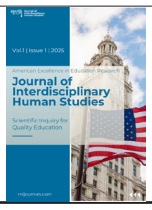
The Journal
OF INTERDISCIPLINARY HUMAN STUDIES
https://mijournals.com/index.php/Human_Studies/index



https://doi.org/10.57033/mijournals-2026-3-096

Nargiza KHALKHODJAYEVA[a]

[a] *PhD doctoral researcher, International Islamic Academy of Uzbekistan, Tashkent, Uzbekistan*
E-mail: nxolxojayeva@gmail.com

THE LEGAL AND EDUCATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE OF SUNNAH PRACTICES ASSOCIATED WITH THE BIRTH OF A CHILD IN ISLAMIC SHARIA

Abstract. *This article examines the role of Sunnah practices associated with the birth of a child in shaping the national and spiritual foundations of children's rights in Islamic Sharia. It explores the jurisprudential, educational and social dimensions of practices such as reciting the adhān and iqāmah, performing taḥnīk and ʿaqīqah, choosing a good name, shaving the newborn's hair and circumcision. The study also considers their contribution to children's spiritual and moral development, parental responsibility and the transmission of national and spiritual values across generations. Drawing on Islamic jurisprudential sources, hadiths and contemporary scholarly research, the article analyses the legal status of these practices from different perspectives. The findings suggest that these practices represent not merely ceremonial traditions but also a value system that supports children's interests, strengthens family responsibility and promotes spiritual and moral development.*

Keywords: *children's rights, Sunnah practices, adhān, iqāmah, taḥnīk, naming, ʿaqīqah, circumcision, Islamic law, child upbringing.*

INTRODUCTION

Ensuring children's rights and creating the conditions necessary for their comprehensive development are important priorities of state policy today. In recent years Uzbekistan has implemented a number of legal reforms aimed at protecting children's rights, safeguarding their legitimate interests and strengthening their upbringing within the family. In particular, the new edition of the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan, adopted in 2023, identifies ensuring children's rights, freedoms and legitimate interests,

and creating the conditions necessary for their full development, as one of the state's important responsibilities (Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan, 2023).

This direction was further developed in Law No. O'RQ-996, "On the Protection of Children from All Forms of Violence," adopted on 14 November 2024. The law established legal mechanisms for protecting children from physical, psychological and other forms of violence and for ensuring their rights and legitimate interests (Law No. O'RQ-996, 2024). In addition, the approval of the Strategy for Protecting Children from All Forms of Violence for 2026–2030 by Presidential Decree of 24 December 2025 further demonstrates the importance of this issue in state policy (Presidential Decree of 24 December 2025).

From this perspective, it is important to study children's rights not only on the basis of contemporary legal norms, but also in connection with the historical, religious and national-spiritual values of our people. Islamic Sharia has paid particular attention to children's rights and interests from the moment of birth and has established a number of religious, ethical and educational practices concerning them. These include reciting the adhān and iqāmah, performing taḥnīk, giving a good name, offering ʿaqīqah, shaving the hair and circumcision, all of which are directly related to the child's status within the family and to spiritual upbringing.

MAIN PART

Islamic Sharia regulates all stages of human life from a moral and legal perspective, including the initial practices associated with the arrival of a newborn. Sunnah practices recommended after a child's birth, such as reciting the adhān and iqāmah, performing taḥnīk, giving a good name, conducting the ʿaqīqah ritual and shaving the child's hair, are not merely religious traditions; they also function as social institutions with specific legal and educational significance. From a legal perspective, these practices help acknowledge the child's membership in the family and society and strengthen the child's lineage and personal status. From an educational perspective, they are important in instilling initial spiritual values and establishing an atmosphere of affection and responsibility within the family.

In Islamic law, the religious, ethical and social duties to be performed for a child from birth are of particular importance. One of the important sources that systematically

discusses these matters is Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya's (d. 751 AH/1350 CE) work Tuḥfat al-Mawdūd bi Aḥkām al-Mawlūd. In this work the author discusses in detail the rights of a newborn, naming, taḥnīk, reciting the adhān, ʿaqīqah, circumcision, upbringing and education, drawing on Qurʾānic verses and Prophetic hadiths (Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, 2015:30). In this respect the work is considered one of the most important sources on children's rights and child-rearing in Islam.

In Islam the birth of a child is regarded as one of the great blessings bestowed by Allah. Therefore, congratulating the family on the birth of a newborn, expressing joy and offering good prayers for the child and the parents are considered among the recommended Sunnah practices. In his work Tuḥfat al-Mawdūd bi Aḥkām al-Mawlūd, Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya discusses the etiquette of congratulating a family on the birth of a child and explains that in the pre-Islamic period of ignorance (Jāhiliyyah) it was customary to use the expression "بالرفاء والبنين" ("May it be blessed with harmony and sons") on the occasion of marriage. The word rifāʾ in this expression means harmony, concord and agreement, that is, "May this marriage that brings harmony and concord be blessed"; banīn means "sons." In this way people would congratulate families only on the birth of a son and disregard the birth of a daughter. It is not right to congratulate a man only when a son is born and not to congratulate him when a daughter is born; rather, such customs of the pre-Islamic period should be abandoned, because people rejoiced greatly at the birth of sons but disliked the birth of daughters (Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, 2015:30).

Abū Bakr ibn al-Mundhir relates in his work al-Awsaṭ a report from Ḥasan al-Baṣrī. While a man was sitting with Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, another man's son was born, and someone said to the father: "May you be congratulated on the birth of a horseman (a brave son)!" Ḥasan al-Baṣrī replied: "How do you know that he will truly become a horseman or a brave man? Why do you say that?" He then said: "Say instead: 'May Allah bless you with the child He has granted you. Give thanks to the One who bestowed this blessing. May your child reach maturity, and may you benefit from his goodness'" (Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, 2015:30).

One of the practices prescribed in Islam for a newborn is to recite the adhān in the child's right ear and the iqāmah in the left ear immediately after birth. Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya devotes the fourth chapter of Tuḥfat al-Mawdūd bi Aḥkām al-Mawlūd to this

issue. As the legal basis for this Sunnah practice he cites a hadith narrated by Abū Rāfiʿ (may Allah be pleased with him): "I saw the Messenger of Allah recite the adhān in the ear of Ḥasan ibn ʿAlī when Fāṭimah gave birth to him." A hadith narrated by Imam al-Bayhaqī also recommends reciting the adhān in the newborn's right ear and the iqāmah in the left, while regarding a third hadith narrated from Ibn ʿAbbās (may Allah be pleased with him) the author notes that its chain of transmission is weak (Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, 2015:30-31).

According to Ibn Qayyim, the principal wisdom behind this Sunnah is that the first words heard by the newborn should proclaim Allah's greatness and call to monotheism (tawḥīd). In this way the child is welcomed into life with the symbols of Islam from its very first moments. The author also identifies the expulsion of Satan by the adhān, and the divine call reaching human nature before Satan's temptations, as important wisdoms behind this Sunnah (Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, 2015:30-31).

Today the Sunnah of reciting the adhān in a newborn's ear is also being discussed from the perspective of contemporary psychological research. In particular, the prominent role of hearing in early infant development makes it possible to consider the wisdom of this Sunnah in the light of modern science. In their article "Examining the Culture of Adhan and Iqomah Preaching in Newborns: Perspectives on Religion and Psychology," the Indonesian researchers Vrisko Putra Vachruddin, Arif Ainur Rofiq and M. Syarif Hidayatulloh, drawing on the studies of Fuad Nashori, William Crain and Wertheimer, state that hearing is the first sensory faculty to become actively functional after birth. Accordingly, reciting the adhān and iqāmah in a newborn's ears makes the words of tawḥīd and the shahādah among the first words the child hears. In particular, the Western psychologist William Crain notes that hearing, sight, smell, touch and sensation develop actively between the ages of 0 and 2, and research conducted by Wertheimer indicated that approximately ten minutes after birth a newborn turns towards the source of a sound, a phenomenon known in psychology as the orienting reflex (Vachruddin, Rofiq & Hidayatulloh, 2023:177-180).

In his work Ḥuqūq al-Ṭifl wa Subul Taḥqīqihā fi al-Sharīʿah al-Islāmiyyah, Shaykh ʿImād al-Dīn Zaydān Ṣaqr emphasises that performing taḥnīk for a newborn is one of the practices recommended in Sharia. He explains taḥnīk as chewing and softening a date and then applying a small amount to the newborn's palate. He supports this ruling

E-ISSN 3069-8375

with a hadith narrated by Abū Mūsā al-Ashʿarī (may Allah be pleased with him): “A son was born to me, so I took him to the Messenger of Allah. He named him Ibrāhīm and performed taḥnīk with a date” (narrated by al-Bukhārī and Muslim) (ʿImād al-Dīn Zaydān, 2023:96).

Raʿfat Farīd Suwaylim also recognises taḥnīk as one of the rights of a newborn established in Sharia. Drawing on hadiths, the author notes that performing taḥnīk with dates is preferable, while other sweet substances may be used when necessary. Referring to the commentaries of Imam Ibn Ḥajar and Imam al-Nawawī, he also states that it is recommended for taḥnīk to be performed by a righteous and pious person. He further argues that the practice may have physical benefits, such as stimulating the infant’s sucking reflex, strengthening the mouth muscles and preparing the infant for breastfeeding; drawing on contemporary medical views, the work also states that taḥnīk may stimulate blood circulation and strengthen the infant’s ability to suck (Suwaylim, 2008:91-93).

Professor İbrahim Canan separately analyses the naming of a newborn in his work Hz. Peygamber’in Sünnetinde Terbiye. According to the author, some hadiths report that the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) named a newborn on the day of birth, while other hadiths mention naming on the seventh day. Imam al-Bukhārī carefully explains the apparent discrepancy between these reports (al-Bukhārī, 2019:1353): he includes a chapter entitled “Naming a Child on the Day of Birth When No ʿAqīqah Is Performed,” indicating that naming on the day of birth relates to cases in which ʿaqīqah is not performed. Ibn Ḥajar also notes that the reports cited by al-Bukhārī do not provide clear evidence that ʿaqīqah was performed for children named on the day of birth, since ʿaqīqah is not obligatory but a recommended (mustaḥabb) act. At the same time, the view that a child should be named only on the seventh day and that there is no need to do so earlier is not fully supported by either Sharia evidence or reason, for the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) is reported to have recommended that even a miscarried foetus be given a name and buried (Canan, 2008:115).

According to the author, the main criterion in naming a child is to choose a beautiful name with a good meaning. In this regard the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) said: “On the Day of Resurrection you will be called by your names and the names of your fathers, so give yourselves good names” (Abū Dāwūd, 1996:292).

It is also reported that the Prophet replaced names with inappropriate meanings with names of good meaning. On this basis the author cites the views of numerous scholars that a name may have a certain influence on a person's character and moral development (Canan, 2008:116).

Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya emphasises that there is a certain relationship between a person's name and personality. According to him, through His wisdom Allah often makes people's names correspond to their circumstances and character. Citing reports from Saʿīd ibn al-Musayyib and other early Muslim scholars, the author explains that a good name may have a positive influence on a person's conduct, whereas a name with a bad meaning may leave a negative psychological impression; the Prophet's changing of certain names with undesirable meanings is also presented as practical evidence for this view (Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, 2015:146-147).

Thus, in Islamic law giving a child a good and meaningful name is one of the first legal and ethical responsibilities of parents towards their child. A name is considered an important factor that may affect a person's identity, place in society and self-understanding. Accordingly, alongside choosing a beautiful name, Sharia regards raising the child with good manners and making it possible for the child to establish a family upon reaching maturity as parental responsibilities. This meaning is expressed in the following hadith: "When a child is born to someone, let him give the child a good name and good manners. When the child reaches maturity, let him arrange the child's marriage. If the child reaches maturity and the father does not arrange the marriage, and the child consequently commits a sin, the sin will be the father's responsibility" (al-Bayhaqī, 2000:401).

In his study ʿInāyat al-Sharīʿah al-Islāmiyyah bi-Ḥuqūq al-Aṭfāl ("The Islamic Sharia's Care for Children's Rights"), the Saudi associate professor Ḥasan ibn Khālid ibn Ḥasan al-Sindī analyses the lexical and technical meanings of ʿaqīqah, its place in Sharia and the views of the four Sunni schools on the issue. According to him, in the Ḥanafī school ʿaqīqah is considered permissible after the child is named on the seventh day after birth, the child's hair is shaved and charity equal to the weight of the hair is given. Some Ḥanafī jurists have regarded ʿaqīqah as a voluntary act of worship performed in gratitude to Allah. The author notes that in the Mālikī school ʿaqīqah is considered mandūb (recommended), a category that in their terminology is ranked below Sunnah (al-Sindī, 2008:21).

E-ISSN 3069-8375

According to the author, scholars of the Shāfiʿī and Ḥanbalī schools establish the status of ʿaqīqah as a confirmed Sunnah (sunnah muʾakkadah) on the basis of a number of hadiths. For example, in a hadith narrated by Samurah ibn Jundub (may Allah be pleased with him) the Messenger of Allah said: "Every child is held in pledge by his ʿaqīqah: an animal is slaughtered on the child's behalf on the seventh day, the child's head is shaved, and the child is given a name" (Abū Dāwūd, 1996:312). In commenting on the expressions "held in pledge" (مرتهن) and "pledged" (رهين) in the hadith, Ḥasan al-Sindī notes that, according to some scholars, these words indicate that until ʿaqīqah is performed on the child's behalf the child's development and growth may not be complete in the same way as that of peers (al-Sindī, 2008:22).

The author also states that the majority of jurists consider ʿaqīqah for a girl to be prescribed in the same way as for a boy. As evidence he cites a hadith narrated by Umm Kurz al-Khuzāʿiyyah (may Allah be pleased with her): "For a boy two equivalent sheep are to be slaughtered, and for a girl one sheep" (Abū Dāwūd, 1996:311; al-Sindī, 2008:22).

In his work Hz. Peygamber'in Sünnetinde Terbiye the Turkish scholar İbrahim Canan analyses the rulings and etiquette related to ʿaqīqah and notes that, according to the hadiths, the most preferable time for ʿaqīqah is the seventh day after the child's birth. If it is not performed on the seventh day, some reports allow it to be performed on the fourteenth or twenty-first day; relying on Ibn Ḥajar, he notes that ʿaqīqah may be performed until the child reaches puberty, after which its ruling no longer applies. According to the author, it is preferable to slaughter the ʿaqīqah animal before shaving the child's head. Its meat may be eaten and given as a gift, like the meat of other sacrificial animals, and it is also reported that the Messenger of Allah recommended giving some of the ʿaqīqah meat slaughtered for Ḥusayn (may Allah be pleased with him) to the midwife. İbrahim Canan further notes that in the pre-Islamic period it was customary to smear the blood of the ʿaqīqah sacrifice on the child's head; the Messenger of Allah abolished this practice and instructed that saffron or a fragrant substance (khalūq) be applied instead (Canan, 2008:117-118).

Shaykh ʿImād al-Dīn Zaydān Ṣaqr identifies three principal wisdoms behind ʿaqīqah. First, ʿaqīqah is a means of drawing closer to Allah and asking for blessing and protection from calamities for the child. Second, it expresses gratitude to Allah

for the blessing of a child and reflects the parents' joy. Third, ʿaqīqah helps strengthen compassion, mutual solidarity and social cohesion in the community (ʿImād al-Dīn Zaydān, 2023:100-101).

In his work Tarbiyat al-Ṭifl: Ḥuqūq al-Ṭifl fi al-Sharīʿah al-Islāmiyyah ("Child Education: Children's Rights in Islamic Law") the Saudi researcher Raʿfat Farīd Suwaylim states that one of the important rights of a newborn is to have the head shaved on the seventh day after birth. According to the author, this practice helps remove discomfort and impurities remaining from birth. In a hadith concerning ʿaqīqah the Messenger of Allah said: "Remove the harm from him" (Abū Dāwūd, 1996:313). Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī presents differing scholarly interpretations of the word "harm" (الأذى) in the hadith: Muḥammad ibn Sīrīn and al-Aṣmaʿī interpreted it as shaving the child's head, while Ibn Ḥajar, relying on reports from al-Ṭabarānī and others, concluded that "harm" should be understood in a general sense that includes both shaving the head and removing other impurities remaining from birth (Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, 2000:734). This interpretation helps reconcile the various versions of the hadith.

The author notes that giving charity in silver, or its value in gold, equal to the weight of the child's hair is also considered recommended. As evidence he cites the Prophet's words to Fāṭimah (may Allah be pleased with her): "O Fāṭimah, shave his head and give silver in charity equal to the weight of his hair" (al-Tirmidhī, 2015:490). The author observes that this blessed Sunnah is not sufficiently practised by many people today, yet performing it brings the reward of following the Sunnah as well as the merit of giving charity to the poor and needy; in addition, shaving the head is said to strengthen the hair roots, clean the scalp and positively affect the healthy development of the child's sensory organs (Suwaylim, 2008:91-93). Raʿfat Farīd Suwaylim also criticises the practice of shaving only part of a child's head while leaving the rest unshaven (qazaʿ), stating that the Messenger of Allah prohibited this practice. A hadith narrated by Ibn ʿUmar (may Allah be pleased with them both) states: "The Messenger of Allah forbade qazaʿ" (al-Bukhārī, 2019:1431).

Another practice performed after a child's birth is circumcision. As Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣādiq Muḥammad Yūsuf notes, circumcision of boys is one of the Sunnah practices in Islam and a tradition that has long been observed among Muslim peoples. The author considers circumcision an important practice associated with the child's

E-ISSN 3069-8375

health and cleanliness, and notes that the ruling on circumcision in the Ḥanafī school and the time at which it is performed depend on the child's condition and health. The word "circumcision" (khitna) lexically means "cutting," and in the terminology of jurists it is defined as "cutting a specific part of a specific organ" (Muḥammad Ṣādiq Muḥammad Yūsuf, 2024:55).

In some hadiths circumcision is mentioned as one of the five practices of fiṭrah: "Five practices are part of fiṭrah: circumcision, removing pubic hair, plucking the hair under the armpits, trimming the nails and shortening the moustache." If fiṭrah is understood to mean "religious principles on which earlier prophets and revealed laws agreed and which we are also required to follow," it is natural that circumcision dates back to ancient times and has become a widespread custom among various peoples (Canan, 2008:119).

In Tuḥfat al-Mawdūd bi Aḥkām al-Mawlūd, Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya cites the following: ʿAbd al-Razzāq narrates through Ṭāwūs from Ibn ʿAbbās, who, commenting on the verse meaning "And when his Lord tested Ibrāhīm with certain words…," said: "These words were tests relating to purification: five concerning the head and five concerning the body." The five practices concerning the head are shortening the moustache, combing the head, using the miswāk, parting the hair and rinsing the mouth; the five bodily practices are circumcision, shaving the pubic hair, plucking the hair under the armpits, cleansing after relieving oneself and washing away impurity with water. The author also divides fiṭrah into two types: inward fiṭrah and practical fiṭrah. Inward fiṭrah concerns the human heart and includes knowing Allah, loving Him and meanings that point towards Him, while practical fiṭrah consists of practices related to cleansing and caring for the human body. All these practices associated with practical fiṭrah serve to maintain human purity, cleanliness and healthy living, and among them circumcision holds a distinct place as one of the important practices of bodily fiṭrah (Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, 2015:161).

Various views have been expressed regarding the appropriate time for circumcision, including on the day of birth, on the seventh day, at seven years of age, during teething, between the ages of seven and ten, at ten years of age, or at puberty. Al-Māwardī summarises these views by distinguishing two periods for circumcision: the period when it becomes obligatory, that is, the age of puberty, and the recommended period, that is,

before puberty. In his view the most preferable opinion is to perform circumcision on the seventh day after birth, and al-Nawawī also considered circumcision on the seventh day after birth recommended (Canan, 2008:121). Thus circumcision is one of the important practices of fiṭrah, an outward symbol of Islam and one of the prescriptions of Sharia. It is considered obligatory for men, and a Muslim who is able to undergo circumcision but does not hasten to do so is regarded as abandoning one of the important symbols of the religion.

CONCLUSION

The analysis shows that Sunnah practices associated with a child's birth are not merely ceremonial; they represent an important system of Islamic values that helps shape the child's status within the family, spiritual upbringing and place in society. Properly understanding the jurisprudential status of these practices and applying them appropriately in practice helps protect the child's interests, strengthen family responsibility and transmit national and spiritual values from one generation to the next. These Sunnah practices are also important in helping parents understand their responsibilities towards their child, show affection and care, and create an environment conducive to the child's spiritual and moral development. Accordingly, studying Sunnah practices in conjunction with children's rights and interests enables a deeper understanding of the place of Islamic values within the contemporary children's rights framework.

REFERENCES

1. Abū Dāwūd. (1996). Sunan Abū Dāwūd. Vol. 2. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah.
2. Abū Dāwūd. (1996). Sunan Abū Dāwūd. Vol. 3. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah.
3. al-Bayhaqī, I. (2000). Shuʿab al-Īmān. Vol. 6. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah.
4. al-Bukhārī, Imam. (2019). Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī. Damascus: Muʾassasat al-Risālah.
5. al-Sindī, Ḥasan ibn Khālid ibn Ḥasan. (2008). ʿInāyat al-Sharīʿah al-Islāmiyyah bi-Ḥuqūq al-Aṭfāl [The Islamic Sharia's Care for Children's Rights]. Riyadh.
6. al-Tirmidhī, Imam. (2015). Sunan al-Tirmidhī. Saudi Arabia: Dār al-Ṣiddīq.
7. Canan, İ. (2008). Hz. Peygamber'in (S.A.S.) Sünnetinde Terbiye [The Prophetic Sunnah in Education]. Istanbul: Işık Akademi Yayınları.
8. Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan. (2023). Tashkent: National Database of Legislation (lex.uz).
9. Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī. (2000). Fatḥ al-Bārī: Commentary on Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī. Vol. 9. Riyadh: Dār al-Salām.

E-ISSN 3069-8375

10. Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya. (2015). Tuḥfat al-Mawdūd bi Aḥkām al-Mawlūd. Damascus: Maktabat Dār al-Bayān.
11. ʿImād al-Dīn Zaydān Ṣaqr, Shaykh. (2023). Ḥuqūq al-Ṭifl wa Subul Taḥqīqihā fi al-Sharīʿah al-Islāmiyyah [Children's Rights and the Means of Realising Them in Islamic Law]. Egypt: Dār al-Luʾluʾah.
12. Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. O'RQ-996 "On the Protection of Children from All Forms of Violence" of 14 November 2024. National Database of Legislation (lex.uz).
13. Muḥammad Ṣādiq Muḥammad Yūsuf, Shaykh. (2024). Sog'lom bola [Healthy Child]. Tashkent: Hilol-Nashr.
14. Presidential Decree of the Republic of Uzbekistan of 24 December 2025 approving the Strategy for Protecting Children from All Forms of Violence for 2026–2030. National Database of Legislation (lex.uz).
15. Suwaylim, R. F. (2008). Tarbiyat al-Ṭifl: Ḥuqūq al-Ṭifl fi al-Sharīʿah al-Islāmiyyah [Child Education: Children's Rights in Islamic Law]. Cairo.
16. Bekmirzayev, I., & Gafurova, I. (2021). Islamic Notarial Acts Tradition In The Classic Movarounnakhr Khanafi School. Turkish Online Journal of Qualitative Inquiry, 12(6), 6710.
17. Vachruddin, V. P., Rofiq, A. A., & Hidayatulloh, M. S. (2023). Examining the culture of adhan and iqomah preaching in newborns: Perspectives on religion and psychology. Journal Analytica Islamica, 12(2), 177–180.