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THE CHILDREN'S CONSTITUTION FROM THE HOLY QUR'AN AND ITS IMPACT ON SOCIAL PEACE (THE ISSUE OF BREASTFEEDING AS A MODEL)

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ABSTRACT

This research examines Qur'anic verses related to children by organizing their content systematically in order to derive general principles governing adult behavior toward children and to clarify the impact of these principles on social relationships. The study proposes a practical Qur'anic model that focuses on breastfeeding as a central issue and explores its role in reinforcing social peace among individuals and institutions. An inductive - analytical approach is employed to collect, classify, and analyze relevant Qur'anic verses, alongside a descriptive - deductive method to extract general rules pertaining to children. Particular attention is given to the early stage of childhood, especially the period of breastfeeding, with the aim of establishing sound and stable social relationships. The research formulates ten constitutional principles concerning children derived from the Holy Qur'an. These principles encompass, and in some aspects exceed, the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as they explicitly and implicitly address the child's physical, intellectual, psychological, and moral well-being. They are grounded in foundational Islamic legal maxims, such as prioritizing the prevention of harm over the acquisition of benefit and emphasizing prevention as superior to remediation. For each principle, the study identifies appropriate legislative and ethical implications while adopting the overarching objective of maximizing benefits and minimizing harm in a manner that preserves societal interests and promotes peace and security. The study concludes by recommending the formation of a comprehensive research team to catalogue and integrate existing studies on children in order to enhance their effective contribution to social peace at both local and global levels.

KEYWORDS: Children's Constitution. Children's rights. Societal peace. Social approach in Qur'anic interpretation (Al-Tafsir al-Ijtima'i).

1. INTRODUCTION

Among the manifestations of divine wisdom is that God has honored human beings with reason, through which they are able to distinguish between what is beneficial and what is harmful, and to prioritize the prevention of harm over the pursuit of benefit. Sound reasoning naturally leads to seeking stability, balance, and protection from collapse in both material and social structures. Just as strong foundations extend the lifespan of physical buildings and shield them from decay, the same principle applies to the human and social structures upon which civilizations are built.

The organization of social life depends on systems that regulate intellectual, psychological, moral, and physical dimensions of human existence. This regulation is achieved through legislation and institutions responsible for its implementation, enabling individuals to live within a framework where rights and duties are clearly defined. For this reason, nations throughout history have devoted considerable effort to drafting constitutions, forming committees to articulate them, and establishing judicial bodies to interpret and amend their provisions. Roman law, for example, evolved over nearly thirteen centuries, reflecting cumulative legal experience and sustained scholarly effort (Abu Zahrah, 1961; Durant, 1988).

With the revelation of the final divine message, the Qur'an introduced a comprehensive legal and ethical framework addressing the social realities of its time while remaining capable of guiding future generations. Qur'anic legal texts are characterized by their capacity to yield rulings for emerging circumstances through explicit and implicit indications (*ẓanniyy al-dalālah*). Consequently, Islamic juristic tradition has continuously engaged in deriving rulings that respond to evolving social conditions, as evidenced by the vast corpus of jurisprudential literature.

Within this comprehensive framework, the Qur'an accords particular attention to children, recognizing them as the foundation of societal continuity and future development. Qur'anic guidance concerning children extends from the earliest stages of human existence and encompasses physical, intellectual, psychological, and moral dimensions. Despite the breadth of Qur'anic discourse on childhood, contemporary scholarship has often treated children's rights, breastfeeding, and social peace as separate themes, without integrating them into a unified constitutional model derived directly from the Qur'an.

This research addresses this gap by examining

Qur'anic verses related to children through an inductive - analytical approach, with particular focus on the issue of breastfeeding. Breastfeeding is mentioned explicitly in several Qur'anic passages and occupies a central position in shaping early childhood development and family relations. Preliminary review of existing literature reveals extensive medical, legal, and institutional attention to breastfeeding; however, these studies rarely explore its broader societal implications, especially its role in fostering social peace.

Accordingly, this study seeks to formulate a Qur'anic "Children's Constitution" by extracting and organizing key principles governing adult conduct toward children and by demonstrating how these principles contribute to social harmony. Through detailed analysis of Qur'anic verses - supported by classical exegesis and jurisprudential insights - the research aims to present a practical model that highlights breastfeeding as a mechanism for reinforcing peace within families and, by extension, society at large. It is hoped that this approach will contribute to contemporary discussions on children's rights by grounding them in a coherent Qur'anic constitutional vision capable of addressing both individual and collective well-being.

2. METHODOLOGY

This study adopts an inductive - analytical approach to examine Qur'anic verses related to children, with the aim of identifying and organizing the principles governing adult conduct toward children. Relevant verses were collected through systematic induction from the Qur'anic text, including passages that address childhood explicitly as well as those that imply children's rights and responsibilities through broader legal and ethical contexts. These verses were then classified thematically in order to establish a coherent framework capable of yielding general constitutional principles.

In addition to the inductive - analytical method, the study employs a descriptive - deductive approach to extract general rules from the selected verses. Classical Qur'anic exegeses - particularly works concerned with legal rulings (*āyāt al-aḥkām*) - were consulted to clarify linguistic meanings, juristic interpretations, and contextual dimensions of the verses. Jurisprudential discussions were used to support the deductive process, ensuring that derived principles remain grounded in established Islamic legal reasoning.

Special emphasis is placed on Qur'anic verses related to breastfeeding, which are analyzed as a

focused case study within the broader framework of children's rights. These verses were examined in light of their legal implications, social functions, and ethical objectives, particularly regarding family relations and societal harmony. The analysis seeks to demonstrate how breastfeeding-related rulings extend beyond individual practice to influence social peace through interconnected familial and institutional relationships.

The scope of the study is limited to the Qur'anic text and authoritative classical interpretations, with selective reference to contemporary legal frameworks for comparative and illustrative purposes. Empirical or statistical methods fall outside the scope of this research. By integrating inductive collection with deductive analysis, the methodology aims to present a structured and textually grounded model for understanding the Qur'anic constitutional approach to children and its impact on social peace.

2.1. Previous Studies

Scholarly attention to childhood in the Qur'an has produced a substantial body of research addressing the status, rights, and developmental needs of children from an Islamic perspective. A number of studies have examined childhood as a comprehensive Qur'anic theme, focusing on the child's physical, psychological, and moral formation. These works emphasize the Qur'an's holistic approach to childhood and its concern with human development from birth to maturity (Ilyas, 2009; Al-Bishi, 2011). Other studies have explored children's rights as articulated in Qur'anic discourse, highlighting the ethical and legal obligations imposed on families and society to protect children and ensure their well-being (Al-Anis, 2013; Al-Khidr et al., 2023; 'A'id, 2024).

Within this broader literature, several studies have addressed specific aspects of childhood, particularly issues related to care, custody, and psychological protection. Research in this area has examined the Qur'anic foundations for safeguarding children from harm, including violence, neglect, and moral corruption, and has emphasized the role of Islamic legislation in preserving the child's dignity and security (Al-Saeed et al., 2020; Al-Shammari, 2024; Basheeb, 2023). These studies contribute valuable insights into the legal mechanisms designed to protect children but generally treat these issues in isolation from their broader social implications.

A distinct body of scholarship has focused specifically on breastfeeding in the Qur'an and Islamic jurisprudence. These studies analyze the

legal rulings derived from Qur'anic verses on breastfeeding, the rights and duties of parents, and the implications of fosterage (*radā'a*) for family relations (Al-Sa'idi, 2022; Sa'dat, 2021; Zuhd and Al-Houbi, 2006; Al-Ahmad, 2017). In addition, medical and psychological perspectives have underscored the benefits of natural breastfeeding for both the child and the mother, often reinforcing the wisdom of Qur'anic guidance in this regard. However, the primary focus of these works remains legal, medical, or familial, with limited attention to the wider societal dimensions of breastfeeding.

Another group of studies has examined the concept of social peace in the Qur'an, emphasizing its centrality within Islamic ethical and civilizational thought. These works highlight Qur'anic principles of justice, mercy, consultation, and social responsibility as foundations for societal stability and cohesion (Zarman, 2020). While such studies provide a valuable theoretical framework for understanding peace in Islamic discourse, they do not apply these principles systematically to specific areas of family legislation or childhood development.

Despite the breadth of existing scholarship, no study has been identified that integrates Qur'anic principles of children's rights with an explicit analysis of their impact on social peace, nor one that examines breastfeeding as a constitutional mechanism for promoting societal harmony. This research seeks to address this gap by bringing together these three strands - children's rights, breastfeeding legislation, and social peace - within a unified Qur'anic constitutional framework.

Recent international and interdisciplinary studies on child welfare increasingly emphasize the relationship between early childhood care, family stability, and long-term social cohesion. Research in public health, psychology, and social policy highlights that consistent caregiving, maternal-child bonding, and early emotional security contribute significantly to reducing social violence, strengthening trust, and fostering cooperative behavior in later life (World Health Organization, 2020). While these studies adopt empirical and institutional frameworks distinct from Qur'anic exegesis, their findings converge with the Qur'anic emphasis on early care and preventive social regulation. This convergence further supports the relevance of the Qur'anic constitutional model proposed in the present study.

2.2. Terminology

Al-Zubaidi mentioned that the term "dastūr" is derived from the Persian word "dastar" (Al-Zubaidi,

2001), which refers to a document prepared for organized groups, containing the rules and regulations of governance (Al-Manawi, 1990). In Arabic usage, the title was also given to the senior minister responsible for recording and managing public affairs. The Cairo-based Academy of the Arabic Language defines the constitution as: "A set of fundamental rules that determine the form of the state, its system of governance, and the scope of its authority over individuals." (Academy of the Arabic Language, 2010 p. 283)

A child is a human being from the moment of birth until reaching the age of puberty (Al-Bishi, 2011). In certain cases, this status may extend until the age of eighteen, particularly according to legal systems and international human rights organizations, which commonly recognize childhood as ending at the age of 18 years. Based on this, a proposed definition of a Children's Constitution could be a set of fundamental principles that define the relationship between the mother (or guardian) and the child (or his/her representative), in a manner that ensures the child's best interest from birth to puberty.

It is worth noting here a book titled "The Child's Constitution" by Dr. Mustafa Al-Diwani, a pediatrician and professor. He wrote it to guide mothers in dealing with their children at home, acknowledging that children often behave like "little tyrants" who seek to impose their will on those older than them. According to Al-Diwani, children may resort to negative behaviors simply to attract attention. The book aims to assist mothers in navigating this developmental stage so that their children can grow up healthy - physically, emotionally, and psychologically (Al-Diwani, 1940).

Social peace refers to the collective behaviors among members of society that promote unity based on shared values, and tolerance in matters of disagreement. It involves proactive measures to prevent the spread of disputes when they arise, mitigating their harm while preserving the rights of all parties. It also encourages prioritizing generosity and mutual understanding over strict justice whenever possible (Zarman, 2020).

2.3. Constitutional Provisions for Children Derived from The Qur'an

2.3.1. Articles of the Children's Constitution in the Light of the Qur'an

By closely examining the verses of the Qur'an that explicitly or implicitly address children, and by reviewing a scholarly effort in which one author

identified sixty-six (66) rights of the child derived from such verses, organized according to their order in the Qur'an and formulated in a style approximating legal language (Al-Anis, 2013), I undertook the task of condensing and rearticulating these into ten core principles. These principles demonstrate the profound attention the Qur'an devotes to children, who are the builders of the future, the wealth of nations, and the cornerstone of societal continuity. It is my belief that any breach of these principles would have immediate and long-term consequences, potentially triggering divine laws of societal change and replacement. These articles accompany the child from the moment of conception until the age of maturity. I will present them as key points, referencing the Qur'anic verses from which they are derived, ensuring a logical order and minimizing overlap wherever possible.

2.3.2. Taking the Necessary Measures to Ensure the Birth of Mentally and Physically Healthy Children

This principle is drawn from Surat Al-A'raf (Qur'an 7:189 - 190), where the Qur'an presents a recurring human scenario. It describes how a husband and wife are deeply concerned for the well-being of their unborn child, taking preventive steps to guard against congenital deformities. However, as the time of delivery nears, they sever their reliance on those causes. Once the child is born "in sound form" (Rida, 1990 p.433), with no physical deficiency or deformity they forget that this outcome was granted solely by the grace of God. Instead, they attribute the child's health to partners who have no power except by God's will. This misattribution reinforces the idea of shirk (associating partners with God) within society. It paves the way for exploiting the emotional vulnerability of parents and subjecting them to various forms of coercion. Moreover, it diminishes the child's dignity by making him grow up with a misplaced sense of indebtedness to those falsely credited with his creation - an outlook that may haunt him throughout his life.

Due to the gravity of this matter, Qur'anic teachings urge adherence to the necessary causes and stress that outcomes are contingent upon their corresponding premises, "Whoever desires 'only' this worldly life and its luxuries, We will pay them in full for their deeds in this life - nothing will be left out" (Qur'an 11:15). This, however, does not fall outside the will of Allah, for He has decreed that human beings be given choice, and that results are proportional to their efforts. Included in this divine principle is the marital relationship aimed at

procreation (Al-Tabari, 2001). Allah has informed us that children are a gift from Him, and He has taught that the believer should pray that their offspring be a source of comfort to the eyes. It is well established that the birth of a physically and mentally healthy child brings joy not only to the parents but to society at large.

Hence, there is an urgent need to spread awareness of the importance of this issue, to promote a culture that encourages it, and to increase the number of medical specialists in fields related to prenatal care. These specialists should be supported in their mission to protect fetuses from physical and mental harm, an endeavor that must remain tied to faith in Allah, who taught humankind that fate may be countered by fate, and that ultimately, nothing occurs except what He has decreed.

2.3.3. Every Child Is Born upon the Natural Disposition of Monotheism and Must Be Supported in Retaining It

It is an Islamic principle that every child is born upon fitrah - the natural disposition towards monotheism - and that any obstacles preventing the child from maintaining this innate state must be removed, whether such obstacles arise from the family, society, or the governing laws of the country in which the child lives. This is evident in the universal command: "So be steadfast in faith in all uprightness 'O Prophet' - the natural Way of Allah which He has instilled in 'all' people. Let there be no change in this creation of Allah. That is the Straight Way, but most people do not know" (Qur'an 30:30).

It is further exemplified in various Qur'anic narratives. For instance, Ibrahim (Abraham) stood alone as a monotheist among his polytheistic people. He confronted them using rational argument based on the laws governing the cosmos. Had it not been for their obstinacy and arrogance, they would have believed, {They said, "Have you done this to our gods, O Abraham?" * He said, "Rather, this - the largest of them - did it, so ask them, if they should [be able to] speak." * So they returned to [blaming] themselves and said [to each other], "Indeed, you are the wrongdoers." * Then they reversed themselves, [saying], "You have already known that these do not speak!"} (Qur'an 21: 62-65).

Similarly, in the story of 'Isa (Jesus), peace be upon him, who spoke from the cradle declaring: "Indeed, I am the servant of Allah" (Qur'an 19: 30). Or in the account of the People of the Cave, whose youth preserved their pure natural disposition despite their young age and the polytheism of their people. The Qur'an says: "Indeed, they were youths who

believed in their Lord, and We increased them in guidance. * And We made firm their hearts when they stood up and said, "Our Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth. Never will we invoke besides Him any deity. We would have certainly spoken an excessive transgression. * These, our people, have taken besides Him deities. Why do they not bring for [worship of] them a clear authority? And who is more unjust than one who invents a lie about Allah?" (Qur'an 18: 13-15).

The Prophet Muhammad confirmed that this natural state of monotheism is not exclusive to prophets, though they are divinely protected from external influences. As for other human beings, they fall under his saying: "No child is born except upon the natural disposition (fitrah). It is his parents who make him a Jew, or a Christian, or a Magian" (Al-Bukhari, 2001 p.94). We observe that the "children's rights" advocated by international and local organizations include the provision that a child be allowed to express what is within themselves. However, in reality, such rights are often restricted through both overt and covert directives, giving the appearance of freedom while in fact diverting the natural disposition toward what those in control desire (Ayed, 2024; National Center for Human Rights, 2023).

All of this confirms that a sound natural disposition (fitrah) is essential to achieving security and stability in society. Any attempt to distort or suppress it will result in a society devoid of virtuous individuals, where conflicting whims dominate, thereby entrenching tribalism and bullying. This, in turn, leads to the fragmentation of society and threatens its collapse, especially when it is ruled by the indulgent elite, who relentlessly pursue unchecked desires.

2.3.4. Publicizing Birth and Encouraging Expressions of Joy

This principle is derived from the story of the "wife of Imran" (Qur'an, 3:34 - 35) and from the story of Zechariah (peace be upon him), who publicly shared the news of his wife's pregnancy with Yahya (John). It is also derived from the argument of contrast: pre-Islamic pagans would become distressed upon hearing the birth of a girl, "And when one of them is informed of [the birth of] a female, his face becomes dark, and he suppresses grief. He hides himself from the people because of the ill of which he has been informed. Should he keep it in humiliation or bury it in the ground? Unquestionably, evil is what they decide." (Qur'an 16: 58 - 59).

The benefits of celebrating childbirth for society are profound. Laws emphasize the importance of naming the newborn and registering them in official records - a practice that protects the child from being misattributed to the wrong parent, and shields families from the confusion of lineage. This is among the reasons the practice of adoption (in the legal sense of attributing a child to other than their biological father) was prohibited. As for expressing joy over a newborn, bringing happiness to the family and neighbors on the occasion of a new birth strengthens communal peace, nurtures children's affection for relatives and the broader family, and inspires serious thought about marriage and increasing offspring - which nourishes the natural parental instinct in men and women.

It also softens the hearts of those hardened by worldly burdens, who may see children as a burden on their lives, or who falsely believe that showing compassion or tenderness towards children is somehow unmanly. In truth, such individuals have had mercy stripped from their hearts, for, as Prophet Mohammad said: "He who does not show mercy will not be shown mercy." (Al-Bukhari, 2001, Ḥadīth No. 1808).

2.3.5. The child is born innately inclined toward foundational virtues; therefore, it is impermissible to corrupt this natural disposition through what is seen, heard, or read.

This principle is evident in the counsel of Luqman to his son and in Qur'anic verses (Qur'an 31:13-19) that emphasize the importance of seeking permission and observing modesty during interactions - except in the case of very young children who lack discernment. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (Government of Jordan, 2022) has also addressed this issue, particularly in its criminalization of content that promotes deviance and moral decay. Accordingly, Allah has commanded those around the child to teach them the foundational virtues and the best behaviors through what they witness with their eyes and hear with their ears. This directive is clearly stated in the verses of An-Nur chapter (Qur'an 24:58-59; Deif, 2022).

Conversely, the neglect of parental supervision over what their children are exposed to - under the pretext that the child only remains calm when given a phone, or due to the parents' lack of time to engage them in beneficial activities - has led to a societal phenomenon. The rising concerns about mental, visual, and moral issues signal a serious alarm; in a few years, we may be faced with generations of humans who look like us physically but neither listen

to us nor share our values, whether in matters of religion or worldly life.

2.3.6. Children Differ in Their Inclination Toward Good or Evil

Based on personal predispositions and external influences; therefore, their behavior must be regulated to avoid excess and deficiency. This article is closely related to the previous one but focuses on a more advanced stage in a child's development - the age at which the child can express opinions and adopt certain positions, typically between the ages of seven and ten. Evidence for this age range includes the Prophet Muhammad's (peace be upon him) instruction "Command your children to pray at the age of seven, and discipline them for [neglecting] it at the age of ten, and separate them in their beds" (Abu Dawood, 2008). The primary responsibility during this stage falls on intellectual and societal leaders, starting with the closest circle of influence: the parents, followed by extended family members.

Governments should enact legislation to regulate all influences in the education and guidance of children in nurseries and early primary levels, especially regarding those responsible for their upbringing and education. The impressions formed in the child's mind during this period will later manifest in their behavior, intellectual formation, emotional development, and moral values. Indeed, what we plant in a child today is what we shall reap in the years to come. The Holy Qur'an presents several incidents that affirm this principle. Among them is the concern that occupied the hearts of the youth in the cave (Aṣḥāb al-Kahf), when they sent one of their own to procure food free from any unlawful impurity; they advised him to act with caution so as not to reveal their identity (Qur'an 18:19). Another example is what al-Khiḍr explained to Moses (peace be upon him) regarding the reason behind his killing of the boy (Qur'an 18:80 - 81), indicating that deviation can manifest early, and at times, intervention may be necessary to prevent greater harm.

2.3.7. Enacting Laws to Prevent Adults from Being Alone with Young Children

This article emphasizes the necessity of establishing legal frameworks that regulate private interactions between adults and minors, rather than leaving such matters to emotions or excessive trust. The principle here is rooted in the maxim: "Preventing harm takes precedence over acquiring benefit" (Al-Sufyani, 1988 pp. 465 - 467) This is not intended to question the integrity of individuals

within society or to strip away trust, but rather stems from the wisdom: "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" (Al-Zuhayli, 2006).

By doing so, both parties are protected: adults are safeguarded from potentially false accusations incited by others, and children are shielded from the predatory actions of individuals whose desires override sound judgment - acts that natural human disposition finds repulsive. Although modern laws criminalize the distribution of indecent content via digital media and impose age restrictions, these measures do not fully prevent minors - especially during curious developmental stages - from exposure to such material or from accessing public cafés and similar venues in the company of adults. This necessitates proactive vigilance. This principle is clearly illustrated in the story of the brothers of Joseph (peace be upon him), who feigned concern for his happiness and well-being. However, once alone with him, they unanimously conspired to cast him into the well - deception hidden behind the veil of familial trust (Qur'an 12: 4 - 10).

2.3.8. Shielding the Child from the Negative Impact of Parental Failure in Marriage

This article emphasizes the importance of ensuring that children are physically, mentally, and emotionally protected in the event of their parents' marital failure. This is evident in the verses of the Qur'an concerning divorce and marital discord, which warn against using the child as a pawn or tool of manipulation by either parent, whether to gain personal advantage or to deliberately harm the other (Qur'an, Al-Baqarah 2:233; At-Ṭalāq 65:6 - 7). The Qur'anic guidance promotes consultation, mutual understanding, and agreement to ensure the best interests of the child are upheld, thereby minimizing long-term conflict and resentment. Societies flourish when mercy and compassion prevail, and marital failure is seen as the end of a partnership - not the child's burden to bear. When divorce is understood as the decision of two individuals pursuing individual well-being, children are more likely to grow into healthy individuals - physically, mentally, and emotionally.

2.3.9. Assigning Guardianship to the Most Suitable Candidate in Case of Parental Absence or Incompetence

This article underscores the importance of selecting the most appropriate guardian when one or both parents are unable to fulfill their responsibilities - whether due to death, psychological or mental illness, imprisonment, or other incapacitating

conditions. If multiple eligible candidates vie for guardianship, preference is given based on clear priority.

This principle is illustrated in Zechariah's (peace be upon him) guardianship of Mary (peace be upon her) (Qur'an 3:37) and is rooted in verses that delineate the financial, emotional, and psychological rights of orphans, particularly in al-Nisā' chapter in the Qur'an (Qur'an, An-Nisā' 4:2; An-Nisā' 4:6). While modern legal systems - especially in times of war - recognize such rights, they must be reinforced by continuous monitoring of guardians' conduct. This is especially crucial when widowed parents remarry or face issues compromising their competence (Abd, 2013). Laws must be enacted to bridge any gaps in care and to ensure consistent, genuine oversight. Incentives should be provided to encourage guardianship that balances legal accountability with personal responsibility and goodwill - ultimately contributing to comprehensive social harmony (Jordanian Ministry of Social Development, 2014).

2.3.10. Ensuring Justice Among Children to Secure Financial and Emotional Sufficiency for Each

The Holy Qur'an emphasizes justice among children, particularly regarding matters directly tied to their upbringing and preparation for the future. Any imbalance in this area inevitably leads to serious consequences, as human nature is inherently inclined to seek what it perceives as its right. The story of Joseph's (Yūsuf's) brothers offers a powerful example. They believed that Joseph stood between them and their father's full affection, which they felt was unjustly denied. They lamented: "Surely Joseph and his brother 'Benjamin' are more beloved to our father than we, even though we are a group of so many.¹ Indeed, our father is clearly mistaken" (Qur'an 12:8) and plotted: "Kill Joseph..." (Qur'an 12:9)

Another historical example lies in the pre-Islamic practice of favoring some children over others - at times to the extent of killing certain offspring - based on arbitrary criteria (Qur'an, Al-An'ām 6:151; Al-Isrā' 17:31). Today, some advocates of population control fall into a mirrored version of the same error. They promote limiting births under the pretense that fewer children ensure better psychological, emotional, and health outcomes. However, real-world outcomes have shown that such policies often produce individuals ill-equipped to handle responsibility, lacking in altruism, and filled with selfishness and entitlement - posing an imminent

threat to social cohesion (Al-Bishi. 2011).

5.1.10. Preserving the Rights of Children of Unknown Lineage Within the Family and Society

At times, societies face the reality of moral lapses that result in pregnancy and childbirth outside the bounds of lawful marriage. Due to societal pressures and cultural norms, some mothers abandon their infants in public places - such as mosque courtyards, church steps, or busy streets - hoping they will be found and cared for by passersby. These children are often referred to as "foundlings" (al-laqīṭ), and many societies have developed specific legal classifications and protections for them. Islamic law, recognizing that such children are innocent and should not be burdened by the sins of others, refers to them with the dignified title "the son of his father." Society as a whole assumes the role of parent, and is thus obligated to ensure that these children receive the same material, emotional, and psychological care as their peers.

Social institutions have taken on the responsibility of establishing care homes for foundlings. However, one of the most pressing challenges remains the seamless integration of these children into society once they reach adulthood - whether they are raised in foster homes or institutional care. The Qur'an provides profound guidance on this matter. It prohibits formal adoption (i.e., altering lineage) and emphasizes assigning children to their biological fathers when known. If the father is unknown, then the child is to be treated as a "brother in faith and a ward." As Allah says: "Call them by [the names of] their fathers; that is more just in the sight of Allah. But if you do not know their fathers, then they are 'simply' your fellow believers and close associates" (Qur'an 33: 5). Prophetic narratives also offer practical insights into how foundlings may be integrated into society. The childhood of Moses (Mūsā), for example, illustrates care within a foreign home (Qur'an 28:8 - 9), and the story of Joseph (Yūsuf) in the house of the Egyptian governor presents another model for inclusion and dignified upbringing (Qur'an 12:21).

3. THE ROLE OF BREASTFEEDING IN PROMOTING SOCIAL COHESION

The Holy Qur'an addresses the matter of breastfeeding (ar-Raḍā') within the context of the verses governing divorce (Qur'an 2:233). These legislative references will serve as the foundation for this section. As for the prohibitions related to breastfeeding (i.e., those women rendered unlawful to marry due to fosterage) (Qur'an 4:23), the Almighty mentions two illustrative examples within

the broader legal framework concerning prohibited categories of women. These will be briefly addressed at the conclusion of this section, without delving into intricate detail.

Breastfeeding holds a primary place in the early life of a child, beginning immediately after birth and continuing until the completion of two full years (Qur'an 2:233). During this period - and extending beyond it - the child requires both protection and care: on one hand, due to their inherent vulnerability, and on the other, to ensure their development occurs free from harmful influences and disruptions. Dr. Sharifa Al-Saeed has extensively explored this topic in her research, which renders further repetition unnecessary (Al-Saeed et al., 2020).

The legal and social issues related to breastfeeding can be categorized into four key matters and six concentric spheres, all of which ultimately serve the greater goal of societal peace. These dimensions have been discussed by commentators on the verses of rulings (Āyāt al-Aḥkām), as well as by researchers focusing on specific aspects such as alimony, breastfeeding, or custody. However, their analyses generally lack a deliberate focus on how these provisions can be activated to promote and sustain social harmony. For this reason, I have structured this section into two specific subtopics, each aimed at exploring the potential of these provisions to achieve societal peace, as follows:

3.1. Qur'anic Rulings on Breastfeeding and Their Role in Achieving Social Peace

The Qur'anic regulation of breastfeeding is primarily articulated in Surat al-Baqarah (Qur'an 2:233), with complementary rulings related to fosterage prohibitions addressed in Surat al-Nisā' (Qur'an 4:23). Together, these verses establish an integrated legal and ethical framework governing early childhood care, parental responsibility, and social harmony. This section focuses on the rulings derived from Qur'an 2:233, as they form the principal legislative basis for breastfeeding and its broader societal implications (Al-Tabari, 2001; Al-Jassas, 1994). The verse stipulates that mothers may breastfeed their children for two complete years "for whoever wishes to complete the nursing period," while assigning the responsibility of provision and clothing to the father or his legal representative in accordance with customary norms. This balanced allocation of duties reflects the Qur'an's broader legal methodology, which seeks to safeguard the child's welfare while preventing hardship or exploitation within the family unit (Rida, 1990; Al-Qurtubi, 1964).

3.1.1. *The Legal Status of Maternal Breastfeeding*

Although the statement “Mothers shall breastfeed their children” appears in declarative form, classical jurists agree that it carries normative force within its legislative context. Juristic discussions converge on the principle that breastfeeding constitutes a fundamental right of the child, while differing on whether it represents an absolute obligation upon the mother. The dominant juristic position maintains that maternal breastfeeding becomes obligatory when no suitable alternative exists or when the child refuses nourishment from another source; otherwise, the matter remains subject to mutual agreement and prevailing social custom (Al-Jassas, 1994; Al-Qurtubi, 1964). This interpretive flexibility reflects the Qur'an's emphasis on preventing conflict and preserving familial stability.

3.1.2. *Scope of the Ruling and Exceptional Circumstances*

The prevailing interpretation confines the obligation of breastfeeding primarily to cases of divorce, as the verse appears within the broader context of marital dissolution. This limitation serves to prevent additional disputes that may arise from pregnancy, remarriage, or overlapping marital responsibilities, while maintaining the child's right to proper care (Al-Jassas, 1994). Classical jurisprudence further accounts for exceptional circumstances that may affect breastfeeding, including maternal illness, harm to the child, insufficiency of milk, remarriage, or the death or incapacity of the father. In all such cases, the child's best interest remains the overriding principle. Where breastfeeding proves harmful to either mother or child, alternative arrangements through a wet nurse become obligatory, with financial responsibility transferred to the father, his legal heir, or – where necessary – the public treasury (Al-Qurtubi, 1964; Ibn Ḥazm, 1988). This adaptive legal structure ensures continuity of care while preventing physical, emotional, and psychological harm.

3.1.3. *Standard of Financial Compensation*

The Qur'an defines the standard of compensation for the nursing mother or wet nurse as “in a reasonable manner (bi-l-ma'rūf),” a concept grounded in prevailing social norms and individual financial capacity. The father or his representative is prohibited from reducing maintenance below acceptable limits, just as the nursing woman is forbidden from exploiting her position to impose

excessive demands (Al-Jassas, 1994; Al-Alusi, 1995). This reciprocal restraint reinforces justice, limits avenues for manipulation, and allows caregiving to occur within an atmosphere of dignity and security. The verse's concluding reminder of divine accountability underscores the ethical dimension of these obligations and deters abuse by either party.

3.1.4. *Disputes Concerning Weaning*

In cases of disagreement between parents regarding the timing of weaning, the Qur'an mandates consultation and mutual consent, placing the child's welfare above personal grievances (Qur'an 2:233). Where consultation fails or one party acts obstructively, intervention by family members or judicial authorities becomes necessary to enforce decisions that best serve the child's developmental needs. Classical exegetes have identified four foundational principles embedded in this ruling: the natural division of parental roles, proportional responsibility, prohibition of harm to either parent through the child, and reliance on consultation in matters not explicitly defined (Rida, 1990). Collectively, these principles function as preventive mechanisms against prolonged conflict and social discord.

4. THE IMPACT OF THE WEB OF RELATIONSHIPS IN THE VERSE OF BREASTFEEDING ON ACHIEVING SOCIAL HARMONY

This section aims to link each layer embedded in the Qur'anic verse on breastfeeding with its role in weaving the fabric of social peace. It considers both the material and emotional/relational dimensions, presented in the order they appear in the verse. These dimensions can be summarized as six interlinked circles, the first of which is as follows:

4.1. *The Biological Mother with Milk vs. the Wet Nurse with Milk*

This foundational circle sets the stage for the Islamic legal construct known as “milk kinship” (raḍā'a), from which stem a range of prohibitions on marriage and other interpersonal boundaries. Scholars have noted that the legal restrictions derived from breastfeeding are based on the milk entering the infant's body before the completion of two lunar years. Although the Qur'an explicitly mentions the prohibition of marriage to the foster mother and foster sister (Qur'an 4:23), the jurists have interpreted this as illustrative, not exhaustive. This understanding is supported by the Prophet Muhammad's (peace be upon him) saying: “What is

prohibited by blood ties is also prohibited by breastfeeding." (Al-Bukhārī, ḥadīth no. 2645; Muslim, ḥadīth no. 1447). Based on this prophetic statement, scholars expanded their inquiries to a host of complex jurisprudential issues, such as:

- Does milk kinship extend to in-law relationships as it does with blood relations?
- Must the milk originate from a birth-related pregnancy to establish kinship?
- What is the ruling when a child is breastfed by multiple women?
- What if breastfeeding occurs after the age of two?
- What if a woman claims to have breastfed a man and a woman after they were already married?

These issues are explored in legal commentaries, jurisprudence manuals, and contemporary fatwas. Notably, Al-Ahmad (2017) has discussed these concerns in detail in his master's thesis "Contemporary Legal Issues in Breastfeeding". His research underscores the crucial role that precautionary measures in breastfeeding cases play in enhancing social cohesion.

Among the key recommendations is:

- Recording instances of breastfeeding in civil status records, or at minimum,
- Witnessing and documenting such events if official registration is not possible.
- These actions serve multiple benefits:
- Preventing future disputes, especially regarding marital eligibility.
- Broadening the web of familial relationships by increasing the number of foster siblings.
- Encouraging familiarity and social intimacy among individuals within the milk kinship network, which is often misunderstood as solely a marital prohibition.

Unfortunately, many in society still view *raḍā'a* only through the narrow lens of marriage restrictions. Greater awareness that a breastfed child gains a foster family - including fathers, uncles, aunts, grandparents, and more - can promote a spirit of fraternity, strengthen bonds of affection and friendship, and reduce estrangement within the community. Such practices are exemplified in the Prophetic biography. The Prophet Muhammad honored the tribe of Banu Sa'd, in whose household he was nursed by Halimah al-Sa'diyya, demonstrating how milk kinship can lead to enduring respect and loyalty (Al-Halabi, 2006; Ibn al-Qayyim, 1994).

4.2. The Child's Guardian or Representative and Their Responsibility

The individual responsible for the child - whether the biological father or his legal representative in case of absence - is obligated to provide for all the necessities of the wet nurse. This includes food, clothing, financial support, and any assistance needed to enable her to breastfeed and care for the child both physically and psychologically. The ultimate goal is to raise a well-adjusted individual who is not adversely affected by the failure of others. It is common in healthy societies that sympathize with divorced mothers who have children, fearing that the child might suffer as a consequence of the parents' failed relationship. The resulting psychological, emotional, and physical harm to the child is of significant concern.

Therefore, the divine legislation in the Qur'anic verse mandates that the child's guardian ensures the wet nurse is provided with proper nutrition, financial support, clothing, and medical care if needed, all done in a fair and appropriate manner (Qur'an 2:233). This ensures the wet nurse remains in optimal condition, capable of breastfeeding the child while maintaining both her health and that of the infant - physically, psychologically, and mentally. Dr. Mahmoud Sa'adat has emphasized these aspects, focusing particularly on the psychological effects of natural breastfeeding on both mother and child, and the societal duty to promote it. For example, some psychological benefits to the child include; healthy psychological development, self-acceptance, strengthening the bond between child and mother, fostering feelings of security and reassurance and reducing stress and calming the child (Sa'adat, 2021).

Some organizations dedicated to promoting natural breastfeeding have developed numerous programs, seminars, and informational materials. However, these efforts have often focused less on divorced mothers and more on general populations, advocating breastfeeding for at least six months in accordance with World Health Organization guidelines, and ideally continuing up to two years. While these initiatives have offered advice to mitigate some risks associated with natural breastfeeding, they have generally not framed breastfeeding as a binding religious obligation, nor have they fully activated all mechanisms necessary to implement it effectively as mandated by related Qur'anic injunctions (Zuhd et al., 2006).

4.3. Maintaining Contact Between the Mother and the Child's Guardian Despite Marital Separation

The verse emphasizes the importance of preserving the relationship and meetings between the mother and the child's guardian, even if the marital relationship has ended. This allows the child to see both parents together, preventing the issue of divorce from damaging the social fabric, starting from them and extending to the wider community. The verse calls for avoiding any harm or injustice to either the mother or the child's guardian because of the child (Qur'an 2:233). It is well-known that at this age, the child usually stays with the mother, whether she is the breastfeeding woman or another caregiver. Therefore, careful consultation and mutual consent based on what is best for the child are paramount.

One might ask: What does a child at this age comprehend? The answer lies in the child's internal memory and emotional imprint, which record these encounters and feelings. This is often reflected in the child's facial expressions and behaviors, such as not rejecting the father, not feeling alienated, and not crying or screaming in his presence. This reinforces in the child's mind the awareness that the parents maintained contact for the child's sake and out of concern for their feelings. Such continuity might encourage reconciliation or at least discourage further estrangement and the spread of personal faults. More importantly, it prevents gossip, conflict, and the stirring of hatred and resentment between the parents, thereby strengthening the cohesion of the entire society (Kurdashah, 2016).

4.4. Prioritizing the Child's Interest Through Consultation and Mutual Agreement on Completing Breastfeeding and Weaning

This circle highlights the importance of parents' consultation and mutual agreement in matters concerning the completion of breastfeeding and weaning (Qur'an 2:233). Such cooperation fosters the development of a morally sound individual who contributes positively to society. It also symbolizes that although the marital bond may have dissolved, both parents can still agree when it comes to the welfare of the child. In refined societies, the spirit of tolerance and emotional regulation is cultivated through open dialogue, beginning within the family unit - father and mother - and gradually extending outward to include relatives, community leaders, and eventually the broader society. When a child is nurtured in such an environment, both the child and those around them consistently prioritize positive

attitudes and acceptance of others.

The benefits and fruits of such practical experience far exceed those obtained from lectures, seminars, or publications. Real-world application is more effective, especially when free from the pressures of cultural customs and traditions that conflict with religious teachings or dilute them. The individual's self-sacrifice for the greater good, seeking God's pleasure, is essential. It is perhaps part of divine wisdom that the laws related to divorce and its consequences are under God's watchful supervision and regarded as His limits - boundaries that must not be transgressed or taken lightly. This is underscored by the stern warning in the Qur'anic verses: "And how many a city did We punish while it was committing wrong, so its punishment came to it at night or while they were sleeping at noon." [Qur'an 65:8 - 9]

4.5. Observing the Elegance of Sharia and Socially Preferred Norms Regarding the Nourisher's Food and Clothing

This circle emphasizes the importance of adhering to the refined standards of Islamic law (Sharia) and socially commendable customs concerning the food and clothing of the nursing woman. This awareness naturally motivates those close to the mother and father of the child to contribute actively to the process of social reconciliation and narrowing the gap of disagreement.

The divine practice in Islamic legislation, which is largely built on resolving disputes, tends to favor rapprochement and conciliation without infringing upon rights or exploiting moments of weakness in either party. This principle can be observed in rulings related to wealth, honor, life, debt, commerce, retribution (qisas), defamation (qadhf), and here particularly, divorce.

When God Almighty mandates the obligation of maintenance and clothing for the nursing woman, He sets two boundaries: one linked directly to the nursing woman's needs, and the other tied to the financial capacity of the one responsible for her (the child's guardian) (Qur'an 2:233). It is neither permissible to reduce these obligations below their required limit nor to demand more than is due. This is especially crucial when religious conscience weakens and feelings of vengeance might dominate some parties. Thus, it is desirable to regulate this matter according to two overarching guidelines:

4.6. The Principle of 'Al-Ma'ruf' (That Which is Known as Good and Customary):

Society acts as a source of obligation, whereby

there are customary norms related to the nursing woman's social status and similar considerations, as well as factors related to the place of residence, the nature of work, and time. For example, clothing appropriate to the seasons or food suitable for her condition, particularly if she falls ill or requires special nutrition or treatment.

What is Approved by Sharia:

This rests on two motivators:

- The religious conscience, based on the parents' sincere intent to seek God's pleasure in what they request or refrain from requesting.
- The worldly reward and punishment, which derive from judicial rulings that impose suitable penalties on anyone who contravenes these regulations.

The practical outcome of observing these guidelines is that the scope of disputes will narrow, and the area of agreement will widen, protecting the child from adverse effects and positioning society to meet the requirements of righteousness and reform. It also preserves positive relationships within the family, which are crucial since the family is the cornerstone that produces the nation's heroes and leaders. Conversely, neglecting these principles risks social discord and fragmentation, which will inevitably harm societal peace sooner or later (Al-Sa'idi, 2022).

4.7. Considering the Newborn as a Child of the Entire Society and the Divine Accountability Entrusted to It

This circle underscores that the newborn is not merely a private concern of the parents but rather a child of the whole society. Consequently, all previously outlined rights and duties connected to the child constitute divine mandates, subject to both reward and punishment. This principle serves as a powerful deterrent for anyone who might be tempted to circumvent established legislation: even if they evade worldly punishment, they cannot escape the accountability before God Almighty. It also places the entire society before its responsibilities, particularly regarding the enforcement and protection of legislation from the whims and caprices of those with unhealthy inclinations. Failure to uphold these laws will inevitably lead to the erosion of societal values and the moral fabric of its members, threatening the security and stability of the community - whether sooner or later. Certainly, the divine command, "And fear God; and know that God is aware of what you do" (Qur'an 2: 233), encompasses everyone for whom this message is

relevant, especially institutions and ministries concerned with child welfare and family affairs. For instance, Jordan's Child Rights Law mandates the Ministry of Health, in coordination with relevant authorities, to take all necessary measures to ensure that the child enjoys the highest possible level of health. This includes providing the child's parents or guardians with essential information regarding the child's health and nutrition, emphasizing the benefits of breastfeeding.

Additionally, Article 13 of the law grants a child who is temporarily or permanently deprived of their family environment the right to alternative care, based on a decision from the competent judicial authority. The Ministry of Social Development, in coordination with relevant agencies, is responsible for implementing the necessary measures for such care, always prioritizing the child's best interests in accordance with applicable legislation (Government of Jordan, 2022).

In conclusion, a thoughtful reflection on these circles reveals the greatness of this divine constitution, which contributes profoundly to building a society grounded in peace, cohesion, and the narrowing of disputes. It creates an environment attractive for living under its protection and emulation, shielding it from the harm posed by those who seek to undermine it and its people (Al-Shammari, 2024). If the members of society faithfully adhered to these principles, there would be no opportunity for ill-intentioned outsiders or those enamored by foreign cultural imports to infiltrate the family's life, whether in times of unity or separation. Should anyone dare to challenge this system, they would find an articulate rebuttal ready to confront them, both through deeds and words (Zarman, 2020).

Contemporary research in child development and social policy affirms that early caregiving arrangements play a decisive role in shaping emotional regulation, social attachment, and conflict resolution skills in adulthood. Studies indicate that societies investing in early childhood stability experience lower levels of social fragmentation and institutional strain (Shonkoff et al., 2012; Heckman & Mosso, 2014). These findings reinforce the Qur'anic approach outlined in this section, wherein breastfeeding and its surrounding legal and ethical structures function not merely as familial obligations, but as foundational mechanisms for sustaining social peace.

5. CONCLUSION, RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study set out to examine Qur'anic guidance

related to children through a systematic inductive-analytical approach, with the aim of formulating a coherent constitutional framework governing adult conduct toward children and assessing its impact on social peace. By organizing dispersed Qur'anic verses into an integrated structure, the research advances the concept of a Qur'anic Children's Constitution that transcends fragmented legal or ethical treatments of childhood and presents a comprehensive, value-based model grounded in revelation.

The study's central scholarly contribution lies in demonstrating that the Qur'an does not merely articulate isolated rights for children, but rather establishes a constitutional vision that regulates family relations, social responsibility, and institutional accountability from the earliest stages of human life. By selecting breastfeeding as a focused case study, the research illustrates how Qur'anic legislation operates simultaneously at biological, emotional, legal, and social levels, transforming a private caregiving practice into a mechanism for social cohesion and conflict prevention. This integrative reading highlights breastfeeding not only as a maternal or medical issue, but as a foundational element in preserving dignity, justice, and stability within families and society at large.

The findings confirm that Qur'anic legislation concerning children encompasses physical, intellectual, psychological, and moral dimensions in a manner that equals - and in several respects exceeds - contemporary human-made child protection frameworks. Unlike modern legal systems that often rely primarily on post-harm intervention, the Qur'anic approach prioritizes prevention, early care, and the safeguarding of innate human disposition

(fitrah), thereby reducing the structural causes of social fragmentation. The study further demonstrates that misuse of children as tools of pressure, manipulation, or retaliation - particularly in contexts of marital conflict - is explicitly prohibited, and that the child's best interest remains an overriding principle under all circumstances.

From a contemporary perspective, the proposed Qur'anic Children's Constitution offers meaningful insights for modern societies facing rising family disintegration, contested models of child welfare, and increasing social polarization. By embedding children's rights within a broader ethical and communal responsibility, the Qur'anic framework provides a sustainable model for social peace that balances individual rights with collective accountability. This relevance is further affirmed by modern interdisciplinary research, which increasingly recognizes early childhood care as a decisive factor in long-term societal stability and peace.

Accordingly, this study recommends the establishment of an interdisciplinary research body dedicated to compiling, integrating, and analyzing existing studies on children from Qur'anic, legal, social, and psychological perspectives. Such an initiative would enhance the practical application of these principles and contribute to the development of policies and educational programs that promote social peace at both local and global levels. Ultimately, the Qur'anic constitutional model articulated in this research affirms that the protection and nurturing of children is not a marginal social concern, but a decisive factor in the endurance, security, and moral strength of societies.

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