Morals Towards Family: The Foundation of Character Building from an Islamic Perspective

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Abstract

The family is the smallest social unit and plays an important role in shaping individual character and personality. In Islam, moral conduct within the family occupies a central position as it regulates relationships between parents and children, husbands and wives, and among family members. However, the dynamics of modern life often present challenges to the implementation of these moral values. This study aims to analyze the concept of family morality from an Islamic perspective, identify its fundamental principles, and examine its relevance in contemporary family life. The research employs a qualitative approach using a literature study method, analyzing primary sources such as the Qur'an and Hadith, as well as secondary sources from classical and contemporary literature on family ethics. Data were analyzed using a descriptive-analytical approach. The findings indicate that Islamic family morality is grounded in the values of compassion, respect, responsibility, and justice, which positively contribute to psychological well-being and social stability. Future studies are recommended to investigate the empirical implementation of Islamic family morality in modern societal contexts.

Keywords: *Family Morality; Islamic Education; Family Ethics; Islamic Values.*

Abstrak

Keluarga merupakan unit sosial terkecil yang memiliki peran penting dalam pembentukan karakter dan kepribadian individu. Dalam Islam, akhlak kepada keluarga menempati posisi sentral karena mengatur relasi antara orang tua dan anak, suami dan istri, serta antaranggota keluarga. Namun, dinamika kehidupan modern seringkali menghadirkan tantangan dalam implementasi nilai-nilai akhlak tersebut. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis konsep akhlak kepada keluarga dalam perspektif Islam, mengidentifikasi prinsip-prinsip dasarnya, serta menelaah relevansinya dalam kehidupan keluarga kontemporer. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi literatur melalui analisis terhadap sumber primer berupa Al-Qur'an dan Hadis, serta sumber sekunder dari literatur klasik dan kontemporer tentang akhlak keluarga. Data dianalisis menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif-analitis. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa akhlak keluarga dalam Islam dibangun atas nilai kasih sayang, penghormatan, tanggung jawab, dan keadilan, yang berdampak positif terhadap kesejahteraan psikologis dan stabilitas sosial. Penelitian selanjutnya disarankan mengkaji implementasi akhlak keluarga Islam secara empiris dalam konteks masyarakat modern.

Kata kunci: *Akhlak Keluarga; Pendidikan Islam; Etika Keluarga; Nilai Islam.*

Introduction

The family is the primary and most important social institution in human life. From an Islamic perspective, the family is not simply a collection of individuals bound by blood or marriage, but rather a fundamental unit with a strategic role in shaping a civilized society. The family is the first place where a child learns the moral values, ethics, and character that will shape their future personality.

In the modern era, marked by the rapid development of information technology and social change, the family institution faces various complex challenges. The phenomenon of family disintegration, weakened communication between family members, and the shift in traditional values demonstrate the urgency of deeply reexamining the concept of morality within the family. Islam, as a religion of rahmatan lil alamin (blessing for the universe), has provided comprehensive guidance on how relationships within the family should be maintained.(Mau, 2025).

The Quran and the Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) contain numerous teachings on the importance of maintaining good morals within the family. The concept of birrul walidain, or devotion to parents, for example, is mentioned in the Quran alongside the command to worship Allah SWT. This demonstrates the high status of morals within the family within Islamic teachings. Furthermore, Islamic teachings also detail the rights and obligations of husband and wife, the responsibilities of parents towards their children, and harmonious relationships between siblings.

Research on morality in the family has become highly relevant due to the values crisis plaguing modern families. Numerous cases of domestic violence, parental neglect, sibling conflict, and other family issues demonstrate the weakening application of morality in family life. Yet, families built on good morals will provide a solid foundation for a civilized society and a strong nation.

This study will comprehensively explore the concept of family morality from an Islamic perspective, from its theological foundations in the Quran and Hadith, to

its governing principles, to its practical implementation in contemporary life. By understanding Islamic teachings on family morality in depth, it is hoped that it will provide solutions to various problems faced by modern families and serve as a guide for building a family that is peaceful, loving, and compassionate.

Research Methods

This research uses a qualitative method with a descriptive-analytical approach. The qualitative approach was chosen because this study aims to deeply understand the concept of morality towards family from an Islamic perspective, which requires interpretation and analysis of religious texts and relevant literature.

Data sources in this research consist of two main categories. First, primary data sources which include Al-Quran al-Karim as the main source of Islamic teachings and authentic hadiths narrated in mu'tabarah hadith books such as Sahih Bukhari, Sahih Muslim, Sunan Abu Dawud, Sunan At-Tirmidhi, and Sunan An-Nasa'i. Second, secondary data sources which include classical and contemporary tafsir books such as Tafsir Ibnu Katsir, Tafsir Al-Maraghi, and Tafsir Al-Misbah, moral and Sufism books by classical scholars such as Ihya Ulumuddin by Imam Al-Ghazali, as well as scientific books and journals about family morals from an Islamic perspective.

The data collection technique used was documentation study or library research, which involved collecting, reading, and reviewing various literature related to the research topic. Data was collected through an intensive review of the primary and secondary sources mentioned above.

Data analysis was conducted through several systematic stages. The first stage is data reduction, which involves sorting and selecting data relevant to the research topic from various sources that have been collected. The second stage is categorization, grouping data based on certain themes such as morality towards parents, morality in husband-wife relationships, and morality between siblings. The third stage is interpretation, interpreting verses of the Quran and hadiths related to

morality towards family by referring to the opinions of commentators and scholars. The fourth stage is comparative analysis, comparing various opinions of scholars and expert views on morality towards family to gain a comprehensive understanding. The final stage is synthesis, summarizing the research findings comprehensively and systematically.

Results and Discussion

The Concept of Morals for the Family in Islam

Etymologically, morality comes from the Arabic word "khuluq," meaning character, disposition, behavior, or disposition. Terminologically, morality is a characteristic embedded in the soul that drives a person to perform actions without requiring lengthy thought or deliberation. Imam Al-Ghazali defined morality as a characteristic embedded in the soul that gives rise to actions easily without requiring prior mental deliberation.

In Islam, morals occupy a very important and strategic position. The Prophet Muhammad SAW said: "Indeed, I was sent to perfect noble morals" (HR. Ahmad). This hadith shows that the main mission of the Prophet Muhammad SAW's apostolate was to perfect human morals. Morals are not just an additional dimension to religion, but are the core of Islamic teachings themselves. In fact, the quality of a person's faith in Islam is measured by the quality of his morals. Rasulullah SAW said: "The believer with the most perfect faith is the one with the best morals" (HR. Ahmad and Tirmidhi).

Morals in Islam are divided into two broad categories: morals towards Allah (hablum minallah) and morals towards creatures (hablum minannas). Morals towards one's family fall into the second category, which holds a very high status. Islam views the quality of one's relationship with one's family as a reflection of one's overall Islamic character.

Family in Islamic Perspective

The family in Islam has a very noble and strategic position. The Koran mentions the family as a place to achieve peace of mind (sakinah), love (mawaddah), and mercy (rahmah). In Surah Ar-Rum verse 21, Allah SWT says, which means: "And among the signs of His power is that He created for you wives from among yourselves, so that you will be inclined and feel at ease with them, and He created between you feelings of love and affection. Indeed, in this there are truly signs for a people who think."

The Islamic family consists of several main components: husband, wife, children, and close relatives such as parents, grandparents, and siblings. Each component has rights and obligations that are detailed in Islamic law. Family relationships should be built on love, mutual respect, and shared responsibility.(Salas et al., 2025).

Islam views the family as a social unit with several important functions. First, it provides legal and dignified reproduction to ensure the continuity of human generations. Second, it serves as the primary and primary educational institution for children. Third, it serves as an economic unit of production and consumption. Fourth, it serves as a social unit in shaping social interactions and relationships. Fifth, it serves as a protective function in providing physical and psychological protection for its members. Sixth, it serves as a religious function in instilling the values of faith and piety.

Moral Principles for the Family

Devotion to parents or birrul walidain is one of the most important obligations in Islam after monotheism to Allah SWT. In the Koran, the command to be filial to parents is mentioned together with the command to worship Allah, which shows how high the position of parents is in Islam.

Allah SWT says in Surah Al-Isra verses 23-24, which means: "And your Lord has commanded that you should not worship other than Him and that you should do good to your parents as well as possible. If one of them or both of them reaches

old age in your care, then never say to either of them the word 'ah' and do not shout at them and say to them noble words. And humble yourself towards them both with great love and Say: 'O my Lord, love them both, as they both taught me when I was little.'"

The forms of birrul walidain encompass various aspects of life, which can be described as follows. First, speak gently and refrain from using harsh language toward parents. The above verse forbids a child from uttering the word "ah," even the mildest expression of annoyance. This demonstrates a very high standard of politeness in interacting with parents. Second, humble oneself and be humble before parents as a form of respect for their countless services.

Third, pray for your parents both while they are alive and after they die. The prayers of a pious child are one of the deeds whose rewards continue to flow to your parents even after they have passed away. Fourth, fulfill your parents' material and spiritual needs, especially in their old age when they require special attention and care. Fifth, maintain your parents' good name and refrain from actions that would bring shame on them in the eyes of society. Sixth, seek your parents' permission and blessing when making important decisions in life. Seventh, maintain relationships with your parents' friends and relatives after they pass away.

The Prophet Muhammad SAW also emphasized the importance of being filial to mothers in particular. In a hadith, a friend asked the Prophet who deserved the most good treatment from him. Rasulullah replied: "Your mother." The friend asked again: "Then who?" He answered: "Your mother." The friend asked again: "Then who?" He answered: "Your mother." The friend asked again: "Then who?" Only then did the Messenger of Allah answer: "Your father" (HR. Bukhari and Muslim). This hadith shows that mothers have a position three times higher than fathers in terms of child devotion, which reflects Islam's recognition of the mother's extraordinary sacrifice in conceiving, giving birth and raising children.

Islam teaches that the relationship between husband and wife should be built on the basis of equality in dignity, despite differences in roles and responsibilities.

Husbands have an obligation to treat their wives well (mu'asyarah bil ma'ruf). Allah SWT says in Surah An-Nisa, verse 19, which means: "And associate with them in a manner that is appropriate."(Hilmi, 2023).

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) set a perfect example in his treatment of his wives. He said, "The best of you are those who are best to their families, and I am the best among you to my family." (Narrated by Tirmidhi). This hadith emphasizes that a Muslim's quality can be seen in how he treats his family, especially his wife. A Muslim's standard of goodness is measured not only by his ritual worship but also by his treatment of his family.

Forms of noble character from a husband toward his wife include the following aspects. First, providing adequate physical and spiritual sustenance according to one's means. Physical sustenance includes clothing, food, shelter, and other material needs. Spiritual sustenance, on the other hand, involves meeting the wife's biological and emotional needs in a kind and loving manner.

Second, speak gently and not harshly. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) never shouted or spoke harshly to his wives, even in tense situations. Third, help with household chores, as the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) did. He sewed his own clothes, milked goats, and helped with other household chores, demonstrating that helping his wife with household chores is a noble deed and not a demeaning act for a husband.

Fourth, give appreciation and praise for your wife's efforts. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) always appreciated his wives' efforts and expressed this appreciation with kind words. Fifth, refrain from physical or verbal violence. Islam forbids all forms of domestic violence and makes gentleness a fundamental principle in interacting with your wife. Sixth, maintain your wife's honor and refrain from revealing her faults to others. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) spoke of the evil of anyone who reveals his private life with his wife to others. Seventh, be fair if you have more than one wife, both in terms of time allocation, living expenses, and treatment.

Wives also have an obligation to have good morals towards their husbands as part of their household responsibilities. Islam teaches that a pious wife is a crown for her husband and the best ornament in worldly life. Rasulullah SAW said: "The world is jewelry, and the best jewelry in the world is a pious woman" (HR. Muslim).

A wife's morality toward her husband encompasses several important dimensions. First, she must obey her husband in matters that do not conflict with Islamic law. This obedience does not mean being a slave, but rather a form of cooperation and support in running the household. A wife is not obligated to obey if her husband orders her to do something that contradicts God's commands.

Second, protect your self-honor, your husband's honor and your husband's property when your husband is not at home. Rasulullah SAW praised women who looked after themselves and their homes when their husbands were not around. Third, respect and appreciate your husband's efforts to earn a living for the family, do not demean or criticize his efforts even though the results have not met expectations.

Fourth, create a comfortable, peaceful, and conducive home environment for rest and worship. The home should be a place where the husband finds peace after a hard day's work. Fifth, do not burden your husband with demands beyond his capabilities, whether financially or physically. Sixth, speak gently and not harshly, and refrain from using words that hurt or demean your husband. Seventh, support your husband in doing good and advise him wisely if he makes a mistake, not in a demeaning manner or in front of others.

Parents have a significant responsibility in educating and guiding their children. This responsibility encompasses not only material aspects but also spiritual, intellectual, and moral aspects. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said, "Every child is born in a state of fitrah (natural disposition), then it is his parents who make him a Jew, a Christian, or a Zoroastrian" (Narrated by Bukhari and Muslim). This hadith demonstrates the central role of parents in shaping a child's character and personality.

The morals of parents towards children cover various comprehensive aspects. First, give your child a good name from birth. The Prophet Muhammad SAW said: "Indeed, you will be called on the Day of Resurrection by your names and the names of your fathers, so make your names good" (HR. Abu Dawud). A good name will influence a child's personality and future.

Second, providing religious education from an early age. The Prophet said: "Order your children to pray when they are seven years old, and beat them (with blows that do not hurt) for neglecting prayer when they are ten years old" (HR. Abu Dawud). This shows the importance of instilling religious values from an early age through habituation and example.

Third, treat all children fairly and do not discriminate. The Prophet Muhammad SAW refused to be a witness when a friend gave a gift to only one of his children, and he said: "Be fearful of Allah and do justice to your children" (HR. Bukhari and Muslim). Unfair treatment can give rise to feelings of jealousy, resentment and conflict between siblings that last into adulthood.

Fourth, give enough love and attention. Rasulullah SAW is an exemplary example of loving children. He often kissed his grandchildren, held them, and even shortened his prayers when he heard a child cry. When someone was surprised to see him kissing his grandson, the Messenger of Allah said: "Whoever does not love will not be loved" (HR. Bukhari and Muslim).

Fifth, providing a decent living for children's physical needs, education and talent development. Rasulullah SAW said: "It is enough for a person to be said to be a sin if he neglects the people he depends on" (HR. Abu Dawud). Sixth, be a good role model for children because children learn more from what they see than what they hear. Seventh, provide education in good morals and etiquette in interacting with others. Eighth, educate children with gentleness and wisdom, not with violence which can damage the child's mentality.

In addition to the birrul walidain (guardianship) explained previously, children have a special obligation to respect and serve their parents throughout their

lives. In Islam, parents have a great right over their children, as they have struggled to raise and educate them with great sacrifice, time, energy, thought, and material resources.(Suhaili, 2023).

Children's morals toward their parents encompass various dimensions. First, they should speak politely, gently, and respectfully. They should not interrupt their parents or argue in a disrespectful manner. Second, they should obey their parents' commands as long as they do not conflict with God's commands. If a parent's command conflicts with Islamic law, the child should refuse in a polite manner without hurting their parents' feelings.

Third, ask your parents' permission before doing something important, such as traveling long distances, getting married, or making other major decisions. Fourth, do not walk ahead of your parents as a sign of respect, do not sit before your parents sit, and do not eat before your parents eat. Fifth, do not call your parents by their given names, but use polite and respectful terms such as "father," "mother," or other terms that show respect.

Sixth, helping to lighten the burden of household chores on parents and not just waiting to be ordered. Seventh, maintaining the family's good name by behaving in a commendable manner in society, because a child's behavior will reflect the quality of their parents' upbringing. Eighth, praying for their parents regularly, especially after prayer, asking Allah to forgive their sins and expand their sustenance. Ninth, being patient and devoted even though parents may be harsh or unpleasant, because testing a child's patience with their parents is part of worship.

Friendship or building ties of brotherhood is one of the commendable morals that is highly emphasized in Islam. Rasulullah SAW said: "Whoever wants to expand his sustenance and prolong his life, then let him maintain friendly relations" (HR. Bukhari and Muslim). This hadith shows that friendship has a real positive impact both in this world and in the afterlife, not only in the spiritual dimension but also in the material dimension.

Silaturahmi encompasses relationships with siblings, uncles, aunts,

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grandparents, cousins, and all relatives related by blood or marriage. Islam commands us to maintain good relations with all relatives, not just those who are geographically close or personally familiar.

Forms of social interaction can take various forms. First, regular in-person visits to relatives' homes, especially during important occasions like holidays, family events, or when a relative is ill. Second, communication through various media such as telephone, text messages, or video calls, especially for relatives who live far away. Even if you don't meet in person, regular communication remains valuable as a form of social interaction.(Yasin & Widyanti, 2023).

Third, providing assistance when a family member is in need, whether material assistance, labor, or moral support. Fourth, praying for each other's well-being and success in this world and the hereafter. Fifth, participating in family events such as weddings, births, aqiqahs, circumcisions, or grieving. Sixth, not severing ties despite conflicts or disagreements, but striving to resolve them amicably.

Islam strictly prohibits breaking off friendly relations. Allah SWT says in Surah Muhammad verses 22-23 which means: "So what if you were in power you would cause mischief on the face of the earth and sever family relations? These are the people whom Allah cursed and He deafened their ears and blinded their sight."

In fact, Rasulullah SAW taught that perfect friendship is not just returning visits or kindness from relatives, but visiting and doing good to relatives who break off relations. He said: "The person who continues friendship is not the one who repays (the kindness of his relatives), but the person who continues friendship is the person who, when kinship ties are broken, he reconnects them" (HR. Bukhari).

Conclusion

From an Islamic perspective, family morality is the primary foundation for developing individual character and a harmonious social order. Islam positions the family as a strategic institution that functions not only as a place to fulfill biological

needs but also as a vehicle for moral, spiritual, and social education. Based on a study of the Qur'an, Hadith, and the views of scholars, it can be concluded that family morality is built on the principles of compassion, respect, responsibility, justice, and role modelling. These principles are reflected in the obligation of birrul walidain, a husband-wife relationship based on mu'asyarah bil ma'ruf, the responsibility of parents in educating children, and the obligation to maintain good relations between family members.

The study results show that the implementation of good morals in the family has a significant impact on the psychological well-being of family members, the creation of household harmony, and the formation of a generation with noble character. Conversely, the weakening of the implementation of moral values in the family has the potential to give rise to various social problems, such as family conflict, domestic violence, and strained relationships between family members. Therefore, strengthening morals in the family is an urgent need amid the challenges of modern life, which is characterized by changing values, individualism, and weakening family ties.

Thus, family morality not only has an individual dimension of worship but also has broad implications for social stability and the civilization of the community. Implementing family moral values as taught in Islam is expected to be a solution in building families that are peaceful, loving, and compassionate, and to produce a civilized society with noble personalities and based on solid Islamic values.

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