

Parent-Child Relations: a Strong Bond for the Society In *Islamic* Perspective

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Abstract

Effective moral training comes not from sermons, advice and instructions but from parents' personal examples of good behavior. It is a famous Tradition of the Prophet (PBUH) that acquisition of knowledge is a must for every Muslim boy and girl. Children, therefore are a trust given to the parents. Parents will be responsible for this trust on the Day of Judgment. In fact, such a statement reflects the value of the proper upbringing of children. It has an everlasting effect, even after death. Children are like flowers. Small children need to be loved, caressed, kissed and hugged. The Prophet loved children greatly. He would allow his grandsons Hassan and Hussain (R.A) to ride his shoulders even during his prayers. The society gets strength if the members of the society especially the parents act according to these guidelines and teachings of Islam to make the family environment most favorable, peaceful and satisfactory for the parents and healthy personality growth for children. This research article will emphasize on child development and parenting techniques. Moreover, the paper will focus on the information on how to let the children flourish and develop a happy family life. The research will also offer techniques for teaching children, raising God-conscious with a sense of civic responsibility in today's world.

Keywords: Islam, Children, *Tarbiya*, Prophet, Society, Role-Model

Human beings are created in the best of forms. It is mentioned in Quran:

(لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيمٍ)

“We have indeed created humankind in the best of moulds”³

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³ Al Quran 95:4

Children are the bounties and gift and blessings from Almighty Allah. Hence their birth should be greeted, and the Lord and Sustainer should be thanked for His grace and favor. They have been declared as good news for the parents. The Qur'an says:

يَا زَكَرِيَّا إِنَّا نُبَشِّرُكَ بِغُلَامٍ اسْمُهُ يَحْيَىٰ لَمْ نَجْعَلْ لَهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ سَمِيًّا

"O Zakariyya, we give thee the good news of a son, his name shall be Yahya, on none by that name have We conferred distinction before"⁴

On another occasion, the Qur'an tells them as the real comfort for us and pleasure to our eyes:

وَالَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَاجِنَا وَذُرِّيَّاتِنَا قُرَّةَ أَعْيُنٍ وَاجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِينَ إِمَامًا

"And those who pray,"Our Lord! Grant unto us wives and offspring who will be the comfort for our eyes and gave us (the grace) to lead the righteous."⁵

Effective moral training comes not from sermons, advice and instructions but from parents' examples of good behavior. It is a famous Tradition of the Prophet (PBUH) that acquisition of knowledge is a must for every Muslim boy and girl. Another Hadith says, "The best of you is one who gives a good education (intellectual and moral) to his children". Another Hadith lays stress on upbringing of daughters.

عن جابر بن عبد الله قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم من كن له ثلاث بنات يؤويهن ويرحمهن ويكفلهن وجبت لها الجنة البتة قال قيل يا رسول الله فإن كانت اثنتين قال وإن كانت اثنتين قال فرأى بعض القوم أن لو قالوا له واحدة لقال واحدة⁶.

Jabir ibn Abdullah reported that the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him said, Whoever has three daughters and he cares for them, he is merciful to them and he clothes them, then Paradise is

⁴ Al Quran 19:7

⁵ Al Quran 25:74

⁶Musnad Ahmad Hadith 2

certainly required for him, It was said, O Messenger of Allah, what if he has only two?" The Prophet said, "Even two," Some people thought that if they had said to him one, the Prophet would have said even one. The concept of behavior in Islam includes the morals and ethics which are said to be *adab*. Children should be taught to use nice words like thank you, *Alhamdulillah*, *Insha'Allah* and beautiful words of greetings. They should also be taught proper eating and drinking ethics and habits, to be dressed decently, and to act respectfully in the society.

Children therefore are a trust given to the parents. Parents will be responsible for this trust on the Day of Judgment. In fact, such a statement reflects the value of the proper upbringing of children. It has an everlasting effect, even after death. Children are like flowers. Small children need to be loved, caressed, kissed and hugged. The Prophet loved children greatly. He would allow his grandsons Hassan and Hussain (R.A) to ride his shoulders even during his prayers.

According to Islam, children are entitled to various rights. The first and foremost of these rights is the right to be properly brought up, raised and educated. This means that children should be given appropriate, adequate, sound and sufficient religious, ethical and moral guidance to last them for their entire lives.

Allah, the Almighty says in the Glorious Qur'an:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ

"O ye who believe! Save yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is Men and Stones." ⁷

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ قَالَ: سَأَلْتُ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: "أَيُّ الذَّنْبِ أَعْظَمُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ؟" قَالَ: «أَنْ تَجْعَلَ لِلَّهِ نَدًا وَهُوَ خَلَقَكَ». قُلْتُ: إِنَّ ذَلِكَ لَعَظِيمٌ، قُلْتُ: ثُمَّ أَيُّ؟ قَالَ: «وَأَنْ تَقْتُلَ وَلَدَكَ تَخَافُ أَنْ يَطْعَمَ مَعَكَ». قُلْتُ: ثُمَّ أَيُّ؟ قَالَ: «أَنْ تُزَانِيَ حَلِيلَةَ جَارِكَ».

⁷ Al Quran 66:6

Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud (RAA) narrated, 'I asked the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) "Which sin is the most serious?" He replied, attribute a partner to Allah, though He Alone has created you. "I asked, "What next?" He said, kill your child, fearing that he will share your food with you." I asked again, "What next?" He said, "To commit adultery with your neighbor's wife." Agreed upon.."⁸

عن عبد الله بن عمر، أنَّ رسولَ الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال " أَلَا كَلُّكُمْ رَاعٍ وَكُلُّكُمْ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ فَالْأَمِيرُ الَّذِي عَلَى النَّاسِ رَاعٍ عَلَيْهِمْ وَهُوَ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْهُمْ وَالرَّجُلُ رَاعٍ عَلَى أَهْلِ بَيْتِهِ وَهُوَ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْهُمْ وَالْمَرْأَةُ رَاعِيَةٌ عَلَى بَيْتِ بَعْلِهَا وَوَلَدُهُ وَهِيَ مَسْئُولَةٌ عَنْهُمْ وَالْعَبْدُ رَاعٍ عَلَى مَالِ سَيِّدِهِ وَهُوَ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْهُ فَكُلُّكُمْ رَاعٍ وَكُلُّكُمْ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ " ⁹

It is narrated by Abdullah bin Umar The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) as saying: Every one of you is a shepherd and is responsible for his flock. The leader of people is a guardian and is responsible for his subjects. A man is the guardian of his family and he is responsible for them. A woman is the guardian of her husband's home and his children and she is responsible for them. The servant of a man is a guardian of the property of his master and he is responsible for it. No doubt, every one of you is a shepherd and is responsible for his flock."Children therefore are a trust given to the parents. Parents will be responsible for this trust on the Day of Judgment. The above quoted verses of the Quran and the sayings of the Prophet, emphasize on the role of parents in the development of their children. Parents are actually the builders of the society and children are core part. Family is one of the main unitsofany society. Good parenting really matters for the betterment of the society, and it cannot be left aside. This target could be achieved when a good relationship between the parents and their children develops. The basis of the society strengthens if this

⁸ Al Jamay Alsahihi Bukhari Hadis number:4477 and Sahih Muslim: 128

⁹ [SunanAbiDawud](#), Book of Tribute, Spoils, and Ruler shipThe Book of Exodus and Emirate (كتاب الخراج والامارة والفيء), 2928

relationship founded on strong bonds. These things could not be achieved by chance. Whenever a family has pious children, and they are living in a relaxed and peaceful environment, with harmony and love, this is not merely the result of chance. This strong bond between the parents and their offsprings is a result of hard work and effort to develop good parent-child relationships. In this age of globalization one can easily observe that a good and strong relationship within the family can make a family, society and civilization; or break the family and society if it does not fulfil its responsibilities. When children are raised with love, affection and confidence, they become a beneficial part of any nation. On the other hand, when they are raised in the state of fear and oppression, they become afraid and cannot play a positive role for society.

As mentioned above, family is the primary and core unit of a society which has a significant role. Parents and children are the key players of that unit. As much this unit becomes strong, the society will become more functional, active and strong. Every member of this unit has its role and contribution, which make it more and more successful. The role of good parenting and how the children raised has a direct effect for the capacity building of the family unit to effect positive social change. The family not only transforms its members but ultimately, society as a whole. It's a matter of the fact that good parenting matters and how the style of parenting we adopt as our choice, affects the kind of people our children become. Strong parent-child relation revolves around love, care, peace and security. A loving family responds to both the needs of the parents as well as the needs of the children. Nowadays it has been observed that not only the western societies facing the issues like single-parent families, divorce, changes in family size and instability; the Muslims families and the Islamic world is also facing these instabilities. The developing societies cannot exist without healthy family units, and

this is also true for the Muslim world. It's the need of time to make it sure to strengthen this unit because a family is part of the larger culture and ideally, a whole culture itself. We should understand the role of the greatness of the roles we play within the family. A family is a little house of worship, a little government, and a little place of learning of positive values and goodness.¹⁰

While thinking about the role and character of the family, parents and children are indeed the initial members of that unit. When a man marries to a woman, the parents undergo a transition from two people (dyad) to three people (triad) upon the arrival of the first child. A new role and phase of the parents start with the arrival of children. When a baby is born in a family, it changes the lifestyle and responsibility of the parents. Especially while we are talking in Shari'ah (the code of law for the Islamic way of life revealed by Allah for mankind)¹¹ perspective, when a baby is born to a Muslim family, certain traditional rites take place to welcome the newborn baby (Zaydan, Abdul Kareem, 1993). Calling *Adhan* (call to prayer) in the ears of a newborn is *Sunnah* (tradition) of the Prophet. It is reported that the Prophet recited the *Adhan* in the ears of his grandson, Hasan, the son of Ali, when he was delivered by his mother, Fatimah. Upon the birth of a newborn, calling the *Adhan* in the right ear and *Iqamah* (immediate call for prayers) in the left ear declares the oneness of Allah the Almighty and reminds the message of the last Prophet, Muhammad (peace be upon him). Naming the baby without delay is one of the foremost rights of child. It should be kept in the mind that the baby should be given a meaningful name. The Muslim child should be given a good name after birth. The Messenger of Allah (Peace

¹⁰ Abdul Hamid Hisham alTalib, Omar Talib *Parent-Child Relations* (Washington, USA: IIIT, 2013), 124.

¹¹ Ghulam Sarwar, *Islam Beliefs and Teachings* (Islamabad, Pakistan: IRI Press, IIUI, 2004), 161.

and blessings of Allah be upon him) is reported to have said: "You'll be called on the Day of Resurrection by your names and your father's names, so choose good names for yourselves." (Reported by Abu Dawud) .He also told us about some of the best names, "The dearest names to Allah are `Abdullah and `Abdur-Rahman." (Reported by Muslim)The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) also used to change some names for better ones. He changed, for example, حرب (war) to سلم (peace), an area called *Afirah* (dirty) to *Khadihra'* (green) amongst many others.Celebrating the birth of the baby in another Sunnah of the Prophet. In Arabic it is *Aqiqah* (عقيقه)which refers to the animal slaughtered as a sacrifice for a newborn child. Usually it takes place on the seventh day after the birth. Islam declares the birth of a child a glad tidings. So, if anyone feels sad and unhappy at the birth of a child, he goes against the Will of Allah. Such persons seek refuge in abortion which is nothing short of killing of the child in the womb. This is a cruel act. Allah declares this merciless and cruel act as foolish and losable .Qu'ran says:

قَدْ خَسِرَ الَّذِينَ قَتَلُوا أَوْلَادَهُمْ سَفَهًا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ

"Indeed lost are they who kill their children foolishly."¹²

Almighty Allah further says:

وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ خَشْيَةَ إِمْلَاقٍ نَحْنُ نَرْزُقُهُمْ وَإِيَّاكُمْ إِنَّ قَتْلَهُمْ كَانَ خِطْئًا كَبِيرًا

"Kill not your children for fear of want. We shall provide sustenance for them as well as for you. Verily the killing of them is a great sin."¹³

Parenthood is a challenge, and there are many external and internal matters which have their effects on the children. As much there is stability in the marital life of a family more it will have positive effects on children. It is well narrated by the Prophet, which gives us the lesson

¹² Al Quran 6:140

¹³ Al Quran 17:31

that the hands of the parents shape the person and personality of the child. It is narrated by Abu Huraira that Allah's Messenger said, "Every Child is born with a true faith of Islam (i.e. to worship none but Allah Alone) and his parents convert him to Judaism or Christianity or Magainism."¹⁴

Furthermore, Islam does not discriminate between girls and boys. Girls must not receive harsh and discriminatory treatment. Both the boy and girl should be loved on an equal basis. The Messenger of Allah (Peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has said:

" He who is blessed with the birth of a girl and does not bury her alive in the manner of the pagan days and does not look down upon her; neither shows preference to the boy over the girl nor considers the boy in any way superior to the girl, such a person will surely go to Paradise."¹⁵

Although there is a difference between men and women, discussing the gender difference is important. It helps us to understand their roles and needs. It also impacts the relationship between parents and their sons and daughters. It is a fact of understanding that healthy relationships are built on a mutual understanding of the similarities and differences between the sexes. The thinking of parents and their idea of what constitute differences between boys and girls affects the relationship of children later in life. This is not the discussion about which gender is more important or better. Qur'an and Sunnah of the Prophet clearly settled the issues in different verses of the Qura'an and sayings of the Prophet of the Prophet. But there are some facts to be understood by the parents. There is no requirement to raise girls and boys identically. There

¹⁴ SahihBukhari, Volume 2, *Kitab alJanaa'iz*, *Hadith 467*

¹⁵ Abu Dawud, Book of General BehaviorBook of Literature (كتاب
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should be no superiority of one gender over the other. Sons and daughters are to be treated fairly but not exactly the same.

Boys and girls have their different needs which should be understood by the parents. In this world, no one exactly judges the different needs of their child, whether a boy or a girl. This varies in different societies. In some societies, roles of gender and the behavior associated with them are well defined and strictly followed. Nevertheless, parents can play a critical role in helping their children satisfy their needs. What a boy or a girl needs, one of the studies (Friedman 1998) describes the needs of girls and boys. According to the study, mostly girls need *Self-Confidence, Physical Fitness, Spatial Relationships and Coordination, Decision Making Skills, Curiosity, Critical Analysis Skills, and Be an Example*. According to the study, most boys need *Physical Affection, Verbal and Communication Skills, Skills for Peaceful Resolutions, Responsibility for His Actions, Expression for Others, and Consideration of Others*.

When Islam come in the seventh century (610 CE) the culture of the Arab society was male-dominated; giving birth to a girl was a disgrace and dishonour. The situation of the Arabs of that time is mentioned in Qura'n:

When news is brought to one of them, of (the birth of) a female (child), his face darkens, and he is filled with inward grief!¹⁶

The response of Qur'an was that it is Allah who gives the blessings of children, whether all girls, all boys, or a mixture of both. The Prophet gave glad tidings to the parents of daughters who raised their daughters in a good manner and correctly:

¹⁶ Al Quran 16:58

Whoever has three daughters, or two daughters, and lives along with them in a good manner, and fears Allah with regard to them, will enter Paradise.¹⁷

One of the teachings of Islam reminds us to inculcate the basic Islamic and moral values in our children. It emphasizes that the best thing which a father gives to his child is a proper way of living (*Tarbia*). Moreover, Allah's Messenger, PBUH said: "Upon death, man's deeds will (definitely) stop except for three deeds, namely: a continuous charitable fund, endowment or goodwill; knowledge left for people to benefit from; and pious righteous and God-fearing child who continuously prays Allah, the Almighty, for the soul of his parents." This Hadith is reported by Muslim. In fact, such a statement reflects the value of the proper upbringing of children. It has an everlasting effect, even after death. The best approach in this regard is to inculcating faith in our children. The foremost of the faith is faith in God and the love for God. It is the duty of parents to raise children with these two approaches. But during this process proper and a balanced way should be adopted, which is the wise approach. Before starting, parents should take an honest at their religious beliefs. Raising of children depends on how wise is the understanding of the practices and inner requirements of parents; this will have a beneficial impact on how parents raise their children. It is the duty of the parents to be aware of the Islamic worldview and to teach it to their children at the age of discernment. The following Qur'anic verse tells us about the fundamental and foundational basis of a worldview in the brains and minds of a child.

Allah has promised, to those among you who believe and work righteous deeds, that He will, of a surety, grant them in the land, inheritance (of power), as He granted it to those before them; that He will establish in authority their religion - the one which He has chosen for them; and that He will change (their state), after

¹⁷ Al-Bukhari

the fear in which they (lived), to one of security and peace: 'They will worship Me (alone) and not associate aught with Me. 'If any do reject Faith after this, they are rebellious and wicked.'¹⁸

Say: "Truly, my prayer and my service of sacrifice, my life and my death, are (all) for Allah, the Cherisher of the Worlds . No partner hath He: this am I commanded, and I am the first of those who bow to His will.."¹⁹

Prayer restrains from shameful and unjust deeds and aggression.²⁰

After inculcating the faith in God, and developing a love for God, parents, who raise the children with these two, need to introduce the Book of God, Al Quran, to children, so that it becomes more than just a holy or sacred book which is to be read on some events and then shelved for the rest of time. Along with that, the parents teach children prayers, supplications and continual remembrance of God. Teach children about Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and other prophets as well. In addition, parents may have to establish a small library containing the books of Sirah of the Prophet and stories of Prophets. In this small collection of books most probably, they can read or narrate about the life of the Prophet, his childhood, his character and the message which is spread by him.

For a strong and effective relationship between parents and their children, that is the love and care which the parents give to their children and the children returns back to them. These are comforts for both. On another occasion, the Qur'an tells them as the real comfort for us and pleasure to our eyes:

"And those who pray,"Our Lord! Grant unto us wives and offspring who will be the comfort for our eyes and gave us (the grace) to lead the righteous."²¹

¹⁸ Al Quran 24:55

¹⁹ Al Quran 6:162-163

²⁰ Al Quran 29:45

²¹ Al Quran 25:74

Children are like flowers. Small children need to be loved, caressed, kissed and hugged. The Prophet loved children greatly. He would allow his grandsons Hassan and Hussain (R.A) to ride his shoulders even during his prayers. In streets he would offer ‘salaam’ to children, play and cut jokes with them. Anas, a Companion of the Prophet, narrated that, "The Prophet was the best amongst people in conduct and manners. I had a brother called Abu `Umair and he was weaned at that time. When the Prophet would see him, he used to say, 'Abu `Umair what has done the Nughair (an Arabian bird)?" (Reported by Muslim) This hadith shows not only the permissibility of nicknaming children, but also of playing and joking with them. Once Aqra bin Habis (اقرع بن حابس), one of the Companions (Allah be please with him) visited the Messenger of Allah (Peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). He was then engaged in caressing Hadrat Hasan (Allah be pleased with him) and kissed him. Being surprised at this act, Aqra Submitted: " O Messenger of Allah, (Peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)! Do you also caress children, I have ten children, but I have never fondled even one of them. "Thereupon the Messenger of Allah (Peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) raised his eyes and remarked with a look at Aqra: " Whoever is not merciful to others will not be treated mercifully."²²

Joy, comfort and love, are the things which everyone wants. It is the main objective of parents, children and so on. Along with that, cultivating and producing righteousness and high values, should be another objective. These values and goodness can be achieved by teaching the children truth, worship of their Creator, *Iman* (Faith) and the love of their Creator Allah and His messenger, Muhammad. When the children behave correctly, and in accord with their mission and responsibility of life on the earth, it will bring joy and pleasure for the

²² Sahi al Bukhari, Book of Good Manners and Form (كتاب الادب) Book of Literature, 5997

parents and the ties between them strengthen. Not only has the family become peaceful but also the whole society and culture. When these concepts absorbed and explained to the children, they will become an active citizen of the nation. A society cannot be survived only upon the external forces which are necessary for the protection of the society. A strong foundation of righteousness strengthens the immunity of a child against the evil and rampant temptations around us. Other factors are the most effective mechanisms for the protection of the society; like internal value system of a child, sense of responsibility and self-respect, and power of self-control and self-esteem. These qualities can be achieved through knowledge and wisdom of divine revelation by emphasizing faith, honesty and truthfulness. Knowing their Creator is not enough. Children should be raised with the love of Allah and which are conscious of Him. The real success will result, and the other values will blossom when the society and family is based and founded on the consciousness of God. child development and parenting techniques in *Islamic* perspective is mostly based upon the balance way of teachings which focuses on the information on how to let the children flourish and develop happy family life in the light of Quran and Sunnah. There are techniques for teaching children, raising the consciousness of their Creator with a sense of civic responsibility in today's world.²³ The parents should raise their children in a balanced way. This is a wise approach. There should be a balance between the *Ibadah* (worship) and *Muamalat*(worldly affairs). The worldview in the minds of our generation child can be clearly elaborated by the following verse:

²³ Abdul Rahman Bin Jozi, *Minhaj-ul-Qasideen* (Lahore, Pakistan: Institute of Islamic Studies), 256.

Say: Truly, my prayer and my service of sacrifice, my life and my death, are (all) for Allah, the Cherisher of the Worlds . No partner hath He: this am I commanded, and I am the first of those who bow to His will.”²⁴

Parents teach children the love of Quran. Teach them manners (*Adab*). Teach them about the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

Conclusion

1. It is believed that good parenting and the family has the capacity to produce righteous and effective citizen. This goal can be achieved within a happy home where there is a strong tie between parents and children.
2. There are many western and Islamic models of parenting which can be adopted for the betterment of the society.
3. Both parents and children are the primary members of society.
4. Parents are the first and best teachers for their children. It is a firm belief that family as an institution has the capacity and power to produce righteous effective and God fearing citizens. So the parents should act as models.
5. Children need role models. They have the ability to learn. If parents do not provide them with good role models, children will choose the wrong ones. Parents are the first foremost and best teachers for their children.
6. This task is best to be done at home with a healthy, happy and supportive environment.
7. Children are good observers. They see and observe how their parents behave with each other and how they treat each other. They compare the words of their parents with their actions. So it is a lesson for parents to practice what they preach and teach.

²⁴ Al Quran 6:162-163

8. On the other hand, children should have respect for them. Parents need to acquire knowledge, skills, education, both worldly and religious, and tools to raise their children properly.
9. Many parents think that they know their children well. Parents need to learn skill and to acquire knowledge, education and tools to raise their children properly.
10. Try to develop and teach your children good manners, personality management, the art of supplication, problem-solving, and good manners. Build their characters with love and affection. Parents should inculcate in their children courage, honesty, responsibility and creativity.
11. All this can be achieved within a happy home environment. All this cannot be achieved by chance. A family with happiness and harmony with a peaceful and relaxed home environment is the result of hard work and continuous effort to develop good and strong parent-child relationships.
12. Supplications or Dua are a strong tool. Parents should call Allah for their efforts to be succeeded. As mentioned in Qur'an:
13. And those who pray, "Our Lord! Grant unto us wives and offspring who will be the comfort of our eyes, and give us (the grace) to lead the righteous."²⁵
14. It should be remembered that all these struggles and activities require a continual awareness and remembrance of Allah and His beautiful attributes.
15. In this way, society will become stronger and civilization will be prosperous. If all the members of the society, act as per the guidelines and teachings of Islam, the environment of the family

²⁵ Al Quran 25:74

will become peaceful and satisfactory for the parents and it will help to make it healthy personality growth for children.

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