

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PARENTS TOWARDS THE CHILDREN IN THE ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE – AN ANALYTICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE STUDY –

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ABSTRACT

This research explores the divine blessing of children, considering them as a paramount gift from God bestowed upon married couples. The Almighty entrusts parents with the sacred responsibility of raising their children, treating them as both a trust and an asset. This study delves into the parental obligations outlined in Al Qur'an and Al Hadith, drawing upon insights from esteemed scholars. The focal point is the Day of Judgment, where parents will be held accountable for fulfilling their duty of imparting moral, ethical, and religious teachings to their children. Successful execution of this responsibility ensures the alleviation of consequences on that significant day. The research emphasizes the shared responsibility between parents and children in nurturing and educating the younger generation according to the guidance of Allah and his messenger. Parents, being the primary role models, play a pivotal role in shaping the education of their children, serving as the initial source of inspiration. In Islam, children are perceived as vulnerable and dependent, necessitating parental care and guidance for their proper upbringing. The reciprocal nature of respect between parents and children hinges on the provision of loving care and guidance from parents. The research advocates for parents to instill religious manners and etiquette in their children by embodying the exemplary characters of the Prophet. In summary, the paper explores parental responsibilities in the upbringing of children, referencing numerous holy verses from Al Qur'an and sayings of the Prophet Muhammad. Employing analytical and descriptive methods, the study relies primarily on secondary sources to elucidate and propose appropriate solutions.

KEY WORDS: Parental duties / Kids & Children / Guidance of Islam / Role model / Issues.

1) INTRODUCTION

Raising children in the 21st century is not an easy task. Each generation has its unique problems but the Qur'an advice will always offer the best solutions because the nature of human beings remains unchanged. When Allah sent down the Qur'an, he filled it with advice and reminders that would be useful for all times. Children are a trust given to parents by Allah. Parents will be held accountable for this trust. Parents are essentially responsible for the moral, ethical and spiritual upbringing of their children. If parents fulfill this responsibility, children will become better citizens and a pleasure to their parents in this life and the hereafter.

Children are worth trust in the life of parents and they are one of the best kinds of blessings bestowed upon the parents; hence the parents will be accountable towards their fulfillment of the responsibility for this entrusted wealth on the Day of Judgment. They want to be the best role model and an excellent example to their children. The parents must treat their children equally with justice and mercy. They shall give them proper and adequate Islamic teachings, enabling the children to lead their lives righteously and achieve success in both worlds. The parent and children relationship in Islam is reciprocal and mutual manner.

2) STATEMENT OF RESEARCH PROBLEM:

This study addresses the intricate and evolving parental responsibilities from an Islamic perspective in the context of contemporary challenges. Rapid changes in family life and parenting dynamics present unique opportunities and challenges. The research explores key issues such as contemporary parenting challenges, variations

in Islamic schools of thought, the role of gender, religious and moral education, societal and cultural influences, and their implications for parent-child relationships.

3) OBJECTIVES OF RESEARCH:

This research is formulated with the following objectives:

1. Analyze Islamic parenting principles from Qur'an sources and Hadith, synthesizing these guidelines to form a comprehensive framework.
2. Investigate how contemporary challenges influence the implementation of Islamic parenting practices and examine their adaptations in varied cultural and social settings.
3. Assess the impact of Islamic parenting on children's well-being and parent-child relationships, while also providing policy recommendations to support effective Islamic parenting in modern contexts.

4) DISCUSSION AND SUGGESTED CONCEPTS & VIEWS:

1. Guidelines of Al Qur'an and Al Hadith on parent's responsibilities

Parents will be free of consequences on the Day of Judgment when they fulfill their due responsibilities to their children, moreover, they shall be honored by Allah with his abundant bounties. Allah says: "And those who believed and whose descendants followed them in faith – we will join with their descendants; we will not deprive them of anything of their deeds. Every person for what he earned and retained" (*Al Qur'an: Al-Thur:21*)

As far as the non-fulfillment of their entrusted responsibility, the consequences are narrated in the Quran verses: "O you, who have believed, protect your selves and your families from a fire whose fuel is people and stones" (*Al Qur'an: Al-Thahreem: 06*).

And, “Say Indeed, the losers are the ones who will lose themselves and their families on the day of resurrection. Unquestionably, that is the manifest loss.” They will have canopies of fire above them, and below them, by that, Allah threatens his servants. “O my servants then fear me.” (*Al Qur’an: Al-Zumar:15-16*).

The messenger of Allah said the following, regarding the responsibility of parents: “All of you resemble a herdsman, just as a herdsman protects his herd, so too should you protect your households and those who serve you from Hell! You should teach them about Islam. If you do not, you will be called to account for it.” (*Sahih Al - Bukhari, Wasaya; Muslim, Imara*)

2. Showing Love Towards Children

Upon their birth, children have all of their rights automatically in effect, feeding, clothing, health care, even the celebration of birth (Aqeeqah), Allah says in the Qur’an that means: “[Mothers should feed their children for two whole years (that is) for those who wish to complete the suckling term, the cost of their food and clothing on equitable terms is upon the father of the child.]” (*Al Qur’an: Al-Baqarah: 233*) Also, the Prophet advised us to give each child a name with a good meaning.

In addition to this, children should be taken care of sentimentally, by doing well to them, having mercy upon them, jesting and bantering with them. It was reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, kissed al Hasan Ibn Ali in the presence of al Aqra Ibn Habis. Al Aqra said: “I have ten children and I have never kissed any of them. Allah's Messenger cast a look at him and said, "Whoever is not merciful to others will not be treated mercifully”. (*Sahih Al - Bukhari: Kitab Al Adab, chapter having Mercy upon the Child, Kissing Him and Cuddling Him (5651), and Sahih Muslim: Kitab al Fadha'il (Book of Virtues), chapter The Prophet's Mercy upon Children (2318)*).

Shadad Ibn Al Had (may Allah be pleased with him) quoted his father as saying: Allah's Messenger came out in al-Isha' prayer carrying either Hassan or Hussein. The Prophet advanced and put him, then started praying. The Prophet prostrated and it was a long prostration. My father said: I have raised my head during the prayer only to find that the little child is climbing over the Prophet's back while he was prostrating. I returned to my prostration. And when Allah's Messenger finished the prayer, some people said: Oh! Allah's Apostle, you have made a long prostration during your prayer until we thought that something happened or that you received a revelation. The Prophet said: "None of this happened, but my son climbed over me and I don't like to prevent him before he finishes what he was doing". (*An-Nasai (1141), Ahmed (27688) and Al Albani* based their argument about prolonging the bowing in prayer on this story, look: *The Prophet's Way of Prayer by Al Albani*).

3. Selecting a good environment in which children mingle.

Whether at home, in the street, or at school, it is better to accommodate the children in environments that glorify religion and the rituals of Islam, instil in them the values of decency and modesty, and to choose a group of companions who accompany the child to safe educational and religious areas.

They will be a blessing to him in obedience, and if there is a companion with whom the parents do not feel comfortable, then he should not show hostility to him, but rather he should try to show the child that his companion's behavior is bad and that he should stay away from him. (*Laila, (2012) pg. 80-89, Part 1.*)

4. Responsibilities of parents on Education, Training and Good Characteristics

Ayyub Bin Moosa narrated from his father and his grandfather that the Messenger of Allah said: There is no gift that a father gives his son more virtuous than good manners” (*Jami’Ath-Thirmidi: 1952*)

Parents have been entrusted with the noble responsibility of upbringing their children. Thus, the duty of every parent is obvious that they want to train their children in the right way. Training of the by the parent includes the teaching and guiding. The guidance that the parents offer to their children is vital for the all- round progress of the children in their later life.

5. *The respectable Life*

Islam ordered the father to guarantee them the resources that can make them live well. Prophet Muhammad said, “The best penny a man spends is that on his children, on his camel for the sake of Allah, and on his friends for the sake of Allah.” (*Sahih Al-Muslim*) Even in cases of divorce, fathers are asked to be fully responsible for their children regarding food, clothing, schooling, and health expenses according to the father’s standard of life. Allah says: Let the man of means spend according to his means: and the men whose resources are restricted, let him spend according to what Allah has given him. Allah puts no burden on any person beyond what He has given him. After a difficulty, Allah will soon grant relief. (*Al Qur’an, Al-Thalaq: 7*)

6. *Parents as role models and excellent examples:*

All the good qualities and pleasing habits of the parents shall make an ever-growing impression in the young minds of their children; likewise, all sort of ill manners and bad habits of the parents shall also affect the tender hearts of the offspring.

The parents want to become an excellent example for their children. As the actions speak much louder than the words, a good example from the parent’s works faster even without words. Practice shall precede the preaching; Al Quran says about this as follows:

Al Qur'an asks: O you who have believed, why do you say what you do not do? (*Al Qur'an, Al-Saff: 02*)

7. Keep children away from digital screen addiction

This is a very crying issue all over the current world, Keeping children away from useless digital screens as much as possible, and finding appropriate and entertaining alternatives; such as swimming pools, scout camps, and amusement parks, and one of the ways to reduce children sitting in front of the phone, television, or computer is that the educator organizes this time; it is limited, not open, and these means can be used to strengthen certain aspects of children; such as discovery, learning, memorization, and the like. (*Laila, pg. 80-89, Part 1.*)

8. Religious Training

Inculcating in the young minds of the children. A firm faith in the creator becomes an important one to lead life righteously. Children must be taught about the existence of God, and the plenty of his blessings bestowed upon us. For an honest and peaceful life, good habits and morals are essential hence, the children must be taught about good manners and qualities such as honesty, kindness, truthfulness, sincerity, justice, contentment, steadfastness, gentleness, politeness, consideration for others, helpfulness, cleanliness, and tidiness, etc. they should be to be free from jealousy, lying, laziness, backbiting, greed, extravagance etc. the children must be enriched with this kind of Islamic knowledge based on Al Qur'an, Al-Hadith and the biography of the holy prophet Mohamed (PBUH). There are several verses of the Al Qur'an and many narrations of Hadith, regarding the responsibility of the parents towards the care of their children.

An excellent model example of parental responsibility and advice is available under Surah Luqman in Al Qur'an. Luqman is a famous man of wisdom; he guides his son

on the path to success in this world and salvation in the hereafter, easily and elegantly. The major advice is as follows:

1. Not to ascribe divine powers to anything other than Allah.
2. To be good and kind to parents.
3. To obey parents unless they command what is wrong.
4. To understand that all our deeds, however minor are recorded and will be brought to light.
5. To be constant in prayer.
6. To enjoy what is right and forbid what is wrong.
7. To bear what is befall him with patience.
8. To avoid pride, arrogance and boastfulness.
9. To be modest in manner and speech. (*Al Qur'an, Lukman: 13-19*)

10. The relationship between parents and children:

The parent's and children's relationship in Islam is reciprocal which a mutual one is. The duties of one side are the rights of the other side. So, in parent- Children relationship the rights of parents are the obligations of the children and vice versa. Parental care and guidance are fundamental to a child's upbringing. The parent's rights to loving care and guidance of their parents.

When we study the following verse of Al Qur'an, we can easily understand the depth of the meaning of the terms, It means: "My Lord, have mercy upon them as they brought me up (when I was) small baby". (*Al Qur'an, Al-Isra: 24*) which illustrates the parental duties and care towards the children at their tender ages and after, towards which the children are asked to pray to Allah for their parents as a reciprocal way.

If we analyze the topic of the discussion, from the Islamic perspective, and in the light of Al Qur'an and Al Hadith, it comes to our light that the children have rights

over their parents as if the parents have rights over their children are emphasized a lot although children's rights over their parents are usually neglected.

Parents, whose babies are born, at the outset, should give them a good and meaningful name. They should provide their children with a good education and good discipline.

11. Continuous training

Children are children they are not adults and need to be encouraged trained, guided and molded. They may make mistakes and errors. Training of a child is a long process and no parent can expect the positive result quickly in many cases. A good example from Al Hadith is available in this regard. The daily prayer is the most important action in Islam, and all parents must ensure that their child prays properly and regularly. Even for this most important action in Islam, our holy prophet (PBUH) grants an extended time limit for children up to the age of ten, even at the age of seven the advice for the prayer is started. (*Sunan - Abu Dawud and Thirmidhi*)

12. Equal and fair treatment

The equal behavior towards the children is highly anticipated in the smooth structure of the family, the unequal and unfair treatment of the parents in the matter of grants and favors makes them feel hatred and jealousy toward each other and also love and respect between them disappear. Accordingly, Islam orders parents to behave equally and fairly to their all children.

It was narrated from Nuh'man bin Bashir that his father gave him the gift of a slave and he came to the Prophet (PBUH) so that he could witness the gift. He said have you given something to all of your children? He said 'No' He said "Then take back (your gift)." (*Sunan ibnu Majah, vol: 3, Book 14, Hadith 2376*).

Another hadith of the Prophet proves that Muslims should be conscious of treating their children justly. Nuhman bin Basheer delivered a sermon and said: Treat your children fairly, Treat your children fairly. (*Sunan Al Nasayi*)

All children within a family have their right to be offered fairly. This right was declared by the Prophet as follows: “Fear Allah and treat your children fairly”. (*Sahih Al - Bukhari: 2447, Sahih Muslim: 1623*)

13. Worth of parent’s prayers for the sake of the children

The prophet has urged the importance of prayers of parents for their children, hence the parents shall pray for the betterment of their children, which is stated by the prophet that the prayer made by the parent is acceptable by Allah. The Hadith is as following: whatever prayer is made by parents on behalf of their children is accepted by Allah without any doubt. Abu Hurairah reported: the messenger of Allah said, “Three supplications are answered without doubt. The supplication of the oppressed, the supplication of the traveler, and the supplication of the parent for his son. (*Sunan: Al Thirmidhi, Abu Dawud*) Our holy prophet said that the parents shall not leave the children as poor: the holy prophet said no doubt, it is better to leave your children rich than to leave them poor, reduced to begging from others. (*Sahih Al - Bukhari*)

5) CONCLUSION

In fact, children represent a significant blessing and trust from Allah, and their potential to become righteous and successful individuals in the world is intricately tied to the fulfillment of parental duties within the Islamic framework. The prevalent challenge lies in the susceptibility of children to external influences, particularly in a contemporary context where exposure to ideal religious environments is hindered by the pervasive impact of media, peer associations, and detrimental entertainment content. The advent of technology further complicates familial dynamics, adding to the complexities of safeguarding children's upbringing. Despite these formidable challenges, the imperative of nurturing entrusted children righteously remains a

crucial responsibility for parents. This duty is not only essential in navigating the fractures induced by technological advancements and external influences but also paramount for securing the salvation and success of children in the life hereafter. In light of these considerations, the paramount duty of parents is to educate their children in a manner that ensures success in both the present life and the hereafter. This dual commitment underscores the pivotal role parents play in shaping the holistic well-being and ultimate destinies of their children.

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