VALUE REORIENTATION AT HOME: PSYCHOLOGICAL AND ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVES OF PARENTING STYLES ON CHILD DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

This paper discusses psychological and Islamic perspectives on different parenting styles' effects on child development, aiming to instil positive values at home. Just as scholars of positive psychology aim to spread positive values, Islam shares the goal of perfecting moral characters and human values, as conveyed in the message of Prophet Muhammad. Parenting is a comprehensive process involving the intellectual, psychological, social, political, cultural, and economic participation of parents and guardians, beginning even before the child is born by instilling quality behaviours known to foster the fetus's quality development until the child matures into a responsible adult accountable for their actions. Islam and psychology both advocate for ideal parenting styles to be adopted by parents/guardians, recognising that the chosen parenting style significantly influences the child's positive or negative development rate. Consequently, the paper examines child development, parenting, various parenting styles, and their effects on child development from psychological and Islamic perspectives. Recommendations are provided for parents to unlearn detrimental parenting values, such as authoritarianism or permissiveness, and embrace positive parenting values, such as adopting an authoritative parenting style, to facilitate value reorientation.

Keywords: Child Development, Islam, Parenting styles, Values, Value Re-orientation

Introduction

The primary agents of socialisation are the home/family, peers, educational institutions, media, and society at large Saldana (2013). They are agents where people learn, relearn and unlearn different values. Islam, as a complete way of life, recognises home, mosque, and educational institutions as the most important institutions that have the most significant positive or negative consequences in the lives of man, especially in terms of value system. Among these institutions, Islam sees family/home as the pillar and foundation of other institutions. Part of what makes the home vital in the socialisation and upbringing of man is its effects on the individual members of the family, especially the children and society at large. Therefore, Islam encourages establishing a solid Islamic home that is built on taqwa-Allah's consciousness as it eulogises and praises the gift of children. Allah says: "Wealth and children are the adornments of the life of this world" (Qur'an Chapter 18: 46).

This made the majority that has little or no Islamic understanding and faith search and pray for the fruit of the womb legally or illegally. The Prophet Muhammad (May Allah's peace and blessing be upon him) also informed us that: "No child is given birth to in any of household except the child becomes honour in the house" (Tobari in Ibn Kathir, 2003). Allah Almighty puts the love of children in the hearts of humanity. This made many prophets of God and general people long for it. (Qur'an chapter 37:100; Q.Ch.25:74; Q.Ch.21: 89; Q.Ch 19:5; Q.Ch.3: 38).

Islam and Child Development

The love of children makes the strong attachment and relationship between the parents and their children a vital connection to humanity. One of these essential relationships is parenting and child development. Islam commands parents to safeguard their children from hellfire because parenting is the responsibility of Allah almighty and his Prophet (May Allah's peace and blessing be upon him). Allah, the Exalted says, "Oh you who believe protect yourselves and your family from Hell…." (Q.Ch.66:6). He also says, "Command your family to observe Salah (prayer) and be patient on it" (Q.Ch.20:132), and the Prophet (May Allah's peace and blessing be upon him) said in the book of Sahih Bukhari: "... Man is a shepherd on his family and he asks about his flock, a woman is a shepherd on her husband's house and children and shall be asked about it…" (Ibn Kathir, 2003). Also, commented on the verse in Q. Ch.18:82, 'and their father was a righteous man', indicating that righteous children and Ibadah will protect them here and hereafter". Additionally, Ibn Kathir related while explaining verse 6 of Q.Ch.66 that Ali bn Abi Talhah reported from Ibn Abbas May Allah be pleased with; 'shield your family and self from the torment of fire'. He said: "Obey your Lord and command your family to do same; and protect them" Mujahid commented on it, saying: "Have taqwa-God consciousness of Allah and order your family to have taqwa of Him" Ibn Kathir (2003). Teaching one's child to have taqwa and obedience to Allah has innumerable and unquantifiable impacts on the child's development in this world and in the hereafter. A pious, well-groomed child would be righteous and able to manifest exemplary characters in this world and be among the people of paradise on the last day. All these pieces of

evidence from the Qur'an and Sunnah (tradition of the Prophet Muhammad) establish the concept of parenting and the importance of the relationship between parenting and child development.

Child Development

Child development is the growth of a child's perceptual, emotional, intellectual, and behavioural, a period when language acquisition is imperative until the beginning of adolescence (Britannica, 2023). Manas (2020) further describes early childhood development organs developing from the prenatal till age eight. It can be inferred that Child development is the frantic and relentless efforts exacted by parents, guardians, caregivers, and educators toward giving children well-rounded development that encompasses but not limited to spiritual, emotional, social/relational, intellectual, mental, and cultural developments from their prenatal stage to their early adolescence stage.

Likhar, Baghel, and Patil (2022) ascertained that child development occurs in different settings with various shiftings from minor to parent. Many scholars believe that early childhood is essential to a child's development. Balasundaram and Darshini-Avulakunta (2023) affirm that the growth and development of children from three to six years old are significant and are the basis of further child development. They added that the literature review showed that the rearing factor influenced the development of a child aged three to six. Hence, what is parenting, and how does it affect child development?

Parenting and other Related Terminologies

Parent/parenting refers to the primary caregivers for the child and is not limited to biological or legal parents, but recognises that many children are brought up by people who are not their birth parents. Also, it describes parenting as a functional term for the processes involved in promoting and supporting the development and socialisation of the child (Lonczak, 2019; Reiss et al., 2023).

Furthermore, Parenting is Tarbiyyatul awlaad (child upbringing) in Islam. It is an entirely balanced system aimed at rearing human beings throughout his/her ages from childhood to youthful stage about all aspects of different human personalities' ideologically-creed, worship, character-socially, physically, economically, militarily, aesthetically, medically, intellectually, psychologically, and sexually and others. It is a system concerned with effective training strategies, acculturation, harmonisation, events, and historical methods, training by consequences-reward and punishment, and other Islamic compliance methods and styles of parenting.

In summary, the Islamic parenting goal is taqwa (God-consciousness). (Q.Ch 49:13) achieving God's consciousness is the utmost goal of child upbringing and parenting in Islam because, with taqwa, man abides by the dos of Allah and abstains from His don'ts. Allah also commanded man to mutually and cooperatively work for and on piety and righteousness. (Q. Ch 5: 2).

Other related terms in parenting include parenting support, a set of services and other activities oriented to improve how parents approach and execute their roles and increase interactions (UNICEF, 2015). Another terminology is parenting programmes, which is one form of parenting support. It is standardised interventions with parents, usually involving several sessions; they can be universal or targeted (ISPCAN et al., 2016, pg 21).

The Council of Europe, therefore, defines positive parenting as parental behaviour based on the child's best interests. In positive parenting, the child is nurtured, empowered, recognised, and guided, as it also involves setting boundaries to enable the child to develop fully. Positive parenting involves recognising children's rights and a conducive environment without iron handling. Different definitions, perspectives and responses from the ISPCAN reveal that positive parenting has the following characteristics:

♦ ensuring a safe and exciting environment

♦ providing a positive learning environment

♦ balancing positive values with discipline

♦ family budgeting and support for the child's needs. Discharge of roles and responsibilities towards the child with the recognition of the child's rights)

♦ Effective communication

♦ ensuring high self-esteem and self-care

♦ safeguarding child protection

♦ family relations and community connectedness

♦ "active ignoring", helping a child to self-regulate and interact appropriately.

In Islam, positive parenting is parenting that uses all wholesome and Islamic methods, strategies, social supports, programmes and styles to produce a god-fearing child. The term 'Islamic' in the statement above means all established theories, programmes, social supports, and styles that do not contradict the philosophy of Islam in the Qur'an and Sunnah. Furthermore, a critical look at the characteristics of positive parenting according to ISPCAN reveals that there is no dichotomy between positive parenting in Islam and the opinion of ISPCANs. However, the result of parenting in Islam must achieve building a god-fearing child.

Types of Parenting Styles:

There are different types of parenting, and different people are also involved in parenting the child.

Parenting Styles: Misra and Jha (2022) defined parenting style as a constellation of parents' attitudes and behaviours toward children and an emotional climate in which the parents' behaviours are expressed (Keur, 2023). They identified two dimensions of parenting: first, parental acceptance or responsiveness, that is, parents' self-regulation and self-assertion, support of special needs of the

children (Garcia, Serra, González and Garcia, 2018). Second, parental demandingness denotes how the parents integrity children to the family values and norms (Delvecchio et al., 2020). Therefore, different parental styles, according to the literature review, include:

    i.   Authoritarian,

    ii.   Authoritative, and

    iii.   Permissive parenting style.

In addition to these three significant styles of parenting (Mori, 2022; Sanvictores & Mendez, 2022) proposed a fourth style, which is known as the uninvolved or neglectful type. An uninvolved parenting style has low responsiveness and little interaction, though the child's basic needs are granted but detached from specific support of life or total neglect. Another categorisation is provided in E. E. LeMasters' listing of five parenting styles: athletic coach, Pal, martyr, police and teacher-counsellor (Vijaya & Kadapatti, 2012). Most parents have two or more characteristics of these styles, each with advantages and disadvantages.

Parenting styles and Impacts on Child Development

The literature reviewed showed different impacts of parenting styles on the child's development. A study (Misra & Jha, 2022) on 360 children and their parents revealed that the most common parenting style was democratic, followed by a mixed one. The parenting style in their study also had a significant influence on children's development. The mixed parenting style had a 1.9 times higher chance of delayed development than those with a democratic parenting style. Democratic parents may give love and warmth, use reasoning, and train their children to be self-reliant and self-confident. Thus, the children can use their abilities to their fullest potential. Moreover, when parents serve their children's basic needs, they will feel ready to learn what affects their development better than those parents who help their children do everything or are strict (Oladunmoye, 2019).

Authoritative Style: It has been found that preschool children raised by authoritative parents were the best-adjusted children. They were cheerful, socially responsible, self-reliant, achievement-oriented and cooperative with adults and peers. This style of parenting is also considered the best in Islam. Islam expects parents to give guidance to their children with love and affection and demand compliance with Allah's injunctions. Allah says: "Command your children to observe Salah (prayer) and be patient on it..."It also frowns at beating children mercilessly as Islam forbids beating children before the age of ten and recommends beating as a last resort after exploring all positive measures of correcting them. The Prophet said: 'Command your children to pray at age seven and hit them (lightly) if they leave it off at age ten and separate their beds'(Abu Dawud 459 and Ahmad 6650). The Prophet said in other traditions that the nobles do not beat and warned against hitting the face, head and other sensitive parts of the body. This finding was also affirmed by Fronsh et al. (2021).

Authoritarian Style: This is a kind of parenting approach where sets of rules must be strictly followed, and failure attracts punishment. The parent gives the rule without clear reasoning behind it. While these parents have high demands, they could be more responsive to their children. The Prophet Muhammad-peace and blessing of Allah be upon him-rebuked the companions who said he did not use to kiss his children. According to At-Tobaraniy in al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr 3847, an individual receives Allah's mercy if transmitted to others.

Permissive Style: This style mostly grooms immature, unruly, nonconformist, and rebellious children. They are always dependent and requesting, which is more noticeable in boys than girls. Furthermore, Parents that are permissive or indulge their children go against the verse of the Qur'an that commands protecting the child from Hell (Qur'an 66:6), and they tend to make their children their enemies (Qur'an 64:14) and calamity. Qur'an 8:28

Unhealthy Parenting Styles

Abusive Parenting: This is a kind of authoritarian parenting. It hurts the feelings and emotions of the child. The parents abuse the child emotionally. This is forbidden in Islam. Allah says: 'Woe to every scandal-monger' Qur'an 49: 20

Dogmatic Parenting: This is a style of parenting in which the parents tend to indoctrinate the children. They want the children to abide by all their rules and injunctions without conviction; it is not democratic. Allah says, "no compulsion in religion" Q.Ch 2:256

Depriving Parenting: This type of parenting denies its children their rights and does not try to learn about the child's needs, providing less for them. This approach is careless about the children's emotions and psychological mechanisms. (Abela & Lanfranco, 2016).

Over-Parenting: This parenting style tries to control all aspects of the child's life. It is a dysfunctional parenting style as it is not possible to control all the child's spare life.

Parenting and Child Development

Aside from the Islamic pieces of evidence, psychologists also ascertained the significant effects of parenting on child development. Frosch, Schoppe-Sullivan and O'Banion (2021) opined that the interaction between parents and children enhances child development the former influence most. They also affirmed the critical importance of early parent-child relationships for children's socio-emotional, cognitive, neurobiological, and health outcomes. Darling-Hammond, Flook, Cook-Harvey, Barron, and Osher (2020) also established that to support healthy development in children; one must focus on the emotional quality of the relationships within which the child participates as well as consider how the larger community supports those relationships. Summarily, Islam and psychologists agree that parenting has innumerable impacts on the development of children.

Bad parenting styles cause the majority of mental health problems in childhood and adolescence. Joseph and John confirmed this and added that the child's Socio-emotional development influences the parenting style used in the families (Lanjekar et al., 2022, pg 24.) as observed the togetherness of both parents nosedive social anxiety and any sign of depression in the children.

Sarwar (2016), moreover, revealed that an authoritarian parenting style leads children to become rebellious and adopt problematic behaviour due to more than necessary power exercised on children by parents, while the authoritative parenting style is effective for children and moderate. It should be noted that time spent could determine the grooming end product of the children. It was affirmed that the permissive style encourages children to possess good social interaction and self-esteem, but they are prone to behavioural problems (Fazli, 2019).

Academic performance is also affected by the parenting styles the parents adopt because it is the basis for psychosocial development and fewer behavioural problems (Ballantine, 2001). Accepting responsibility is difficult for many of them. Talib et al. (2015) also stated in their study that the authoritative styles of mothers and fathers positively affect behaviour and school achievement.

Conclusion

One major value reorientation about parenting and child upbringing is to unlearn wrong values, culture, habits and behaviour that will not bring about positive parenting. One learns and relearns positive values that enhance value reorientation in the family. The approach of parenting employed by the parents has either positive impacts or negative consequences on the development of the children right from childhood period to adulthood psychologically and Islamically.

However, to ensure positive child development, an authoritative parenting style should be imbibed, while those parenting styles known to cause poor personality development of the child should be avoided.

Suggestions

Therefore, value reorientation training should be organised to expose religious leaders and congregations to positive values in parenting; then, religious teachings could be explored in relating with children to bring them up nicely. Furthermore, there should be a psycho-religious-based enlightenment seminar and workshop for religious leaders on the modality, skills, and manners of rearing children in the best parenting style-authoritative parenting- to be used by the adherents in their various homes. More so, individual professional counsellors should organise public enlightenment on skills involved in rearing children about being authoritative parenting in all religious centres.

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