

Dimensions of Child-Rearing within the Family Domain based on the Teachings of Imam Reza (A.S.)

Mohammad Norouzi¹

1.Ph.D. Candidate ,Higher Education Management ,Allameh Tabataba'i University ,Tehran ,Iran.
Email: Mnma67@gmail.com

Article info

Abstract

Article type:
Research Article

Received:
29 April 2025

In Revised form:
26 June 2025

Accepted:
22 July 2025

Published:
30 August 2025

This research was conducted with the aim of delineating the educational tradition of Imam Reza (peace be upon him) in the realm of “child-rearing within the family environment.” Given the existing gap in providing a systematic and integrated model that explicates the dialectical connection between these two axes, this study, employing a descriptive-analytical method and through documentary analysis of authentic religious and hadith sources, has investigated the Razavi tradition. The findings indicate that, from the perspective of Imam Reza (A.S.), the family is a education-centric institution and a divine-human project. Its establishment, with an emphasis on the criterion of moral competence in spouse selection and rites such as sanctifying the commencement of marital life, is considered a necessary and strategic imperative for raising a righteous generation. In the domain of child-rearing, a comprehensive, preventive, and stage-based model is presented, encompassing the period from before birth to adolescence. In this model, physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual dimensions are developed in a balanced manner, centered around rational affection, respect, indirect supervision, and the fostering of self-reliance. The innovation of this research lies in presenting an integrated model in which family formation is defined as the foundation and child-rearing as the ultimate goal, in an inseparable connection.

Keywords: Imam Reza(A.S.),Principles ,Ideal Family,Child-Rearing.



Reference: Norouzi, Mohammad. (2025). Dimensions of Child Uphringing in the Family Domain Based on the Teachings of Imam Reza (A.S). *Imam Reza (A.S.) and Contemporary Sciences*. 3(7). 92-125.

Publisher: Imam Reza (A.S) International University

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.22034/ijs.2025.421708.1032>



1. Introduction

The family is the fundamental institution and primary workshop for human upbringing in Islamic thought, playing a decisive role in the destiny of both the individual and society. In the contemporary era, this sacred institution faces numerous challenges and harms, the roots of many of which can be traced to the absence of practical and systematic educational models. Despite numerous valuable studies that have addressed aspects of the conduct of the Infallible Imams (A.S.), a clear gap has been felt: the lack of a comprehensive, integrated model that analyzes “family formation” and “child rearing” not as two separate categories, but as two complementary and dialectical stages within a single divine-human project. Focusing on the practical and verbal conduct of the Eighth Imam, Imam Ali ibn Musa Reza (A.S.)—a pinnacle of cultural and educational excellence in Islamic history—this research seeks to fill this theoretical gap and present a practical, systematic model.

2. Research Objectives

This research pursues the following main objectives:

Explaining the philosophy and necessity of family formation from the perspective of Imam Reza (A.S.) and examining the criteria for selecting a worthy spouse as the cornerstone of an education-oriented family.

Discovering and extracting the principles, methods, and stages of child rearing in the *Riḍawī* conduct, from the initial pre-birth stages to the beginning of adolescence, emphasizing a comprehensive and preventive perspective.

Presenting an integrated and operational conceptual model in which “conscious family formation” is defined as the essential foundation and prerequisite, and “raising a righteous child” as the ultimate goal and fruit of this institution, in an organic and inseparable bond.

3. Methodology

This research was conducted using a qualitative method and a descriptive-analytical approach. The required data were collected through library and documentary research from reliable Hadith, biographical, and exegetical sources (such as *Al-Kāfi*, *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā*, *Bihār al-Anwār*, and *Wasā'il al-Shī'ah*). This data was then analyzed and interpreted within a systematic framework that views the family as an “education-forming institution.” The primary approach was to identify behavioral

and educational patterns in the practical conduct of Imam Reza (A.S.), particularly in his interactions with his son, Imam al-Jawād (A.S.), as well as his direct statements.

4. Findings

The findings of this research indicate that the conduct of Imam Reza (A.S.) presents a comprehensive, dynamic, and stage-based model that, beyond being a collection of scattered recommendations, forms a coherent “educational system.” This model can be explained through three interconnected macro-stages and several main axes:

A) Foundation Stage: Family Formation as the First Educational Act

In this view, choosing a spouse and forming a family is itself the first and most fateful educational decision, shaping the destiny of future generations.

Ethics-Centered Criterion Setting: By centering “moral competence” and “chastity” as the main criteria, the Imam (A.S.) elevates marriage from the level of a socio-economic contract to an “educational investment.” He explicitly prohibits marriage to individuals with bad character, immoral persons, and wine-drinkers, as this choice directly impacts the spiritual and moral health of future generations.

Sanctifying the Beginning of Life: Through recommending specific supplications at the start of marital life and seeking righteous offspring from God, the Imam defines a sublime identity and purpose for the institution of the family and procreation.

B) Implementation Stage: The Process of Comprehensive, Preventive, and Stage-Based Child Rearing

From the Riḍawī perspective, upbringing is a dynamic, multi-dimensional process with distinct and methodical stages:

Pre-Natal Rearing (Fetal Stage): This stage focuses on “preparing the ground.” The emphasis on comprehensive care for the mother (both psychologically and physically) and the use of specific natural substances like frankincense resin “indicate the Imam’s preventive and forward-looking view, confirming the direct impact of this period on shaping the child’s future personality, intelligence, and creativity.

Rearing in Infancy and Early Childhood: This stage involves a set of interconnected educational-health interventions:

Spiritual Interventions: Performing rituals such as reciting the Adhān and Iqāmah in the newborn’s ear as a form of “mystical immunization” against satanic influences from the first moments of life.

Health-Social Interventions: Practices like circumcision , ‘Aqīqah ritual sacrifice, and shaving the baby’s head ,which ,besides health benefits ,have social dimensions(aiding the needy)and are identity-forming.

Spiritual-Physical Nourishment: Emphasizing breastfeeding not only as the best food but also as the first link in creating” secure attachment “and ensuring the child’s future emotional health.

Identity Formation and Character Building in Childhood: This is the pivotal stage in the formation of the child’s“ self-concept”.

Choosing a Good Name :Imam Raza(A.S.) considers choosing a good name an ”identity-building strategy “and an absolute right of the child ,impacting both individual personality and the blessing of family life.

Comprehensive Care and Verbal Interaction: Emphasis on direct and active parental supervision ,establishing continuous verbal communication(even with the infant)and meeting emotional needs as the foundation for healthy development.

Psychological Principles Governing Uprighting :Constant principles act as a framework throughout all these stages:

Purposeful and Wise Affection: As the most effective educational tool ,which should be based on merit and avoid excess and discrimination.

Respect for the Child’s Innate Dignity: Through behaviors such as addressing by a respectful kunya) agnomen (and seeking their consultation ,which fosters self-esteem and a sense of responsibility in the child.

Simultaneous Religious and Rational Education: A firm emphasis on teaching religious knowledge alongside nurturing a critical ,inquisitive ,and reasoning spirit.

Indirect Supervision and Fostering Self-Reliance :Striking a balance between caring for the child and gradually delegating responsibilities to them to strengthen their spirit of independence and management ,the supreme example of which is evident in the upbringing of Imam al-Jawād(A.S.).

C)Management and Support Stage: Architecting the Environment of a Thriving Family

To ensure the success of the educational project ,Imam Reza (A.S.) also pays attention to the” environmental architecture “of the family .This architecture rests on several pillars:

Emotional and Communicative Management :Includes mutual expression of affection between spouses ,good temper ,forgiveness ,and especially“ interactive self-adornment ”to maintain attraction and intimacy in the relationship.

Economic Management Based on Balance :Emphasis on providing lawful livelihood and creating ease for the family as a religious duty ,while avoiding extravagance and recommending contentment.

Continuous Spiritual Support :Utilizing tools such as giving charity and reciting the Qur'an in the home ,not as individual acts ,but as" spiritual investments "to attract divine blessing and grant immunity to the family hearth.

5. Conclusion

This research demonstrated that the educational conduct of Imam Reza (A.S.) presents an "Integrated Family-Centered Educational System" in which "conscious and ethics-centered family formation" paves the way for "successful and comprehensive child rearing." The innovation and distinction of this model lie in its preventive, stage-based, and systematic perspective, which does not view upbringing as a matter of chance, but rather derives it from initial choices, foundational rituals, and the intelligent management of the family environment. By harmoniously integrating "affection," "reason," "spirituality," and "economics" within the framework of the family, this model offers a balanced and practicable paradigm for the present age.

Suggestions:

This model can form the basis for designing curricula in family education centers and pre-marital counseling.

It can be used as a framework for macro-cultural policies aimed at strengthening the institution of the family and countering social harms.

Future research can focus on the practical testing and assessment of this model's effectiveness in different sociological samples ,further revealing its adaptive capacities

Keywords: Imam Reza (A.S.), Principles, Ideal Family, Child Rearing.