

The Role of the Algerian Family in Protecting Children from Deviation

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Abstract:

The aim of this research paper is to explore the role of the Algerian family in protecting its children from the phenomenon of deviation, which threatens the stability of social systems and personal lives. This encompasses various imbalances that occur at the level of social structures and functions, especially within families.

Therefore, it was of utmost importance to specify the active roles of family in contemporary society and their impact on building the sound personalities of children and protecting them from disturbances and deviations through the role of families in instilling values in children as one of the most significant preventive measures against deviations of children.

Keywords: Family; Deviation; Values; Family Upbringing; Children.

INTRODUCTION

Sociologists agree that the phenomenon of deviation is considered one of the functional obstacles to the social order. Its severity and the importance of its study become evident through the various aspects associated with it. It is one of the long-standing social issues that is prevalent in all societies, varying in motivations and underlying reasons depending on the diversity of behavioral determinants, criteria, and prevailing societal values.

The deviation of children and their rebellion against values and principles makes them a source of danger that threatens the society as

a whole. This necessitates a social intervention to correct their values and guide them towards the right direction. The family is the most appropriate social institution to deal with this social group and guide it towards what aligns with the society's interests.

The family is the one that provides the individual with the initial stock of values, thus furnishing them with the light to guide their behavior and actions. Within the family, the child receives their first lesson about right and duty, correctness and error, beauty and ugliness, what is desirable and what is undesirable, what is permissible and what is not, what they should do and what they should avoid, and why they should avoid it. Additionally, they learn how to earn the approval of the community and avoid its disapproval.

In this context, the family can play the most significant role in safeguarding its children from deviant behavior by raising their awareness and guiding them. It is the primary educational institution within the society that nurtures its children, works towards their upbringing, social integration, and instills in them values and social norms.

And this is what drives us through this research paper to answer the following questions:

What is the role of the Algerian family in protecting its children from deviation? What are the most important methods it employs in this regard? And what are the positive and negative aspects of these methods?

1. Defining Concepts:

1.1.Family: Linguistically: In the Arabic tongue, the family is a person's clan and his closest group, and it's named by this name due to the meaning of strength it carries, as a person gains strength through it. In the Arabic language, the family is the fortified shield,

and it also carries the meaning of strength. This is because the term "أسر" gives a sense of strength and intensity. So, when a soldier captures his enemy, it means he restrains his enemy tightly, and "إسار" encompasses everything used for tightening.

Technically: in social sciences terminology, the term "family" is used to describe "any social bond between spouses and their children, and it may extend further to include other individuals who share the same household with the spouses and children." (Abdul Basit, 1982, p. 399)

Furthermore, The family is the primary social unit where a child is raised, and it is the primary entity responsible for their social upbringing. It also teaches the child the proper system that provides them with a sense of security, as well as clarifying the boundaries of good and evil, and the limits between freedom and chaos. (Mukhtar, 1982, p. 128)

1.2. Deviation: Linguistically: Deviation is derived from the term "حرف" in Arabic. Among its meanings in the Arabic language, it is used, for example, to refer to a mountain, signifying its specified top. It can also be said: to indicate someone's shift away from something they disliked upon seeing it. Additionally, its meaning encompasses being on one side or aspect of something. (Ibn Manzur, 2000, p. 42)

Technically: deviation is defined as: "Human behavior that is not balanced because it does not conform to the values, customs, and traditions adopted by society in determining individual behavior. Therefore, it is the absence of alignment with social standards, or, in other words, the lack of agreement or conflict." (Jabbar Muhammad, 1998, p. 129)

It is also defined as: "Departure from what is customary in social behavior without reaching the point of significantly or seriously disrupting social security in a noticeable or serious manner that

threatens the internal stability of society." (Al-Awji, 1994, p. 24)

Some define deviation as the "result of contradictions that emerge within the social framework, meaning the incongruity between established goals and legitimate means to accomplish societal objectives." (Muhammad Mahmoud, 2001, p. 53)

This definition clearly indicates the importance of alignment between the social structure and the society's objectives. This is because individuals' personalities are acquired and developed within the framework of social relationships, and any disruption occurring at the level of these relationships may lead to the deviation of its members.

Deviant behavior is behavior that contradicts the culturally and socially accepted levels and standards within the social structure. Robert Merton defines it as "that individual who departs from the standards established for individuals in their positions, and cannot be described in isolation, but should be linked to the standards defined and endorsed by the society, as they are considered suitable and morally imposed on individuals occupying various social positions." (MERTON, 1961, p. 223)

The definition of Merton indicates that deviant behavior is linked to individuals deviating from the standards set by society. This deviation is associated with their social position or status. Any departure from social standards in a specific social context may not be considered deviant in another social context. In other words, deviant behavior encompasses any departure from the agreed-upon standards by members of the social group.

On the other hand, Khairi Khalil Al-Jumaili argues that deviant behavior is "violating rules that are characterized by a sufficient degree of exceeding the boundaries of general tolerance in society"

(Khalil Al-Jumaily, 1998, p. 133)

Deviant behavior, through this definition, indicates that it is a violation of the controls and standards of the society that have been agreed upon and unanimously accepted, and which society cannot tolerate any departure from. Therefore, it often uses various means it possesses, such as deterrent or punitive laws, to deter the deviant.

2. Types of Deviation: Deviation can be classified into four types: (Jabbar Muhammad, 1998, pp. 143-145)

2.1. Casual Deviation: This type of deviation is termed for deviations that lack continuity, or are not an inherent trait of the individual. It occurs from time to time, as the individual isn't suffering from compelling psychological, educational, or familial circumstances that drive them to deviate. Instead, their inclination to deviate is due to error or exploration, and there is no difficulty at that point in retracting, admitting the mistake, or even feeling remorse.

2.2. Professional Deviance: Individuals turn to practicing deviant behavior to achieve material goals or psychological needs, without separating from their family. Deviant behavior may become a closely associated social habit for the individual, where they can only achieve their purposes through illegitimate means like theft, drug abuse, and adultery. The active element in adopting deviant behavior is that it serves as a quick method to fulfill desires, in a way that is not subject to the restrictions of society and its values, which one is obligated to adhere to and patiently endure, as they are unconcerned with society's observation and its values and appreciation.

2.3. Organized Deviance: This type of deviance is based on collective work in order to achieve specific goals through illegitimate means. The individual feels that satisfying their social needs can only be accomplished through belonging to a particular group and participating in its activities. What distinguishes this type of deviance

is the presence of a specific organization with clear relationships among its members and specific roles distributed among the members. Often, deviant groups become an appealing community for individuals who are psychologically and socially defeated, and who are experiencing specific social conditions.

2.4. Collective Deviance: This type of deviance represents collective deviation within a specific sector of society, where deviant behavior becomes a distinguishing characteristic of a community. There is a segment of society that tends to practice certain deviances such as drug use, committing specific acts of aggression, or engaging in extramarital sexual activities. Deviance often proliferates during times of social, economic, and political crises.

The family is the primary nurturing environment where values are acquired through socialization mechanisms aimed at shaping the individual according to the image of their society, and molding them in the form and manner approved by the community. This process also safeguards them from falling into deviations from these standards.

Hence, it can be said that individual behavior is nothing but a reflection of the social upbringing they first acquired, primarily within the family, and then within the various social institutions they engage with and interact through.

This is what led Maciver and Page to state, "There is nothing among the organizations within society that surpasses the family in the strength of its social importance. It influences the entirety of society's life through various methods, and the echoes of changes that occur within it reverberate throughout the entire social structure." (Zaeimi, 2007, p. 64)

If there are social institutions that collaborate with the family in the process of social upbringing of the individual, such as schools,

mosques, peer groups, and media, including primarily satellite channels and the internet, as well as social media platforms and digital platforms, the family remains the primary and most significant responsible entity among all these institutions in shaping the intellectual, behavioral, and moral orientations of the children.

The Algerian family, like other families worldwide, employs various methods in transmitting values, norms, and tendencies to the younger generation. These methods vary according to the characteristics of the Algerian family, the prevailing values within it, and the nature of familial relationships among its members.

3. Characteristics of the Algerian Family: We will attempt to provide some characteristics of the Algerian family and highlight the essential features of the methods that parents follow in conveying social values and standards to their children within traditional Algerian families, both in their traditional and contemporary forms. If these characteristics converge in some traits due to the transfer of cultural and civilizational heritage from traditional families to modern ones, there are still differences influenced by factors of cultural, social, and values-based change that Arab societies, including Algerian society, have witnessed, especially in the era of cultural openness and media globalization

3.1. Characteristics of the Traditional Algerian Family: Mustafa Boutefnouchet extensively elaborated in his book "The Algerian Family: Evolution and Modern Characteristics" on clarifying the cultural and social traits of the Algerian family, the patterns of family relationships, and the methods of upbringing that parents follow in transmitting customs and values to the younger generation. We will attempt to present the most important points from it as follows: **(Boutefnouchet, 1984, pp. 37-42)**

The traditional Algerian family is a large or extended family, where multiple families or marital units live together under one roof,

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known as the "big house." This house can accommodate between twenty to sixty individuals, spanning three to four successive generations. The "big house" serves the role of familial cohesion and provides security for its members, maintaining relatives in a state of constant gathering and cooperation.

The family is considered an ethical and spiritual value for all its members. The word 'family' is a serious term with its weight and regard, and it cannot be a subject of jest or banter in gatherings. It is laden with emotions and feelings of respect and sanctity.

The framework of values on which the traditional family is based becomes evident in religious, spiritual, and moral values. These are values that rise above materialistic spirit. We find the dominance of values such as blessings, loyalty, and purity in buying and selling, and the value of contentment and satisfaction with a modest life, and the consideration that richness in hearts is greater than material gain. We also find that the values of honor and dignity are acquired through one's balanced actions, ethics, religion, and honest management. "Nif" is considered a part of the value of honor that one acquires and grows over time, and "nif" implies that an individual's actions that deviate from the values and traditions of the community should not become subject to criticism and ridicule of everyone.

Among the prevailing values in Algerian families is the value of saving and frugality. Traditional families are characterized by a simple way of life, focusing on life's necessities, and refraining from seeking luxuries. For example, home furnishings are notably simple, relying on handmade items produced by women, including weaving of furnishings and spinning and weaving of clothing. Additionally, traditional families do not lean towards consumption except in exceptional circumstances like special occasions or celebrations.

Under no circumstances can the saving and frugality adopted by

the family in its life be interpreted as stinginess on the part of its members. The family knows well how to be hospitable, as generosity and hospitality are among its most important traits.

The system of frugality and saving adopted by the family has many reasons. Among them is its suitability for ensuring the adequacy of provisions for the large number of family members, which can reach up to sixty individuals. Additionally, saving is the optimal solution during crises, especially in lean years.

The family upholds the value of cooperation and social solidarity during both joyful and sorrowful occasions. This is evident in the tradition of "Twiza" which includes the organization of celebrations or funerals, offering financial assistance to a family member facing financial hardship, and providing aid to widows, patients, and the vulnerable.

The family also upholds the value of loyalty and commitment to the ancestors in most aspects of an individual's social life. This loyalty is considered a voluntary obligation that the individual assumes and accepts wholeheartedly. This submission to the community is built upon respecting parents and family, and it's based on prohibiting individualistic tendencies within the community. The individual is required to prioritize the interests of the community and place them above their personal interests.

3.2. Characteristics of the Modern Algerian Family: The extended family no longer represents the traditional form that distinguishes Algerian society at present, especially in major cities, where the structure of the simple or nuclear family prevails. This does not imply that the familial pattern has been disrupted, but rather it is a result of the family's attempt to adapt to the social, cultural, and economic changes occurring in society. Among the most notable characteristics of the modern Algerian family are the following:

3.2.1. Family Size Reduction: "The modern Algerian family is characterized by a small marital structure, consisting of the husband, wife, and unmarried children. It is a simple family that manages its affairs independently and seeks autonomy and individuality within its household". (Lebdiri, 2005, p. 54)

The Algerian family has increasingly tended to reduce its size, adopting a method of birth spacing through the use of contraceptive methods. This indicates a cultural change within the Algerian family, as in the past, the prevailing belief was that using contraceptive methods to space births contradicted religious principles and interfered with God's will. (Al-Khouli, 1984, p. 438)

The modern nuclear family is a result of the fragmentation of the extended family in the face of conditions of urbanization and education. It differs from the traditional extended family, as the lifestyle of the spouses diverges from the traditional pattern. The limited housing space has led to a reduction in family size. Moreover, this family relies on a regular income. In most cases, we find that the wife has attained a certain educational level that enables her to reconsider her traditional role. This affords her a degree of freedom in choosing a contemporary lifestyle model. (Khodja, 1991, p. 49)

3.2.2. The Change in Social Status of Women: The modern Algerian woman is no longer the secluded and reserved daughter or wife in front of men. A new position for women has arisen within the family, where she is no longer under the authority of her father, brother, husband, or in-laws. While the woman still respects and obeys her parents, her new status permits her to speak up, take initiative, and manage her own life while avoiding sharp conflicts with her family members. (Boutefnouchet, 1984, p. 259)

The widespread of education in Algeria has greatly contributed to changing the social status of women within both the family and

society. Moreover, Algerian women have experienced significant advancement in the realm of work, aligned with their educational progression and elevation in professional ranks.

The spread of education in Algeria has significantly contributed to changing the social status of women within families and society. Algerian women have also witnessed substantial progress in the field of work, which is commensurate with the advancements in their educational level and their elevation in it.

When the woman entered the workplace and felt her economic value, and that she became in charge of the situation, she then realized that there was no need to bear the restrictions imposed on her by the man and that there is no justification for her submission to him. This made her impose her personality, intervene in choosing her life partner, draw the lines of married life herself, and even contest the man's control over the family. (Al-Khashab, 1985, p. 84)

3.2.3. The decline of paternal authority: The authority of the father within Algerian families has been receding, leading to changes in prevailing concepts about the family, its characteristics, functions, and dominant relationships, as well as the centers of management and power within it. This has led to the mother and the children assuming substantial roles in it. (Awashria, 2003, p. 127)

One of the factors that has led to the decline of paternal authority in modern families is the individualistic nature and self-independence of its members. The father often finds himself preoccupied with work outside the home, while the working mother has commitments and obligations in the workplace. Additionally, children start engaging in external environments beyond the family's scope from an early age, such as daycare, school, playgroups, and various forms of entertainment, notably electronic games, television with its multiple channels and programs, and the internet network.

3.2.4. The prevalence of consumer culture and materialism:

Modern Algerian families are seeking greater freedoms and more consumption of technology, aspects of civilization, and luxuries. This trend has spread even to the simplest and most delicate of households, where interest in appearance, elegance, clothing, home furnishing, and modern décor supplies has emerged, along with the focus on adornments, pretense, and ostentation among people. This leads to exceeding the limits of the family's capabilities and burdening its budget.

The Algerian girl did not delay in responding to this trend, sparing no effort in imitating the Western style of dress and following fashion in clothing and cosmetic tools. (Boutefnouchet, 1984, p. 274)

Thus, the modern Algerian family has become more of a consuming family than a productive one, leading to an increase in consumeristic desire and materialistic utilitarianism as a behavioral trend and manifestation, and the value of saving, contentment, work, and productivity has diminished.

"The nuclear family remains linked to the parents' family due to its adherence to values and customs, and the extension of parental moral authority over the children, even in cases of marriage often. In addition to the economic and social connection of the young nuclear family with the extended family, which acts as a safeguard and support for the small family, embodying the traditions and values of solidarity and cooperation that the Algerian family is known for." (Al-Swaidi, 1990, p. 89)

4. Family Methods for Protecting Children from Deviation:

4.1. Sound Methods:

4.1.1. The Role Model Method: Role modeling is considered one of the most effective means of influencing children to adopt values and preparing them morally, psychologically, and socially

while protecting them from falling into the traps of deviation. A positive example in the eyes of children is subject to imitation and mimicking behavior and character, as the verbal, practical, sensory, and moral image of this role model becomes imprinted in their selves and perceptions. (Ibrahim Ayad & Muhammad Al-Khodari, 1997, p. 102)

4.1.2. Dialogue and preaching method: Dialogue is considered one of the most effective means of persuasion and changing the direction that leads to improving behavior. It assists in shaping the minds to accept criticism and respecting the opinions of others. Its importance also lies in supporting psychological growth, alleviating suppressed feelings, and liberating the self from conflicts, hostile emotions, and deviant behaviors.

4.1.3. Method of monitoring and control: The conscience or internal observer is considered one of the highest means of social control. The conscience is that inner inhibitory force within humans. It is the authority of self-imposed punishment and its execution. When an individual commits a mistake or deviant behavior, their conscience - if active - holds them accountable, reproaches them, and penalizes them. It makes them feel guilt, which is a deeply distressing and painful sensation. In this context, the conscience resembles an "inner judge" that holds its owner accountable for the mistakes they commit. (Al-Isawi, 2004, p. 211)

4.1.4. The Approach of Moderation and Balance: This approach relies on rationality and finding a balance between firmness and gentleness in raising children. This is done by avoiding excessive harshness and excessive indulgence, steering clear of fluctuating between strictness and leniency, and achieving a middle ground in satisfying the physical, psychological, and moral needs of children. This ensures they do not suffer from deprivation and do not become accustomed to excessive indulgence. Additionally, this approach involves getting them accustomed to doses of failure and frustration, as life doesn't always grant them everything they want. This approach also depends on having a mutual understanding between the father and

mother about a unified path. (**Al-Isawi, Psychological Education for Children and Adolescents, 2000, p. 186**)

the approach of moderation, balance, and parental acceptance contributes to the formation of an independent and emotionally balanced personality, far from stress and deviation. This personality is aware of the responsibilities it carries and accepts both positive and negative outcomes of actions. When a child grows up in a moderate and balanced manner in all aspects, their unique abilities erupt, talents develop, and they become an active individual in society, contributing to its development and progress.

4.2. Unbalanced Approaches:

4.2.1. The Authoritarian and Harshness Approach: Some parents adopt a style of authority, dictatorship, strictness, and harshness in dealing with their children, guiding them toward social norms. They believe that this authority represents the most suitable family structure for disciplining and upholding parental reverence. Additionally, many parents believe that rules, systems, judgments, and control within the family constitute successful strategies in cultivating the behavior of children and adolescents, directing them, and safeguarding them from deviation. (**Al-Isawi, Psychological Education for Children and Adolescents, 2000, p. 117**)

Parents consistently tracking their teenager's or young adult's mistakes and reminding them of these errors each time, in a manner involving insults, swearing, mockery, and physical punishment each time, can serve as a contributing factor to the emergence of some deviant behavioral issues, such as lying, fleeing from home, and intentionally damaging and breaking things in retaliation against the parents. (**Nasr al-Din, 2000, p. 44**)

4.2.2. The style of excessive protection and indulgence: This style involves parents exaggerating in attending to all the organic and physical needs of the child, fulfilling all their psychological desires, excessively safeguarding them, and constantly defending

them even when they make mistakes. It includes excessively praising and complimenting them, providing constant protection from distressing experiences, extravagantly spending on them, and assisting them in every minor and major matter they encounter. (**Mansour & Sayed, 1987, p. 72**)

4.2.3. Neglect and Rejection Style: Neglect and rejection also manifest in the lack of care and guidance, and the absence of attention to encouraging the child towards good behavior or disciplining them for bad behavior. Parents who employ such a style of upbringing often lack what they should provide for their children. They also lack clear rules for raising their children, as those who do not possess something cannot give it. (**Sayed Abdullah & Abdul Latif Muhammad , 2001, p. 233**)

The style of neglect and rejection leads to the young person increasingly feeling that they have lost their position within the family and the sense of companionship and belonging to them. This often results in an anxious and hesitant personality, stumbling through random behaviors without rules or constraints. Frequently, this young person joins a group or gang where they find their place, receiving the care and love denied to him in his family, especially since the group he belongs to often encourages him in everything he does, even if it involves deviant behavior or criminal actions outside the law.

4.2.4. The fluctuation style: Differences of opinions between parents are considered an influential factor in the behavior and actions of their children. Often, the father dissuades his son from an action or behavior he deems wrong, while the mother intervenes and approves of the same action, even encouraging the child to do it as she sees no fault in it. This oscillation in the parents' interactions, which are at opposite ends, leads the children to doubt the reliability of the guidance and direction provided by the parents (**Al-Oqsori, 2002, p. 66**)

Just as the fluctuation in behavior between various methods swings between softness and severity, acceptance and rejection, or parents using more than one approach each time to evaluate the same behavior, or the inconsistency between actions and words, and the lack

of alignment between them in adopting consistent educational methods to guide their children's behaviors, due to their differing ideas or their adherence to contradictory advice from diverse sources like relatives, neighbors, or friends. All of these pieces of advice and the inherent contradictions therein contribute to the confusion and anxiety of parents in searching for the optimal approach to raising their children. This further adds to their oscillation in dealing with their children (Nasr al-Din, 2000, p. 69)

The fluctuation in parenting approaches leads to various repercussions, including disrupting the balance of the prevailing expectations that govern the parents' relationship with their children. As a result, the child comes to realize that his behavior may yield certain consequences at times and different ones at other times, and that his behavior could result in one kind of outcome from his mother and a contrasting one from his father. In this context, the child cannot predict what results his behavior might lead to, which increases tension and emotional reactions among the children, potentially pushing them towards deviant behavior.

CONCLUSION

This research paper has arrived at a set of important findings, including: Algerian families employ various methods to protect their children from deviance by transmitting values, attitudes, and social standards to them. Several intertwined factors contribute to the formation of these family methods, encompassing aspects related to parents as well as those concerning the children. These familial methods vary between positive and balanced techniques and others that are negative and unbalanced. All of these methods have a distinct impact on shaping the personalities, attitudes, values, integrity, or deviance of the children.

The Algerian family is not isolated from the cultural and civilizational changes occurring on a global level. It is in constant

interaction with these changes. Therefore, it strives to keep up with and follow the transformations and developments that the contemporary world is witnessing in various fields, especially during the era of cultural openness and the globalization of media. At the same time, it seeks to preserve its identity and its cultural and moral uniqueness, Without taking root or dissolving in the crucible of the dominant Western perspective that extends to all aspects.

If contemporary Algerian families can achieve a balance at their level between adapting to the changes of the present and rooting in the past, and between heritage and modernity, then this balance will guarantee their stability, coherence, and progress. However, if this balance is disrupted, it exposes family members to sharp polarization between full adherence to the Western model or complete isolation. Yet, in the era of globalization and the inheritance of information and communication technology, it has become impossible to resist or distance oneself from the attraction of the global movement with all its positives and negatives.

Thus, the only option left for Algerian and Arab families is to confront the foreign cultural penetration that now threatens all cultures with erasure and fusion within a single global culture. This exposes families to various crises, foremost among them being the deviance of their children.

Therefore, the responsibility placed upon the Arab family in the face of contemporary global changes, especially within the realm of media globalization, has become a multiplied responsibility. The family is required to define its role and adapt to global changes, as it is responsible for shaping the human of the future and the society of tomorrow.

We still maintain hope that the Arab Muslim family will fulfill its pioneering role in safeguarding the cultural identity of its children and upholding the genuine Arab Islamic values. Furthermore,

nurturing in the younger generation a sense of belonging to the family, the community, and the Islamic nation. This encompasses instilling a sense of pride in the religion and embodying its teachings and values across various aspects of life. Should the family succeed in fulfilling this duty, it will serve as a rock on which all attempts that aim at our existence and identity will shatter. It will also function as an impregnable fortress, protecting the children from crises and preventing deviation.

Through this research paper, it is possible to provide a set of recommendations that encompass specific educational methods that parent should consider when dealing with their children, especially teenagers, in order to prevent their deviance. These recommendations can be summarized in the following points:

- **Understanding and Acceptance:** It is necessary to anticipate mistakes from teenagers just like any other mature individual, and for parents to comprehend them and accept their excuses. Adolescents are highly sensitive to any criticism directed at them, especially when it is intentional from adults to comment on their physical or behavioral traits.

- **Considering calm and reasoned dialogue** within the framework of trust, understanding, and acceptance, while steering clear of all manifestations of nervousness and tension. However, this should be done with firmness and control, without laxity or neglecting to monitor the actions of young children, as firmness, when applied appropriately, is not considered strictness but rather leniency.

- **Taking into account the youth's need for rest, relaxation, and entertainment**, as well as safeguarding them from the pressures of exams, so that they neither magnify nor belittle their importance. Additionally, refraining from exaggerating children's mistakes without justification, and fostering an environment of enjoyment, tolerance, and optimism within the home.

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