.12

⁵ M. -Sharif, M. Sunan Ibn Majah, (2008). *The Sixth Corrected Tradition of the Prophetic Sunnah*, Vol. IV. Lebanon: Dar Kotoob Al-Ilmiyyah, p.1

⁶ Qur'an, chapter 10, verses 57

⁷ Qur'an, chapter 17, verses 82

Allah, which is considered permissible to use as most of them are from plants and animals sources. However, some of them contain animals that are prohibited for man to eat, such as donkey, dog as well as those that are acquired against the teaching of Islam, such as blood, waste products, carnivorous animals, parts of living animals, dead animals or anything impure. Therefore, we have different opinion of *jurist* concerning the use of such things, all the jurists unanimously agree that using *najasa* (impurity) for medicine is not allowed in Islam, where they base their argument on hadith of Prophet (S.A.W) which said:

Allah does not make your recovering in something, He forbade you (something which is unlawful)⁸

However, *Ibn Taymiyyah* also have the view that anything impure including camel urine, dead animals, prohibited animal, and alcohol are not allowed to be used for cure or for medicine⁹, where he based his argument on the hadith of *Ibn Tarik*, he went further to explain that not only alcohol or intoxicant substances, any things unlawful cannot be used as medicine at any course.¹⁰ However, Maliki school of law have the same views¹¹ with *Ibn Taymiyyah*, that the issues of using *najasa* for medicine even if it is not for oral used, i.e rubbing as well as using alcohol or any intoxicant is not allowed in Islam base on the hadith of Prophet (S.A.W) who has been asked about alcohol:

On the authority of Wa'il that Tarik Ibn Suwaid asked the Messenger of Allah (S.A.W) about wine. He forbade him to prepare it. He asked him once again and he (the Prophet) gave the same forbiddance. He (Tariq) said ' O Messenger of Allah! I prepare it as a medical treatment' On that the Messenger of Allah (S.A.W) said "No, it is no medicine, but it is an ailment."¹²

Also, Allah says:

... And Allah loves those who make themselves pure.¹³

However, Hanafi, Hanbali and Shafi are on the same views with Maliki on issues of using alcohol for medicine but they said only based on food poisoning if it is only alcohol can save life, in that case the use of impure or alcohol is allowed for one to drink it only in that particular situation, but they give condition that it must be testified by a faithful, trust worthy, reliable Muslim doctor who has vast knowledgeable on medical field.¹⁴

However, Ibn Taymiyyah said this condition is not applicable to medicine because seeking for medicine is not compulsory, he based his reason on hadith of prophet that woman come to Prophet to pray for her on her sickness (epilepsy) but Prophet give her two option, one is to be patient with sickness to enter Paradise while the other is to pray for her as cure, she choose the first one but has prophet to pay for her that whenever he is unconscious her body shouldn't expose and Prophet pray for her for that. So, Ibn Taymiyyah said if medication is compulsory Prophet will not give her option and he said based on his knowledge he has not seen any scholar who said seeking for cure is compulsory.

However, anything that has to do with associating Allah with a partner is not allowed. These types of healings that contain incantations and invoking of spirits or using menstrual blood or any blood of wife in Islam is Shirk and is not allowed in Islam where Sultan Muhammadu Bello¹⁵ mention different opinion concerning magic where all agreed is prohibited in Islam but there is different views on its effect on human being some scholars said it work while others said it does not have effect on human being, those who belief it affect man said it affect man with the will of Allah where they quat a verse that discuss about witchcraft or magic.

...Even then men learned from this two magic by which might cause a separation between a man and his wife; and they cannot hurt with it anyone except with Allah permission...¹⁶

⁸ M. M. Sharif (Trans), "*Al' Bukhari's Sahih The Correct Traditions Of Al' Bukhari*", Dar Al-Kotob Al-Ilmiyah, Beirut Lebanon, Vol. III, 2007, p.501

⁹ *Majma'u Fatawah li Sharhil Islami Ahmad bn Taimiyyah*, p.562

¹⁰ A.K. Sayid Salim, "*Sahih Fiqh Sunnah*", Maktabatul Tawafikiya, Azhar University, 2016, P.390

¹¹ A. Yassar (edit) *Ihya'u Sunnah*, n.p, n.d, Pp.165-166

¹² M. M. Sharif (Trans), "*Sunan Abu Dawud The Third Correct Traditions Of The Prophetic Sunnah*", Dar Al-Kotob Al-Ilmiyah, Beirut Lebanon, Vol.IV, 2008, P.162

¹³ Qur'an, chapter 9, verses 108

¹⁴ A. Al-Jazan, *Al-Fiqhu Ala Mazhibul al-Arba'ah Kitabul Hudud, Babi Shurbi Kharami India Darura*, Vol. V, Darol Fajr lituras Al-kahira Egypt, 2013, p.31

¹⁵ Muhammad Isa Talata Mafara (Trans) "*Ifdatul Ihwan fi dibbi Nabawi*" of Sultan Muhammad Bello, Iqra publication House, Gusau, Vol. V, 2013, p.1173

¹⁶ Qur'an, chapter 2, verses 102

Which shows it only work when it met one's destiny which is close in related to the today "*kayan mata*" called "*mallaka*" which is considered as a major capital sin which makes man an infidel. This is prohibited because Allah said:

Allah forgives not that partners should be set up with Him; But forgives anything else, to whom He pleases; to set up partners with Allah is to divine a sin most heinous indeed.¹⁷

The Qur'an and Sunnah laid down guide lines which govern the practice of medicine as we know that Qur'an and Hadith teach the promotion of health at the individual and societal levels through acquisition of knowledge. The Qur'an specially points out to mankind the vital information regarding man, nature and the universe and how they interact for the benefit of man, where Allah said:

.... And We are never unmindful of (Our) Creation. ¹⁸

One of which areas of disease were discussed whether spiritual or medical, as indicated that Qur'an is a healing to you, where Allah Says:

....Of the Qur'an that which is a healing and a mercy to those who believer.... ¹⁹

It is also indicated in one of the Hadiths of Prophet, which said:

Seek medical treatment, O! Allah's servant, for Allah has created no disease except that He created its cure apart from old age²⁰

The above verse allows a Muslim to seek for medical treatment for all diseases including sexual problems. One part of it can be psychological or medical. This is more relevant if we look at the importance of sexual intercourse and part of the nature and ways of multiplying creature, which include man and animal. Therefore, this is the rationale behind the use of "*kayan mata*" to improve the quality of sex. As we know, sexual appetite and sexual union are ingrained in the human nature after puberty. From there, it gradually flares up and becomes a pressing demand at a certain stage.

2. Principle of Harm and Benefit (*Maslaha and Mafsada*):

In Islamic law, actions are judged based on their harm and benefit. If "*kayan mata*" provides a benefit (e.g., improving marital relations or addressing health issues) and does not cause harm, it may be permissible. However, if it leads to harm or contains harmful ingredients, it would be discouraged or prohibited as indicated in the hadith of Prophet where he said:

The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said: "There should be neither harming nor reciprocating harm."²¹

The Qur'an emphasizes the principle of choosing what is pure and avoiding what is harmful:

And do not eat up your property among yourselves for vanities, nor use it as bait for the the judges, with intent that you may eat up wrongfully and knowingly a little of (other) people's property.²²

If "*kayan mata*" is shown to have harmful effects on health or marital relations, it would be considered impermissible according to this principle.

3. Permissibility of Pure and Lawful Substances (*Halal and Tayyib*)

Islam emphasizes the consumption and use of pure (*tayyib*) and lawful (*halal*) products. Therefore, in Islam, Muslims are allowed to use any substance, which is pure and clean and which will benefit them whether known or unknown provided that it is clean and pure. Therefore, the use of traditional herbal enhancement substances "*kayan mata*" can be seen in this angle provided that the substances are not harmful because of the saying of Allah on the issue of using pure and clean product where Allah the most high says:

Say: who has forbidden the beautiful (gift) of Allah which He has produced for His servants, and the things, clean and pure (which He has provided) for sustenance?.... ²³

¹⁷ Qur'an, chapter 4, verses 49

¹⁸ Qur'an, chapter 23, verses 17

¹⁹ Qur'an, chapter 17, verses 82

²⁰ Op. Cit, Sunan Ibn Majah, Vol. IV, p.1

²¹ Op. Cit, Sunan Ibn Majah, Vol, Iv, Hadith no:2340

²² Qur'an, chapter 2 verse, 188

²³ Qur'an chapter 7, verse 32

Note that even if the verse is talking about sustenance, all what we put to use to live a perfect life is considered as sustenance. This could be food, clothes, shelter, medication, transportation and so on. The whole matter of Islamic religion is a point, which is meant to enhance the very quality of human life, because Islam is a religion of rational and critical mind, It is a straight forward path chosen by Allah for the entire humanity. And as a balance that enjoins man to seek for the goodness of this world and the hereafter concurrently as indicated in the Qur'an, this is accepted in Islam from the Muslim to ask for enjoyment in this life and the hereafter where Allah says:

....."Our Lord! Give us the good in this world and the good in Hereafter...."²⁴

In another verse, Allah said:

But seek, with the (wealth) which Allah has bestowed on you the Home of the Hereafter, nor forget your portion in: but do good, as Allah has been good to you...."²⁵

Islam has encouraged personal hygiene as well as safety of human being, Allah has asked Muslim to eat what is safe and hygienic where Allah says:

O you people! Eat of what is on earth, lawful and good; do not follow the footsteps of Satan,..."²⁶

At the same time, Allah warns us on the use of what is unhygienic, unsafe and unhealthy. In this case, Muslim women were not excluded. As use of "*kayan mata*" is considered to be part of the food we eat. Therefore, this ruling is applicable to it.

In another verse, Allah says:

He has only forbidden you dead meat, and blood and flesh of swine, and that which any other (name) than has been invoked besides that of Allah....."²⁷

From the above verse, it is shown that any medication, whether traditional herbal enhancement substances "*kayan mata*" or not must be safe and hygienic to the user. When we are discussing about safety of the substance, intoxicant substances are among because some "*kayan mata*" can intoxicate the Muslim women. Any "*kayan mata*" that intoxicates the user is not allowed in Islam because of the saying of Allah that:

They ask you about intoxicants and gambling. Say: in them is great sin, and some profit for men; but the sin is greater than the profit"²⁸

Islam has also ruled it that whatever a Muslim will consume must be pure and safe to the health, as indicated in this verse, where Allah said:

They ask you what is lawful to them (as food). Say: the lawful unto you are (all) things good and pure....."²⁹

In this verse, the good thing referred to as the safe and hygienic food they consume.

In another verse, Allah states:

This day are (all) things good and pure made lawful unto you. The food of the people of the Book is lawful unto you and yours is lawful unto them...."³⁰

And also, in another chapter Allah says:

O you who believe! Eat of the good things that We have provided for you, and be grateful to Allah, if it is Him you worship."³¹

This suggests that herbal substances like "*kayan mata*" must be pure and free from unlawful or harmful elements to be permissible.

²⁴ Qur'an chapter 2, verse 201

²⁵ Qur'an chapter 28, verse 77

²⁶ Qur'an chapter 2, verse 168

²⁷ Qur'an, chapter 2, verse 173

²⁸ Qur'an, chapter 2, verse 219

²⁹ Qur'an: chapter 5, verse 4

³⁰ Qur'an, chapter 5, verse 5

³¹ Qur'an chapter 2, verse 172

4. Maintaining Marital Harmony: However, man (human being) finds it as an over whelming passion, whether sleeping, walking or going about one's duty in day time. It is like an obsession, a constant struggle between his passion and his good sense of judgment where the canal urge incites him to go ahead with the means of its gratification. It is totally oblivious of the limit of hasten approval and the forbidden. This is one of the reason why Muslim women are running halters skelter looking for substances to boost their appetite to satisfy their sexual relationship.³² Another importance of sex can be seen in the Qur'an where Allah said:

Glory to Allah, who created in pairs all things that, the earth produces, as well as their own (human) kind and (other) things of which they have no knowledge.³³

The verse makes a reference to the universality of the sex-law and the Master Engineer of the universe Himself divulges the secret of His creation. He says that the universe has been designed on the relationship of pairs for the purpose of mating (sex). However, women try as much as possible to make sure that they satisfy their husbands sexually knowing that they are made to serve their husband and vice versa, as mention in the Qur'an:

Your wives are as a tilth for you, so go into your tilth when you like, and do good beforehand for yourselves ...³⁴

This means a husband can have sex with his wife whenever he wishes at any time, any place, any position provided it is not an anal sex.³⁵ So, Muslim women saw the need to use something that will help them to be ever ready just in case come by surprise. The use of (*kayan mata*) is for those women that have low libido as come in a book called *Masalihil Insan* where *Shaykh* Abdullahi bn Fodiyo said:

There is no sex without desire, even though sex is very important to human body, there is need to practice sex once in a while, even for the sick person who is suffering from jaundice even though their body is weak but he need to try to have sex by doing so it will improve the quality of his health. He went further to say there is no specific time chosen as best time to have sex, while too much sex can cause aging and joint weaknesses. He concluded by saying man on top position during sex is the best position than any style. He said *Allahu A'alamu*³⁶

From above discussion it shows that is another reason why Muslim women used "*kayan mata*" for those women who are suffering from low libido or lack of desire can use "*kayan mata*" as remedy to their problem as is not good to have sex without desire by doing so will affect the body. However, women also use "*kayan mata*" in order to boost their libido due to one reason or another because they know their husband can call them to bed at any time. If they refuse without any reason, the Angels will curse them until morning:

If a husband called his wife to his bed (to have sexual relation with her) and she refuses and causes him to sleep in anger, the angels will curse her till morning³⁷

The above Hadith shows that women used to do certain activities in preparation for sexual intercourse, but this may differ from one place to another. If a woman uses "*kayan mata*" in order to satisfy their husband's need, it is allowed in Islam provided they are from pure and *halal* sources. More so, it is another reason that permit the use of "*kayan mata*" provided they did not contradict *Shari'ah* as it was said:

Moreso, some scholars hold the view that any medicine which contains pure substances and does not cause harm to man and which he thinks is beneficial to him, that medicine is allowed. The simple reason is because medicine is a trial and error, and sometimes, it works based on the belief of the user based on psychological acceptance. The use of traditional herbal enhancement substances, such as "*kayan mata*" in Islamic contexts is not directly addressed in classical Islamic texts, but Islamic principles can be applied to evaluate the permissibility of such practices. These principles come from the Qur'an, Hadith, and the rulings of scholars (fiqh) that govern health, medicine, and marital relations. One of the

³²Abdul-Razak. (N.D). *Sexual Issues in Modern Era and its Solution in Islam*. New Delhi: Adam Publishers and Distributors, p.52

³³ Qur'an, chapter 36, verse 37

³⁴Qur'an chapter2, verse223

³⁵ M. M. Sharif (Trans), *Tafsir of ibn Kathir in Suratul Baqara , Verse 233, Dar Al-Kotoob*, Beirut- Lebanon, 2006, p.355

³⁶ J. Yusha'u, (Trans) Prof. S. Musa(edit), *Masalih Insan* of Shehu Abdullahi Dan Fodiyo, Iqra publishing House, Gada Biyu, Gusau, Zamfara State, 2013, p.211

³⁷Al-Bukhari Sahih vol. III, book of marriage P, 790

objectives of marriage in Islam is to maintain love, affection, and physical fulfilment between spouses. If the use of “*kayan mata*” enhances marital relations and promotes harmony, it can be considered permissible as long as it does not violate Islamic principles. Allah says in the Qur’an:

And among His Signs is this, that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that you may dwell in tranquillity with them, and He has put love and mercy between your (hearts): Verily in that are Signs for those who reflect.³⁸

The below statement encouraged mutual fulfilment in marital relations, as seen in Verse:

....And women shall have rights similar to the rights against them, according to what is equitable terms.....³⁹

If “*kayan mata*” helps in maintaining this fulfilment and harmony, its use may be considered in line with Islamic teachings on marital relations.

Prohibition of Deception

If the use of “*kayan mata*” involves deception (e.g., hiding medical conditions or artificially altering physical appearance without the spouse’s knowledge), this could be problematic from an Islamic perspective. The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said:

Whoever deceives us is not one of us. Honesty and transparency are essential in marital relations, and any use of enhancement substances should be within the bounds of mutual respect and understanding.⁴⁰

In summary, the use of “*kayan mata*” is not explicitly prohibited in Islamic texts, but its permissibility depends on several factors, such as: The purity and lawful nature of the substances used. Whether it causes harm or benefit. Its alignment with the objectives of marital harmony. Whether it is used in a manner that is honest and does not involve deception. Scholars may differ in their rulings based on specific circumstances, the composition of the substances, and the intent behind their use. Consulting knowledgeable scholars on the specifics of these substances is recommended for clarity in individual cases.

Conclusion

Islamic perspectives on the use of traditional herbal enhancement substances (*kayan mata*) emphasize balance, responsibility, and ethical consideration. Islam recognizes sexual intimacy within marriage as a legitimate and valued aspect of human life and encourages spouses to seek lawful means of maintaining affection and satisfaction. Consequently, the use of herbal remedies aimed at enhancing marital intimacy may be permissible when they align with Islamic principles.

However, Islamic teachings place strong emphasis on the preservation of life and health, making any substance that causes physical or psychological harm unacceptable. The lack of regulation, possible adulteration, and unsafe preparation methods associated with some *kayan mata* products contradict the Islamic injunction against harm. Furthermore, practices involving deception, immodesty, or exploitation of marital insecurities violate Islamic moral values. In conclusion, from an Islamic perspective, the use of *kayan mata* is conditionally permissible and must be guided by the objectives of *Sharī‘ah*, particularly the protection of health, dignity, and marital harmony. There is a need for education, ethical guidance, and collaboration between religious scholars, health professionals, and traditional practitioners to ensure that cultural practices surrounding *kayan mata* remain consistent with Islamic values and human wellbeing.

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³⁸ Qur’an, chapter 30, verse 21

³⁹ Qur'an, chapter 2, verse 228

⁴⁰ Abu Isa (Tirmidhi), *Shama 'lil Mahmadiyyah*, Darrul Hudah Al-Mahmadiyyah publishers, 1437 A.H, p.123

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