



The Jurisprudential Ruling on Parents' Nudity in the Presence of Their Children in Imamiyya (Ja'fari) Jurisprudence

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1. Introduction

Child upbringing has become one of the principal concerns of parents in contemporary society. From an Islamic perspective, education begins even before birth; however, after birth, parents encounter numerous questions concerning different dimensions of child development, including religious, moral, physical, and sexual education. One important issue that intersects both moral and sexual education is whether parents are permitted to expose their private parts (*'awrah*) in the presence of their children. This concern arises because parental nudity may adversely affect children's sexual development, their perception of modesty, and their respect for parental authority. In addition, some contemporary psychological discussions have suggested that parental nudity may have beneficial effects on children, although such claims remain controversial. Therefore, it is essential to examine this issue from

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the perspective of Islamic jurisprudence. This study seeks to answer the following questions: **Is it permissible for parents to be naked before their children? If so, does the ruling differ according to the child's developmental stage?**

2. Literature Review

No independent scholarly study has comprehensively examined the jurisprudential ruling on parental nudity before children. Existing studies discuss this issue only incidentally within broader discussions of sexual education or modesty. Some have relied exclusively on narrations concerning public baths, while others have referred to the Qur'anic verses on guarding chastity (*ḥifẓ al-furūj*) or the verse concerning seeking permission (*isti'dhān*), without conducting a comprehensive jurisprudential analysis. Consequently, the available literature lacks a systematic examination of all four recognized sources of Shi'a jurisprudence (the Qur'an, Sunnah, reason, and consensus), highlighting the necessity of the present research.

3. Research Method

This study adopts a qualitative doctrinal approach based on documentary analysis. Relevant Qur'anic verses, prophetic traditions, narrations of the Ahl al-Bayt, and classical as well as contemporary Shi'a jurisprudential sources were systematically collected and analyzed. The legal arguments were reassessed through comparative jurisprudential analysis in order to derive the most authoritative ruling within Imamiyya jurisprudence.

4. Research Findings

The findings indicate that the Qur'anic verse of *isti'dhān* establishes the obligation to conceal one's private parts from

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children who have reached the stage of understanding and requesting permission before entering private spaces. Although the verse does not explicitly address younger non-discerning children, the Prophetic and Imamic traditions extend the prohibition to them as well. Furthermore, rational considerations and prevailing social norms support the prohibition of exposing one's private parts before discerning children, while no decisive independent rational proof exists regarding non-discerning children. Likewise, no binding consensus revealing the opinion of the Infallible Imam was found on this issue. Nevertheless, a comprehensive evaluation of the Qur'anic evidence, narrations, and jurisprudential principles supports the conclusion that exposing one's private parts before children is impermissible.

5. Conclusion

The study concludes that, according to Imamiyya jurisprudence, parents are not permitted to expose their private parts before their children, including children who have not yet reached the age of discernment. This ruling is primarily supported by the combined authority of Qur'anic evidence and narrations, together with jurisprudential reasoning. The findings also suggest that the issue has important implications for contemporary family law, child protection, and Islamic approaches to sexual education, and therefore deserves further interdisciplinary legal and ethical investigation.

6. Keywords

Imamiyya Jurisprudence, Parents, Children, Nudity, Sexual Education, Awrah, Islamic Family Law