

Educational Support and Parental Involvement for Immigrant Learners at Islamic Schools in South Africa: A *Maqāṣid Al-Sharī'ah* Approach

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Abstract

Little is known about how immigrant parents in South Africa view education and how they contribute to their children's educational growth. This research study indicates that these parents provide their school-aged children with a wide range of support; most of which is of a physiological nature, such as providing food and clothing. This study investigates immigrant parents' understanding of educational support for their school-aged children and the challenges they experience in South Africa. An interpretive paradigm informs the setting of this basic qualitative research investigation. Six families were chosen for the study using a purposive sample method. Participants are from the Indian and Pakistani communities in Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu Natal, and from the Somali community in Mitchells Plain in the Western Cape. Content analysis was conducted on the data after it was gathered through semi-structured interviews and observations. The challenges that the participants encounter are amongst others; educational, cultural, and linguistic. It is evident that the *maqāṣid Al-Sharī'ah* principle is applied as part of the parenting of children in these immigrant families. As such, the findings of this study suggest that the participants are involved in both their children's secular and Islamic education.

Key Words: Parental involvement, educational support, immigrants, *maqāṣid, sharī'ah, madrassah* .

1. Introduction

Parental engagement is subjective in nature and often challenging to assess. It is a term commonly used in primary and secondary education contexts and is customarily associated with parental involvement in schools and parents' support of their children's education (Waterman, 2008). It may also refer to the extent or level of participation that parents have in their children's learning trajectory. The success of parental involvement and collaboration with the education community may be ascribed to parents' significant role in their children's educational paths. There are innumerable ways parents can become involved in their children's development. These *modi operandi* include, amongst others, participation in their children's educational progress (Taliaferro, et al., 2009). It is recognised that children's insight and knowledge development may be enriched when parents provide their children with the required assistance and support in their educational growth (Dunst, 2004). Oftentimes, parental engagement may be understood by both schools and parents as a series of events, from initiating and establishing substantial learning skills and knowledge in their children in the home environment, to volunteering to assist with school projects and events.

South African schools have shifted from being racially and ethnically segregated (and thus homogeneous to being culturally, ethnically, and linguistically diverse in the last two decades. Schools in lower socioeconomic regions, in particular, are under significant strain to service their expanding immigrant learner population (Daniels, 2017). It can be assumed that learners' backgrounds may have an effect on how they learn in school, since learners come from various racial, ethnic, linguistic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Swart (2004) claims that schools may overcome obstacles to learning by embracing and fostering diversity. Success may be guaranteed for parents, learners, and the community by addressing these issues. Thus, it is critical that schools address diversity-related issues constructively and concentrate on giving learners the chance to study, regardless of any complications that might develop.

One of the numerous approaches to accomplishing educational goals is encouraging parent engagement. By having conversations with their children about their regular school activities, parents demonstrate to their children the value of education. Additionally, parents might offer to participate in extracurricular activities and school functions as volunteers. Involving parents

in a child's education is crucial, especially if they may not be familiar with how local schools operate (Nargis & Tikly, 2010). Although parents continue to be in charge of raising their children, schools are largely in control of teaching them (Epstein, 2001). Moreover, if the quality of the partnership between parents and the school is good, this may lead to an enjoyable classroom environment for learners. It is imperative to pay close attention to the function that parental participation plays in educational support in addition to creating awareness of diversity and inclusivity in schools.

Education, especially at the primary and secondary levels, is essential to the growth and development of a community. Pitt (1998) contends that a commitment to freedom and democracy may be equated with a commitment to social justice within the framework of education. Additionally, integration, including in educational contexts, is made possible when an individual's rights and obligations are upheld in its entirety. This cultural attribute, which includes values, beliefs and behaviour could make people more willing to fulfil their social obligations and foster their resourcefulness, which might improve their child's academic achievement (Pitt, 1998).

There is a myriad of reasons why families would relocate from their native country to start a new life elsewhere. One such cause would be to seek more favourable employment opportunities (Al-Sharmani, 2007; Jinna, 2010). Many immigrants have settled and become self-sufficient in South Africa. In doing so, they have contributed to the country's economic growth. However, their integration into the South African cultural landscape seems to be hindered by, amongst others, linguistic dissimilarities (Jinna, 2010). A child's educational development is shaped by the type of schooling that is offered. In most South African schools, English, and to a lesser extent Afrikaans, are the predominant medium of instruction. However, both would be languages that many recent immigrant families do not speak and therefore they may lack proficiency in these languages. Hence, parents may experience countless challenges supporting their children academically due to differences in native languages and culture. Moreover, the language in which children converse in their home context may differ from the ones used in a school environment. This may impact the value that parents hold about education.

Several elements influence and strengthen a country's success and economic growth. One such element is that of education. Arguably, irrespective of a community's economic status; parents generally aspire to the best education

for their children. This is also true for immigrant families. Since educational settings are not always standardised and consistent, there are several unique challenges that immigrant societies face. Some of these challenges include the degree of affluence in a community, which may determine the quality and success of children's education. Communities with a more developed educational infrastructure are more likely to have higher success rates and positive outcomes. Consequently, wealthy communities have a greater advantage over the less affluent communities since they also generally have a higher degree of social capital. Bourdieu (1986, p. 248) defines social capital as "the aggregate of the actual or potential resources, which are linked to the possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition." This may include, amongst other factors, access to resources in the form of books and information technology. Cultural capital thus serves as an advantage and an asset, precisely because many of children are exposed to reading material at a relatively young age.

There is a lack of knowledge about parental support amongst the immigrant populace in South Africa. If parents gain insight and awareness into, amongst other factors, the scholastic and linguistic challenges that their children face at school, they may better comprehend techniques which they can utilise to support them. This in essence may lead to greater success in their children's education. To better understand their children's performance, parents may play an active role in their children's education by joining school boards, demonstrating care for their academic success, and attending parent meetings. These activities may help parents become more engaged in their children's education. In order to determine the areas where their children are having difficulties, parents may also become engaged by following up with the subject teachers of their children.

This study explores the various forms of support and involvement of immigrant parents for their school-aged children. This study is guided by the following research questions: (1) What is immigrant parents' understanding of educational support for their school-aged children in South Africa? (2) What are the challenges that immigrant parents' school-aged children experience? (3) What challenges do cultural differences pose to parental engagement with their children's school? (4) What role does *maqāṣid* play in encouraging immigrant parents from Muslim backgrounds in providing educational support for their children?

This study was limited to communities in two provinces, viz. Mitchell's Plain, Western Cape (WC), and Pietermaritzburg in KwaZulu Natal (KZN). This study's population was confined to six households: three from Mitchell's Plain, and three from Pietermaritzburg. In KZN, the research participants were from the Indian and Pakistani communities, as opposed to the WC, where the research participants were Somali families. Fathers and mothers both participated in this study.

2. Literature Review

In an educational setting, the expression parental engagement often refers to ways that parents become involved in schools and how they support their children's education (Waterman, 2008). It further refers to the level of involvement a parent has in the education of his or her child, as well as the expectations parents may have for their children and the ways in which parents might be involved in their learning and educational pursuits (Ji & Koblinsky, 2009). Establishing links between parental involvement and student learning is challenging, especially since learner achievement is influenced by multiple factors. This is due to differing definitions of parental involvement and an overall lack of consensus regarding which types of parental involvement leads to certain educational outcomes (Cao, et al. 2104 & Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003).

Parents or guardians are the chief teachers of their children. Their guidance has an impact on children's growth, cognition, and ultimately school performance. Indirect facilitation of elements including diet, health, and cleanliness as well as direct assistance with learning before and throughout formal schooling are included in parents' roles. Communication between the school and family, help with homework involvement in school activities, and participation in decision-making bodies at the school are all examples of support activities (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003). Depending on a child's age, support might range from at-home preschool assistance to more indirect assistance once the child enters primary school, including support with homework and volunteering in the classroom and at school events.

A substantial amount of research demonstrates that "at-home good parenting" is a key predictor of children's success, even after other factors that affect accomplishment have been eliminated, such as the calibre of schools at the primary level (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003). Mahuro and Hungu (2016) discovered in Uganda that parental involvement in the form of devoting time

and money to their children's education plays a crucial factor in encouraging children to raise their academic standing.

Parents who are actively engaged in their children's education help them develop academically and in other abilities associated with learning by modelling how to organise, supervise, and be cognisant of the learning process. In a similar vein, the largest influences on learning come from supporting and monitoring children's key learning objectives, which include learning and studying. Parents are also role-models of favourable school-related behaviours and attitudes, and play a crucial role in accentuating the value of education (Castro, Exposito-Casas, Lopez-Martin, Lizasoain, Navarro-Asencio, & Gavirria, 2015). For example, education ought to be beneficial and relevant to the real world, with an emphasis on fostering practical abilities. Moreover, if teachers are aware of the heightened parental involvement, they might also pay closer attention to those specific learners. In view of the aforementioned, one may assume that children's parents who are actively involved in the education of their children and school activities are more likely to be successful academically as they would not like to disappoint them and emulate their parents' optimistic approaches to learning.

Furthermore, studies conducted in Burundi, Malawi, Senegal, and Uganda demonstrate that parental involvement in their children's educational increases their children's literacy levels, despite the parents' level of educational attainment (Marphatia et al., 2010). It can thus be concluded that promoting greater parental engagement might aid in minimising gaps in educational performance. Winthrop, Ershadi, Angrist, Bortsie, and Matsheng (2020) found during a study in Botswana that the need for and value of active, ongoing parental participation in the teaching and learning process, was reinforced during the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, Brossard, Cardoso, Kame, Mishra, Mizunoya, and Reuge (2020) proclaimed in their study that outcomes of learning for children may be significantly impacted by parents' own education levels and capacity to assist with homework, particularly when schools are closed. Parents' capacity to support their child's learning must be taken into consideration when making policy choices about school closures and distance learning. In areas where there is no internet access or power, parents can be aided with self-directed learning packages (Brossard et al., 2020). Another study conducted by Angrist, Bergman, Brewster, and Matsheng (2020) showed that involving parents through phone calls and SMS messages enhanced parental involvement in their children's schooling

and improved parents' comprehension of their child's academic standing. Moreover, any strategies created must also consider parents' schedules as well as the diversity of family situations. Of particular importance is extending assistance to those parents who need it the most (Winthrop et al., 2020).

3. Theoretical Framework

This study utilises an eclectic theoretical and conceptual framework that draws insight from Epstein's Parental Involvement Model and a *maqāṣid Al-Shari'ah* approach.

3.1 Epstein's Parental Involvement Model

The six primary elements of parental involvement in children's home and school activities are outlined in a framework developed by Epstein (2001). These include attending to children's needs, communicating, volunteering, learning, making decisions, and working with the community. Epstein emphasises that any kind of parental involvement is acceptable for assisting school-age children and offers strategies for fostering effective communication between parents and the school. Epstein's paradigm for parental participation is supported by Lunenberg and Irby (2002), who assert that it is more successful and useful than other models since it focuses on parents' engagement in both the home and school environments, as illustrated in Figure 1.



Figure 1: Effective parental involvement (adapted from Epstein, 2001).

During occasions like parent-teacher conferences, social gatherings, and other school-related activities, all of these aspects create opportunities for parents to connect and communicate with the school. Both the home and school environments are seen as separate microsystems, whereas parental engagement is classified as a mesosystem (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998). Hence, children are affected by both systems in their own unique ways. If the home and school environments are supportive of one another, it may be advantageous for the child, the parent, and the school. For instance, when teachers inform parents about what they anticipate from their learners, the parents may then assist their children in obtaining the resources they require. This serves as assistance for educational support as well.

Many educational institutions mandate that parents attend scheduled events, programmes, or meetings. At school meetings for examples, parents may use this opportunity to express their concerns and even raise their opinions on relevant matters. By doing so, parents gain insights into the logistics of how schools function. In view of this, Epstein (2001) elucidates the significance of parent involvement at schools. For instance, parents might volunteer to help out at fund-raising events or as teaching assistants in the classrooms. Frequently, parents are utilised to oversee the lessons while teachers are absent. Moreover, parents who participate in their children's education through the aforementioned activities become aware of the challenges that teachers as well as other parents may encounter (Epstein, 2001).

3.2 *Maqāṣid Al-Sharī'ah* Approach

In the interest of presenting an Islamic paradigm and worldview that accomplishes Islam's higher purposes, i.e., *maqāṣid* in the modern environment, and the *maqāṣid* methodology (Auda, 2021) initiative strives to resurrect the fundamental conceptions of the Qur'ān and the Prophetic traditions. The long-term objective is to enable this framework to integrate into systems of higher learning and research that promote global civilisation. It is necessary to reclassify all fields of knowledge before developing a *maqāṣid*-based plan for higher education. Therefore, Auda (2022) argues for "disciplinisation" From an Islamic perspective. In the context of higher education, disciplinisation can be understood as the process through which a discipline is established.

3.3 The Role of *Maqāṣid Al-Sharī'ah* in Education

Maqāṣid and *sharī'ah* are the two terms from which *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* is derived. *Sharī'ah* denotes the divine Islamic law, whereas *maqāṣid* refers to objectives, purposes, or goals (the singular form is *maqāṣid*, i.e., an objective). Consequently, the two terms together imply a philosophy related to the goals of Islamic law. The goals of *sharī'ah* encompass every facet of human existence, including human growth, with a particular focus on each person's overall well-being (Oladapo & Rahman, 2016) and more particularly on educational rearing. Strictly speaking, *maqāṣid* refers to the study of understanding the logic and rationale of the legal rulings that Allāh. revealed to believers via his final prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ). Literally, *maqāṣid* refers to the goals of Islamic legal norms or legal rulings (Abdul Karim bin Mussa, 2021).

3.4 The Philosophy of *Maqāṣid Al-Sharī'ah*

Human development in essence is measured amongst others, in terms of health, income, and education. Education plays a vital role in the improvement of human life since it provides an approach for humankind to access means for physiological needs for survival, to the extent of alleviating poverty. In Islam, it is imperative to understand and implement the objectives of *sharī'ah*. According to Oladapo and Rahman (2016), Al-Ġazālī divided the goals or objectives of *sharī'ah* into three fundamental levels of *maṣlaḥah* (benefits or interests), i.e., necessities (*darūriyyāt*), complementary (*ḥājjiyyāt*), and embellishment (*taḥṣīniyyāt*). Necessities refer to those factors that are necessary to a system's smooth operation because without them, a society would destabilise. The survival and spiritual well-being of people and societies are considered as fundamental prerequisites for necessities (Sarkawi, Abdullah, Dali & Khazani, 2017). Complements are those features that make people's lives easier, and embellishment pertains to moral and ethical behaviours in a system. Furthermore, on preserving the five fundamental *sharī'ah* principles, or universal values (*al-darūriyyāt*, *al-khams*), namely, religion (*ḥifẓ ad-dīn*), life (*naḥs*), intellect (*'aql*), posterity (*nasl*), and property (*māl*), which serve as the foundation for all "human affairs, are the basis for the Islamic vision of development (Oladapo & Rahman, 2016).

According to Auda (2008), *maqāṣid* is viewed amongst other concepts as "a group of divine intents and moral concepts upon which Islamic law is based, such as justice, human dignity, free will, magnanimity, chastity, facilitation, and

social cooperation". Based on the aforementioned definition, it is imperative to be cognisant that Allāh. has created humans as vicegerents on earth and by following Allāh.'s commands we are able to attain a close(er) relationship with the Divine (Qur'an, 2:30).

4. Methodology

This study is qualitative in nature, and offers insights into how immigrant parents support their school-aged children, and aims to discover underlying causes, perspectives, and motives related to this support. This qualitative study demonstrated awareness of aforementioned in specific regions in South Africa as previously stated, especially among six families whose children attend nearby Islamic schools.

4.1 The Research Population and Sample

Two immigrant communities from Pietermaritzburg (KZN) and Mitchell's Plain (WC) were the focus of this research. The scope of this study was restricted to immigrant parents of learners at Islamic Schools from six families in these areas. In order to obtain data about the parents, a method termed purposive sampling was utilised to choose the participants. Merriam (2002; 2009) contends that the purposive sampling theory applies to selecting participants or instances that have a wealth of information and would be most appropriate for use as study examples or interview subjects. Purposive sampling is unrelated to the sample size. Instead, the primary interests of the research are on the significant contribution that each participant may make to the researcher's comprehension of the phenomenon (Merriam, 2002).

4.2 Data Collection

Researchers who employ a qualitative approach consider occurrences in their natural environments and interpret circumstances in view of the meanings that individuals assign to them (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Patton (2002, p. 248) endorses that "[a] rich variety of methodological combinations can be employed to illuminate an inquiry question". Several different techniques were executed to gather data in order to validate the aforementioned endorsement in this study, including semi-structured interviews and observations.

4.3 Semi-Structured Interviews

Face-to-face interviews are among the most common techniques for gathering information (Alasuutari, Bickman & Brannen, 2009). This kind of data collection includes a number of benefits. One of these benefits is that, in addition to the researcher being available to structure the interview, he or she is also in a position to encourage the participants to expound on their experiences. Thus, it is possible to facilitate both verbal and nonverbal communication (Alasuutari et al., 2009). Hence, interviews served as the main technique for gathering data for this study in order to shed light on the experiences of immigrant parents in terms of providing educational support for and being actively involved in their children's education (cf. Seidman, 2012; Patton, 2002). An interview guide was specifically designed to elicit pertinent information from participants and expertise on the subject was used to facilitate the semi-structured interviews. The researcher adhered to the interactional concept by conducting semi-structured interviews and posing open-ended questions to participants. This allowed the researcher and participants to have a direct line of contact. As the participants did not consent to have their interviews audio recorded, the interviews were conducted manually; the researcher honoured their preferences and recorded the responses to the queries by taking notes. In short, the interview questions were verbally delivered to the participants and their responses were written down.

4.4 Ethical Considerations

The protection of participants from any negative impacts of the research is one aspect of ethical behaviour during the research process (Henning, Van Rensburg & Smit, 2004). Participants in this study were informed about the nature of the investigation and had an opportunity to address any ethical problems with researchers. Prior to the signing of permission forms, their rights were explained to them. The researcher ensured they understood everything there was to know about the research, the interviewing procedure, and how their privacy would be safeguarded. According to Duffy (2008), the intimate and in-depth nature of material collected makes informed consent crucial in qualitative research. Respecting the participants' right to privacy is of utmost significance. Any information supplied by them is private (Allan, 2008). To assist participants who might have challenges reading and/or writing in English, the consent form was provided both verbally and in writing, and explained in a manner the participants could comprehend.

Documents were submitted to the International Peace College of South Africa's (IPSA) Ethics Committee as part of the required procedure for institutional assessment and ethical approval. The principals of the schools that were chosen as the study's setting granted access to undertake research at their schools by issuing their approval.

5. Data Analysis

5.1 Discussion of Emerging Themes

To demonstrate how Islam supports parents' efforts to educate their children, Epstein's paradigm (2001) will be merged with Auda's (2008) *maqāṣid* method. Epstein (2001) focuses on parenting, communicating, supporting children's teaching at home, collaborating with the community, keeping good company, teaching children to be critical thinkers and to make informed decisions, and volunteering in the community. These are all part of parents' involvement for the *maslahah* of their children. The fundamental levels of *maslahah* are clearly indicated in Auda's approach. Similarly, the objective of the *sharī'ah* is to promote the well-being of all humankind, which lies in safeguarding religion (*ḥifẓ ad-dīn*), life (*nafs*), intellect (*'aql*), offspring (*nasl*) and wealth (*māl*). Whatever ensures the safeguarding of these five principles serves public interest and is desirable (Auda, 2008). The *maqāṣid* approach is illustrated in Figure 2.

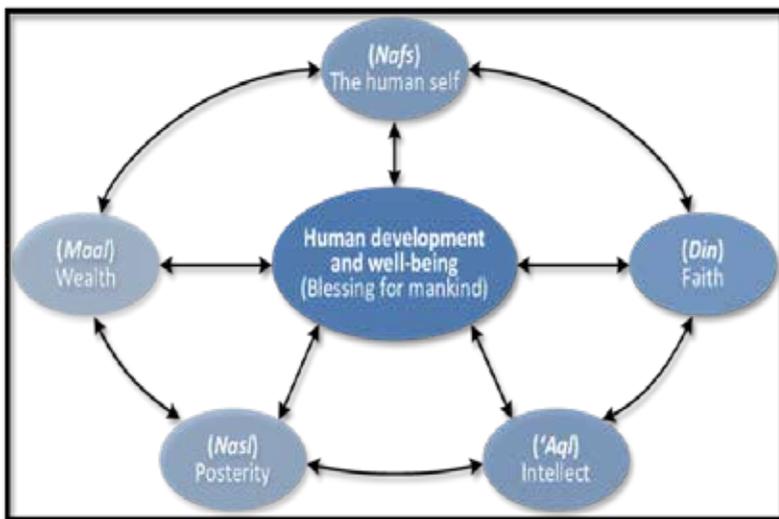


Figure 2: Human Development and well-being Based on *Maqāṣid Al-Sharī'ah* (Chapra, 2008).

The following themes emerged from the data: the importance of children's education; the role of parents in children's education; parent support; effect of migration on children's education; impact of environment on children's education; and cultural and economic changes.

5.1.1 The Importance of Children's Education

Within contemporary society, all people's lives are significantly impacted by their education. More so in the case of a child's education. Similarly, Islam places a high value on education. This concept of the importance of education, and more particularly of gaining knowledge, is emphasised in the following *'āyāt*:

Read! Read in the name of thy Lord who created; [He] created the human being from a blood clot. Read in the name of thy Lord who taught by the pen: [He] taught the human being what he did not know (Qur'ān, 96: 1-5).

This *āyah* that was sent to Muḥammad (ﷺ). In *Sūrah al-Baqarah* Allāh. says, "And Allāh. taught Adam all the names..." (Qur'ān, 2:31). On further exploration of this *āyah*, it points to the various fields of education. Another *āyah* in the Qur'ān states, "Are those who have knowledge equal to those who do not have knowledge?!" (Qur'ān, 39:9).

According to Epstein (2001), parents have certain obligations towards their children's education. Apart from attending to their physiological needs, they are encouraged to bring their children to school on time. This element of punctuality is also demonstrated in the Qur'ān and *ḥādīth* as it plays a crucial role in the life of a Muslim. For example, Mu'adh ibn Jabal (RA) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

A person will not move on the Day of Judgment until he has been asked about four things: his life and how he spent it, his knowledge and what he did with it, his wealth, from where he acquired it and on what he spent it, and his body and how he wore it out.

Evidently, the participants in this study take this issue of time and education serious. Some parents reported that they take responsibility for taking their children to school themselves, whereas others depend on reliable private and public transport.

The principle of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* under *ḍarūriyyāt* can be applied to the preservation of children's intellect (*'aql*) through education. This is currently evolving around the pursuit of knowledge and the avoidance of brain drains in Muslim contexts, as well as the ability to use educational facilities in a way that positively enhances children's minds. For example, it is necessary to prevent children from using school computers to watch unethical propaganda and violent films, which can endanger their minds and weaken their relationships with peers and the community. Instead, technology should be used to expose children to books and movies that depict people who have a strong faith in Allāh. and show how their faith and rituals help overcome obstacles and problems. In addition, nature, science, and so on can all be used to demonstrate the Creator's majesty. These are just a few examples of how parents can protect their religion and children through education.

5.1.2 The Role of Parents in Children's Education

One fulfills their role as a parent by enhancing the role of Islamic education in promoting peace and harmony in society, and thus achieves the higher purpose of *maqāṣid*. In other words, parents are not only parenting their children, but are also active members of society who promote Islamic values through their children. As a result, they are promoting social peace and harmony. Close communication with children and a positive attitude is the most effective ways to help children to learn and develop tolerance, harmony, and peace as members of society. An example of this is illustrated in the following *ḥadīth*:

There is no gift a father gives his child more virtuous than good manners. (Tirmidhī *ḥadīth* No.4977).

In essence, it highlights the importance of the proper raising of children.

The protection of children's lives (*nafs*) through education can be accomplished in accordance with *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* under the premise of *ḍarūriyyāt*. In order for children to grow up with an understanding of Islam and its qualities, education is the mechanism through which this development takes place. The parental example serves as the foundation for education since young children look up to their parents as role models. This parental duty does not just fall under the purview of the father. The Prophet (ﷺ) is reported to have said:

Take care! Each of you is a shepherd and each of you shall be asked concerning his flock; a leader is a shepherd of his people, and he

shall be asked concerning his flock; and a man is a shepherd of the people of his house, and he shall be asked concerning his flock; and a woman is a shepherd of the house of her husband and over their children, and she shall be asked concerning them (*Al-Bukhāri & Muslim*).

The role of a mother in raising their children is invaluable. Children are dependent upon them as they are growing up. An Arabic proverb attests to this, saying, “The mother is the first school” (Responsibilities of parents, 2012). Every mother should be aware of her responsibility and do her utmost to contribute to her children’s growth as they go on their life’s journey. In this life, children will mature into respectable citizens and be a delight to their parents. Allāh says:

And those who believed and whose descendants followed them in faith – We will join with them their descendants, and We will not deprive them of anything of their deeds. Every person, for what he earned, is retained (Qur’ān 52:21).

Even though the majority of structured learning occurs in a school setting, parents still play a significant role in their children’s education. Parents motivate, inspire, and encourage their children to perform well in school. As parents of school-age children, participants in this study expressed a variety of opinions on their responsibilities. A common understanding reported by the participants is that being a parent is a big responsibility. Mohammed (43) stresses the importance of the role as parent, particularly that of the father, “[p]arents should be the provider, especially the father. The parent must be the maintainer. The parent must be a teacher. Must take the children to school.” As Muslim parents, their role is to teach them *kalimah* (tradition) and *ḥaqq* (truth), according to Ameer (49). Moreover, the parent participants reported that they teach their children the fundamentals of Islam, particularly focusing on how to communicate with people, especially elders, by greeting with *salām* and teaching them to respect elderly people. The rationale behind this phenomenon is that when their children grow up, they will know how to fulfil their roles as parents. Though, as Asma (54) asserts, parenting can be overwhelming at times, they need to “nurture their children into the best people they can be” (Khadija, 30). This study’s findings also show that parents see themselves as providers, nurturers, and supporters of their children in accordance with Qur’ān:

Mothers shall suckle their children two years completely, for such as desire to fulfil the suckling. It is for the father to provide them and clothe them honourably” (Qur’ān 2:233).

Evidently, as in accordance with aforementioned Qur’ān *āyah*, the participants take their responsibility as parents serious and invest a lot of time and energy into preparing their children for school.

5.1.3 Parents’ Support

The factors that some parents have found challenging in helping their children with their schooling must be taken into consideration. Language barriers prevent some parents from being involved in their children’s education, particularly those from lower socioeconomic statuses or minority groups. In this study, some Somali participants, mainly mothers, reported difficulties in supporting their children with their homework. This could be ascribed to their own education background, which appeared to be the largest obstacle. Though Ameer (49) completed Grade 7, his wife is not proficient in English.

Khadija (30) proclaims, “at home there are sometimes miscommunication[s] because of us parents speaking our mother tongue and the kids mostly speak English”. Despite their town lack of proficiency in the language of instruction of their children’s schools, they encourage and motivate them to learn by appointing tutors for them. In some instances, older siblings assist with homework. This type of conduct in itself seems to be a positive contributor to how these mothers emotionally support their school-age children.

According to Epstein (2001), the first sort of parental engagement occurs when parents tend to their children’s basic needs, keep watch over them and provide a home environment that supports their children’s learning. Ja’far ibn Muḥammad al-Šādiq said: “Allāh. has mercy on the servant because of the strong love for his child” (‘Uṣūl Al-Kafi). As they mature, children are taught to cultivate an Islamic worldview and qualities through education. This phenomenon is demonstrated in the Qur’ān where Allāh. declares: “This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favour upon you and have approved for you Islam as religion.” (Qur’ān 5:3). It emphasises the importance of following Allāh.’s commands and avoiding what He has forbidden, as well as teaching humans the reasons and wisdom behind these rulings. The love of a mother for her child is an example of the highest form of human compassion and affection. Therefore, it is crucial to

teach children about Allāh’s mercy and love, as well as showing them mercy and love as parents. Ultimately, this is what parents in this study demonstrated.

The principle of *maqāṣid al- shari‘ah* under *darūriyyāt*, can be applied to the preservation of the lives (*nufūs*, sing. *nafs*) of these school-aged children and serves as an example of how *maqāṣid al- shari‘ah* works. As previously alluded to, parents are inherently concerned about the emotional and moral support they offer their children. If children are protected from harm, i.e., they are provided with a safe environment, it aids in a holistic development. Support from parents is thus not always concrete per se, but all forms of support contribute to the child’s well-being. As described in the Qur’an, this results in the development of a solid relationship between parent and child. “Your parents and your children, ye know not which of them are nearest to you in benefit.” (Qur’an 4:11). The Islamic perspective on the connection between parents and children is demonstrated in this *āyah*. From birth until adulthood, the parents’ love and care transforms their children from a state of complete helplessness and weakness into one of perfect strength and independence.

The participants in this study reported that they receive monetary support from their relatives. This is a significant aspect that lessens the strain on parents altogether; in addition to paying school fees, there are also other expenses such as transport and access to the internet. Faatimah (56) is the sole provider for her family and depends on financial assistance from her daughter who resides in Canada. Mohammed (43) also relies on his relatives for financial support. Evidently, the study’s participants take full advantage of every opportunity to support their children in receiving the best education possible. By supporting their children with schoolwork or other curriculum-related assignments, parents actively participate in their children’s at-home education (Epstein, 2002). A further ideology of Epstein (2001) that is evident in this study, is that of decision-making, particularly relevant to the notion of accepting monetary assistance. Thus, the participants’ reports strongly resonate with Epstein’s (2001) notion of collaborating with communities. In a similar vein, the *maqāṣid al- shari‘ah* approach, similarly focuses on aforementioned priorities. Moreover, the methodology of the *maqāṣid al- shari‘ah* application also imparts the *maslahah* principles. This study’s findings clearly show a connection between the preservation of intellect (*‘aql*), offspring (*nasl*), and wealth (*māl*) as these will result in a prosperous future for their children. This is the common understanding of all the participants.

5.1.4 Effect of Migration on Children's Education

In the context of migration and education, Epstein's (2001) parental support model provides a framework for understanding how parents can support their children's learning. By engaging in activities such as monitoring their children's progress, and as in the case of the participants, e.g., most of the parents who lack proficiency in English, finding either a relative or a tutor to assist their children with homework, can mitigate any negative effects on their children's education.

Chapter 2, Section 24 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) ensures that every person has the right to a safe place. Ultimately, this is what Somali immigrants ultimately came to seek in South Africa, like Ameer (49). In the same vein, the Indian participant, Faatimah (56), expresses a sentiment comparable to Ameer (49) focusing on educational prospects. Though Asma (54) from Pakistan finds South Africa "quite challenging", she claims that the country is "quite advanced compared to Pakistan". Furthermore, Indian participant Maryam (49) asserts that "South Africa is a better developed country than India, better standard of living than India and higher level of education".

The Qur'ān clearly states:

And We have honoured the children of Adam, We carried them on land and ocean, We give them sustenance of good things and We preferred them to the advantages of the perfect on most creatures that We have created (Qur'ān 17:70).

This *āyah* implies that the Allāh. elevated the human population. *Maqāsid al-sharī'ah* in itself has an objective that is consistent with basic human principles. Similarly, in governing the people of Medina, the Prophet (ﷺ) employed human rights principles (Al-Nahari, Monawer, Abdullah, Abdul Rahmaan, Achour, 2022) which include the right to life, the right to equality, the right to property, the right to dignity, and women's rights (Alarashi, 2022). These are the most fundamental rights in Islamic law. The participants appeared to be preoccupied with the positive effects that living in South Africa has on their lifestyle and future. Although the relocation of parents may improve children's long-term educational prospects, it may also lead to behavioural problems, as reported by Mohammed (43):

Here in South Africa, the children phone the police for their parents. They are scared if they should punish their child. Oh it is very hard. Especially the environment the children are facing. The influence of their friends and community around them. Lots of social influence. There's drugs, smoking, not praying on time. They play with children who are not Muslim. They play soccer in the road during *Maghrib* time.

Additionally, participants also reported experiencing increased financial strain. School fees and transport seem to be the major monetary expenses. Mohammed (43) relates what transpired with his friends:

They don't have [the money to pay] school fees. Some children were sent home. They had no [money for] school fees for the whole year. Private Muslim school sent the children home 'cause there was no school fees. So, no school for the children for [a] whole year.

Faatimah (56) states, "it is difficult as there [are] other expenses to pay for and I'm the only one providing for my family". These repercussions may occasionally result in poor learning outcomes and possibly even quitting school, lowering children's lifelong educational success.

5.1.5 Impact of Environment on Children's Education

This study's participants strongly identify with the philosophies of communication, decision-making, and collaboration through communication (Epstein, 2001). Parents value both Islamic and secular education. Consequently, they fulfil their responsibility to safeguard their children from harm in both regards. They convey the value of prudent decision-making to their children in this way, as well as the grave repercussions that may result from making poor choices. Furthermore, children's characteristics must be developed over time, which means parents, families, and schools must all take responsibility. In addition, the foundation of moral teaching and, more crucially, the belief in spiritual values as superior should serve as the basis for effective guidance and leadership within the Muslim family. Cohesion between the strong and the weak is one of these ideals, as are those of cooperation. In view of the aforementioned, the premise of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* under *ḍarūriyyāt* is applied by parents to protect their children's lives (*nufūs*).

From a parent's perspective, there is an immense amount of concern for the well-being of their children. The family plays a more significant role in shaping an obedient and moral person than other institutions, such as schools. Therefore, the environment in which children grow up has a significant influence on their life choices. The negative effects of ongoing advancements in technology on parenting styles and parental education about raising children are often apparent in the latter's education, which manifests in the form of a growing global problem. For parents who are raising their children in the current world, it is oftentimes easier to resort to the use of technology as a means of showing their love which can frequently go amiss. This may result in the child being spoiled with amenities like unlimited access to technology over which parents may have little control. This may reduce their ability to perform academically and may have detrimental effect on their future. Nonetheless, if parents display love by fostering sound values that comply with the teachings of the Qur'an and *ḥadīth*, it will prepare god-fearing children. This study unequivocally demonstrates that Muslim parents undertake every endeavour to rear their children as adherents of Islam. For example, Ameer (49) proclaims:

Muslim[s'] role as parent[s] is *kalimah* and *ḥaqq*. I teach them what they need to know about Islam. I teach them how to communicate with people. They must greet with *salām*. They must respect old people. They must learn *dīn* of Islam.

In a similar vein, Mohammed (43) declares, "they must read Qur'an. They must pray *ṣalāh*".

5.1.6 Cultural and Economic Changes

Collaborating with the community, one of Epstein's (2001) six sub-constructs of parental involvement refers to the extent to which parents are cognisant of and employ community assets that assist with children's development and learning. This phenomenon impacts both the cultural and economic elements of a community, particularly those of immigrant families, which may lead to family dysfunctions. Family disorders, disputes, and disagreements between parents, as well as a lack of close communication between family members (particularly parents) as a consequence of insufficient safety and harmony in the home, can therefore endanger children's education. In view of this, the Qur'an states, "Behold, Luqman said to his son by way of instruction, O my

son! Join not in worshipping others with Allāh., for false worship is indeed the highest wrong-doing” (Qur’ān 31:13). Since the objective of *maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah* is to promote the well-being of all humankind, according to Auda (2008), it is imperative that Muslim parents adhere to this ruling. According to Mohammed (43), the Somali culture is “Muslim culture”. However, he highlights some of the cultural challenges.

To exercise culture is better in Somalia. ... The wife also supports the child if the child becomes disobedient. The wife scold at the father if [a] child wants to do things that friends do. The father wants to stay on traditional, but wife does not help. For example, the child cuts the hair zig-zag. The wife shouts because the children do so, so why not her child. Then there is family conflict. Now, in Somalia this don’t happen. The wife wouldn’t have this attitude. Parenting is strict in Somalia. It is based on Islamic values.

Related to the aforementioned data, the Qur’ān states,

O you who believe! Verily, among your wives and your children there are enemies for you; therefore, beware of them! But if you pardon them and overlook, and forgive, then verily, Allāh. is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful (Qur’ān 64:14).

Moreover, the principle of *maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah* under *darūriyyāt* can be applied to the preservation of children’s intellect (*‘aql*) and their religion (*ḥifẓ ad-dīn*) through education. Hence, the participants in this study reported their aims to secure the best possible secular and Islamic education for their children.

Maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah advocates for the right to education which, can be considered part of the preservation of children’s intellect (*‘aql*) and is central to religion (*ḥifẓ ad-dīn*). The preservation of wealth (*māl*) is categorised under the classification of *darūriyyāt*. Thus, for the improvement of business relations in a country, *maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah* may be applied. Among other things, the success of a nation is determined by its economic standing and its citizens, whether native-born or immigrant. All of these elements contribute to an economy’s prosperity. The data indicate that the participants believe there to be several career prospects in South Africa. Furthermore, these immigrant parents have the chance to do business since the government provides them with the necessary permits. Another aspect of *maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah*, is to

preserve the order of society in a community. In essence, it serves to seek benefit and repel harm. Allāh. mentions in the Qur'ān, "and do not act wickedly on earth by spreading corruption" (Qur'ān 7:74). God further describes in the Qur'ān how the Prophet Shu'aib addresses his people, "I desire no more than to set things right in so far as it lies within my power, but achievement in my aim depends on Allāh. alone" (Qur'ān 11:88). These *āyat* are proof of the objective of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* which can be applied to business transactions in safeguarding the preservation of wealth (*māl*).

5.2 The Society and Its Well-being

The wellness and success of any community is dependent on a holistic approach. It is thus the responsibility of each human being to ensure that his or her well-being and prosperity are prioritised.

5.2.1 The Role of Society in The Formation of the Self

The development of the self in society is crucial to the advancement and enhancement of any community. So how can one develop the self in society? This phenomenon can be executed by achieving one's goals. Goals are the things we want to achieve in life which are different from dreams and wishes. Goals are important because they help one to take charge of their life and to make decisions (Rooth, Steenkamp, Mathebula, Mahuluhulu, Ramzan & Seshoka, 2018). However, the decisions related to these goals should be based on the fundamentals and principal teachings of Islam. Thus, one's values will ultimately determine the decisions one makes in life. Poor decisions, or decisions made during inappropriate lucid thinking may result in severe consequences. Therefore, one needs to engage in logical, rational judgement before coming to a decision. Allāh. has provided perfect guidance in the Qur'ān (17:36), "Do not follow that of which you have no knowledge. Surely the hearing, the sight, the heart – each of these shall be called to account." Hence, the importance of education and being educated becomes crucial.

In the same vein, Kamali (2014) asserts that *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* incorporates a level of adaptability and knowledge into the interpretation of the *sharī'ah* that is, in many respects, distinct and transcends the fluctuations of time and context. Furthermore, the revelations of the Qur'ān and the traditions of the *Sunnah* coincide with the appearance and development of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*. The Qur'ān and *Sunnah* established a set of values and incorporated

what is seen as necessary for the creation of a just, balanced community. For Allāh.'s followers to use as a guide while surviving on earth, Allāh. offers a comprehensive guidebook in the form of the Qur'an and traditions to follow in the form of the *Sunnah*. Islam's *shari'ah* is a way of life, and the *maqāṣid al-shari'ah* encapsulates its goals (Sarkawi, Abdullah, Dali & Khazani, 2017). Hence, Islam gives direction for the material, moral, spiritual, economic, political, social, legal, cultural, as well as educational elements of human existence. This corpus of advice stemming from divine revelation is called the *shari'ah*. Thus, *maqāṣid al-shari'ah* plays a pivotal role in a sound educational rearing for the human race to succeed in all spheres of life.

5.4.2 The Significance of Wellness at Schools and Tertiary Institutions

The importance of student well-being at school and tertiary institutions is a phenomenon that should not be disregarded. Every human being has the right to live a life deserving of honour and respect regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, and socio-economic status. This in essence may be referred to as the fundamental principle of human development. With regards to human dignity, the Qur'an (17:70) clearly declares:

And certainly, We have honoured the children of Adam and We carried them on the land and the sea, and we have provided them of the good things, and We preferred them over many of those whom We have created (with) preference.”

Subsequently the onus remains on the human being to take care of his or her health and well-being, be it physical or spiritual, particularly from a young age. Since the parent is the primary caregiver of the child, such information and educational processes should be inculcated prior to the child being enrolled in a secular institution. At educational intuitions core values instilled by parents may be deviated from or otherwise negatively influenced. This could partially be ascribed to the set curriculum schools are obliged to follow which in many instances do not conform to the values of Islam. For example, Comprehensive Sexuality Education is a contentious phenomenon across religious traditions, but more specifically in the Muslim community. It is currently taking a new dimension in the education system to include information about non-heteronormative sexualities such as homosexuality, transgender, and so on. This phenomenon was introduced as a module in the

compulsory Life Orientation subject in South African schools. Hence, the importance of aligning Islamic values with those being taught in state schools.

Education is a key factor in the lives of all individuals. It further defines one's genuine quality of life and serves as a vital predictor of how future generations will develop in certain ways. Each country's educational objectives should be grounded in *sharī'ah* logic in terms of its curriculum, performance standards, and overall purposes. As previously alluded to, the five fundamental aspects of human life are, protection of life, religion, intellect, progeny, and property. Two of these five, namely, the preservation of religion and the preservation of reason, are directly connected to the goals of education and the goals of the *sharī'ah*. Due to the fact that Islam is founded on *sharī'ah* principles, and that understanding of these laws depends on knowledge itself, there is overlap with the preservation of religion. The idea that the mind is the object of delegation accounts for the intersection of *sharī'ah* goals and the preservation of reason (Abd- Allāh., 2017).

The best education may create virtuous, prodigious people who are innovative and creative. A strong education may also help young people recognise their true potential for success in a global context. In order for teaching and learning to be successful, education needs to be based on moral principles and values. As *maqāṣid* alludes to higher education and the advantages of the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ), it is crucial that *maqāṣid* be applied in contemporary education contexts.

6. Conclusion

This study sought to understand how immigrant parents supported their school-age children's education. The participants of the study were selected from the Somali, Indian, and Pakistani communities whose children attend Islamic schools in Mitchells Plain (WC), and in Pietermaritzburg (KZN).

Qualitative research investigating immigrant parents' educational support for their school-aged children was conducted in this study. The researcher acquired insight into the participants' ways of making meaning throughout the research process. As a result, this study enhanced the researcher's comprehension of immigrant participants' parental engagement with their children's school experiences. The data show that immigrant parents provide several forms of educational assistance to their school-aged children. Despite limitations, the

data indicate that the participants are engaged in their children's secular as well as Islamic education, since it is clear that the principle of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* is applied in the understanding of the upbringing of children in these Muslim households. The participants expressed concern that exposing their children to Western culture and modern technology may cause them to lose sight of their own culture and sense of self. In terms of corporal punishment, their methods of raising their children differ from those allowed by South African laws. These parents predominantly offer principal assistance to their children by providing for their most fundamental needs. This can also be considered as educational support. Some immigrant parents face constraints that make it difficult for them to meet the educational demands of their children. Among these difficulties is the language barrier which appears to be the most significant factor because it affects the level of educational assistance that parents can offer to their children. In this study, primarily the Somali mothers reported finding it difficult to assist their children with their homework. This could be attributed to their limited education level, which seems to be the primary obstacle. The researcher's classification of the various difficulties these immigrant families experience was made possible by this study. Cultural, socioeconomic, and educational challenges are present.

The results of the present study allow the researcher to offer the following recommendations for future investigation. If the language of the immigrant parents was the same as the language of instruction at the schools, such parents would be more inclined to become involved in their children's educational trajectory. Considering the findings, the researcher recommends that educational authorities conduct further research on the impact of parents' language proficiency on the educational performance of their school-age children. There is a need for more research into how to support immigrant communities. Moreover, the researcher recommends that an analogous investigation be conducted, about how teachers can develop a broader understanding of immigrant parents' support. It would be beneficial for parents and schools alike if a study of this kind would be executed to evaluate teachers' comprehension of immigrant parents' support for their school-age children.

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