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Ethical and Legal Indexes of Efficient Family

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By using a descriptive-analytic methodology, the present study aims to identify and introduce the Ethical and Legal Indexes of Efficient Family on the basis of Islamic sources. The study based on family-related verses and traditions, shows that Islamic sources have considered Affection in the Family, Mutual Respect, Greeting, Sympathy and Kindness, Patience, Honesty, Positive Attitude as the most important ethic indexes of efficient family. Also, the study shows that Islamic sources have considered rights for each one of family members including husband, wife, child, father and mother. Parallel to these rights, they have placed duties on each one of family members. Based on Islamic sources, it is the observance of rights together with performing duties that strengthen family bonds and family will be efficient.

Keywords*: family, right, ethic, efficiency, index, Islam*

Introduction

Family, which is the root of line of human descent, will not be firm and stable unless it is strong, peaceful, dynamic and efficient. Creation of mankind was divinely commenced by matrimony between a woman and a man. Adam and Eve started a family and all their offspring were divinely called to the bond of matrimony and human perfection was reflected in building mutual understanding between wife and husband. Divine wisdom is manifested through attraction between male and female and this has made all mankind down the centuries live together in families and thus mankind has survived.

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The bond between women and men is accorded such significance that it has been termed 'solemn covenant': "And they have taken from you a solemn covenant?" (4: 21) The Prophet of Islam is narrated as saying about the sacred bond of matrimony, "In Islam no foundation is dearer to God Almighty than matrimony" (Majlisi 1983: C/222). He also says that homes prosper by marriage: "Marry and marry off… and in Islam there is nothing dearer to God Almighty than a house prospering by matrimony" (Hurr Amili 1991: IV/5). Deprived of such great blessing, a man and a woman have been depicted as lonely: "Miserable, miserable, miserable is the man who does not have a wife even though he might have immense wealth; miserable, miserable, miserable is the woman who does not have a husband even though she might have immense wealth" (Haythami 1988: IV/252).

One is, in fact, born in a family, lives in the institution of family, turns to one's family in need, and finds peace of mind in the light of living in a family: "And of His signs is that He created for you mates from your own selves that you may take comfort in them, and He ordained affection and mercy between you. There are indeed signs in that [blessing] for a people who reflect" (30: 21).

Goal-oriented marriage is common in an Islamic ideal society where the tendency toward marriage and starting a marriage are cherished as a value and a matter of significance. It goes without saying that the institution of family provides members with peace of mind when its efficiency, similar to its foundation, is accorded significance by its founders and members; otherwise, it will create tensions and its members wish for its ruin or make attempts to ruin it.

It is more complicated, compared to recent decades, to maintain appropriate relations with one's spouse and raise children. Family efficiency or inefficiency is affected by numerous and complicated factors to the extent that it is required to safeguard family efficiency and deal with harmful factors according to Islamic teachings. Ethical and Legal Indexes of efficient family are based on the descriptive analytical approach and provide detailed attestations derived from verses of the Holy Qur'an and hadiths.

Terminology

Index. The term denotes general characteristics that include sub characteristics and are of further significance. Terming more general characteristics as indices and explication and classification of such characteristics by that title will lead to a more facile understanding of sub characteristics and subcategories (Gould & Kolb 1997).

Family. Experts have presented different definitions of family. Each definition refers to a dimension of the family. However, family can be defined with a view to its basic features.

Family is among of the most common social institutions that emerges as a result of marriage between a male and a female ending up in blood ties. Usually characterized by shared residence, it has personal, physical, economic and educational functions (Salari Far 2006: 13).

Efficient family. An efficient family is a family whose members, by adhering to religious beliefs and observing Islamic morality and fulfilling rights, pave the way for exploring and developing their capabilities and competence in various cognitive, emotional and behavioral dimensions[1].

Authentic Islamic Sources

Islamic teachings derive from two sources: The Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah. The former is unanimously recognized by all Muslims. The latter includes the entire body of the Sunnah narrated from the Fourteen Infallibles, from the Shi'a perspective, and it is restricted to the words and acts of the Prophet of Islam, from the Sunni viewpoint.

1. The Ethical Index

Family is the first learning environment for children. It is in this environment that moral virtues grow and foundations of moral qualities are established. Children learn the majority of moral qualities and behaviors from their parents, siblings, and other people with whom they live in the family. Family members learn honesty, trustworthiness, mutual respect, gratitude, kindness, affection, generosity, courage, chastity, and the majority of such moral behaviors from each other.

Children learn the first lessons about moral qualities in family and the formation of such moral qualities are affected by their long-lasting and constant association with grownups. The family environment must be adorned with moral qualities and thus pave the path toward growth of family members and family efficiency.

1 This definition has been presented with a view to the literal and technical meaning of the term "efficiency" after consulting and getting confirmation of lecturers, experts and researchers in religious seminaries and university, those who have worked in the area of family and family therapy.

Efficiency signifies good performance and the term 'efficient' means that someone is capable of doing something well. The technical meaning of 'efficient' in a family context is almost similar to its literal meaning. A family being a dynamic, lively and changing unit is also described as efficient. This term is used to determine a normal family function process (Nawwabi Nejad 1997).

1. 1. Affection in the Family

Human beings need affection and friendship and prefer to be liked by others. This human instinct is further felt in the conjugal bond made by a man and a woman who left the stage of 'I' and reached that of 'we'. Each of them experienced the feeling of being loved by their parents and upon entering the matrimonial bond they expect to be loved by their spouse and experience a fresh bond of affection and love.

Mutual love binds the couple, strengthens family foundation, and makes the family efficient. The Prophet of Islam is quoted as saying, "The best of women are those who have love and affection" (Majlisi 1983: CIII/235). With regard to men he says, "Our friends further love their spouses and the more perfect faith one possesses the more they love their spouses" (ibid.: CIII/223, 228).

Parents who love each other are more successful in raising their children who grow up in a family brimming over with love and affection. They have more peace of mind and better emotional development and will be able to follow their parents in being a loving and efficient spouse and will have an efficient family. Such efficiency is handed down to the coming generation and the society will be imbued with passion, liveliness, and efficiency.

1. 2. Mutual Respect

Any individual essentially expects others, in particular their family members, to respect their dignity. When the individual finds that his dignity is not respected by some people, a distance grows between them. In other words, respecting the dignity of family members is reflected in their behaviors.

Mutual respect strengthens interrelations. Males and females both expect others to respect their dignity and couples should not neglect such significant principle because of their intimate relationships, but it is for maintaining such intimacy that they should respect the dignity of the other party and preserve their close relationship from turning it into formality. It is attested in Islamic sources that man is obliged to respect his wife, e.g. "It is the wife's right to know that God Almighty created her a human being and an intimate friend and she should know that such blessing has been divinely bestowed on her and that she should appreciate it and promote her station through it" (ibid.: LXXI/4). On the other hand, a woman who disrespects her husband is cursed: "Cursed is cursed is the woman who wrongs and saddens her husband; blessed is… blessed is the woman who respects her husband, does not wrong him, and is obedient to him in his conditions" (ibid.: C/253).

Family members who treat each other respectfully will have close relations and such relations protect them from misbehaviors and misconduct.

Such family members preserve their liveliness and enthusiasm in managing their affairs and thus pave the path to grow and achieve their potential and efficiency.

1. 3. Greeting

People from different cultural backgrounds express their emotions and feelings, e.g. their being pleased to meet others, greeting one another and making use of conventional words and movements in particular ways to communicate the same intentions. Greeting, shaking hands, and embracing are different ways of expressing such emotions in the Islamic tradition. Greeting as a divine command is attested in the Holy Qur'an: "So when you enter houses, greet yourselves with a salutation from Allah, blessed and good. Thus does Allah clarify His signs for you so that you may apply reason" (24: 61).

Living in our world is accompanied by stress and anxiety. The best way to communicate with others is, therefore, to provide the other party with security and peace of mind, to assure them that no harm will be done to them. The significance of greeting is best manifested in one of the divine Names, *Salām* (literally peace). Paradise, as the abode of peace, is termed *dār al-salām*. It is evident that such mode of communication and peace of mind will pave the path to family efficiency and the spiritual growth of family members.

1. 4. Sympathy and Kindness

Affectionate treatment protects human soul from impurities and safeguards its purity and health. It is in the light of such purity and health that an individual may strive toward realizing their potential and firmly encounter moral and psychological disorders and impede alien factors from affecting their mind.

The messenger of God is narrated by Imam al-Ṣādiq as saying, "One who respects believers by his kind words and eliminates their sadness will be, as long as they maintain such attitude, forever in the shad of divine mercy" (Hurr Amili 1991: XI/591). Kind and sympathetic treatment of grownups and one's spouse who are able to analyze other people's attitudes and behaviors will have more valuable results. When couples treat each other kindly, they strive to make their families more efficient.

1. 5. Patience

It is attested in Islamic sources that patience is accompanied by achievement. This moral virtue is reflected in the Holy Qur'an as the essence of all virtues and means of attaining happiness. Human beings and family members

may not achieve happiness and efficiency without possessing such quality. Patience is likened by Imam ʻAlī to the head for the body: "Patience in affairs is like the head to the body, when the head is severed from the body the latter decomposes and when patience is removed from affairs they will fall into ruin".

Family members face disappointments and fulfillment of wishes requires passage of time. They may also, at times, suffer from physical damages. As a consequence of such incidents their relations may be adversely affected and differences and misbehaviors may arise. When family members happen to be incapable of checking their desires and endure vicissitudes the family will suffer and besides being deprived from fulfilling their wishes they will cause problems for others. Stress is the first consequence of impatience in the face of tensions and pressures. Patience enables people to stand up in the face of incidents and safeguard family efficiency and achievement. In contrast, inconsideration and overreaction against other people's misbehavior swill end in regret. It is patience that enables us to adopt timely and proper reactions with respect to misdeeds. Children raised in impatient families will suffer entanglements in the society, since an individual is not always able to fulfil their wishes in all circumstances. An impatient child imagines that all their wishes will be before long fulfilled in society and when their wish is not granted they will make a display of unpleasant reactions in society and such reactions will often entail entanglements for them and their family.

1. 6. Honesty

It is attested in the Holy Qur'an and hadiths that honesty is the fountainhead of all virtues and moral qualities (Majlisi 1983: LXXXVI/9) and the key to all good qualities; in contrast, lying is the key to vices (Muhammadi Reyshahri 2000: 439). Honesty, in psychological analysis, is applied to words and behaviors by which an individual is not intending to display their opposites by what they say or carry out; in other words, the individual demonstrates their honesty by their words and actions. When an individual is dishonest in verbal and/or body communication a contradictory or two layered communication will be established in that the contexts of their words and conduct communicate different things or the incentive and intention behind their words and behavior are different (Salari Far 2006).

The addressee responds, in such circumstances, according to their words or behaviors, but when they learn that there was another cause, they will be perplexed in responding to their other words and behaviors. The addressee will consider their words and behaviors, fails to notice the incentive(s) behind those words and behaviors and may at times, owing to further concentration on possible incentives, react inappropriately. Members of inefficient families

display such words and behaviors. To achieve and maintain healthy family relations, growth, efficiency, and verbal and physical communicative means—e.g. tone, eye contact, postures, and movements—should be transparent rather than leading others to perplexity. Not only the words should be in harmony with tone, posture, and facial expressions but also they should demonstrate the incentives and unconscious postures and represent that all psychological dimensions of the individual, e.g. emotional, excitement, behavioral, and cognitive spheres are in harmony.

Such honest, efficient, and normal interrelation provides family members with the opportunity to show their honesty, commitment, qualification, and creativity and attain perfection and by surmounting impediments pave the path to further family efficiency.

1. 7. Positive Attitude

A couple seeking rewarding lives maintain their positive attitude toward their spouse, consider their positive qualifications, ignore their defects and flaws, constantly see their life and conduct elegantly and at times even consider some of their flaws as good qualities.

Bradford (1983) studied couples' satisfaction with their lives in a study which he conducted on 351 couples who had lived together for at least fifteen years and inquired about the reasons for living together. The results demonstrated that having a positive attitude about one's spouse is one of the significant factors in living together.

Misunderstanding the words and behaviors of other people directly affects having a positive attitude. Such misinterpretations ruin the good relations of family members and end in distress and anxiety.

Misunderstanding is one of the main factors causing domestic problems and the best strategy to confront the issue is to adopt a positive attitude. Besides resulting in family efficiency, the good quality of having a positive attitude also directly affects efficiency and having the same attitude in society, since children learn, commit to memory, and make use of any attitude adopted by parents in dealing with different phenomena.

2. Legal Index

Preventive measures to avoid problematic and unsupportive familial interactions and disintegration of family structure and adopting actions to increase family efficiency include acquaintance with obligations and transparency of mandatory and non-mandatory spousal expectations, since many disorders that jeopardize family efficiency and undermine its family foundation stem

from violating the rights of others and showing ingratitude to each other. More optimal attitudes arise from family members' familiarity with their rights and obligations (Baqiriyan 2000).

Great significance is accorded in Islamic teachings to mutual rights and obligations, in particular those of family members and laws have been legislated for all family members in all stages and degrees. Itis attested in Islamic sources that God Almighty is above all worshipped by respecting believers' rights (Majlisi 1983: LXXI/243), in that honoring the rights of others does not only safeguard family efficiency and foundation but also it serves as a devotional act that will be divine rewarded. It is worthy of note that right (*ḥaqq*, pl. *ḥuqūq*) is some relative entitlement for someone by someone else. It may or may not have its roots in reality, in that existence or inexistence of real roots is not considered in its concept.

Mandatory and Non-Mandatory Rights and Obligations

Some rights and obligations, stipulated in Islamic sources, addressing family members are mandatory and inviolable and failure to respect them will be punishable. There are some other rights that are no mandatory in that failure to honor them will not entail any punishment.

The former rights are termed, in Islamic sources, obligatory (*wājib*) rights, and the latter rights are termed recommendable (*mustaḥab*) and at times permissible (*mubāḥ*).

It is to be noted that each of the non-mandatory rights is substantiated by a moral obligation and family efficiency may not be exclusively based on obligation and law, since legal obligation will turn the institution of family into a rigid and impassive group devoid of support, moral principles, and susceptible to breakdown and disintegration.

Family members' rights will fall into four categories: wife's rights; husband's rights; children's rights; parents' rights.

2. 1. Wife's Rights

Wife's rights, attested in Islamic sources, should be respected by her husband and thus the family will proceed on the path to efficiency.

2. 1. 1. Providing Means for Family Life and Payment of Expenses

It is an obligation that a husband pays for his wife's expenses and the amount of such payment is determined on the basis of the wife's need and social dignity (Khomeini 2000: 299). According to the Civil Code of the Islamic

Republic of Iran, "Maintenance (*nafaqah*) is applied to all the needs of a wife appropriate to her social dignity, e.g. accommodation, clothes, food, furniture, medical and health expenses, hiring a servant (in case of need, habit, or some ailment)" (*Official Gazette*, *Ruznāma-yi Rasmī* [of the Islamic Republic of Iran] 2002: II/1079).

A husband is obliged to pay for his wife's maintenance, considered as one of the wife's rights (Khomeini 2000: 299–300), instances of which include: accommodation, food, clothes, medical expenses, and furniture all commensurate with her social status and dignity.

2. 1. 2. Attending to Sexual Needs

Attending to the couple's sexual needs is one of the main incentives behind building a family. Sexual feelings and organs form significant parts of human existence. Understanding spousal sexual feelings and attending to them may preserve family's psychological health, peace, and efficiency. It was mentioned above that Bradford (1983) conducted a study on 351 couples to investigate their satisfaction with life. One of the factors that significantly affects spousal life, according to his findings, is satisfaction with marital sexual relationship.

Sexual need is commensurate with human nature and that is why attending to the wife's sexual needs, according to Islamic sharia, is an obligation incumbent upon her husband. It is attested in the Holy Qur'an that liking sexual relationships is an adornment of life: "To mankind has been made to seem decorous the love of [worldly] desires" (3: 14).

According to Islamic teachings, there is no other means of attending to sexual needs and it is incumbent upon the husband to attend to his wife's need and respect her right.

2. 1. 3. Financial Support

It is an obligation rendered on man to strive toward maintaining his family reasonably. God Almighty above all grants those men blessings that favorably attend to providing for their families: "God is above all satisfied with those of you who provide maintenance for their families" (Majlisi 1983: LXXVIII/136).

Well-provided-for family members proceed with more peace of mind toward their growth and perfection. Those who face restrictions by the father and or the spouse will have less peace of mind and will develop negative attitude toward the breadwinner and such attitude will adversely affect family efficiency. It is attested in Islamic sources that "Men are supposed to provide

their families with such maintenance that the members of their families do not long for their death" (Kulaynī n. d.: IV/11).

It is attested in Islamic sources and culture that martyrs will be above all rewarded and those who strive toward supporting their families will be rewarded similar to and even more than martyrs and those struggling in the cause of God (Hurr Amili 1991: 12). In contrast, those who neglect to provide for themselves and their families have been censured by the Prophet of Islam: "He is not one of us who has the financial means but neglects to support his family" (ibid.).

2. 1. 4. Being Well-Groomed

A Man expects his wife to be well-groomed and a woman also prefers her husband to be as such and it is in fact a woman's right to have a neat and well-groomed husband. Such attribute creates satisfaction in a woman's life and further strengthens her virtue of chastity. It is attested in hadiths that the chastity of the Israelites' women faded only because their husbands were not well-groomed. The Prophet then says that a woman expects the same from her husband (Majlisi 1983: LXXIII/102). Respecting chastity is one of the pillars of family efficiency. A couple may not be expected to be faithful to each other when they lack such moral quality. Families are bound together in love and solidarity and family efficiency are thus safeguarded. Chastity is one of the most significant factors in raising well-rounded children and thus improving the society. Family is the best environment where children may learn chastity and it is through following their parents as role models that children will grow into chaste adults.

2. 1. 5. Good Relationship

To a man, his wife is a divine blessing, gift, and trust ("Know that this is a divine blessing bestowed on you. Respect her and treat her courteously" (ibid.: LXXIV/5)). It is incumbent on a man to treat his wife considerately and gallantly. Respecting one's spouse and avoiding abusing them verbally and humiliating them is an obligation rendered on any man or woman. A man is not supposed to focus on his wife's flaws but he should, as attested in Islamic injunctions, conceal them: "The wife's right, if you know, is that God Almighty made her a means of peace of mind and intimacy for you… and if she did not know forgive her" (Hurr Amili 1991: XV/175). Forgiving one's spouse's mistakes is one of the significant elements of maintaining a good relationship. Those who forgive other people's flaws and mistakes and ignore their own rights will gain others' affection and make them faithful, optimistic, and affectionate.

Good relationship needs to be manifested in words and deeds. When a man looks at his wife with a smile on his face and talks to her with kind words he gives to her the key to love and efficient and intimate relationship and strengthens the relationship happily and by pleasant words. Courtesy and elegance in speech are among the good qualities of sincere people and friends of God. In contrast, looking upset and worried and using abusive words close the window to intimacy and good relationship, adds in time to the psychological and emotional distance, and cause inefficiency in family.

2. 2. Husband's Rights

Strengthening the pillars of marital life and family efficiency mainly lie in the wife's respecting the rights of her husband. When the wife respects her husband's rights, the husband will be motivated enough to carry out his obligations. Such mutual respect paves the path to good behaviors and accomplishing family efficiency.

2. 2. 1. Attending to Sexual Needs

A wife, except for the days when she has religious restrictions, should attend to her husband's sexual needs. It is recommended that she takes the first steps in this regard and show her interest. The Messenger of God says, "It is incumbent upon her to wear the most fragrant perfume, wear the most elegant of her clothes, wear the best of her adornments, and show that she loves him every morning and evening and spare no effort to respect his rights" (ibid.: XIV/8).

With regard to the husband's desire for his wife and the wife's obedience to him the Messenger of God is quoted as saying a seemingly surprising injunction. In responding to a woman inquiring about her husband's rights, the Messenger of God said, "She is not supposed to reject him even though she happens to be on the back of a camel" (ibid.). This injunction implies the significance of attending to the husband's sexual need.

2. 2. 2. The Right to Supervise Visits

It is undeniably attested in hadith that a woman may only leave her home by her husband's permission. Such injunction is frequently attested in Shia hadiths (ibid.: XIV/125, 154–156) and similar hadiths are attested in Sunni sources as well (Haythami 1988: IV/313). Jurisprudents have been unanimous on the authenticity of this injunction, though some of them maintain that a wife is only obliged to gain her husband's permission to leave her home when

it is contrary to his sexual rights, but considering the universal application of hadiths it would be unwarranted to restrict them to instances of violating the husband's sexual rights (Bustan 2009).

2. 2. 3. The Right to Choose One's Place of Residence

A husband's right to determine the place of residence is one of the requirements of the wife's submission in attending to her husband's sexual needs, in that a woman may only act upon her obligation to attend to her husband's sexual needs that she obeys him in terms of place of residence. Such right is specified for the husband in Islamic sources where the wife is obliged to submit to her husband's choice of place of residence (Hurr Amili 1991: XIV/435, 494).

The wife may make use of 'the condition to be stipulated in the marriage contract' by suggesting the condition that the husband may not take her out of her town or city of her domicile and settle her in another place. In case the husband accepts that condition he will be obliged to act upon it (ibid.: XV/49) and violating it will be considered as failure to stand on one's promise (Bustan 2009). It is also stipulated in the Civil Code of the Islamic Republic of Iran: "A wife should reside at a home determined by the husband unless the choice of place of residence has been accorded to her".

2. 3. Children's Rights

Children are the sweetest fruits of a couple who live together by love, affection, and divine and sharia bonds. Not only do children add to love, affection, and sense of responsibility and fulfilling obligations in matrimonial life and hope in future, but parents see their 'common selves' in their children's mirror.

Children are divine blessings that make parents bearers of divine trust. They provide parents with the opportunity to achieve immortality by raising their children according to Islamic teachings and fulfilling the obligations of such divine trust and safeguarding their survival by raising well-rounded children. Such wish may not be fulfilled without respecting divinely specified rights.

2. 3. 1. Bearing a Good Name

It is a child's right to bear a good name (Khomeini 2000: II/308). Imam-al-Riḍā is quoted as saying that a good name is beneficence to a child: "The first beneficence done by a father to his child is to choose a good name for

them. It is thus an obligation rendered upon any of you to choose a good name for your child" (Fayḍ Kashani n. d.: II/66). A good name is the best gift received by any child from their parents, a name that they always bear, a name that ceaselessly affects their individual and social character. Parents are prohibited to choose unpleasant names for their children. By selecting unpleasant or reprehensible names for their children parents adversely affect their character and dignity and deprive them of having good names.

2. 3. 2. The Right to Be Breastfed

It is required by divine commands and laws of nature that children should be breastfed by their mothers, since "the best milk for children is above all that of their mothers" (Hurr Amili 1991: XV/175) and unwarranted depriving of a child from being breastfed by their mother is a sinister wrong done to them. It is attested in Islamic sources that divine blessings are abundantly bestowed upon mothers breastfeeding their children. The Prophet of Islam is quoted as saying, "When a mother breastfeeds her child and each time the child is suckled God Almighty grants her rewards in abundance and when she completes suckling her child an angel will place a hand on her side, saying, 'Start a new life that all your sins have been forgiven by God'" (ibid.).

2. 3. 3. The Right to Socialization

Human social nature is one of their existential dimensions that must be accorded significance in education. Parents' and educators' duties in raising and educating the new and coming generations include paying attention to their social growth and thus provide them with opportunities to develop their talents and aptitudes in the sphere of social life and help them participate actively and successfully in groups. In other words, it is a right of children to receive social education.

The human experience in social life indicates that social organization and its stability and sustainability are founded on the capabilities, preparedness, and soundness of the members of a society.

Having a comprehensive outlook and according significance to all different aspects of human life, Islam pays attention to education in society and provides instructions to help people develop and maintain discipline, mental health, moderation, and wisdom and also participate realistically in the sphere of collective life. Islam enjoins people to respect certain principles—e.g. moderation, sustainable relations, mutual affection, and social supervision—following of which will be of great use to social organizations.

2. 3. 4. The Right to Marry

The right to marry is one of the indubitable rights of children incumbent upon their parents, particularly on the father. Young people may deviate from the norms or procrastinate over matrimonial bonds owing to their limited experience, insufficient financial means, and idealism, but it is the fathers' duty to help them make the right choice and support them in their taking the first step toward such holy commitment.

Children's rights incumbent on the father, as indicated in Islamic teachings, include being given a good name, having access to literacy, and receiving support in taking steps toward marriage upon majority (Muhammadi Reyshahri 2000: X/720). Parents were inattentive in pre-Islamic times to their children's marriage and Muslims were commanded to take the requirement into account and it became their obligation to render assistance to their children in that respect (Baḥrani n. d.: III/132).

2. 4. Parents' Rights

The religious sources provide various manifestations of fulfilling and honoring the rights of parents. These manifestations can be placed under one common title "kindness". God, the Exalted, consistently enjoins kindness to parents in different verses of the Quran placing it next to worshipping God. That is to say, respect for parents and showing kindness to them has been placed second in importance (Qur'an 2: 83; 4: 22; 17: 23). The manifestations of kindness have been pointed out and explicated in the traditions. Some of the most important manifestations mentioned therein are the following:

- To obey parents[1];
- To talk to parents gently and nicely[2];
- To avoid interrupting parents;
- To show humbleness and humility towards parents[3];
- To tend to parents and fulfill their needs;
- To share their grief and happiness;

1 "Be grateful to Me and to both your parents; to Me is the eventual coming. And if they contend with you that you should associate with Me what you have no knowledge of, do not obey them, and keep company with them in this world kindly, and follow the way of him who turns to Me, then to Me is your return, then will I inform you of what you did" (31: 14–15).

2 "And do not raise your voice above their voice" (Hurr Amili 1991: XV/205).

3 "And it is upon you to obey your father, to show him kindness, humility and respect and to lower your voice whilst speaking in his presence…" (Majlisi 1983: LXXI/76).

- To be more kind to mother;
- To appreciate, in words and in practice, their favors and sacrifices[1];
- To avoid ordering parents (Hurr Amili 1991: XV/205–277);
- To avoid hurting parents even to the extent of saying *uff* to them[2];
- To take special care of parents in their old age[3];
- Not to address parents by calling out their names[4].

The basis of relationships and the most important factor that binds parents to their children is the blood relationship between the parents and their children. The parents' names are a sign of that relationship. If a child addresses his parents by calling out their names, it is as though he has forgotten or ignored parental relationship causing the emotional and parental relationships to fade gradually with the children not feeling obliged to respect their parents' rights (Salari Far 2006: 87). The Messenger of Allah also wanted his daughter Fatima Zahra to call him 'father' and not to use any titles like 'Messenger of Allah' (Majlisi 1983: XLIII/32). It can be said that the Prophet of Islam wanted to maintain the father-child relationship in their communication and to ensure that his emotional relationship did not turn into a formal one.

2. 5. Shared Right

One of the Islamic teachings to Muslim families is to maintain the bonds of kinship which, in religious terminology, is called *silat ar-rahim*. In Islamic thought, maintaining, expanding and deepening family relationships, cordial and supportive relationships are so important that the Prophet of Islam has described it as a part of faith[5] and introduces connection with one's kindred as the goal of his prophetic mission after servitude to God and combat against

1 "Verily, Allah has ordained giving thanks to Him and to one's parents; he who does not thank his parents has not thanked Allah."

2 "If there were a word shorter that *uff* that connoted disrespect of parents, God would have used it" (Ṭabarsi 1981: VI/409).

3 "And your Lord has commanded that you shall not serve (any) but Him, and goodness to your parents. If either or both of them reach old age with you, say not to them (so much as) *Ugh* nor chide them, and speak to them a generous word. And make yourself submissively gentle to them with compassion, and say: O my Lord! have compassion on them, as they brought me up (when I was) little" (Quran 17: 23–24).

4 "He (child) should not address him (father) by his name" (Hurr Amili 1991: 220).

5 "Verily I recommend those who are present and absent of my people and those who are still in the phalli of men and the wombs of women till the Day of Judgment to keep ties with their kin even if these kin are one-year walk away. This is a norm of religion" (Majlisi 1983: LXXII/72).

idolatry[1]. In religious sources, the shared right of maintaining ties with other relatives has been described as something that helps promote well-being in all matters of the family[2].

Conclusion

Ethical and legal indices of family efficiency are attested in Islamic sources. Family is one of the main institutions of human life and its efficiency and perfection lie in having the characteristics of those indices. When attitudes toward life, and family in particular, are commensurate with the commands of the Creator, human life will proceed on the right path to efficiency. In contrast, when human life is oriented on the basis of unwarranted attitudes, life will deviate from the right path and proceed toward inefficiency.

Family is the first educational environment for children where moral qualities grow and the cornerstone of moral principles is laid. Children learn the majority of moral qualities and ethical behavior from their parents, siblings, and others when they live with them. Family members learn many good qualities from each other, instances of which include honesty, trustworthiness, mutual respect, expressing gratitude, affection, kindness, generosity, courage, and chastity. The first lessons about moral qualities and virtues are learned in the family and grownups impact the development of moral qualities in children.

One of the measures to avoid problematic and unsupportive familial interactions and disintegration of family structure but rather adopting actions to increase family efficiency is gaining acquaintance with obligations and transparency of mandatory and non-mandatory spousal expectations, since many disorders that jeopardize family efficiency and undermine its foundation stem from spousal violation of the rights of each other.

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1 Someone asked the Holy Prophet: "What is the goal of your prophetic mission?" The Prophet replied: "The goal of my mission is to establish devotion and servitude to One God, break the idols and establish ties with the kids" (Majlisi 1983: XXXVIII/Chap. 65, hadith 49).

2 "Maintain your friendly relationship and connection… and add blessing to all your matters" (Majlisi 1983: LXXIV/Chap. 17, hadith No. 10).

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