

THE IMPACT OF CHILD UPBRINGING AND CARE ON ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN LIGHT OF QUR'ANIC VERSES

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Abstract:

This study aims to examine the impact of child upbringing and care on achieving sustainable social development by exploring the Qur'anic guidance and objectives derived from relevant verses that emphasize this aspect and its influence on building stable, enduring societies. It also highlights the importance of applying these divine principles in contemporary social contexts to ensure the continuity of social development among community members. The research employs the inductive–deductive methodology supported by analytical interpretation, tracing Qur'anic indications and extracting the objectives related to the topic. The key findings reveal that: Proper upbringing of the young generation is among the most crucial factors for sustainable social development, as it contributes to the formation of stable societies—the foundation upon which human civilizations are built. The family constitutes the primary building block of any society, and thus, of any prosperous civilization. And Reflecting upon the Qur'an, deriving its guidance, and applying its objectives in human reality foster community development, resolve social problems, and sustain civilizational growth. Main Recommendation: Establish specialized research centers focusing on studies that enhance and support sound child upbringing based on correct principles and moral values.

Keywords: Upbringing – Children – Social Development – Qur'anic Objectives.

INTRODUCTION

All praise is due to Allah, and may peace and blessings be upon the Messenger of Allah.

Indeed, the Qur'an is the greatest book revealed by Allah Almighty to the noblest of messengers. He made it an admonition, a healing for what is in the hearts, and a mercy and guidance for the believers. The guidance of the Qur'an is the most perfect, upright, and illuminating guidance.

Today, the Muslim nation is in dire need of the Qur'an's guidance to attain a wholesome life and to build societies free from corruption and disorder. This research seeks to shed light on one of the most vital dimensions of social construction from a Qur'anic perspective—the upbringing and care of children—as a major factor contributing to sustainable social development.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To shed light the Qur'anic guidance that influences community orientation and contributes to social development through the proper upbringing of children.
2. To underscore the Qur'an's role in emphasizing the importance of nurturing children to achieve sustainable development.
3. To identify the Qur'anic objectives and insights related to child upbringing that assist in building enduring societies capable of achieving long-term sustainability.

RESEARCH SIGNIFICANCE

1. It demonstrates the greatness of the Qur'an and its role in reforming human conditions, shaping individuals properly so they may become constructive members of their societies.
2. It opens avenues for researchers in Qur'anic guidance to apply its principles within individual and social realities to achieve sustainable development.

The applied scholarly approach

This study adopts the **inductive–deductive method**, tracing and deriving Qur'anic guidance and objectives pertinent to the research topic. Analytical tools are then applied to extract lessons and applications that relate to sustainable social development.

RESEARCH PLAN

The study consists of an introduction, two main sections (mabāḥith), a conclusion, and a list of references.

- **Introduction:** Includes research objectives, significance, methodology, and structure.
- **Section One:** The significance of upbringing in achieving sustainable social development.
- **Section Two:** Factors influencing child upbringing that contribute to sustainable social development.
- **Conclusion:** Summary of findings and recommendations.

Section One: The Significance of Upbringing in Achieving Sustainable Social Development

Upbringing (*tarbiyah*) is among the most essential means of community development, contributing directly to the construction of human civilization. Proper upbringing occurs through wisdom, good counsel, and winning hearts—so that individuals are aligned with the builders of noble civilizations and contribute actively to achieving sustainable social development.

The Qur'an highlights this dimension in numerous verses, particularly within the story of Prophet Ibrāhīm (Abraham), peace be upon him, as narrated in *Sūrat al-Baqarah*. The following are some key pedagogical aspects emphasized in those verses:

1. The verses indicate that parents' concern for their children is among the most important factors in the children's righteousness. This is derived from the concern of Prophet Ibrāhīm's supplication (peace be upon him) for the righteousness of his offspring, as he would pray to God to make leaders from among his children, as he would pray to God to make leaders from among his children, as in His saying: **"qāla wa-min dhurriyyatī"** ("He said: And from my descendants").
2. The verses further demonstrate that a fundamental principle of proper nurturing is that the educator must test the one under his care in order to determine whether the process of upbringing has been successful or not [5]. exemplified by the divine test given to Ibrāhīm: **{وَإِذِ ابْتَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ رَبُّهُ بِكَلِمَاتٍ فَأَتَمَّهُنَّ}** (Wa idhi ibtalā Ibrāhīma rabbuhu bikalimātin fa-atammahunna) — "And [mention, O Muhammad], when Abraham was tried by his Lord with commands and he fulfilled them." (al-Baqarah: 124)

Likewise, Allah says: **{وَابْتَالُوا أَلْيَتَايَ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغُوا النِّكَاحَ فَإِنْ } {وَأَنْتُمْ مِنْهُمْ رُشْدًا فَادْفَعُوا إِلَيْهِمْ أَمْوَالَهُمْ}** (Wabtalū al-yatāmā hattā idhā balaghū al-nikāḥa fa-in ānastum minhum rushdan fa-idfa'ū ilayhim amwālahum) — "And test the orphans [in their abilities] until they reach marriageable age; then if you perceive in them sound judgment, release their property to them." (al-Nisā': 6)

3. The verses also point to the importance of gradual progression in education, as indicated by the verse: **{يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ}** (Yatlu 'alayhim āyātihi wa yu'allimuhumu al-kitāba wa al-ḥikmata) — "He recites to them His verses and teaches them the Book and wisdom." (Āl 'Imrān: 164) This order reflects the principle that the first thing to reach the ear is the recitation and vocal articulation of the Qur'an, after which its meanings are learned and its implications pondered. [2]
4. The verses indicate the importance of knowledge, and that it precedes both speech and action. This alludes to a foundational principle, namely: **"Knowledge comes before speech and action."** [12] Allah Almighty says: **{فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ}**

{وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لِدُنْيِكَ} (Fa'lam annahu lā ilāha illā Allāhu wastaghfir lidhambik) — "So know, [O Muhammad], that there is no deity except Allah and ask forgiveness for your sin." (Muḥammad: 19) The ordering of knowledge before action indicates that intellectual and spiritual comprehension is the foundation upon which moral conduct is built.

5. Teaching the Book and the Wisdom alone is not sufficient for the reform and felicity of nations; rather, education must be accompanied by cultivating virtues and encouraging righteous deeds through good example and sound guidance. Abraham and Ishmael (peace be upon them) understood this well, and thus included in their supplication the words: This is reflected in the supplication of Ibrāhīm and Ismā'īl: **{وَيُزَكِّهِمْ}** (wayuzakkīhim) — "purify them." (al-Baqarah: 129). Purification (tazkiyah) here refers to the moral and spiritual refinement that must accompany instruction for education to bear fruit.
6. The verse highlights the importance of reinforcing one's speech in education with arguments or expressions that are more likely to be accepted. This principle is derived from His saying, Exalted is He: **{إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَىٰ لَكُمُ الدِّينَ}**, "Inna Allāha iṣṭafā lakumu al-dīna"

The verse demonstrates that presenting guidance in a way that aligns with divine wisdom strengthens its acceptance, showing that sound reinforcement of speech is essential in education and moral training.

7. Encouraging steadfastness upon values and principles.

Children should be encouraged to remain steadfast in their values, principles, and moral constants. This principle is derived from the example of Jacob (peace be upon him), whose inquiry about the state of his children after his death indicates that his intention was to encourage them to maintain the same steadfastness in correct values and principles that he had exemplified during his life. [10]

8. Care must be taken to safeguard the belief and creed of children. This is derived from the intense concern of Jacob (peace be upon him) for the faith of his children, as indicated by his question in the Qur'an: **{مَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِن بَدْعٍ}** (Yūsuf 12:101 — contextually referring to his question to his sons) **"Mā ta'budūn min bad'ī."**, "What do you worship besides Me?"

The term "mā" is general and encompasses everything. If the question had been phrased as "whom do you worship?" it would have applied only to rational beings capable of understanding. But the use of "mā" extends to anything that can be worshipped. This generality

reflects Jacob's intention to inquire about all possible objects of worship, including those venerated by humans, angels, the sun, the moon, certain stars, and sculpted idols. [2][4]

9. The mercy of parents toward children should focus on what benefits them religiously.

Guidance indicates that a parent's mercy toward their children should be directed primarily toward ensuring what benefits them in matters of faith. This principle is derived from Jacob's (peace be upon him) concern for his children's belief, as reflected in the Qur'aṇ:

(إِذْ حَضَرَ يُوسُفَ الْمَوْتَ إِذْ قَالَ لِبَنِيهِ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِن بَعْدِي) (Yūsuf 12:101 — contextually referring to his question to his sons) "Idh ḥaḍara Yūsuf al-mawt idh qāla li-banīhi: mā ta'būdūn min ba'dī." "When death approached Jacob, he said to his sons: 'What do you worship besides Me?'"

The verse highlights that parental concern and mercy are most meaningful when they aim to guide children toward what will benefit their religious and moral development.

10. The necessity of focusing on early stages of upbringing.

Special attention should be given to children's formative years, as early education and guidance leave lasting imprints on character and behavior, shaping the moral fabric of society across generations.

Section Two: Factors Influencing Child Upbringing That Contribute to Sustainable Social Development

First: Guidance to Seek Help from Allah in the Righteousness of Children

A person should seek help from Allah (SWT) in ensuring the righteousness of those under their care. There is no salvation, success, or prosperity except by the aid and guidance of Allah. One of the most important factors in the righteousness of children is supplication to Allah for their guidance and uprightness. Prayer has a tangible effect in achieving the intended purpose, whether to avert harm or to attract what is beloved.

The prophets (peace be upon them) fully recognized this, and they diligently practiced it. For example, Prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him) prayed for the leadership and righteousness of his descendants. Allah says: (قَالَ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي) "Qāla wa min dhurriyyatī" – "He said, 'And [include] from my descendants'" [Ibrahim: 40].

He asked his Lord that among his offspring there be leaders, and that some of his descendants establish prayer: (رَبِّ اجْعَلْنِي مُقِيمَ الصَّلَاةِ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي) "Rabbi aj'alnī muqīmāṣ-ṣalāti wa min dhurriyyatī" – "My Lord, make me an establisher of prayer, and [some] of my descendants" [Ibrahim: 40].

Hence, one should include one's descendants and those under one's care in supplication, as Ibrahim and Isma'il (peace be upon them) did, as mentioned: (وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِنَا أُمَّةٌ مُّسْلِمَةٌ لَّكَ) "Wa min dhurriyyatinā ummatun muslimatun laka" – "And from our descendants, a Muslim nation devoted to You."

Righteous offspring are a continuation of a person's righteous legacy. Ibrahim (peace be upon him) also prayed in another verse: (وَاجْنِبْنِي وَبَنِيَّ أَنْ نَعْبُدَ الْأَصْنَامَ) m"Wajnibnī wa banī an na'budal-aṣnām" – "And keep me and my children away from worshipping idols" [Ibrahim: 35], demonstrating the central importance of children's righteousness for a person. Moreover, supplication for children and descendants should be repeated, as Ibrahim (peace be upon him) repeatedly demonstrated, e.g., (وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي) [Al-Baqarah: 124] and (وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِنَا أُمَّةٌ مُّسْلِمَةٌ لَّكَ).

Supplication for goodness was the practice of the prophets (peace be upon them). Ibrahim's prayer illustrates this: (رَبِّ اجْعَلْ هَذَا بَلَدًا آمِنًا وَارْزُقْ أَهْلَهُ مِنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ) "Rabbi aj'al hādhā baladan āmnan wa arzuq ahlahu mina ath-thamarāt" – "My Lord, make this city secure, and provide its people with fruits." Supplicating for the security and prosperity of one's homeland, and for the youth's righteousness and success, carries immense importance. Ibrahim (peace be upon him) prayed for Mecca and its people hundreds of years in advance, and they continue to benefit from the blessing of his supplication to this day.

A person should continue to pray for their children even when signs of goodness are not yet apparent, and should not give up hope in Allah. Ibrahim (peace be upon him) prayed for the people of Mecca to be provided with fruits despite the absence of natural causes, as Mecca was barren: (رَبَّنَا إِنِّي أَسْكَنْتُ مِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي بِوَادٍ غَيْرِ ذِي زَرْعٍ) m"Rabbana innī askantu min dhurriyyatī bi wādīn ghayri dhī zar" – "Our Lord, indeed I have settled some of my descendants in an unproductive valley" [Ibrahim: 37].

Thus, supplication for the righteousness of children is of utmost importance because of its effect on the development of societies and the maintenance of sustainability, contributing to peace in all times [8].

Second: Observing Gentleness and Kindness in Advising and Guiding Children

One of the most important pillars of proper education is gentleness and kindness in guiding, advising, and instructing children. The Qur'anic guidance emphasizes the method of wise, purposeful counsel, which has a strong effect on moral correction. Advice naturally has a significant psychological effect, especially when it comes from a respected and loving figure, such as a parent or educator.

This is evident in the story of Ibrahim (peace be upon him): (وَوَصَّىٰ بِهَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ بَنِيهِ وَيَعْقُوبُ يَا بَنِيَّ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَىٰ لَكُمُ) (الَّذِينَ فَلَا تَمُوتُونَ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ) “Wa waṣṣā bihā Ibrāhīmu banihi wa Ya‘qūbu yā banī inna Allāha iṣṭafā lakumu d-dīna fa lā tamūtunna illā wa antum muslimūn” – “And Ibrahim instructed his sons, and Ya‘qūb [Jacob] said: ‘O my sons, indeed Allah has chosen for you the religion, so do not die except as Muslims.’” And: (أَمْ كُنْتُمْ شُهَدَاءَ إِذْ حَضَرَ يَعْقُوبَ الْمَوْتَ إِذْ قَالَ) (لِبَنِيهِ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ بَعْدِي قَالُوا نَعْبُدُ إِلَهَكَ وَإِلَهَ آبَائِكَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ) (وَأِسْحَاقَ إِلَٰهًا وَاحِدًا وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ) “Am kuntum shuhadā’a idh ḥaḍara Ya‘qūbu l-mawt idh qāla li banihi mā ta‘budūna min ba’dī qālū na‘budu ilāhaka wa ilāha ābā’ika Ibrāhīma wa Ismā‘īla wa Ishāqa ilāhan wāḥidan wa naḥnu lahu muslimūn” [Al-Baqarah: 133] – “Were you present when Ya‘qūb was dying, when he said to his sons: ‘What will you worship after me?’ They said, ‘We will worship your God and the God of your fathers – Ibrahim, Isma‘il, and Ishaq – One God, and to Him we submit.’”

These verses illustrate the gentleness of the prophets toward their children by addressing them as “my sons” (يَنِي - yā banī), encouraging children to accept guidance and advice. This method is recommended for parents and educators alike to foster obedience and compliance.

The Qur’an emphasizes caring for children, ensuring their righteousness, and guiding them gently toward what benefits them in this world and the Hereafter, as shown in the example of the prophets: (وَوَصَّىٰ بِهَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ) (وَوَصَّىٰ بَنِيهِ وَيَعْقُوبُ يَا بَنِيَّ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَىٰ لَكُمُ الدِّينَ فَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ) [132]. Repeating good counsel is important, as Ibrahim (peace be upon him) repeatedly instructed his children, indicated by the intensive form (وَوَصَّىٰ), meaning he entrusted them with counsel again and again. Advice is an effective means of proper education, provided gentleness is observed and harshness is avoided.

Third: Encouraging Active Engagement in Raising Children

Education is an ongoing process requiring close engagement with those being educated. The Qur’an and the Sunnah emphasize active engagement, which nurtures hearts by encouraging good deeds and discouraging harmful acts. This practical approach goes beyond verbal instruction and includes both incentives and warnings.

Ibn al-Qayyim said: *“The most beneficial person for you is the one who allows you into his life so that you can plant good in him or do a favor for him; your benefit from him is equal to or greater than his benefit*

from you. The most harmful person is the one who allows himself under your influence to disobey Allah, aiding you in harm and deficiency.” [3]

The prophets’ interactions with their children illustrate this engagement, using “ibni” (son) instead of “walad” (child) to signify specificity and continuous companionship: (وَوَصَّىٰ بِهَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ بَنِيهِ وَيَعْقُوبُ يَا بَنِيَّ) Children’s maturity does not exempt parents from responsibility; guidance and counsel must continue. This is exemplified by Ibrahim and Ya‘qūb (peace be upon them).

Fourth: Good Role Models Instill Values and Principles in Children

The presence of a good role model is one of the most important factors in proper education, contributing to sustainable social development. By nature, people are drawn to noble character and degrees of excellence, and good examples inspire hope in attaining virtues. Therefore, educating generations through exemplary conduct is among the most effective means of habituating them to perform good deeds, as young learners are influenced more by actions than by words. This, undoubtedly, reflects positively on the advancement of societies and ensures their sustainability.

The Qur’anic verses are replete with instances illustrating the impact of good role models in raising children and cultivating a righteous generation. The Qur’an illustrates this principle in Ibrahim’s story:

1. Parents’ righteousness contributes to their children’s righteousness. When Ibrahim fulfilled Allah’s commandments (وَإِذْ ابْتَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ رَبُّهُ بِكَلِمَاتٍ فَأَتَمَّهُنَّ), Allah made among his descendants those who follow in goodness.
2. Performing religious duties qualifies one to be a role model: (وَإِذْ ابْتَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ رَبُّهُ بِكَلِمَاتٍ فَأَتَمَّهُنَّ قَالَ إِنِّي جَاعِلُكَ) (لِلنَّاسِ إِمَامًا).
3. Every role model must ensure the correctness of their children’s beliefs: (إِذْ قَالَ لِبَنِيهِ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ بَعْدِي).
4. Children are highly influenced by their parents’ example. When Ya‘qūb asked his sons whom they would worship, they replied: (نَعْبُدُ إِلَهَكَ). The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: *“Every child is born upon fitrah, and his parents make him Jewish, Christian, or Magian.”* [12], Therefore, children should be guided towards correct creed and upright religion. Thus, effective education requires the educator to embody righteousness and integrity in character, words, and deeds, consistently practicing what they teach. Without this, guidance loses its credibility and impact

RESULTS AND OBSERVATIONS: DISCUSSION

1. Proper upbringing of children is one of the most important factors in achieving sustainable social

development, as it contributes to the building of stable societies, upon which human civilizations are established.

2. Reflecting on the Qur'an, deriving its guidance, and applying it in people's lives contributes to the development of societies and the achievement of sustainable social development.
3. The family constitutes the foundational building block of society.
4. Educational engagement, good role modeling, and gentleness in raising children have a significant impact on their proper and sound upbringing, which in turn contributes to social development and its sustainability.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Establish research centers dedicated to studies that reinforce the proper upbringing of the younger generation, based on sound principles and values.

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