

RESEARCH ARTICLE

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The Role of Family Education in Preparing Children for Married Life (A field study of a group of families in the Algerian central region.)

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Received: 07/11/2025; Accepted: 24/04/2026; Published: 08/07/2026

Abstract:

This study highlights the importance of family education in preparing children for married life, with a focus on stable families' role in providing a proper and comprehensive upbringing. Specifically, the study aims to identify the principles and guidelines for fulfilling this role and to examine the mechanisms for achieving it. Through our study, we also aim to reveal the factors that influence this process.

We adopted a descriptive-analytical approach to conduct this research because it is appropriate for this study. Our research population consisted of stable families in Algeria's central region. We used purposive sampling to select the research sample. We also used interviews to collect data in the field.

Following the analysis of the collected data, the study reached the following conclusions:

Preparing children for marriage and enabling them to fulfil their future family roles competently requires a comprehensive upbringing that includes physical, mental, social, religious, sexual, and psychological development. The mechanisms for implementing this role are closely linked to parents' ability to have a clear vision of educational goals and apply precise, correct methods grounded in Algerian society's cultural, social and religious values — particularly by serving as good role models for their children.

Additionally, the study emphasises the importance of fostering an environment within the family characterised by open communication about all aspects of life, including children's future marital life. This approach can empower children to make choices, develop decision-making skills, and take on responsibility.

The research also concluded that the most important factor in preparing children for married life is the nature of the relationship between parents and the stability of the family, as this is essential for raising children correctly and appropriately.

Keywords: marital preparation of children, family education, family.

Introduction

Marriage is one of the most important social institutions in life as it provides the basis for establishing a family. Since ancient times, it has been defined as a lawful union between a man and a woman, governed by a set of rules and provisions. Marital life is naturally based on love, mercy and mutual harmony between spouses, especially if they have received an adequate family education, equipping them with the capacities and readiness to succeed in their marriage. Consequently, they may live happily; however, if they are not successful, their lives may become difficult and burdensome. Essentially, marriage is a

legitimate bond between the two sexes that occurs within the limits set by society according to its approved concepts and arrangements¹.

Therefore, there is no doubt that embracing and succeeding in married life is a critical phase in an individual's life. It requires psychological, social and economic preparation, as well as sufficient training and maturity so that individuals can withstand its challenges and take on its responsibilities. While society has a major responsibility to prepare people for married life through its organisations, institutions and social structures, the family's role remains at the forefront. This is because the family is the first and most immediate environment with which individuals interact across the various stages of life. It provides the necessary skills, experiences and knowledge for the individual's development, ultimately giving them a comprehensive upbringing that enables them to fulfil their future role competently and capably.

Thus, the family can be considered the primary human system, being one of the most important and influential groups in an individual's life. It is also the fundamental structural unit from which all other social groupings emerge. The family plays a key role in building the foundations of society, reinforcing its unity and cohesion, and organising the behaviour of its members in accordance with different social roles, in line with the societal pattern to which they belong².

Clearly, for the family to provide an integrated upbringing for children, stability is essential. Children do not necessarily need material support; rather, they need certain experiences

and guidance from both parents so that they can fulfil their future roles appropriately.

Children take their families as role models. Therefore, when an individual grows up within a protective, cohesive family environment characterised by familiarity and affection between its members, particularly between the parents, this leads the individual to emulate their parents' behaviour in the future. Such individuals usually develop mature and balanced personalities. Conversely, if the family is unstable and characterised by an atmosphere of verbal and physical violence, particularly between the parents, this can have a negative impact on the children's psychology and, consequently, their future behaviour. In such circumstances, the child learns this pattern of behaviour and reproduces it later in life towards their spouse or children, resulting in an unstable family threatened by dispersion and separation.

In this regard, Hakki and Abu Sakina³ suggest that the family is the primary source of support when preparing for married and family life. The more stable and integrated the family, the better it can serve as a role model for children, providing them with real, observable experiences or correct models transmitted by parents. This includes interaction styles, respect, participation and the distribution of responsibilities, as well as each party fulfilling their role — particularly in finding ways to address and manage problems that arise between them.

Similarly, Hasan's study⁴ emphasised the importance of educating newly married couples in adapting to changes, fostering positive attitudes towards each other. Furthermore,

¹- Othman, Salwa; Abdel Mahi, Mahmoud. (2000). *The Family and Population from the Perspective of Social Work*. Alexandria: Dar Al-Ma'rifa Al-Jami'iyya, p. 45.

²- Mohamed Abdel Fattah, (2012), *Social Work Practices with Family and Childhood Problems*, Alexandria, Modern University Office, p. 17.

³- Haqqi Zainab Mohamed and Abu Sakina Nadba Hassan, (2009), *Family Relations Between Theory and*

Practice, Jeddah, Khwarizmi Scientific Publishing and Distribution, p. 299.

⁴- Hassan, Abeer Ali, (2011), *The Role and Proposal of Group Work Specialists in Acquiring Family Interaction Skills for Newlyweds in Light of Social and Economic Changes*, Published Research, 24th International Scientific Conference, Helwan University, Faculty of Social Work, Vol. 4.

Nadia Abdel Aziz and Hazazi's 2015⁵ study aimed to promote social responsibility among girls preparing for marriage by facilitating group discussions as a form of community service. This social responsibility included helping the girls to understand their own rights, as well as those of their future husbands and fathers, and equipping them with the necessary skills and experience to fulfil their future roles as wives.

The success of the family in preparing children for future marital life depends on how well children are prepared, as well as on ensuring the safety and soundness of the family environment and the integrity of relationships within it. If the family takes this task seriously, recognises the surrounding difficulties and obstacles, and understands its importance for children and society, this will activate its educational role in preparing children for married life.

1. Problem of the study

The family is the first institution through which individuals acquire the values and principles that shape their personality and determine the course of their life. Therefore, family education plays a vital role in developing children's personalities and strengthening family stability. This is because the family is the first environment in which children begin to form their fundamental concepts about the world around them through daily interaction with parents and siblings. Through this interaction, children learn how to manage their emotions and express themselves. Therefore, a proper family upbringing contributes to the development of a child's personality, enhances their self-confidence and strengthens their ability to face future challenges.

Accordingly, it can be said that the family occupies the position of the primary social institution with distinction. It occupies a central and solid place in socialisation, providing a natural and automatic environment for raising children and meeting their needs, satisfying their desires and enveloping them in a sense of belonging during the early, decisive stages of life. The family is also responsible for shaping the child's basic personality, tendencies and inclinations, while socialising their behaviour to fit their social reality. In this sense, the family is linked to tasks related to defining the child's moral and material ties to themselves and to the external world. It provides an environment suited to positive ideas and cultivates optimal principles and values within the child, reflecting the nature of society and its spiritual and ethical orientation.

These balances are closely connected to the degree of family cohesion, the strength of intimate ties, the effectiveness of communication between members, and the positivity of their interactions. In this way, the family is the fundamental entity that begins the socialisation process for human beings — when individuals adopt the 'garment' of life, and marital life in particular, and social existence begins to flow within them.

Some studies and research have examined the impact of the family environment on children's future marital success. One such study was conducted by Terman in 1961⁶ and concluded that factors conducive to children's success in marital life include experiencing a happy childhood under the care of compatible parents characterised by stable, conflict-free relationships and moderate home discipline.

The Al-Rifai study, conducted in 1990⁷, highlighted the significant effect of parents'

⁵- Hijazi, Nadia Abdel Aziz, (2015), Using Group Discussion in the Group Work Method to Develop Social Responsibility Among Young Women About to Get Married, 28th International Scientific Conference, Faculty of Social Work, Helwan University.

⁶- Lewis M. Terman (1961). Psychological Factors. Marital Happiness in Different Countries.

⁷- Al-Rifai, Sabah Qasim Said. (1990). 'The Relationship of Parenting and Marital Treatment Methods to the Continuity of Marriage of Daughters or Its Failure'.

educational practices on whether children's marriages succeed or fail. It found that positive parental upbringing contributes to the development of a mature, balanced personality capable of real and practical adaptation, supporting the continuation of marital life. Conversely, a negative upbringing characterised by rejection, harshness and neglect has a detrimental effect on marital life.

Similarly, the results of the study by Ali Abdel Salam (2001)⁸ underscored the importance of a family climate based on support and emotional reinforcement in achieving children's marital success. The study showed that spouses who were characterized by involving their families in the process of making marriage decisions and choosing a partner, and who were supported by social and emotional support, recorded higher levels of marital adjustment.

As for the studies by Al-Sayf Mohamed bin Ibrahim (2015)⁹ and Al-Khthlan Intisar Saud Abdel Rahman (2017)¹⁰, they agreed that socialization and marital upbringing that elevates the value of the male and trains him toward control, while diminishing the value of the female and training her toward submission, contribute to reducing their chances of success in marital life.

Finally, the results of the study by Al-Rashidi Omar bin Hassan Ibrahim, conducted in 2017¹¹ in Jordan, indicated that comprehensive upbringing qualifies a girl to shoulder the burden of marital life in the future. It also found that the model image of the marital relationship

presented by parents plays a role in helping the girl acquire positive behaviors that enable her to face challenges after marriage.

Based on the findings of previous studies which confirmed the role of the family in preparing children for marriage, this research seeks to examine how this role can be properly and correctly carried out, and to reveal the mechanisms that enable its fulfilment, particularly by identifying the factors that influence it. This is important for the stability of families and, consequently, society. Therefore, this study was conducted to highlight the role of family education in preparing children for marriage by answering the following questions:

1. What are the most important principles adopted by Algerian families to prepare children for married life?
2. What mechanisms help to fulfil this role?
3. What are the most important factors that influence how well Algerian families perform this role?

3. Concepts of the study

3.1. Family Education

The concept of family education is prevalent in contemporary culture. The variation in definitions of this concept is due to the differing viewpoints from which it has been presented¹².

Dr Yousra Daabas argues that family education means: "Raising the individual's awareness of all aspects related to family life, in its social, cultural, economic, political and psychological

Master's thesis, Faculty of Educational Sciences, Umm Al-Qura University, Makkah Al-Mukarramah.

⁸- Ali Abdel-Salam. (2001). 'Social Support and the Decision to Marry: Choosing the Spouse and Its Relationship to Marital Adjustment'. Egypt: Journal of Psychological Studies, Vol. 11, No. 1, pp. 69–95.

⁹- Al-Saif, Mohamad Ben Ibrahim. (2015). 'Family Marital Socialisation and Its Relationship to the Problem of Divorce in the Saudi Family'. Al-Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University Social Journal, Vol. 9, pp. 259–326.

¹⁰- Al-Khthlan, Intisar Saud Abdel Rahman. (2017). 'Some Social Factors and Their Relationships to Marital

Compatibility'. Saudi Arabia: Journal of 'Eidafat' (Additions), No. 40, pp. 153–199.

¹¹- Al-Rashdi, Omar Ben Hasan Ben Ibrahim. (2017). 'The Role of the Family in Preparing the Girl to Face Challenges After Marriage from the Perspective of Islamic Education'. The International Specialized Journal, Vol. 6, No. 3, pp. 341–358.

¹²- Mohammad Yosra Ibrahim Abas. (1996). Family Education: Its Two Concepts, Nature, Objectives, Dimensions and Challenges'. 2nd ed. Alexandria: Dar Al-Mu'allif, p. 65.

dimensions, across all ages.” The aim is to promote happiness and stability within the family and wider society, particularly given that contemporary families live in a changing world characterised by the expansion of communication networks and an increase in the diversity and speed of cultural communication tools.”

In turn, Djamaa Mohamad Ali Badr¹³ defines family education as follows: ‘a set of activities and practical procedures carried out by the family with the aim of bringing about positive changes in the personalities of its members in the form of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that enable them to develop physically, mentally, spiritually, emotionally and socially; to interact positively with the elements of the environment and its material, scientific and cultural developments across various fields of life; and to achieve individual goals and lead happy, prosperous lives in accordance with the requirements of the era, without contradicting religious and social principles.’

The American Psychological Association (APA) defines it as: ‘The distinctive overall pattern of family practices in the ways it raises children.’¹⁴

Al-Jouzi and Chaabane state that it refers to the efforts of mature parents expressed through educational practices, through which children are taught essential skills to prepare them for family life and develop their abilities¹⁵.

Meanwhile, Farghali states that it is ‘everything that educational institutions provide consciously and intentionally with the aim of preparing individuals to competently carry out their current and future roles as family members’¹⁶.

Preparing Children for Married Life

According to Teodoras Ooms (2005), this process involves transferring knowledge and attitudes to individuals who are about to marry. The aim is to equip them with the necessary skills and behaviours for a successful and fulfilling marital relationship, including the intimate dimension¹⁷. The Mahdi defines it as ‘the scientific and systematic preparation of both spouses so they understand and know the basic foundations of marital relations in a way that enables them to practise them in the best possible way’¹⁸.

It is clear, therefore, that preparation for married life involves equipping prospective spouses with the skills and capacities to build a successful marital relationship. In this study, we employ this concept to refer to the early preparation of children by their families, and the upbringing they receive based on principles and rules that help them to understand and prepare for married life from an early age until they are ready to start families of their own.

This is achieved through a comprehensive upbringing that prepares children physically, mentally, psychologically, socially and sexually. The aim is to develop a meaningful

¹³- Djamaa, Mohammad Ali Badr. (2007). 'Requirements of Family Education.' *The Maghreb Arab Journal*, No. 2, pp. 59–98.

¹⁴- Mansour Taa'at, n.d., 'The Impact of Family Education on Offspring'. Ain Shams University, Cairo, p. 4.

¹⁵- Al-Jawzi, W., & Sha'ban, I. (2020). 'The Role of Family Education in Establishing Psychosocial Balance in Children'. *Al-Marshid Journal*, Special Issue for the Fourth Conference on Mental Health and Practical Applications, organised by the University of Algiers 2, Abu Al-Qasim Saad Allah, 3–4 March 2020.

¹⁶- Ahmad Mohammad Ahmad and Jibril Bin Hasan Al-Orayshi, along with Bent Rashad Wafa' and others.

(2013). *Family Education and Socialisation Institutions*. 1st ed. Amman: Safaa Publishing and Distribution House, p. 24.

¹⁷- Al-Mudhaf, Abaid Ali Atiyyan and Al-Juwaisir, Ghada Abd Allah. (2013). 'The Role of Rehabilitation Programmes in Raising Awareness of Planning for Marriage and Building a Family'. *Saudi Arabia: King Abdulaziz University Journal*, Vol. 21, pp. 127–162, p. 131.

¹⁸- Al-Mahdi, Mohammad. (2014). *The Art of Marital Happiness*. 2nd ed., Egypt: Dar Al-Yaqin Publishing, p. 58.

understanding of marital life and enable children to acquire the experiences, behaviours and skills that will support them in achieving success in marriage.

3.4 The Concept of the Family

Scholars from various disciplines, including sociology, anthropology and education, have offered multiple definitions of the family. While they differ in their views on the possibility of arriving at a unified definition, they all agree that the family is the fundamental building block of society. It is one of the simplest yet most diverse and interrelated forms of social structure, encompassing a range of relationships, roles and functions commonly used to characterise it. Consequently, sociologists differ in how they define the family, and its most prominent definitions can be summarised as follows:

Zaki Badawi defines the family as ‘the first social unit intended to preserve the human species, based on requirements endorsed by collective reason as well as the rules and structures of different societies’¹⁹. MacIver, on the other hand, defines it as ‘a dual unit composed of a man and a woman, linked by close spiritual relations, with children and relatives; its existence is grounded in instinctive drives, mutual interests, and a shared sense of purpose’²⁰. The family can also be defined as ‘a biological, economic and social unit’, consisting of a group of individuals connected by relationships of marriage, blood ties and adoption. It operates through a framework of interaction comprising a series of centres and roles, through which it performs a number of educational, social, and economic functions²¹.

However, the scope of these functions has narrowed in line with the capacity of the family,

due to social and economic changes in society, such as the establishment of state institutions that have assumed some of these functions. Nevertheless, the family remains the primary and most influential unit in educating children and instilling a set of values, customs, traditions and norms in them through socialisation.

In our study, we define ‘family’ as a unit comprising parents, older siblings, grandparents, children and other relatives who live under the same roof and hold authority over children. They play a role in the upbringing, guidance and care of children with the aim of preparing them for their future roles, whether professional or marital.

Algerian family

Recent contributions and new theories are essential for developing research on families in general, and on Algerian families in particular, as they have undergone many changes since their formation. These changes are the result of social, economic and cultural transformations in the Arab and Islamic world, as well as colonial influences. Consequently, the Algerian family has developed characteristics that are distinct from those it previously had in terms of its structure and the functions it performed on a traditional basis. These shifts occurred under the influence of industrialisation and urbanisation, which necessarily had a distinct effect on it. However, Algerian society did not respond to these transformations in a wholly homogeneous manner because it does not readily adopt change, except in terms of form. Nonetheless, significant changes have occurred.

The form/structure of the Algerian family

¹⁹- Atif, Ghayth. (1967). *Sociology of Systems*. Vol. 2. Beirut: Dar Al-Ma‘arif. p. 6.

²⁰- Ihsan Mohamad Al-Hasan. (1983). *Social Structure and Class System*. Beirut: Publishing and Printing House, p. 188.

²¹- Ali Asaad and Watana. (1993). *Educational Sociology*. Damascus: University of Damascus for Publishing and Distribution, p. 73.

Many studies have addressed the Algerian family as a distinctive model within the Arab world owing to a set of conditions, the most important of which is the historical evolution that shaped the composition of Algerian society. Accordingly, its traditional structure reflects prevailing social, economic and cultural conditions. This is evident in its deep attachment to a set of customs, traditions and social values that express its identity and sense of belonging through the characteristics that distinguish it.

In general, it is described as an 'extended family', comprising several married couples and their children living together under one roof (the large household or *dar kabira*). Such households may comprise twenty to sixty people, or even more, living communally together with some members of the wider extended family²². All members share a social and economic life based on kinship, specifically blood descent, which determines their relationships with each other, as well as their shared duties and obligations.

In this context, the father and grandfather are the spiritual leaders of the family group, organising the management of collective inheritance and holding a special status that enables them to maintain discipline and cohesion within the family community. Authority within this group primarily manifests through patriarchal authority since social life within the family is organised through a set of social relations²³. Women typically perform domestic tasks, while men oversee agricultural and productive work, take care of the land and ensure food and housing are provided for. Despite the large size of the family, this is also

reflected in mutual understanding and cooperation between the two spheres.

Furthermore, internal social positions within the family are defined by, and vary according to, an individual's social status in their local environment. As previously mentioned, 'status, name, and inheritance pass naturally from father to son without the involvement of the mother'²⁴. Thus, the Algerian family is characterised by patrilineal kinship (agnatic/masculine lineage), meaning males have greater responsibility for domination than females. This form of organisation also places strong pressures on its members. Consequently, their internal cohesion and unity become tangible realities embodied in kinship ties. At the same time, remnants of the old system persist, such as sexual and tribal affiliation and regulatory norms established by the family.

As for the Algerian family in the contemporary structure—where it has appeared in a form different from that of the traditional structure—this is the result of both change and continuity. Accordingly, the Algerian family today is characterized by a narrow scope and a simple composition: "after it had been, in general, an extended family, it has now become smaller in size, consisting of the husband, the wife, and the children."²⁵

Socially, this simple form has come to be known as the nuclear family. This transformation can be attributed to several factors. First, city life differs from rural life: in urban areas, the number of individuals within the family tends to be limited. Second, there is a difference and variation in the productive-economic structure of the extended family, which previously relied on family inheritance—represented in agricultural land—

²²- Mostafa Botfounoshant. (1984). *The Algerian Family: Development and Modern Characteristics*. Algeria: Yawan for University Publications, p. 37.

²³- Same reference, p. 37.

²⁴- Claudine Chaulet: *La Terre et Frère et l'Argent* (The Earth and Brother and Money). (1987). Vol. 1. Algiers: OPU, p. 208.

²⁵- Mohammad Souwaidi. (1990). *An Introduction to Studying Algerian Society*. Algeria: Diwan of University Publications, p. 89.

as a production and consumption unit²⁶. However, following the movement of family members to cities after the division of agricultural lands, these migrants found employment in factories or were recruited based on individual competence and abilities, without regard to gender, lineage, kinship, or other considerations, in order to receive a monthly wage—whether through work in government institutions or in private units.

In light of this, a new pattern of economic independence emerged as sub-families (familial units) formed from the original family. This, in turn, has led to the formation of independent marital families that align with modern urban society. Consequently, the authority of the father has weakened because family members now have greater economic independence from the wider family. Consequently, paternal authority no longer carries the same degree of dominance and violence that characterised it in the traditional family.

Furthermore, Punch emphasised that despite the trend towards the nuclear family, the extended family still exists, and some of its characteristics and functions remain present within nuclear families. Furthermore, in accordance with structural-functional theory, the focus on the family's connection to the occupational system, and the potential fragmentation affecting families, reflects an adaptation to economic requirements.

4. Methodological Procedures

1. Research method

Given the nature of the study topic, the descriptive-analytical approach was deemed the most suitable for this research, which aims to examine family education and its role in preparing children for married life. This approach was chosen for its ability to describe

reality by collecting data related to the phenomenon under study. It also analyses, explains and compares in order to reach conclusions regarding the phenomenon.

2. Areas of the study

Human scope: We selected a group of Algerian families residing in the central region of Algeria. This choice was based on two main considerations. First, I belong to the same region, which meant that I did not have to travel long distances. Second, I have relationships with people from the area, which facilitated access to their homes. Secondly, having lived in the region for a long time, I believe I have sufficient knowledge of local customs, traditions and methods of family upbringing, given my daily interaction with the local community. This made entry into the research community relatively easy.

Spatial scope: The study was conducted in the central region of Algeria.

Temporal scope: The study was carried out from March 2024 to the beginning of September 2025.

3. Study sample

We relied on a purposive sample, selecting sample units from the study population in a manner appropriate to the researcher's aims²⁷. The purpose of this sampling method was to select sample units that met two key criteria: having resided in the central region of Algeria for a significant period and belonging to a family with children.

The sample size amounted to 65 families.

4. Data collection tools

To answer the study questions, we designed an interview schedule consisting of a set of questions distributed across four main categories. This was intended to obtain the

²⁶- Same reference, p. 90.

²⁷- Anjers, Maurice. Translated by Bozid Sahrawi and others. (2004). *Research Methodology in the Human Sciences*. Algeria: Dar Al-Qasba, p. 315.

necessary information from the participants (members of the sample).

The four axes are as follows:

- Axis One: devoted to basic/personal data.
- Axis Two: devoted to identifying the foundations and rules adopted by families to prepare their children for married life.
- Axis Three: devoted to the mechanisms and approaches used by families to fulfil this role.
- Axis Four: devoted to identifying the most important factors affecting the performance of this role by the Algerian family.

After completing the interviews, we conducted a content analysis. We extracted the most important themes that emerged from the respondents' answers and then conducted a sociological analysis of these themes:

5. Presentation, analysis of results and discussion:

5.1 Basic foundations and rules for preparing children for married life

Based on the responses obtained from the participants, most of them agreed that the essential foundation for preparing children for married life lies in a complete and comprehensive upbringing. In other words, attempts to pay attention to all aspects of the family socialisation process are not merely limited to protecting children and providing for their material needs; they also involve developing children's personalities in every dimension — physical, social, emotional, psychological, religious and sexual — by collectively and integrally satisfying these needs.

Physical upbringing is considered a goal for all parents due to the significant value it adds to this preparation. A healthy body is better able to perform tasks and take on responsibilities. To this end, families pay close attention to their children's physical health from birth, providing comprehensive care to strengthen their bodies

through proper nutrition, cleanliness, and appropriate medical care. The aim is for children to grow up strong and healthy, so that they can better withstand the challenges of life, including establishing their own families and bearing the responsibilities and consequences that come with it.

In sociology and psychology, the health dimension plays an important role in achieving marital compatibility and satisfaction. The healthier and more balanced both spouses are, the better they will be able to fulfil their roles in married life and avoid problems and discord. This is because each spouse will be able to fulfil their role to the fullest. However, if an individual falls ill, they may lose the strength needed to fulfil their role within the family, which can create obstacles. In that case, most responsibilities may shift to the other partner, who will then face increased pressure, ultimately leading to the breakdown of the family.

From the above, we can conclude that Algerian families are concerned with safeguarding the physical well-being of their children, protecting them from illness and teaching them to lead healthy lives.

Another concept highlighted through the interviews was the necessity of raising children in an environment characterised by smooth communication and democratic consultation. It is also important to grant children a degree of autonomy so that they can learn to make the right decisions. This should be accompanied by providing an atmosphere of encouragement and safety, and by encouraging dialogue between parents and children. Such dialogue serves to explain and clarify matters, and to use persuasion rather than coercion or imposing things on children. This is particularly important in the context of living in the age of technology and the information society, where traditional family roles and authority have been disrupted. In this context, neither parent enjoys absolute authority over their children,

particularly given openness to the outside world and other cultures. Therefore, an effective approach to family upbringing is the appropriate solution.

This can be achieved by providing a healthy family environment that employs effective educational methods. Such an environment can lay the foundations for a successful married life. Consequently, the family can nurture the children's thinking, preparing them to fulfil their active role in the future.

There is also no doubt that developing multiple mental abilities is one of the most important human potentials needed when facing life situations that require wisdom, such as making sound decisions. Marriage is one of the most significant life situations and deserves careful reflection, verification and reliance on rational judgement. Accordingly, parents should begin training their children from an early age to think logically and engage in dialogue with family members. This is because excessive protection and solving all of children's problems for them prevents them from developing the ability to take on responsibilities in the future.

The sample members also confirmed that a correct family upbringing must include psychological care.

This can be achieved by providing care, affection and warmth within the family and making children feel loved and reassured. Such an atmosphere provides a wealth of cognitive and emotional experiences, enabling children to develop the skills needed to build successful relationships based on trust rather than fear. As Bell and others have indicated, individuals who grow up in an affectionate and warm environment tend to be more independent and better able to form relationships with others. They also tend to exhibit more positive behaviour. Therefore, a person who experiences security and love in childhood acquires better skills for building a healthy relationship in adulthood.

In contrast, a child who is deprived of, or neglected, or unhappy is likely to become an unfit spouse or unsuccessful partner later in life.

The study also highlighted another solid foundation relied upon by Algerian parents in family education: social upbringing.

This is because it plays a significant role in preparing children for married life. Through social upbringing, children learn to cooperate, be empathetic, and interact successfully with others. They also learn to understand others' feelings, develop a sense of social belonging, and build self-esteem. The social skills children acquire within their family provide them with important capabilities and experience that determine their future success in adulthood.

If a family succeeds in instilling these social principles in their children and training them to internalise them, the results will be evident in their ability to form a compatible family and establish good relationships with its members in the future. Furthermore, this success will be reflected in the children's ability to integrate easily into external social environments without fear or hesitation.

Parents spoke at length about sexual education, emphasising that it should not be treated as a taboo subject or something to be avoided. On the contrary, they consider it fundamental to preparing children for married life. The more a family succeeds in familiarising children with the facts and requirements of married life, such as how to choose a spouse, how to interact with each other and how to develop intimacy, the more it contributes to preparing them for a fulfilling and healthy married life. Therefore, providing correct knowledge and information

related to sexual education helps prepare children for a happy married life²⁸.

Alongside teaching children about psychological, social and sexual development, parents must also pay special attention to religious education, which the parents described as ‘a substance’ that will protect children against evil and harm. Religious education nourishes the spirit, purifies the inner self and strengthens its role in human relationships in general. Children who grow up in an environment shaped by the teachings of the Islamic religion will act with uprightness and good character in the future, and will be characterised by honesty and trustworthiness. These qualities are essential for the success of married life in particular and a person’s life in general.

Most of the families we spoke to try to educate their children by following the principles and rulings of Islamic law. Some explained that they tell their children stories about the prophets during their early years to teach them the lessons and morals contained within. Although methods differ, some families recite the Qur’an collectively, followed by explanations of how to live life according to Islamic rulings. Others limit themselves to reminding children of Islamic teachings when they make mistakes, encouraging them to read the Qur’an. Despite these differences in approach, the underlying meaning remains the same: to nurture children in accordance with Islamic teachings in order to keep their hearts and souls pure, thereby preparing them for married life and equipping them with the ability to behave correctly and in a balanced manner.

From the above, we can conclude that preparation for married life begins within the family before any specialist or association becomes involved. The family is responsible

for preparing children for their future roles, including married life. This is achieved through comprehensive, integrated upbringing across all aspects of life: ensuring the strengthening of their physical health; developing their mental abilities and training them in analysis, reflection, and inference; enabling them to communicate and engage effectively through good dialogue and interpersonal interaction; and reaching psychological upbringing, which gives children self-confidence and a balanced personality.

Finally, it involves teaching them social skills — skills that help them to establish good relationships with others and integrate easily into different groups.

It is equally important to raise children on the basis of sound religious teachings, as this strengthens their “immunity” against the problems they may face in future marital relationships. Therefore, comprehensive upbringing is sufficient to prepare children for married life.

5.2 Mechanisms for preparing children for married life

Among the mechanisms highlighted by the research participants are the parents’ clear vision regarding the goals of upbringing. This vision shapes their awareness and enables them to understand their educational role. It is considered the proper entry point for activating the family’s educational role. A clear understanding of the objectives and responsibilities of upbringing helps parents recognise their children’s problems and needs, especially as children develop desires, inclinations and intellectual orientations that may conflict with their parents’ aspirations and viewpoints. Parents cannot organise these desires properly, reinforce positive traits, or

²⁸- Bell, L.; Goulet, C.; Paul, D. et al. (1998). 'A Concept Analysis of Parents–Infant.' *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 28(5), pp. 1071–1081

correct negative ones unless they have a clear vision of the goals of upbringing.

This should be achieved by listening to children's concerns, providing emotional warmth and mature guidance, and not neglecting them. It is particularly important not to misunderstand the role of parents as being limited to reproduction and providing food and housing, with a focus solely on the material aspect. Neglecting the broader educational and relational role would result in children losing their ability to achieve marital compatibility and adaptation.

One of the mechanisms that helps prepare children for married life is upbringing through example, or role modelling. This mechanism plays a key role in shaping children's views on marriage and determining the nature of their future marital lives. Some families emphasise this point, considering their own marital lives to be an example for their children. Accordingly, these families strive to create a harmonious environment. Even if problems arise between spouses, they remain committed to behaving respectfully in front of their children, showing that issues can be resolved through dialogue and understanding rather than violence.

Providing this positive marital relationship model and practising the foundations of a successful marriage helps to build children's psychological health and emotional maturity in adulthood. Consequently, their opportunities to form happy families similar to the one they experienced growing up are greater. In short, children need to be provided with safe and stable environments, free from recurring conflict and disputes. Parents have a responsibility to recognise that children adopt their family as a model for their own future.

Based on the above, we conclude that preparing children for married life requires practical mechanisms that enable the family to fulfil this role. These mechanisms include a clear vision of the goals of child-rearing and knowledge of

effective educational methods, such as dialogue, guidance and encouragement. This increases the likelihood of success in directing children. As a result, children approach married life with awareness. In addition to being brought up by example, children are ultimately influenced by the image they form of their parents' marital life. If it is exemplary, this supports their ability to enter marriage successfully and harmoniously. However, if it is not, this may lead them to struggle to form a happy, compatible family later in life.

5.3 Factors affecting the preparation of children for married life

One of the factors influencing this preparation is gender differentiation. This approach elevates the status of males, teaching them strength, control and dominance, while socialising females into roles of weakness, submission and dependence. This can lead to the reinforcement of negative values in both partners. Through our study and the responses obtained, we observed that some families still treat boys differently to girls, with the brother holding a higher rank and enjoying greater freedom. Meanwhile, the mother teaches the girl not to go out except when necessary and instructs her in cooking and all household tasks — under the pretext that she will move to her husband's home. She is taught how to care for her future husband's family, but never how to treat and care for her own husband. Consequently, the boy grows up to be domineering and treats his wife in the same way. At the same time, this nurtures negative attitudes towards the opposite sex in the girl, which affects her future relationship with her husband.

Another factor affecting children's preparation for married life is: The use of violence and coercion by one or both parents. Such behaviour may lead the child to avoid starting a family, believing that they will become a harsh and violent parent who beats their spouse and children. Therefore, the way children are

treated, and the nature of their relationship with their parents, constitutes a fundamental factor in shaping their future marital path.

Researchers in this field agree that the relationship between parents, considered the most important within the family, has a profound impact on children's lives, both now and in the future. A positive relationship between parents helps create an environment that is conducive to the healthy psychological development of children, enabling them to fulfil their roles in life and form their own families in a harmonious and effective manner later in life.

Based on the above, preparing children for married life is influenced by a set of factors. The nature of the relationship between parents is crucial, as it shapes a positive attitude towards marriage. Conversely, negative relationships contribute to negative attitudes. The results also show that a gender-differentiated family upbringing reduces the chances of success in future marital lives. This requires us to reconsider gender-based methods of marital upbringing. Rather than emphasising contrasts between the sexes, the focus should be on bringing them into balance by promoting values such as mutual respect and cooperation in sharing family responsibilities. Additionally, the nature of the relationship between parents and children — whether based on violence and coercion or dialogue, warmth and active listening — plays an important role in determining whether children will succeed or fail in their future marital roles.

Conclusion:

This study has demonstrated that the family is the primary educational institution. It is responsible for preparing children for married life as it is the first environment with which individuals interact throughout the different stages of their lives. Historically and presently, the functions of raising and training children and preparing them for their future lives have always fallen within the family's scope.

For the family to fulfil this role properly, certain conditions must be met. Family upbringing should be grounded in clear principles that address children's holistic development. In order to fulfil this role effectively, the family must possess specific mechanisms. The most important of these are: clarity of vision on the part of the parents regarding the goals of education; awareness of appropriate educational methods; and, in particular, providing an example of a good relationship between the parents, which will serve as a model for the children later in life. Additionally, children, whether male or female, should be treated equitably. Parents should also avoid violent or harsh approaches when dealing with their children.

Furthermore, the family should foster an environment characterised by democratic dialogue, open communication and the reinforcement of values such as cooperation, tolerance and honesty. Children should be encouraged to take the initiative and assume responsibility, and they should feel secure and emotionally supported. In short, the family's role is not limited to material matters. Rather, it must also nurture children's feelings of love and belonging, listen to their opinions and aspirations, and provide opportunities for self-expression.

With this approach, children will be well prepared for married life.

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