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# The Role of Religion in Conscience Reawakening of the Youth

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Abstract: In many countries of the world youth constitutes large number of population in which their conscience is abuse, most especially in underdeveloped and developing countries, some were left without formal and informal education that will drive and reprimand their character positively. They are also left with various immoralbehaviors peculiar to their dwelling end within their various societies. Many of these countries, youth have neither shelter nor food and security, they become vulnerable to any immodest activity in lieu without invoking the verdict of Allah in their ramifications of life due to the absolutely absence of religion in their lives. Furthermore, absence of religion can be devastating onthe youth. This paper studies the role of religion as a motivator in imparting ethics and morality to the youth by conforming their senses towards achieving right conducts in this world and the implication of its paired. The reawakening of the youth towards religion in combatting evil tendencies and accordance of rewards(... therein all that the one's inner-selves could desire, all that the eyes could delight in and will be abide therein forever)cannot be emphasized. The study reveals that youth are victims of society violence and prone to psychological imbalance. Using the primary and secondary sources of information, this paper identified the role of religion in reawakening the youth as contained in the Our'an and Sunnah. The paper recommends that Religious leaders (Muslim leaders) have serious role to play in imparting religious teachingin the communities by educating and enlightening them about the true teaching of Islam.

#### I. INTRODUCTION

In the name of Allah, most gracious most Merciful. All praises and thanks are due to Allah the Lord and Cherisher of the universe. We praise Him and seek His forgiveness. Whosoever has been guided by Allah, none can misguide him and whosoever has been misguided by Allah, none can guide him. I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah. He is alone and has no partner or associate in His sovereignty and I also bear witness that our spiritual chief, our apostle and our true Prophet Muhammad (SAW) is His true servant and true messenger. May Allah bestow His peace and blessings on the noblest of the Prophets, Muhammad (SAW), his companions, his household and all those who followed him in righteousness till the day of reckoning.

We Muslims believed, Allah the Almighty has send his last Prophet with His universal religion alone with His last Holy book who has the solutions to all our disputes and challenges, the Prophet was saddled with the responsibility of explaining the Qur'an to His people which marked the evolution of Hadith as means of practices and teaching of Prophet Muhammad (SAW). 'Aishah the wife of the Prophet was reported saying: ''the Prophet character embodied the Qur'an.''(Bukhari) This shows, whether the Prophet has explicitly explains the Qur'an verbatim or not his body language is also a means of explanation of the Qur'an. Whereas the Holy Qur'an has enjoined Muslims to obey the messenger whether they like it or not and also to abide by His Teachings with absolute obedience, piety and imitation. The Qur'an says:

Rich (free of All wants), worthy of All praise." (Qur'an: 60:6)

However, it is part of the cardinal responsibilities of every parent to train their children morally, educationally, productively and religiously according to the teaching of Islam so that Islam can be proud of them in this world and the hereafter where both the parent and children will be awarded according to their deed, Allah the Almighty said:

چۈ ۈ ۇ ۋ ۋ و و ۋ ۋ ي ي ېېرىيانا ئىئى ئونۇ ئۇ ئۇ چ التحريم: ٦

"O you who believe! Ward off from yourselves and your families a fire (Hell) whose fuel is men and stones, over which are (appointed) angels stern (and) severe, who disobey not, (from executing) the Commands they receive from Allah, but do that which they are commanded." (Qur'an:66:7)

Therefore, this research is a survey on how religious teaching can be use to reprimand the crooks youth and to combatand expunge violence across the globe and in particular countries that are facing security challenges base on the aforementioned in which my dear country Nigeria cannot be exception. This can only be

achieve with religious upbringing and with sound and western education and by modeling their appropriate behavior right from tender age, by understanding the right of children in Islam, by rising our children in Islamic way and by knowing their psychological awareness and feelings to be able to guide them religiously.

#### II. SURVEY OF ISLAMIC UP BRINGING

Today I want us to look at the Islamic way of bringing up a child. This is because of the relationship that existed between Prophet Ibrahim and his son Prophet Ismail (peace be upon both of them) which made it possible for the son to submit himself for the great sacrifice that Prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him) was about to make. The Qur'an said in surah As-Saffat:102, thus:

ج ئی ئی ئی ی یہ یہ نے خ خ م ہی ہی ہے ج خ خ م ہی ہی ہے ہے تھ کہ الصافات: ۱۰۲

And, when he (his son) was old enough to walk with him, he said: o'' my son! I have seen in a dream that I am slaughtering you (offer you in sacrifice to Allah), so look what you think! He said: ''o my father! Do that which you are commanded, insha' Allah (if Allah will), you shall find me of As-Sabirin (the patient ones, etc).

Unfortunately, most parents have forgotten about their responsibility of bringing up their children in the proper way prescribed by Islam. This presentation therefore seeks to lay bare the principles Islam wants us to adopt in bringing up our children. It is important to point out that Allah says in Qur'an 66:6 that "O you who believe! Ward off from yourselves and your families a fire (Hell) whose fuel is men and stones..." This places an arduous task on us all to deliver in this respect. This is even reiterated by the assertion by the Holy Prophet that "all of you are shepherds or care takes and you will be questioned about how you took care of those under your care." (Bukhari)

The Holy Prophet is also reported to have said that: "there is no inheritance that a parent can bequeath to his child which is better than good manners". Again, the Holy Prophet is reported to have said that: "the rights of the child over his parents are; to give him a good name, to teach him the book of Allah and to ensure that he marries if he becomes of age to do so". (Al-Hakeem)

Indeed giving a good name to a child starts from the time that the baby is conceived. The Holy Prophet (SAW) taught us that in order to have an obedient child that the devil will not approach, we should at the time of having sexual intercourse with our spouses say "BISMILLAAHI, ALLAHUMMA JAN-NIB-NASH-SHAITWAANI WA JAN-NIBISH-SHAI-TWAANA MAA RAZAQ-TANAA." (Abu-Dawood)

We also have to bear in mind that no child is born with a language, ideas, values etc but they acquire it from their immediate environment. It therefore behaves the parents that they get the right environment for learning, playing and socializing for their children. The parents must therefore teach the children good things when they begin to speak. Unfortunately, some children are allowed to engage in the "normal" everyday insults that elderly people go through when they begin to speak. What this does is that when these children are left unattended to, they learn by "picking" the insults. If they do not get anyone to insult in town, they come home to insult their parents, elders and members of their household and the parent will at times insult them in return. The Prophet (SAW) has said in a Hadith reported by Muslim, thus: "Do not offer bad prayers to your children, you may not know whether is a time when Allah is answering prayers." (1994:3014)

That is why it is important that we do not say those bad things in the presence of the children by rather encourage them to say good things. Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) is reported to have said that the Holy Prophet (SAW) said that we should teach our children the ''Kalimah'' when they start talking. In yet another tradition, the Holy Prophet is reported to have taught his household to recite what literally means "He, to whom belongs the sovereignty of the heavens and the earth, and who did not take a son, nor has He any partner in sovereignty, and He created everything, and then determined it in a precise measure.

چۇ ۋ و و ۋ ۋ ې يې بې بې دىد ئا ئا ئەئە ئو ئو ئۇ ئۇ چ الفرقان: ٢ ''He to Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and who has begotten no son (children or offspring) and for Whom there is no partner in the dominion. He has created everything, and has measured it exactly according to its measurements.'' (Qur'an 25:2)" when anyone begun to speak.

### III. GOOD EDUCATION

The Holy Prophet (SAW) also spoke about giving the child good education. In this contemporary time, I dare say, that it should be both Islamic and secular education. If we fail to educate our children, they will grow up to become our enemies. We can cite the example of the boy who beat his father during the caliphate of Umar IbnKhattab (may Allah be pleased with him). When the father reported his son to Umar IbnKhattab, he was invited for questioning. After Umar had read out the complaint against him and admonished him to be a good child, the son enquired from Umar IbnKhattab whether the Holy Prophet taught the rights of parents over their children but did not say anything about the rights of the child over his parents. After Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) had explained the rights of the child over the parents, the boy responded "my father did not use the right means to marry my mother. He took advantage of her. In addition, my father did not give me a

good name. He named me as ''JA-ALAN'', otherwise known as ''AL-KHAFASH'', which means a bat so I behaved like an animal. Then Umar asked the father to take his son home and teach him good manners. (As-Sallabee 2010:113)Some western Philosophers alluded the following on the importance of education, thus: ''Education has for its object the formation of character.''(Herbert Spencer). The aim of education is the knowledge, not of facts, but of values. (W. R.Inge)

Besides, we must lead exemplary lives that our children could emulate. We must not lie to our children or teach them to lie by making them lie on our behalf. We could also learn from the relationship that existed between Luqman and his son which has been captured in Qur'an:

O my son! If it be (anything) equal to the weight of a grain of mustard seed, and though it be in a rock, or in the heavens or in the earth, Allah will bring it forth. Verily, Allah is subtle (in bringing out that grain), well-Aware (of its place). O my son! Perform Salat, enjoin (people) for Al-Ma'ruf (Islamic Monotheism and all that is good), and forbid (people) from Al-Munkar (i.e disbelief in the oneness of Allah, polytheism of all kinds and all that is evil and and bad), and bear with patience whatever befall you. Verily! These are some of the important commandments ordered by Allah with no exemption. And turn not your face away from men with pride, nor walk in insolence through the earth. Verily, Allah likes not each arrogant boaster. And be moderate (or show no insolence) in your walking, and lower voice. Verily, the harshest of all voices is the voice (braying) of the ass. (Qur'an: 16-19)

In the upbringing of our children, we should try as much as we could not to discriminate against any of them. We should also not be prejudicial when it comes to listening to them and forming an opinion about some incidents that might have happened.

#### IV. RAISING CHILDREN THE ISLAMIC WAY

In many Muslim households, Islam is taught to children in isolation of other concepts and values and we rely far too heavily on the four hours of Sunday school to teach our children an ample amount of information. We also begin teaching basic Islamic values to children too late with regard to their age, and often we may not be teaching them what they need to grow into happy and practicing Muslims and human beings. The impetus is on us as a whole community, not just on those who are blessed to be parents already, to work together to make sure children are surrounded with Islamic values and actions rather than just empty rhetoric.

In recent years, many communities have been forced to address a lack of Islamically appropriate conduct on the part of their youth. We have typically attempted to remedy the situation through a set of predictable steps that include the following: sending the youth to Islamic lectures and events, immersing them in the culture "back home", or hoping that this is a phase they will tire of eventually. However, our approach to teaching our children about Islam consistently falls short of success because while we know that a child must be taught to read and write beginning at the age of five, we rarely instill in them the need to pray on time at the same age. Very often, the social surroundings of a person are blamed as the reason behind who and what they turn out to be. There is much to disagree with in this regard; however, the blame cannot be placed solely on the parents ever. The reality is far more complicated and to say "it's the parent's fault" would be absurd, considering that historically we have had Prophets whose children have disobeyed Islam. Lack of authentic and sound Islamic education still remains a great challenge to many Muslim youths. This is largely because there are no genuine scholars to teach the religion or lacks teaching method or they are itinerants. This is why some are brainwashed and falsely indoctrinated with bad ideologies and eventually radicalized into fighting their parents, societies and even government on the account that their fake Sheikh has told them that they are unbelievers and can be killed. We should therefore seek for sound knowledge, religious and conventional.

### V. WHAT ARE THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN IN ISLAM?

Before practical measures can be taken to teach important Islamic concepts and behaviors to children, we must recognize that all children in our community hold rights against us. We are currently failing as a collective Muslim community in fulfilling our obligations towards the youngest of God's followers and creations. On the Day of Judgment, each and every one of us is accountable for our work done towards helping our young in attaining an understanding of Islam.

What exactly are the rights of children in Islam? Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said to Ali (peace be upon him): "O Ali, there are as many rights of children incumbent upon parents as there are rights of parents incumbent upon children." (As-Sallaabee 2008:203)

However, according to my understanding, children have the following rights:

- 1. The right to life.
- 2. The right to belong to a legitimate family.

- 3. The right to have a good name.
- 4. The right to have proper maintenance.
- 5. The right to have a basic secular and religious education.
- 6. The right to be brought up according to Islam.

Keeping in mind that the Prophet (SAW) have set forth for us guidelines in how to raise children according to Islam, below are suggestions and steps necessary to facilitate a proper Islamic upbringing in our community.

#### VI. MODELING APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

Prophet Muhammad divided the life of a child from the age of infancy to 21 into three stages, each lasting seven years. During the first stage from 0-7 years old, it must be a priority to instill in children the values necessary for a proper upbringing and to work on character building. Those familiar with child development will agree that that is not the period to introduce complex concepts in Islam and nor is it appropriate to use fear and shame as a tactic to get children to comply with Islamic laws. Instead, Prophet Muhammad teaches us that at this stage we must model appropriate behavior and treat children with grace and respect: in the Hadith of Abu-Dawood, the Prophet was reported saying, thus:

"Respect your children and teach them good behavior and Allah will forgive (your sins)." (2000:119)

We must model Islamically appropriate behavior before young children in our community at the mosque, community events and in day-to-day activities regardless of whether or not we are the parents. Children at this age absorb information quickly and it's up to us to show them what is and is not acceptable. It is important to also model certain behaviors out loud for example, when beginning a meal we must say "Bismillah," or "in the name of God," and when we finish a meal we should thank God. It is also important to watch our language, keep calm and remain respectful before children because we are teaching them how to act. Children must be in a positive environment and the Prophet stresses upon the need for this too: "It is among the rights of the child on his father to teach him good manners and keep him in good society." (Al-Hakeem)

### VII. TEACHING ISLAM TO CHILDREN

When children are 8 to 15 years old, they are in the second stage of their Islamic upbringing and adolescence. Children during the first two stages are taught the steps of prayer and ablution, until eventually at the age of nine they should be able to master prayer. In many texts and traditions, it is mentioned that once a child has learned how to pray, God will forgive the sins of the parents. It is important to remember that teaching prayer in gradual steps is more logical than teaching prayer in a very short amount of time (a week, for example).

During this stage, children must be taught formal Islamic knowledge. Many families have opted to entrust this large task to Sunday Schools. This approach remains problematic because children are immersed in secular education five days a week and in religious education only a few hours a week. There must be a form of collaboration between parents and weekend Islamic schools so that children are getting the time and attention needed to meaningfully learn and implement Islamic laws and values. During this stage, females also begin to wear the headscarf; however, they must understand that the basis of *Hijab* is modesty, not simply wearing a cloth on their heads, and that modesty manifests itself in our speech, conduct, friendships, and dress. For both genders, it is important during this stage to limit and eliminate their exposure to un-Islamic television shows, books, and movies due to the large element of anti-religious rhetoric that lies within such things. Furthermore, we must work with the youth at this stage to develop fun and fulfilling alternatives to activities that are forbidden in Islam while also providing them with the reasoning as to why certain activities and television shows are not appropriate for a Muslim to watch.

The final stage of Islamic Upbringing takes place during the ages of 15 to 21, and at this point the hard work of the community in working together to raise a child should manifest itself in the child's conduct. Unfortunately, many families begin Islamic upbringing at this age! This is an ineffective method as we have witnessed and instead, during this stage, we should be reinforcing important ideas and behaviors taught in the first two stages. The Prophet has suggested that parents now act as a "friend" to their child rather than continue in the role of a teacher. However, we have seen some parents take this concept too far and are unable to remind their teenagers of Islamic answers to the typical teenage problems and concerns. For one, we see far too many Muslim families allowing their teenagers to mix freely with the other gender and attend events like prom. This lends itself to a lack of Islamic knowledge on the part of both parent and teenager. Prophet Muhammad said the two Hadith reported by Tirmidhi: "A virtuous child is a flower from the flowers of Paradise." He also said, "Among the good fortunes of a man is the virtuous child." (Tirmidhi: 112-114)

Islamic upbringing begins in the early childhood years and should continue throughout the teenage years. It is the responsibility of all members of the community to work together to instill in our children the best social, moral, and religious values and these values are found only in Islamic behavior and knowledge, this is the only way that would poster awakening to our youth.

#### VIII. PSYCHOLOGICAL AWARENESS AND FEELINGS FOR THE CHILDREN.

**Psychological** refer to the love and compassion and tenderness which Allah the exalted, has aroused in parent for their children. Thereby feeling of abhorrence emerges for the customs and habits of the Days of ignorance concerning daughters. One may also know what the parent must do when a conflict arises between the interests of the child and the considerations of Islam. Love of children is natural to parent that is to look after them and to be kind and compassionate to them. Without this motivation human beings could have been wiped out off the face of the earth. The holy Qur'an has categorized children as the adornment of the world, thus:

Wealth and children are the adornment of the life of this world. But the good righteous deed (five compulsory prayers, deeds of Allah's obedience, good and nice talk, remembrance of Allah with glorification, praises and thanks, etc.) that last, are better with your lord for rewards and better in respect of hope. (Qur'an: 18:46)

Children are a great blessing of Allah for which we must thank him, the Qur'an said:

"Then we gave you once again, a return of victory over them. And we helped you with wealth and children and made you more numerous in man power." (Our an: 17:6)

Further, if the children are pious and God fearing then they are delight of the eyes, Qur'an says:

'And those who say: 'our lord! Bestow on us from our wives and our offspring who will be the comfort of our eyes, and make us leaders for the Muttaqun'' (Qur'an:25:74)

The result of the love and compassion that Allah, the exalted, has put into the hearts of parents ensures that children are properly trained and that their needs are met.

### IX. LOVE OF CHILDREN AND BEING AFFECTIONATE TO THEM IS A DIVINE GIFT.

Love of children, affection and tender and kind feelings for them as unique sentiments. They have a great say in their guidance and training, care and nourishment. One who is bereft of mercy has the characteristics of a surly stonehearted, cruel person. These attribution have an adverse effect on children; they tend to be rebellious and aberrant and are lost in the deep maze of ignorance, villainy and wretchedness. Therefore, Islam urges us to develop the sentiments of love and mercy. It has warned us against being devoid of these qualities. (Tirmidhi) It was reported that a person is embracing his child, the Prophet (SAW) asked him: "Do you feel compassion for the child? "Yes, I do" was the polite reply he said, "Allah is Merciful to you more than you to the child, He is the most Merciful (of those show mercy)." (Bukhari)

On the other hand, the Prophet (SAW) severely admonished those who were not merciful to their children. Once, when he kissed Hasan bin Ali, a person said: "I have ten children and I have never shown love to any of them." He looked towards the person in astonishment and said, "He who is not merciful will not be shown any mercy." (Bukhari)

In another vain, a woman visited 'Aishah, thus:

Aishah gave her three dates, she gave to her two sons one each and kept one with herself, both the boys ate their share and then looked towards their mother with expectant eyes for more, she halved the date that she had kept with herself and gave them a piece each, when 'Aishah related this to the Holy Prophet, he said; 'How does this amaze you? Her tenderness to her children has earned her the mercy of Allah. (Bukhari)

The Holy Prophet (SAW) very softhearted. His grandson was in a moribund state, he took him in his laps and tears rolled down his eyes, sa'ad may Allah be please with him asked: "O messenger of Allah! What is the matter? He said; "this is the mercy of Allah that he has put into the hearts of men." In another version it is put thus: "Of His bondsmen, Allah the exalted puts mercy into the heart of whom He wills. Allah the exalted is merciful to those of His slaves who are merciful to others." (Muslim)We should therefore express love for our children to enable us council them according to the teaching of religion.

### X. CONCLUSION

Finally, The role of religion in the conscience awakening of our youth cannot be over emphasize in order to have peaceful, secured and serene community and environment. it behooves us as parents to teach our youth religion, council and admonish them, engage them with other various religious activities and real Islamic teachers that will impart the religion without sentiment and vulnerable to repulsive indoctrination, advice our youth so that they are not misled by their friends. We also need to select the kind of books they read and type of films they have to watch and their social network friends and groups. We also need to inspect their work and assist them with their homework. May Allah give us good and obedient children and may He admit us into AlJannah, the garden of bliss. AAMIIN.

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