

Parent and Child Relationships in Islam: A Study of Love and Affection in Parent and Child Relationships

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Abstract

The family is the first environment in a child's education, the formation of a child's personality, and the establishment of social and emotional bonds between the child and both parents. Therefore, in the process of strengthening social bonds with children, both parents should spend quality time and pay more attention to their children's healthy growth and development, as well as have insight into parenting patterns, especially the loving and compassionate parenting methods taught by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Therefore, the focus of this study is on how families can strengthen emotional bonds with children according to the teachings of the Quran and the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). The findings of this study are analyzed qualitatively thru the results of a literature review. The study results show that: 1) children are a gift from Allah SWT and a source of reward (Al-Quran, Surah Al-Syu'ara, verse 49). 2) it is recommended to be kind to parents as stated in the Al-Quran, Surah Al-Isra, verses 23-24. 3) parents' obligation to educate children is not limited to knowledge, but also includes shaping good character and personality. 4) teaching Islamic values using a loving and compassionate approach, in accordance with the teachings in Surah Al-Lukman. With love and compassion in the parent-child relationship, it is hoped that the family will be harmonious, peaceful, full of grace, and blessed by Allah SWT.

Keywords: parent-child relationship, affection, compassion, education, Islam

Introduction

Speaking of building a happy and loving family is the desire of every human being. The family is the first environment for children to learn, gain knowledge, interact, gain experience, delve into things, and form their character. The family is also a place for the process of mutual appreciation, respect, and love between parents and their children. Therefore, it is important for parents and children to communicate well with each other. Parents can express their affection thru care and compassion toward their children, while children can also express their affection toward their parents by being respectful, obedient, and polite.

It needs to be realized that the parent-child relationship in the Islamic perspective is emphasized as part of worship to Allah SWT and responsibility (Bullah & Rohman, 2020). For parents, children are a gift from Allah SWT that must be educated, loved, cherished, cared for, treated well, protected, fed, clothed, housed, and accompanied in their growth and development solely for the purpose of worshipping Allah SWT and as a form of their responsibility to Allah SWT for being granted such a beautiful blessing. Similarly, for a child who considers their parents the most important figures in their life, whom they are obligated to respect, love, cherish, and treat well as a form of responsibility and worship to Allah Swt.

In the Quran and Hadith, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) emphasized the importance of compassion and mercy in this relationship. This shows how highly Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) valued humanity with gentleness.

However, when we look at the reality, many parent-child relationships are not as they should be according to Islamic teachings. Many parents are too busy with their work routines from morning till evening, even working overtime until nite, leaving very little time for family. Not only that, other issues such as child abandonment, neglect, and child abuse cause children to become unruly, prone to mischief, and some even end up on the streets to fend for themselves.

Conversely, there are also many cases of children being disobedient to their parents. The increasing prevalence of child-related issues, including children being rude to their parents, disrespecting them, and even abandoning them in their old age. For example, as mentioned in the Journal Wissen regarding the intensity of interpersonal communication between parents and children and juvenile delinquency, it states that various forms of juvenile delinquency cases occurring at Bengkulu City State High School 6 are due to poor communication with parents. Some students expressed that they didn't trust their parents and felt less cared for by them, so they preferred the outside environment as a place for stories (Abdillah & Tohari, 2025).

Therefore, research on the relationship between parents and children is interesting to conduct. This research aims to explore more deeply how the interaction between parents and children should be according to Islamic teachings, which are guided by the Quran.

Methods

This research is a type of library research using qualitative description. Used to study, analyze, and explore resources related to research data. In other words, it is known as library research. Library research is how to utilize library resources to obtain research data (Zed, 2014). Researchers used this method because it was

suitable for the study on Compassion and Kindness in Parent-Child Relationships, as it allowed for a deeper exploration of how Islam views parent-child relationships using compassion and kindness.

Considering this is library research, the data collection technique used is document research. Document research is a record of existing events. Documents can be in the form of writing, images, or monumental works by an individual (Al-Ghaaruty, 2010; Farida, 2010; Rahardjo, 2010). Document research is the process of finding relevant data in the form of notes, books, papers, articles, journals, and so on (Suharsimi, 2013). In collecting data related to the study on Compassion and Mercy in Parent-Child Relationships, the researcher searched various sources of journal references and verses from the Quran and hadiths that were relevant.

This research uses content analysis. Content analysis is used to obtain valid and replicable inferences based on their context (Giannantonio, 2010; Krippendorff, 2010; Shelley & Krippendorff, 1984). The analysis is conducted thru the process of selecting, comparing, combining, and sorting various definitions until the relevant one is found (Mirzaqon T, 2017). The data, consisting of collected journals, was then analyzed to find the necessary information relevant to the research topic.

Results

Allah says in Surah Al-Shu'ara verse 49:

ه مَلِكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ يَهَبُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ إِنَاثًا وَيَهَبُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ الذُّكُورَ

Meaning: "To Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth. He creates what He wills, giving daughters to whom He wills, and giving sons to whom He wills" (Surah Al-Shu'ara' verse 49).

In this verse, Allah explains that the heavens, the earth, and everything in them belong to Allah SWT. By His power, Allah SWT creates whatever He wills and it will surely come to pass. Likewise, in His will to create humans, He gives daughters to whomever He wills, gives sons to whomever He wills, or does not give children to those whom He wills. All of this shows that Allah Almighty is all-powerful and no creature in the universe is capable of competing with Him. This verse confirms that Allah SWT knows who is worthy and deserving of receiving each type of Allah SWT's blessings.

In another surah, Allah says in Surah Al-'Ankabut, verse 27:

وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُ إِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَجَعَلْنَا فِي ذُرِّيَّتِهِ النُّبُوَّةَ وَالْكِتَابَ وَأَتَيْنَاهُ آجْرَهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَإِنَّهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ لَمِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ

Meaning: "And We bestowed upon him (Abraham) Isaac and Jacob. We made prophethood and the Book among his descendants, and We gave him his reward in

this world." Indeed, in the Hereafter, he will truly be among the righteous." (Surah Al-'Ankabut, verse 27)

In this verse, Allah recounts some of the blessings bestowed upon Prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him), namely the sons named Ishaq and Ya'qub, as a reward for his sincerity in his deeds. Allah the Almighty made these two children prophets with righteous personalities.

From the two verses above, it can be concluded that children are a gift from Allah SWT to whomever He wills. As humans, we are obliged to care for these children, loving them with full affection and gentleness. We can emulate the sincerity of Prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him) in performing righteous deeds, which is why Allah the Almighty rewarded him with righteous children.

A child will behave well if they are also well-educated. Fulfilling children's rights, such as feeling safe, protected, loved, comfortable, and happy within the family, demonstrates the importance of parents' role in children's growth and development. Parents can accompany their children in the learning process, provide quality parental presence in daily life, and increase the intensity of good communication. This is a form of attention that every child desires.

A healthy family environment will impact a child's well-being, emotional development, and tendency to exhibit good behavior. Therefore, creating a harmonious family environment can prevent children from deviating or misbehaving.

In a hadith of the Prophet, from Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him), he said that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) said, "When a person dies, his deeds are cut off except for three things: a continuous charity, knowledge that benefits others, and the supplication of a righteous child who always prays for him." (Narrated by Muslim, No. 1631) Imam Nawawi (may Allah have mercy on him) in his commentary on Sahih Muslim explains the continuous reward a person receives after his death. In the hadith above, the scholars said that its meaning is that the deeds a person performs in this world are cut off when they die. His reward is also cut off except for these three things, because he was the cause of the action's existence. That child is the result of his efforts. The knowledge he taught and wrote was also his effort. Similarly, the ongoing charity of waqf (endowment) also comes from him. Syarah is an explanation of hadiths, which is an effort to interpret the meaning behind the text of a hadith (Mubiin & Arifin, 2024).

Allah the Almighty says in Surah Al-Isra' verse 23:

وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا ۗ إِنَّمَا يُبَلِّغَنَّ عِندَكَ الْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كِلَيْهِمَا فَلَا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا
تَنْهَاهُمَا وَقُلْ لَهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا

Meaning: "Your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him, and that you be kind to your parents." If one or both of them reach old age in your care, never say "ah" to them and do not scold them, but speak to them kindly. (Surah Al-Isra' verse 23).

In this verse, first, Allah Almighty commands all of mankind not to worship any god beside Allah Almighty. This includes not believing in any other power that can influence the soul and body beside that which comes from Allah SWT, because everything that exists, both visible and invisible, is a creation of Allah SWT. Therefore, the only one worthy of the highest honor is the Being who created the universe and all its contents. He is the one who gives life and enjoyment to all of His creatures. Therefore, if a person worships objects or supernatural powers other than Allah SWT, it means they have gone astray, because objects do not provide benefit and cannot ward off harm, and therefore are not worthy of worship. Second, that people should be kind to their parents. This command comes after the command to worship only Allah SWT, which aims to help humans understand how important it is to be kind to their mothers and fathers. Also, so that they are grateful for the kindness of their parents, because of how difficult the suffering they have experienced, both during childbirth and when struggling to earn a living, raise, and educate their children with love.

Then Allah Almighty said in the same surah in the next verse, which is:

وَإِخْفِضْ لَهُمَا جَنَاحَ الذُّلِّ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ وَقُلْ رَبِّ ارْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيْنِي صَغِيرًا

Meaning: "And lower your wing [in humility] to them both and say, 'My Lord, have mercy on them as they raised me when I was young.'" (Surah Al-Isra' verse 24)

In the next verse, Allah SWT commands Muslims to be humble and compassionate toward their parents. What is meant by humility in this verse is obeying what they command as long as the command is good and does not contradict the teachings of Islam. A child's obedience to their parents is a sign of their love and respect for them, especially when they are in great need of their child's help. It is emphasized that humility must be practiced with compassion, not artificially to merely cover up flaws or avoid causing others to feel ashamed. Humility should be practiced sincerely because it stems from a conscience-driven awareness. At the end of the verse, Allah SWT commands Muslims to pray for their parents, asking for Allah's abundant mercy in return for their parents' love in raising them when they were children.

The conclusion from the two verses above is regarding Allah SWT's command to humans to worship only Him, as well as the command to treat parents well with humility and compassion. Because the parents' pleasure is also God Almighty's pleasure.

When children are still under parental care, parents are obliged to educate them by providing good education, which includes general knowledge, religious knowledge, and nurturing them to develop Islamic and Ihsan character. Imparting knowledge to children is no longer limited to just information, but also includes experiences and the practice of good values that must be realized in daily life. Therefore, the success of education lies in a child who possesses intellectual intelligence, emotional maturity, good social skills, and a positive personality character.

To achieve the desired education based on the domains of knowledge achievement and good personality character, the right method is needed. There are several methods for educating children according to Islamic teachings, as follows:

1. Counselling method. This method can be done, for example, by parents telling their children stories about the Prophets, reading the Quran together, and familiarizing them with wise words and good advice. Therefore, parents need to balance work and leisure time so that their children can have peace of mind, enjoy learning, and spend time with their families. Stories can make children think, and stories can impact their faith, morals, intellectual, and social aspects.

2. Conscious method. With this method, parents consciously monitor their child's development, guiding their moral, mental, and social formation, making it one of the most effective ways to shape a child's personality. Parents can pay attention to who their children's friends are, whether their friends are good and pious or naughty, because friends can influence a child's behavior and morals.

3. Punishment for children and methods of punishment. According to Abdullah Nasih 'Ulwan, in Islamic teachings when punishing children, one should pay attention to the child who has made a mistake and be gentle with them. Children have different levels of intelligence and reactions. Parents can choose the right way to teach their children and correct them if they make mistakes, whether by giving advice or reprimanding them. Parents can gradually increase the severity of punishments from mild to stricter than before, if they know that too-light punishments cannot correct the child's mistakes even if they show the child the error of their ways. The purpose of punishment is to build good character.

4. Example is how parents practice and set a good example for their children. Example in education is the most effective and successful way to prepare children morally, mentally, and socially. Since parents are role models for children, speak kind words and behave well so that children can imitate what their parents exemplify. (Chairunnisa, et.al., 2022).

Allah Almighty says in Surah Luqman verse 14:

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ وَهَنَا عَلَى وَهْنٍ وَفِصَالَهُ فِي غَامِغِينَ أَنْ اشْكُرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيْكَ إِلَيَّ الْمَصِيرُ

Meaning: "We have enjoined upon man to be good to his parents." His mother carried him while she was increasingly weak and weaned him in two years. (Our testament,) "Be grateful to Me and to your parents." Only to Me will you return.

In this verse, Allah commands humans to be dutiful to their parents by striving to fulfill their commands and realize their wishes. Mothers experience a lot of suffering and hardship during pregnancy and breastfeeding. In this verse, only the reason why a child should obey and be kind to their mother is mentioned; the reason why a child should obey and be kind to their father is not. This shows that the difficulties and suffering of mothers in conceiving, nurturing, and educating their children are far greater compared to the suffering experienced by fathers in raising their children. A mother also provides essential nutrients for her child's food while the child is still a fetus in the womb. Breast milk also consists of essential substances from the mother's blood, offered with love for the baby to suckle.

Discussion

The concept that children are a gift from Allah SWT, bestowed upon whomever He wills, affirms that humans do not have complete control over having offspring. This teaches us to be grateful and accept our fate sincerely. A righteous child is one form of ongoing charity that provides continuous reward for parents. Thru the prayers of righteous children, parents can be saved from the torment of Allah SWT. Therefore, loving children sincerely is a form of worship and our love for Allah SWT.

In Surah Al-'Ankabut, verse 27 explains that educating children is the responsibility of parents, encompassing spiritual, emotional, social, and intellectual aspects. Child development is greatly influenced by the quality of relationships within the family. A harmonious family protects children from deviant behavior.

The command to be good to parents shows their importance after Allah SWT. Even saying something rude is forbidden, let alone hurting them. The emphasis on the sacrifices a mother makes during pregnancy, breastfeeding, and caring for her child highlights the immense contribution of a mother in raising a child. As children, we must certainly be devoted to them, because without their struggle, we would not be able to live well in this world.

The verses of the Quran show a reciprocal relationship: Parents educate their children with love, guidance, and example. And children are obligated to respect, obey, and treat their parents well.

The principle of Humanistic and Balanced Islamic Education, using the mentioned educational methods (counseling, supervision, wise punishment, and role modeling), illustrates that Islam emphasizes education that is gentle,

communicative, and full of mercy. Punishment is not forbidden, but it must be proportionate and aimed at character building, not causing harm.

Then in Surah In Surah Luqman, verse 14, we can conclude that despite the mother's hardship in carrying the child for 9 months, breastfeeding for approximately 1.5 to 2 years, and raising the child until adulthood, she still treats the child well and with love. A child who can't do anything yet, just getting to know the world, a mother with tenderness provides nourishment so the child can grow up healthy.

Conclusion

Children are a gift from Allah SWT given to whomever He wills. Humans do not have complete control over the gift of offspring, so gratitude and acceptance of fate become an obligation for everyone. A righteous child is one form of ongoing charity for parents, which will provide continuous reward thru the child's prayers and deeds.

Children's education is the primary responsibility of parents, encompassing spiritual, emotional, social, and intellectual aspects. The quality of relationships within a family significantly impacts a child's development, as a harmonious family environment can protect children from deviant behavior and shape good character. Parents are required to educate their children with love, supervision, positive examples, and wise and proportionate educational methods.

In addition, Islamic teachings emphasize the importance of being dutiful to one's parents, as obedience and respect for them are commands from Allah SWT that align with recognizing the extraordinary sacrifices a mother makes in conceiving, breastfeeding, and raising a child. The reciprocal relationship between parents and children confirms that good education is not just the transfer of knowledge, but also consistent experience, example, and moral guidance.

Thus, the humanistic and balanced principles of Islamic education emphasize education filled with love, good communication, and discipline aimed at character development, not merely punishment. Children raised using this method will grow into intelligent individuals with noble character and good social skills, while also being able to respect and pray for their parents, thus creating a harmonious and blessed family.

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