A Study of Islamic Teachings on the Prevention of Psychological Violence in the Family

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Abstract

As any violent behavior and word that imperils the mental health of others, psychological violence is one of the issues and problems that have several negative outcomes on the family life of individuals. Nowadays, since the issue of psychological violence has received further attention, it seems necessary to analyze the Quranic view in this field in order to respond the ambiguities in this field. In this descriptive-analytical study, the Quranic teachings on the prevention of psychological violence in the family were observed and it was found that Quran contains family-specific moral teachings that are effective in achieving peace and avoiding psychological violence; The need for compassion, adherence to the marriage contract, the need for decent behavior and the need for forgiveness in the family are the most important of these specific moral teachings of the family. On the other hand, the Quran advises everyone in society to self-control in social relations, pay attention to religious values, and following these general principles in social relations is also effective in reducing psychological violence in the family as the smallest social institution.

Keywords: *Psychological Violence; Family; Islam; Decent Behavior*

Introduction

Today, the types of violence such as physical, sexual and body violence have decreased and the rate of psychological violence is increased. Violence is any form of violent behavior that is intentionally performed in order to harm another person. Violence ranges from very violent and traumatic behaviors to negative reactions such as inattention and indifference. Psychological violence is one of the most common types of violence in which the physical and evident dimensions of violence are less visible and the hidden and mental aspects are more visible. This type of violence usually manifests itself in words and actions that hurt the human mind. Psychological violence with the aim of harming the spouse is one of the issues and problems that affect the lives of people in different social groups. Psychological violence is any violent behavior or speech that endangers the mental health of another; This behavior is used in the form of inadmissible criticism, humiliation, slandering, ridicule, insult, obscenity and various threats (Martin,1985, p .1-32).

This social harm, in addition to the detrimental effects on the lives of men and women, causes negative psychological consequences such as lack of security, disruption of social relations and negative effects on the upbringing of children (Saei Arasi & Niknejad,2010, p. 97-122). Social consequences of home violence are also extensive among which, defect in social interactions with family, friends, and others, poor performance in social tasks and performances, conversion of a victim into abuser, and disruption of social health.

In the etiology of psychological violence, some views suggest that violence against women is rooted in the culture and cultural structure of a society, which encourages patriarchy, and stems from their inferior status in relation to men and the patriarchal family system. It is significant in theories of social learning, base incompatibility and resource conflict within the framework of patriarchal cultural structures (Ramos, 2004, p .245).

However, violence is one of the factors that imperils the feeling of security in the home environment. Since the family has always been considered as a sanctuary of sanctity for the comfort and peace of man, domestic violence is not literally compatible with such a concept of the family, since violence destroys the peaceful image of the home and the security gained from kinship.

In this area, functionalist theory also considers violence as a way to continue family functions. From this perspective, the family is a group of people with different genders, ages, interests, and benefits, and because the current hierarchy is not a function of specialization and competence, but based on gender, age, and economic power, therefore, the use of violence as a manifestation of power can remove its functional barriers and return the family to the normal routine of daily life. Violence both increases a man's self-confidence and power to regulate the family structure and also, by creating the ground for the free emergence of emotions, keeps society from its explosive emergence.

In the present study, the set of Quranic teachings that are effective in preventing the occurrence of psychological violence in the family is examined by descriptive-analytical method.

1. Family-Specific Moral Lessons

Because human thought is based on a system of values and insights, human beings can change their family interactions by changing their attitudes. In the Quranic view, man with dignity, in the purposeful system of creation, steps towards absolute perfection and the goal of his creation, and in this way, is bound by moral constraints and his attitudes and beliefs play an essential role in family life. Beliefs such as God's constant supervision of deeds (Surah Qaf: 16), divine justice (Surah Nahl: 90), God's infinite power (Surah Al-Imran: 189) and attitudes full of optimism, loyalty, expediency and dignity, affect all family members. It leads to divine satisfaction. Following the Quranic teachings, due to having an afterlife dimension and regulating desires based on moral values, promotes the control of individuals over their behaviors. In this way, the Quran's emphasis on the transience of worldly life in the minds of the audience strengthens their motivation to face the serious areas of the family. Undoubtedly, adopting a monotheistic Quranic attitude, will lead to adhering to moral principles, reducing tension, and establishing effective communication with family members.

God the Almighty says: *"Whosoever doeth right, whether male or female, and is a believer, him verily we shall quicken with good life, and We shall pay them a recompense in proportion to the best of what they used to do"* (Surah Nahl: 97) According to this verse, both men and women, who do righteous deeds and have a faithful attitude, will be given pure life. In this regard, one of the thinkers writes: Family life is not an end in itself, but a means. In this life, the goal is to absorb and to be absorbed and to reach unity from strangeness, and in order for family life not to be bitter and hateful, not to turn into a gradual death, and not to become the basis of a sinister and hateful life, we recommend men and women, to learn family ethics from the school of Islam.

The most important Quranic moral teachings that are effective in preventing psychological violence in the family are:

A. The Need for Compassion in the Family

The Holy Quran has given great importance to the family and has paid special attention to the family as the axis of attention to the rules, rights, customs and ethics and has strengthened its position with various teachings and instructions. The sensitivity of the family environment and its long-term and sacred goals require that spouses be most careful in being kind to each other and make the home an atmosphere full of kindness and gentleness, because God has purposefully placed man and woman together. There is a recommendation in verses 20 and 21 of Surah Rome in this regard. After referring to the life of the earth after its death and reminding the scattering of human beings on the earth for work and effort and earning sustenance, God says*: "And of His signs is this: He created for you helpmeets from yourselves that ye might find rest in them, and He ordained between you love and mercy. Lo! herein indeed are portents for folk who reflect.",* "And of His signs is that He created for you mates from your own selves that you may take comfort in them." According to this verse, God establishes kindness and mercy between the spouses, and the loving relationship between the spouses requires that there be good mood, forgiveness, mercy, peace, kindness, intimacy, and compassion (Ibn Ashur, 1999, p.236).

B. The Need to Adhere to the Marriage Contract

In the Quranic applications, among all the various human covenants that are concluded in various scenes between individuals and legal entities and nations and governments, the title (thick covenant) refers only to the covenant of marriage, and since the word covenant indicates firmness and truth, and refers to a covenant that is accompanied by a kind of oath and the word *thick* also indicates firmness, firmness and firm stability and somehow emphasizes the concept of covenant, so the descriptive combination of these two words and using them between the covenants of the people only in the bond of marriage, indicates that from the point of view of the Holy Quran, the covenant of marriage is one of the most stable and valuable human covenants. Since the main philosophy of the covenant and the emphasis of the covenant is to increase fidelity to it and prevent breach of covenant, the use of the term covenant in marriage can indicate the extreme need for fidelity to the covenant of marriage and the need for comprehensive commitment to its provisions.

Quranic verses related to marital relations seek to establish a comprehensive jurisprudential principle, moral law that covers the performance and interaction of couples in various fields and leads to fidelity to the covenant of marriage and the stability of the family unit.

In verse (Surah Noor: 21) God has established the formation of the family based on a strong covenant between spouses and in order to converge and their faithfulness to the obligations and requirements of marital bond, it has prescribed reciprocal rights and duties for each of them which are rooted in their nature, beliefs and spirits. The Holy Quran is used in such a way that fidelity and commitment to the marriage covenant is not just a simple moral advice to which spouses are bound, but is the result of a complex of different and interactive actions of spouses that are influenced by their beliefs, attitudes, traits, and behaviors and family upbringing and cultural and social status of a society in which spouses live.

A noteworthy point is the influence of the level of faith and the level of religious beliefs of the spouses in their relationship that the stronger the degree of faith, the more complete and better the observance of Islamic ethics and the degree of fidelity and practical commitment of the couple to the covenant of marriage will also be.

C. Necessity of Decent Behavior in the Family

In the verse *"O ye who believe! It is not lawful for you forcibly to inherit the women (of your deceased kinsmen), nor (that) ye should put constraint upon them that ye may take away a part of that which ye have given them, unless they be guilty of flagrant lewdness. But consort with them in kindness, for if ye hate them it may happen that ye hate a thing wherein Allah hath placed much good.* "Ma'ruf" (Surah Nisa: 19) was considered as something that is not denied by Sharia, custom and morality, and examples of abuse, such as frowning of man, were considered as examples of miscommunication; In addition, the behavior like "Ma'ruf" was considered obligatory.

From the jurists' point of view, the examples of good communication cannot be determined precisely; Because social customs and the degree of civilization and religious morality among each people have created a special concept of good communication; But in short, all things that are considered socially insulting (such as profanity, beating, arguing, humiliation) or things that are in conflict with love for the family and the need for love between spouses (such as leaving the family, ignoring the spouse and his desires, harmful addictions) are examples of miscommunication in family (Rashid Reza, 1998, p .435) .

Contemporary interpreters have mentioned examples such as: gaining satisfaction, maintaining friendship and helping in hardships katozian, 1997, p .219). From the fourteenth century onwards, some contemporary interpretations of the Quran, according to the realities of the time among the public, in the interpretation of the verse, have clarified issues related to women's social freedom and respect for their free personality, and Ayatollah Javadi Amoli has pointed to the scientific and social rights of women, which are of particular importance in contemporary society. In one thirteenth-century interpretation, according to some, one of the examples of *good communication* was considered to be good-natured with the wife even if she hurts him badly (Ibn Ajiba, 1997, p. 120).

The most beautiful point in this verse is that in all stages of life, both in normal and in critical situations, what God wants is the preservation of moral values, known as "Ma'ruf" – what the healthy human soul generally likes. Behavior, love and respect, and observance of duties and responsibilities from the husband and wife, has no source other than morality and its principles.

Because the responsibility of the family lies with the man, there is often oppression and injustice in the area of women's personality and rights. It may be thought that according to Islamic law, the husband, as the head of the family, is allowed to prevent the woman's freedom and ignore the woman's scientific, social and other rights; But according to the principle of *good communication*, which considers the good behavior of the husband with his wife necessary, such a perception is considered a kind of oppression.

This verse, while obliging the spouses to observe proper relations with each other, opposes any oppression and abuse in the interactions of the spouses; But since in human societies, especially in the society of the age of revelation, delusional and oppressive ideas were more common about women and as a result there was a possibility of abuse by men as heads of families, so the verse, reminds and guides men to communicate well.

It should be noted that in a verse that some interpreters of the Quran have taken from verse 34 of Nisa that the Quran allows women to be beaten, the main purpose is only to show a practical response to the very specific issue of having intercourse with a man other than her husband, or her quit from the path of fidelity to the marriage contract. This practical response also aims to change the woman's behavior and return to the boundaries of the family.

D. The Need for Forgiveness in the Family

In Quranic verses, the tendency to benevolence and forgiveness is recommended in order to preserve the foundations of the family and avoid self-centeredness, because this mechanism facilitates the realization of moderation in family behaviors (Furqan: 67, Asra: 29).

In psychology, forgiveness is an intra-individual process in which the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral aspects of the individual change in the face of error and the wrongdoer. One of the experts in the definition of forgiveness writes: Forgiveness is a motivation that reduces anger and revenge against the wrongdoer and increases positive emotions and replaces negative ones (Macaskill,2005, 1239). This concept is expressed in the dictionary of Islamic concepts with the word (al-ʿafwa) and in the word it means to quit, to release (Ibn Faris, 1991, p 340). In other words, forgiving the mistakes of others is done to rule the spirit of purity and intimacy and the spread of moral values.

Due to the fact that futurism motivates people, people in the family with the aim of gaining divine satisfaction, face the mistakes of others with respect (Shoura: 43, Fosselat: 34-35, Nahl: 42) and in stressful situations, control their anger (Al-Imran: 134).

The almighty God, in one of the verses with the axis of familial interactions says*: "O ye who believe! Lo! among your wives and your children there are enemies for you, therefor beware of them. And if ye efface and overlook and forgive, then lo! Allah is Forgiving, Merciful"* (At-taghabun: 14) O you who have faith! Indeed, you have enemies among your spouses and children; so beware of them. Yet if you excuse, forbear, and forgive, then Allah is indeed all-forgiving, all-merciful. In portraying the image of the pious, the Holy Quran considers forgiveness and control over inner anger as among their outstanding characteristics and says: *"Those who spend (of that which Allah hath given them) in ease and in adversity, those who control their wrath and are forgiving toward mankind; Allah loveth the good";* Those who forgive in ease and adversity, and suppress their anger, and excuse [the faults of] the people; Accordingly, although individuals are responsible for the proper upbringing of their families (Tahrim: 6, Taha: 132), but they should not show intensity of action, but it is appropriate to use the method of forgiveness.

Thus, it can be acknowledged that forgiving family members with the motivation of inner peace, improving relationships with the wrongdoer and getting rid of negative feelings, results in overcoming resentment and avoiding anger and retaliatory behavior in the family.

2. *Comprehensive Moral Lessons in the Community*

In order to effect more and be better effected and for the durability and health of communications, human beings need to apply principles that are like the law governing their social relations, and ignoring these principles creates many problems in human social relations. The Quran advises all audiences to many of these principles, and adherence to these general principles, as it is effective in the formation of a peaceful society, will also be effective in the mental health of families as the smallest social institution. The most important general moral teachings in society that are also effective in reducing psychological violence in the family are:

A. Self-Control in Social Relationships

Self -control can be considered as a factor that causes changes in human identity and behavioral patterns. Despite the attention of contemporary psychologists to this issue, Islamic teachings have paid special attention to it and have noticed the need for Muslims to pay attention. Self-control plays an effective role in preventing people from committing deviant behaviors. Self-control is the ability to follow reasonable demands, adjust behaviors according to the situation, and delay demands within socially

accepted frameworks, without the direct intervention and guidance of another person. In other words, self-control is the control of one's behavior, actions, and thoughts by oneself and it is induced by mental maturity and the promotion of human beings to the highest stages (Sarukhani, 1997, p .717). This state leads to the performance of duties without the supervision of an external agent and threats, allurement and coercion (Alwani, 2001, p .67).

Researchers use the term self-control in situations where people engage in behaviors that overcome very strong tensions and change their desires in a way that requires stopping a goal to achieve a goal with longer term advantage. Psychologists believe that religious beliefs as an internal source can be very useful in self-control. From this point of view, religious beliefs cause the delaying of hedonism, reducing criminal behaviors, and gaining a high degree of self-control (Kivetz, & Yuhang, 2006, p.123). Researchers consider this ability to be one of the characteristics of a growing personality (Shaarinejad, 2006, p. 425) In other words, the ability to control oneself and the feeling that one can control oneself is one of the characteristics of a healthy personality.

The concept of self-control in revelatory teachings is a platform for removing obstacles to reform and strengthening relationships. Strengthening the family is the basis for the optimal growth and development of each member of the family. Therefore, any action or behavior that causes anxiety, worry and disorder in the family environment is condemned. Piety is one of the most important religious issues and also one of the most important moral virtues that has a tremendous effect on individual and social behavior. According to the verses, this attribute is a criterion and the degree to which human truth is measured (Surah Hujrat: 13). In the Holy Quran, thoughtful phrases of the word piety are mentioned including: the best baggage (Surah Baqarah: 197), the companion of justice (Surah Maeda: 8), the most beautiful cover (Surah Araaf: 26), human-growing and polite-creating (Surah Hujrat: 3), enlightening and knowledge-creating (Surah Baqarah: 228), deepening the cognitive forces (Surah Anfal: 29), the cause of forgiveness of sins and glorious reward (Surah Talagh: 2). It can be acknowledged that in a Quranic point of view, basically, a life with the basis of self-control in front of divine commands, is not comparable to a life devoid of this basis.

God the Almighty says: *"Is he who founded his building upon duty to Allah and His good pleasure better; or he who founded his building on the brink of a crumbling, overhanging precipice so that it toppled with him into the fire of hell? Allah guideth not wrongdoing folk."* (Tawbah: 109) "Is he who founds his building on Godwariness and [the pursuit of Allah's] pleasure better-off or he who founds his building on the brink of a collapsing bank which collapses with him into the fire of hell?"

According to the interpreters, managing the soul and organizing the motives, desires and behaviors is possible only in the shadow of piety (Tabatabai, 1996, p .48). Therefore, piety refers to keeping the human soul free from what harms it or restraining oneself from sin and prohibitions (Makarem Shirazi, p. 428). Self-preservation of desires is the avoidance of the pests of the evolution of the soul and self-control against sins and lusts, which have become the customs and habits for human beings.

B. Paying Attention to Religious Values in Social Relations

Quranic verses, while referring to the common nature of men and women, emphasize their common mission to adhere to human values and perfections. (Surah Nisa: 1; Surah Hujrat: 12). It also recognizes the principle of marriage in order to dominate mercy and friendship and to achieve peace and tranquility.

God in verse 132 of Surah Taha emphasized the need to strengthen the spirit of bondage and patience in doing worships "*And enjoin upon thy people worship, and be constant therein. We ask not of thee a provision: We provided for thee. And the sequel is for righteousness."*. Bid your family to prayer and be steadfast in maintaining it, because this prayer is a source of purity and intimacy of heart for you and your family, and strengthens the soul and permanence of the remembrance of God. Then He adds that

if the order of prayer is given to you and your family, its benefits and blessings are only for you. We do not ask you for sustenance, albeit we give you sustenance. This kind of care does not add anything to the greatness of God, but is a great asset for the development of human beings and the higher class of education. The most important religious values in social relations are:

- Avoiding useless arguments

Frivolous quarrel means dialogue with strife and militancy in order to overcome the other side. God says in the Qur'an: *"And if they wrangle with thee, say: Allah is Best Aware of what ye do".* (Surah Hajj: 68)

- Avoiding relying on others

Condescending and showing off what we have done to others is considered very strong and disgusting. God says in the Qur'an: *" O ye who believe! Render not vain your almsgiving by reproach and injury, like him who spendeth his wealth only to be seen of men and believeth not in Allah and the Last Day. His likeness is as the likeness of a rock whereon is dust of earth; a rainstorm smiteth it, leaving it smooth and bare. They have no control of aught of that which they have gained. Allah guideth not the disbelieving folk.* " (Surah Baqarah: 264)

- Avoid revealing the secrets of others

God does not like exposing the evils of others and shouting in bad language, it means to reveal and expose, and the word is "alsuw" includes any aspect of bad. God the Almighty is the coverer of defects and does not like to expose the evils of others unless in the case of the *oppressors whose harm have become frequent in the society and has exceeded the limit.* God says in the Qur'an: *"Allah loveth not the utterance of harsh speech saves by one who hath been wronged. Allah is ever Hearer, Knower".* (Surah Nisa: 148)

- Avoiding slandering others

Whoever commits a mistake or a sin and then attributes it to a sin has certainly borne an evident vilification, slandering creates some kind of rupture and draws the atmosphere towards distrust and suspicion and brings bad outcomes. God says in the Qur'an: *"And whoso committeth a delinquency or crime, then throweth (the blame) thereof upon the innocent, hath burdened himself with falsehood and a flagrant crime."* (Surah Nisa: 112)

- Avoid ridiculing others

Mocking means mentioning the words that cause other people to go out and insult them. In these verses, people clearly did not stop making fun of each other in order to maintain the spirit of solidarity and empathy in the Islamic society. God says in the Qur'an: *"O ye who believe! Let not a folk deride a folk who may be better than they (are), not let women (deride) women who may be better than they are; neither defame one another, nor insult one another by nicknames. Bad is the name of lewdness after faith. And whoso turneth not in repentance, such are evil-doers."(Surah Al-Hujurat:11)*

- Avoid commenting without knowledge

Denying a comment without knowing the limits of a person's comment on things he is not familiar with is ugly because in most cases it causes many mistakes. God says in the Qur'an:" (O man), follow not that whereof thou hast no knowledge. Lo! the hearing and the sight and the heart - of each of these it will be asked." (Surah Asra: 36)

Adherence to these principles in social interactions is essential for the permanence and stability of human relationships and the optimization, consolidation and health of social relationships and is

considered as an important factor in reducing psychological violence in society. In this regard, the family is the first and most stable social institution in which human identity and sociability of the individual is formed and has caused the acceptance of social values and norms, and the transfer of patterns of relationships and interaction to other social institutions.

Conclusion

The family is a deep and lasting bond of several people to live in a single space, that is, without the realization of this bond, the family has no meaning. This depends on the degree of bonding of its members. So, for the efficiency of the family, the communication between family members is emphasized and this issue is among the most important issues on the health and growth of individuals as well as dynamism and all-round development in society. According to the Holy Quran the health of any society depends on the health of the family and the health of the family depends on the set of relationships and interactions that exist between members of a family. The family is generally considered to be a place where people consider themselves safe and sheltered. It is a place where peace, tranquility and harmony should rule, and it is the best place for adults to live and the best place for children to grow and develop emotionally and physically, because of their intimate, emotional and physical relationships.

According to the verses of the Quran, the purpose of the creation of a man and a woman and the interaction of a spouse is to achieve peace" *He created for you helpmeets from yourselves that ye might find rest in them, and He ordained between you love and mercy"* (Surah Rome: 21); And this issue is met from the path of friendly behaviors and the effort of each to meet others' needs (kindness and mercy). Needless to say, all the factors that reduce the peace of the family and consequently the emotional bond between men and women, because it is contrary to the purpose of the family, are not divine favors. The set of Islamic teachings about the family leads us to a system that has foundations that meet the spiritual and physical needs of the family.

Islam's profound point of view of family life has led it to recommend the most beautiful behavior in interactions between members. In this system, self-control in order to grow and be in harmony with transcendent desires and in conflict with deterrent and humane tendencies, is the bedrock of judgment and selection of opposing tendencies in the family. Promoting the power of self-control and the evolution of behaviors within the family, according to the Quranic point of view, will lead to healthy, safe and developed behaviors.

A comprehensive look at the verses related to the famous association between spouses, including the above-mentioned verse, draws a moral model centered on morality, the result of which is a gift such as calming the spouses and strengthening the warm hearth of the family and defending women's personality and rights; A law from which emerges the attention to the demands of spouses, non-abuse of the right to head the family, consultation and exchange of views, forgiveness and sacrifice, assistance and cooperation, loyalty, confidentiality, fairness and good mood, and so on.

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