

## PARENTS' INVOLVEMENT IN THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH ISLAM BASED ON IMAM AL-GHAZALI'S PERSPECTIVE

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**Abstract:** Parental involvement in children's education is crucial in any cultural or religious context, including Islam. Education is highly valued in Islam, and parents are considered their children's primary educators and role models. Parents are responsible for imparting religious education to their children. Therefore, this study aims to explain the essential elements of Muslim parenting from the perspective of Al-Ghazali, explore the importance of parents' involvement in educating Islam, and analyze the effect of the parents' participation on children. This study applied document analysis and interviews as data collection methods. Five parents were interviewed with open-ended questions. As a result, there are three critical elements in parenting, according to Al-Ghazali, namely knowledge acquisition, worshipping Allah, and relation and responsibility towards children. All the participants agree that parents' involvement in nurturing Islamic education in children is significant besides only focusing on academic education. Some participants' opinions regarding the effect of parents' involvement in educating Islamic teaching, namely curbing bad influences, good behaviour or akhlak, and clear guidelines for children. This finding potentially creates awareness and offers guidance to parents, encouraging them to enhance their efforts for the well-being of their children and families. It serves as a reminder that when individuals prioritize practising and preserving their faith, Allah, the Almighty, ensures the well-being of the family structure, leading to harmony within the broader community.

**Keywords:** parents' involvement, education, Islam, al-Ghazali, children.

### INTRODUCTION

Early childhood education is necessary for children, not only academic education. Still, the most essential education is Islamic education, which explains the truth of religion and all the basics of faith [1]–[3]. The Prophet Muhammad said in hadith:

حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدَانُ، أَخْبَرَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ، أَخْبَرَنَا يُونُسُ، عَنِ الزُّهْرِيِّ، قَالَ أَخْبَرَنِي أَبُو سَلَمَةَ بْنُ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ، أَنَّ

أَبَا هُرَيْرَةَ . رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ . قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ "مَا مِنْ مَوْلُودٍ إِلَّا يُولَدُ عَلَى الْفِطْرَةِ،

فَأَبَوَاهُ يُهَوِّدَانِهِ أَوْ يُنَصِّرَانِهِ أَوْ يُمَجِّسَانِهِ، كَمَا تَنبُتُ الْبُهَيْمَةُ بِهَيْمَةٍ جَمْعَاءَ، هَلْ تُحْسِنُونَ فِيهَا مِنْ جَدْعَاءَ"

ثُمَّ يَقُولُ { فِطْرَةَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ ذَلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَائِمُ } - صحيح البخاري

Meaning: Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said, "No child is born except on Al-Fitra (Islam), and then his parents make him Jewish, Christian or Magian, as an animal produces a perfect young animal: do you see any part of its body amputated?" Then he rec 'The religion of pure Islamic Faith (Hanifa), (i.e., to worship none but Allah), The pure Allah's Islamic nature with which He (Allah) has created mankind. Let There be no change in Allah's religion (i.e., to join none in Allah's worship). That is the straight religion, but most men know not..." (30.30) – Sahih Bukhari.

From this hadith, it is clear that giving children proper early childhood education is indeed the parent's responsibility, and it is the children's right. Early Islamic education include tauhid, fiqh and tasawuf. Every child must know their God and religion, not just Islam in name and lineage alone. Every parent has their busyness, but they should not forget the responsibility towards the child, which is to take care, educate, and guide the child to the path of God so that the child is not far from the teachings of the Prophet. However, how do parents want to teach religion to their children if they are not knowledgeable about religion? Then, parents must know about Islam, even if it is very little and basic religious knowledge.

## PROBLEM STATEMENT

With the increasing advancement of technology, Islamic practice is critical nowadays, which can influence children's minds against bad things or alarming negative propaganda [4]. The issue of Islamic education among children has been extensively studied in recent years. Education in Islam is regarded as a process involving the 'insane sole,' including the rational, spiritual, physical, and social dimensions [5].

Current studies have looked directly at parental awareness of academics [6], parental involvement in school [7], parental involvement in child education [8], Islamic religious education in the family [9], and the effect of Islamic education on character development [10].

However, less attention has been given to parental involvement in applying the practice of Islam to children at home, which this issue will affect children's lives and outlooks as they grow into adulthood. Therefore, this research will discuss the gap area using a qualitative approach. The researcher will analyze some documents related to this research based on the theory of parenting by Imam al-Ghazali and also interview five parents.

## METHODOLOGY

This research aims to study how parental involvement relates to a child's Islamic practices. To make this research more transparent, the researcher has set the objectives which are: 1). To explain the essential elements of Muslim parenting from the perspective of Al-Ghazali. 2). To explore the importance of parent's involvement in educating Islam. 3). To analyze the effect of the parents' involvement on children.

## Imam Al-Ghazali's Perspective on Muslim Parenting

Al-Ghazali's philosophy of education represents the high point of Islamic thinking on education, in which al-Ghazali's inclination towards reconciliation and integrating various intellectual schools is apparent. He emphasizes two main goals: achievement, which leads to self-approach to Allah, and perfection, which leads to the world's happiness and the hereafter [11]. The principles of education that this scholar prioritizes are that every education should focus on the relationship with Allah, and every education should lead to Him. The purpose of the community is to apply Sharia in everything done in daily life and education; any education must be in line with what Sharia outlines [12]–[14].

One of the prominent writings of Al-Ghazali is Kitab Ihya' Ulumuddin, which was written in the 11th century and focused on worship and divine service. In this study, the

researcher refers to Ihya' Ulumuddin, who translated by Fazl-ul-Karim from volumes 1,2,3, 3, and 4, which include worship, morals, destructive evil, and methodology. The researcher analyzes and takes input only related to this study, covering parenting knowledge or skills. As a result, there are three critical elements in parenting, according to Al-Ghazali, namely knowledge acquisition, worshipping Allah, and relation and responsibility towards children [15]-[18].

### Knowledge Acquisition

Acquisition of knowledge is obligatory in Islam as it has been said by Prophet Muhammad in hadith:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: وَمَنْ سَلَكَ طَرِيقًا يَلْتَمِسُ فِيهِ عِلْمًا سَهَّلَ اللَّهُ لَهُ بِهِ طَرِيقًا إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ، وَمَا اجْتَمَعَ قَوْمٌ فِي بَيْتٍ مِنْ بُيُوتِ اللَّهِ يَتْلُونَ كِتَابَ اللَّهِ، وَيَتَدَارَسُونَهُ فِيمَا بَيْنَهُمْ؛ إِلَّا نَزَلَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّكِينَةُ، وَعَشِيَّتْهُمْ الرَّحْمَةُ، وَحَفَّتْهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ، وَذَكَرَهُمُ اللَّهُ فِيمَنْ عِنْدَهُ، وَمَنْ أَبْطَأَ بِهِ عَمَلُهُ لَمْ يُسْرِعْ بِهِ نَسَبُهُ" [رواه مسلم].

Meaning: On the authority of Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him), the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: Whoever follows a path to seek knowledge therein, Allah will make a path to Paradise easy for him. No people gather in one of the Houses of Allah, reciting the Book of Allah and studying it among themselves, except that sakeenah (tranquillity) descends upon them. Mercy envelops them, the angels surround them, and Allah mentions them amongst those with Him. Moreover, whoever is slowed down by his actions will not be hastened forward by his lineage [Narrated by Muslim].

Seeking knowledge is not only at school or a place of study, but that knowledge can be obtained no matter where we are, and this has proved that those who seek knowledge will get an easier path to heaven [19]. Allah also stated His attestation that Allah highly places the rank and honour of those who seek knowledge, which can be proven in surah Al-Mujadilah verse 11:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِذَا قِيلَ لَكُمْ تَفَسَّحُوا فِي الْمَجَالِسِ فَافْسَحُوا يَفْسَحِ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ ۗ وَإِذَا قِيلَ أَنْشُرُوا فَأَنْشُرُوا يَرْفَعِ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَرَجَاتٍ ۗ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ (11)

Meaning: "O believers! When you are told to make room in gatherings, then do so. Allah will make room for you in His grace". Moreover, if you are told to rise, then do so. Allah will elevate those of you who are faithful and raise those gifted with knowledge in rank. Moreover, Allah is All-Aware of what you do."

Knowledge is something that needs to be emphasized by parents, and they need to know about child development, psychology, health, communication, and, most notably, for Muslim parents, knowledge related to divinity and Islam. Every parent must master these fields of knowledge in fulfilling duties and responsibilities. How can parents put high expectations on children's Islam if they do not have even the basic knowledge of Islam? Parents, especially mothers, are the first teachers for every child who instil the right faith and beliefs in children [20]-[23].

Meanwhile, Al-Ghazali distinguished knowledge based on its source and divided it into two which are syariah knowledge, which is all knowledge that directly addresses religious matters and is generally obtained from and developed based on the Qur'an and as-Sunnah, and choir syariah, which is the knowledge that originates from thinking. According to Al-Ghazali, the first and foremost knowledge that should be cultivated in children is knowing Allah or tawhid in Islam. Knowledge is precious for its own sake as it will bring happiness in this world and the hereafter, but only if the knowledge sought is the knowledge that is useful and brings us closer to Allah and his religious path. Tawhid is the most critical knowledge because every creature in this world needs to know and recognize who their creator is and what the purpose of their life is. In strengthening the relationship with Allah, parents must have at least basic knowledge of Islam and tawhid; children need to be exposed by their parents to tawhid from an early age through theoretical education, role models, or the Quran and hadith. As said by Al-Ghazali, teaching faith is like planting a seed in the heart until it grows strong and high and becomes a high-quality tree, its root in the earth, and its branch in the sky [24], [25].

### Worshipping Allah

Worshipping Allah means obeying all His commands and prohibitions, which include fulfilling all obligatory duties such as prayer, zakat, fasting, and others. Parents who fulfil their responsibilities towards Allah will surely meet their duties towards the children entrusted to them [26], [27].

The most important is the responsibility of praying five times a day. Consistent prayer purifies the human soul and becomes a powerful shield for parents to protect their family, including children, from delinquency. Al-Ghazali wrote in his book that prayer is the pillar of religion, the basis of faith, the tree to nearness to Allah, and the excellent light of obedience [28]–[30]. The Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) said in hadith narrated by Abu Hurairah:

حَدَّثَنَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ بْنُ حَمْرَةَ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي ابْنُ أَبِي حَازِمٍ، وَالدَّرَاوَرْدِيُّ، عَنْ يَزِيدَ، عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، عَنْ أَبِي سَلَمَةَ بْنِ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، أَنَّهُ سَمِعَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ "أَرَأَيْتُمْ لَوْ أَنَّ هَرًا بَابِ أَحَدِكُمْ، يَغْتَسِلُ فِيهِ كُلَّ يَوْمٍ خَمْسًا، مَا تَقُولُ ذَلِكَ يُبْقِي مِنْ دَرَنِهِ". قَالُوا لَا يُبْقِي مِنْ دَرَنِهِ شَيْئًا. قَالَ "فَذَلِكَ مِثْلُ الصَّلَوَاتِ الْخَمْسِ، يَمْحُو اللَّهُ بِهَا الْخَطَايَا". [صحيح بخاري]

Meaning: I heard Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) saying, "If there was a river at the door of any of you and he took a bath in it five times a day, would you notice any dirt on him?" They said, "Not a trace of dirt would be left." The Prophet (ﷺ) added, "That is the example of the five prayers with which Allah blots out (annuls) evil deeds." (Sahih Bukhari)

Prayers not only eliminate our sins and purify our souls, but prayers also can form a good personality, and it is essential for parents to take care of their five times prayers to educate themselves and then be able to educate children to take care of their prayers and their religion. Besides that, the pillars of Islam and other Islamic teachings, such as fasting and reading the Quran, are also very important for parents to practice. Al-Ghazali stated that fasting opened the door of paradise. The road of syaitan to the heart is their strong desire. Moreover, by preventing their desire, the soul will be at peace, showing its gallant in defeating his ambitious enemy. On top of that, reciting the Quran as a daily routine is also very helpful for parents in educating their children according to the path of Islam. Al-Ghazali said in his book, Ihya Ulumuddin, that it is light, and therein, there is a cure for the diseases of the mind. Those who advised according to it told the truth. Those who held

it firm found guidance. Those who acted up to it got salvation. This practice helps parents to be calmer in managing and carrying out their responsibilities to their children because when the soul is quiet, all tests and challenges in educating children can be passed with patience [31]-[33].

All acts of worship performed by parents are an example for children and will be emulated by them in their daily lives, and this is very important to keep children on the right track of Islam [34], [35].

### Relationship and Responsibility Towards Children

Maintaining a good relationship and total commitment to responsibility towards children is essential in parenting. A good relationship or bonding between parents and children can be created in many ways, either through physical or spiritual contact [36].

Showing affection towards children is one way to build muscular attachments and improve children's emotional development. Children need unconditional attention to allow them to grow with high self-esteem. Parents are responsible for maintaining good relationships with their children and guiding them until they become accountable and reasonable. This is important because the parent-child relationship is a bond that will never end and is bound in this world and the hereafter [37], [38].

Parents should also treat children equally so that the children do not feel left out or neglected. Treatment and love towards children must be fair regardless of the children's level of achievement or certain characteristics [39]. Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) said:

أَخْبَرَنَا يَعْقُوبُ بْنُ سُفْيَانَ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا سُلَيْمَانُ بْنُ حَرْبٍ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا حَمَّادُ بْنُ زَيْدٍ، عَنْ حَاجِبِ بْنِ

الْمُقَضَّلِ بْنِ الْمُهَلَّبِ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، قَالَ سَمِعْتُ النَّعْمَانَ بْنَ بَشِيرٍ، يَخْطُبُ قَالَ، قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ

عليه وسلم "اعْدِلُوا بَيْنَ أَوْلَادِكُمْ اَعْدِلُوا بَيْنَ أَوْلَادِكُمْ". [سنن النسائي]

Meaning: An-Nu'man bin Bashir delivered a Khutbah and said: "The Messenger of Allah said: 'Treat your children fairly, treat your children fairly.'" [Sunan An-Nasai]

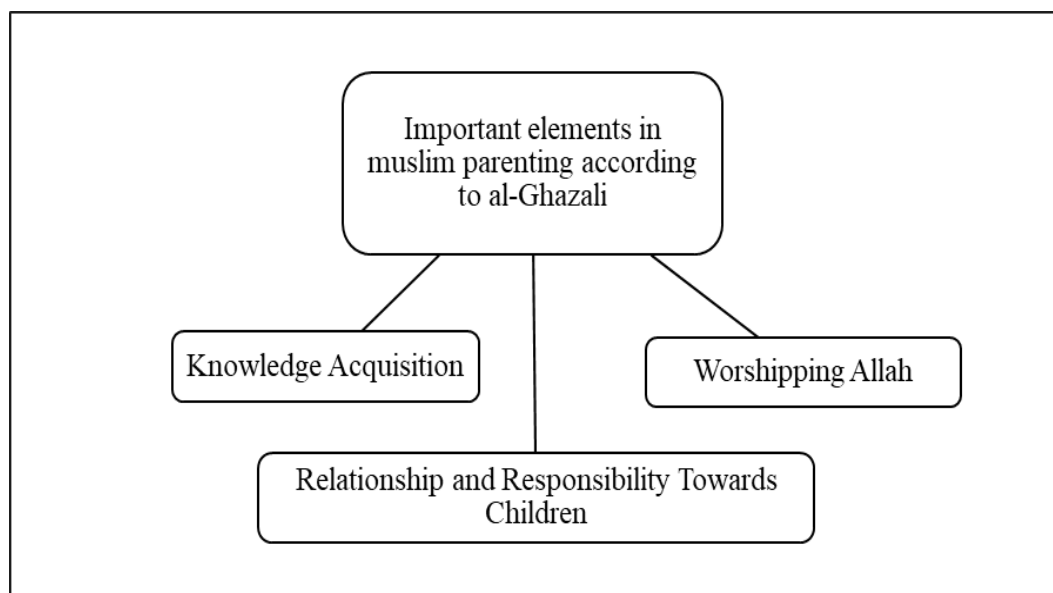
Fair is measured through the equal treatment given to each child based on their personality and behaviour. As each child is different, parents are responsible for using a suitable approach for each of them. As Al-Ghazali wrote in his book, do justice to the people willingly and come to them with what they love [40]-[42].

Despite the treatment Al-Ghazali mentions in his book, parents are responsible for fulfilling their children's needs. Al-Ghazali stated that as you have duties towards your parents, you also have duties towards your children. The needs include a good education, shelter, food, clothing, and other needs that are considered essential to the children. Parents should earn from permissible earnings to give the best to their children as it dramatically impacts their growth. Al-Ghazali said that permissible earning is a compulsory subject of wisdom for a wise man out of other crucial things [42]. From this earning, parents provide for the children's needs, so it is essential to avoid impermissible earning to prevent harmful effects on the lives of parents and children, as Allah said in the Quran, surah Al-Mu'minun verse 51:

يَا أَيُّهَا الرُّسُلُ كُلُوا مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَاعْمَلُوا صَالِحًا إِنِّي بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ عَلِيمٌ (51)

Meaning: O messengers! Eat from what is reasonable and lawful, and act righteously. Indeed, I fully know what you do.

Besides that, disciplining children is also one of the parents' responsibilities, especially in this age of advanced technology, where children are exposed to various external elements that are not good. Therefore, parents need to discipline them by monitoring them, setting a good example, and advising the children to be under control and not do sinful acts or things that have dire consequences in the future. Regarding disciplining children, parents can instil the right and good deeds through religious teaching at home. Eventually, the children will be able to cooperate and differentiate between right or wrong, good or bad things, and simultaneously avoid bad influences towards them [43]–[45].



**Diagram 1 – Important Elements in Muslim Parenting According to Al-Ghazali**

Al-Ghazali emphasized Islamic elements more, especially taqarrub ilallah, or getting closer to Allah in anything we do as parents or human beings. Exposure to the knowledge of Islam and its creator is significant as parents' primary knowledge to emphasize in their children. All these elements must move along so that Islamic education towards children can be successfully achieved, in addition to maintaining the children's emotional development during the growth process [45].

### **The Importance of Parent's Involvement In Educating Islam**

The involvement of parents in children's lives is essential, especially in children's Islamic education. All the participants agree that parents' involvement in nurturing Islamic education in children is significant besides only focusing on academic education. Parental involvement is a vital bonding session that helps children's development, whether small or big things about children, such as sharing with children about life and religion, listening to children's stories, assisting children in solving their problems, or anything that involves them [46].

Involvement in educating Islam to children is very important for the sake of a better lifestyle for children. This act of educating not just teachers in school alone, but it is the parents that should teach their children about Islam first before they get the knowledge in school or any other medium. As stated by P1, "*Children have more time with parents than they do when they are in school, so good parents should take the opportunity to apply Islam in their children and not just take their hands off to the teacher*".

P2 also has the same thought by saying "Parents are the first teachers who should show good manners to their children. We must always apply Islamic and religious values in every act and behaviour of our children. Even small things, for example, when going out for a walk, look at the sky, and tell his great son God made the sky with no poles but no falls. Such a small thing may seem trivial, but indirectly for the child to know Islam, know the greatness of Allah".

This action indirectly creates a strong bond between parents and children; even children become more attached to their parents and more comfortable with them.

Some parents think that children only need a place to live, clothes, food, and the best education, but they forget the children's rights of love and attention that need to be given to them. Children need the attention and involvement of their parents. Parents must be willing to involve themselves in the development of their children [47]–[49].

In Islamic education, parents must have enough knowledge to teach their children accurate and correct knowledge based on the Qur'an and Sunnah. Still, if the parents themselves do not know, they need to be willing to seek new knowledge they do not know so that knowledge can be taught to the children [50].

All the participant are willing to seek knowledge that they do not have for the sake of their children. P3 said "On my own opinions and views, I, as a mother, prefer to study it first. As we are advised before marriage, both spouses should first provide at least basic religious knowledge. That is why we as a married couple are encouraged to learn religious knowledge before giving birth and form a real Islamic family. So, I will learn something that my husband or I don't know first, so if the children ask questions or the children don't know, then I can answer their problems and they don't have to look for answers from other sources that we don't know the pros and cons of our children. Fear that they misunderstand, so let parents sacrifice a little to learn for the good of the children".

### **Effect of Parent's Involvement in Educating Islamic Teaching**

Parents' involvement in children's Islamic education has continuity in children's lifestyle that affects their future. Proper education or guidance must be given to children as it is their right, and the most important thing is for parents to apply elements of Islam in the lives of their families and children. Parents are responsible for providing a proper education to children. All the participants in the interview agree that parent's involvement in nurturing Islamic education in children is significant as religion is the pillar of a civilization. The participation of parents in educating their children about Islam is essential because parents are the first teachers to children whom they hold a vast trust to take care of and educate in the best way so that the children can grow up to be a person with strong religious beliefs and then be able to build a quality future generation. These are some participants' opinions regarding the effect of parents' involvement in educating Islamic teaching [51]–[53].

#### **Curb Bad Influences**

If parents often spend time with children and give full attention and commitment to their growth, children will grow up to be a person who will provide complete trust to their parents. This makes it easier for children to listen and obey their parents. Indirectly, this can prevent children from being influenced by bad things outside. Parents who involve themselves in their children's religious education can set a good example and explain what is good and what should be avoided by children. With the application of correct Islamic values, with god's permission, bad things or influences can be avoided [54], [55].

P2 stated that she will spend time with the children, and apply religious values in daily life as well as be a friend and a point of reference for the children so that the children do

not have to look for the wrong source of reference outside the home, as said by P2: *"I strongly agree that when parents care and involve themselves in the child's life, in the child's education, in the child's religious growth, these children will tend to trust their parents 100%. Children will be more transparent with parents, and not afraid to ask something, for their stories. So the involvement of bap and mothers can indirectly stem the bad influence of children. For example, if we as parents do not know what they do, they must find friends outside, where our friends do not know what influence they have on their children, or our children will be a bad influence on their friends. So, as parents, we must be good friends and loyal listeners to our children."*

#### Good Behavior or Akhlak

Parental involvement affects children's behaviour. Parents who pay less attention to their children are likely to become rebellious. The participation of parents who lead towards religion by giving good religious education, able to form good morals in children [\[56\]](#), [\[57\]](#).

A statement from P4 has proven that the involvement of parents does affect children's behaviour, "Alhamdulillah, so far until today everything is fine. One example of what I see in my children is that they serve their parents well and do not raise their voices or be rude to their parents. Thanks to religious upbringing and examples of good behaviour, the children of all Alhamdulillah are now the coolers of their father's mothers. Hopefully, these good wishes remain in them until the end of their lives and even for myself. Wallahua'lam."

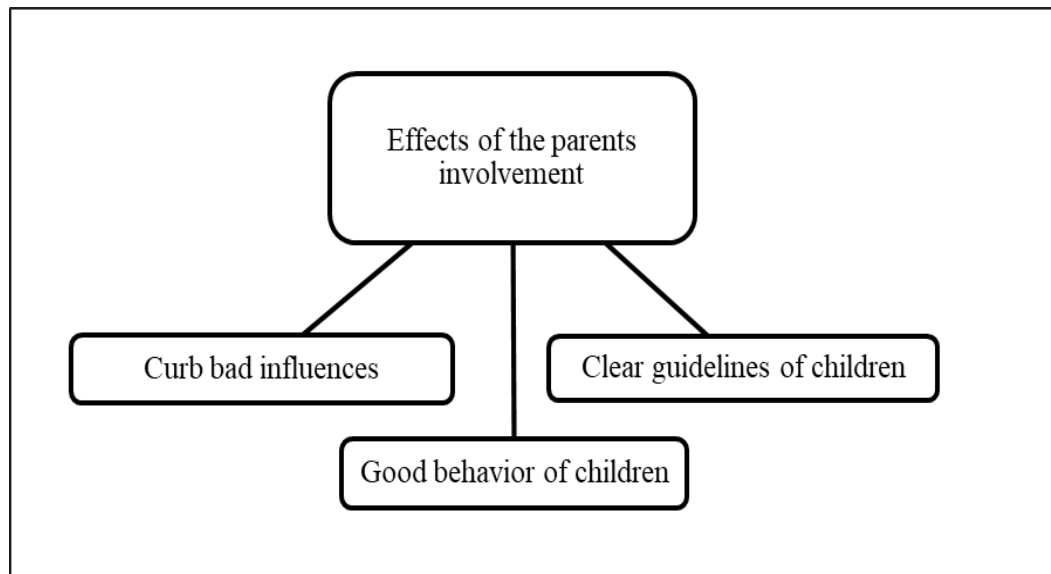
P3 said, "My involvement as a parent to my children in religious education has greatly impacted their personality because if it is not myself who applies Islamic values first, it is not necessarily my children who can accept and understand well what their second teacher teaches in school and no matter where they are."

#### Clear Guidelines for Children

When parents give religious education to their children, indirectly, the children have clear guidelines for navigating life in the future. Children will have examples they can follow, such as the messenger of Allah, Prophet Muhammad, or examples of good behaviour from their parents. If children are exposed to the Qur'an and sunnah, their lives are more orderly, and they know better the purpose and direction of life, which is not just a race that measures academic success or is measured in terms of wealth alone. Instead, life is more valuable if guided to happiness and success in the hereafter [\[58\]](#).

As stated by P2, "I think that the guidance from the Quran and Sunnah, as well as good religious values, can guide my children in the future because for me it is a loss in the life of a person who was born a Muslim but does not practice Islamic values in his daily life. Wallahua'lam".





**Diagram 2: Effects of Parent's Involvement**

## CONCLUSION

This research serves the implications and guidelines for society, especially parents, to apply the critical elements in parenting suggested by Al-Ghazali. Parents' involvement in children's Islamic education has continuity in children's lifestyle that affects their future. Proper education and guidance must be given to children as it is their right, and they are a trust and rizq from Allah that needs to be taken care of, educated, and guided best because the responsibility as a parent to inform the child will be asked in the hereafter as stated in hadith: Ibn 'Umar (May Allah be pleased with them) reported: The Prophet said, "All of you are guardians and are responsible for your subjects. The ruler is a guardian of his subjects; the man is a guardian of his family, and the woman is a guardian and is responsible for her husband's house and his offspring; so, all of you are guardians and are responsible for your subjects." (Sahih Bukhari and Muslim). With the existence of this study, it is hoped to provide awareness and guidelines to parents to do better for children and families. As a reminder, when each person takes care of the religion and keeps its purity, Allah the Al-Mighty will take care of a family institution, and there will be harmony in the entire community.

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These should be brief and placed at the end of the text before the references.

## Author Contribution

The author contributed equally to the main contributor to this paper, some are as chairman, member, financier, article translator, and final editor. The author read and approved the final paper.

## Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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