



e-ISSN: 2148-4899

Pamukkale Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi
Pamukkale University Journal of Divinity Faculty

Güz/Autumn, 2025, 12 (3), 102-121

**THE FIGURE OF THE FATHER IN THE QURAN AND THE SILENT FAREWELL TO THE
FATHER IN MODERN SOCIETY (THE CASE OF HEKATON'S LAST TANGO)**

**Kur'an'da Baba Figürü ve Modern Toplumda Babaya Sessiz Veda (Hekaton'la
Son Tango Örneği)**

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Makale Bilgisi / Article Information

Makale Türü / Article Types:	Araştırma Makalesi/Research Article
Geliş Tarihi / Received:	10.08.2025
Kabul Tarihi / Accepted:	10.11.2025
Yayın Tarihi / Published:	03.12.2025
Cilt / Volume:	12
Sayı / Issue:	3
Sayfa/ Pages:	102-121

Atıf / Cite as: Eşmeli, İsmet. Gün, Faruk. "The Figure Of The Father In The Quran And The Slient Farewell To The Father In Modern Society (The Case Of Hekaton's Last Tango)" (Kur'an'da Baba Figürü ve Modern Toplumda Babaya Sessiz Veda (Hekaton Son Tango Örneği)). *Pamukkale Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi-Pamukkale University Journal of Divinity Faculty* 12/3 (2025), 102-121. Doi: 10.17859/pauifd.1761859.

İntihal / Plagiarism: Bu makale, Turnitin intihal tarama programı ile taranmıştır. Ayrıca iki hakem tarafından da incelenmiştir. / This article has been scanned with Ithenticate plagiarism screening program. Also this article has been reviewed by two referees.

Çıkar Çatışması / Conflict of Interest: Yazar çıkar çatışması olmadığını beyan etmiştir. The Author declared that there is no conflict of interest

Finansal Destek / Grant Support: Yazar bu çalışma için finansal destek almadığını beyan etmiştir. / The authors declared that this study has received no financial support.

www.dergipark.gov.tr/pauifd



2148-4899

Pamukkale Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi (PAUİFD), 12 (3) 2025: 102-121

THE FIGURE OF THE FATHER IN THE QURAN AND THE SILENT FAREWELL TO THE FATHER IN MODERN SOCIETY (THE CASE OF HEKATON'S LAST TANGO)*

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Abstract

It addresses the systematic discrediting of the Prophet as the fundamental dynamic of a multifaceted dissolution experienced along the axes of identity, belief, and morality. Mustafa Merter's work, Hekaton'la Son Tango (The Last Tango with Hekaton), which examines the examples of prophets-fathers in the Qur'an, reveals that the upheaval not only in the institution of the family but also in fundamental areas such as the individual's spiritual integrity, social loyalty, and faith is directly related to the breakdown of paternal authority. Fatherly authority, weakened through secular ideologies, media discourse, educational policies, and psychoanalytic approaches, has led to the distortion of the individual's conception of God, the uprooting of morality, and the fragmentation of identity. This study analyzes the guiding role of the father in the construction of faith and morality at the theological and pedagogical levels, centering on Qur'anic guidance with examples from Islamic thought such as Abraham, Jacob, and Lokman, and aims to fill the void in this area. The reconstruction of the father's identity is essential for the individual's revival, the family's recovery, and the nation's return to its spiritual roots. The declaration of 2025 as the "Year of the Family" in Turkey is seen as a good opportunity for rebuilding the family. The main objective of this article is to raise awareness among readers that fatherhood is not only a blood bond but also an identity that carries justice, love, responsibility, and divine representation. It should not be forgotten that a strong father upholds the material and spiritual foundations not only of a family but also of a nation and a civilization. Therefore, the revival of fatherhood is one of the fundamental principles for reestablishing humanity's existential balance.

Keywords: Family, Islam, Quran, Father, Last Tango with Hekaton, Society.

Kur'an'da Baba Figürü ve Modern Toplumda Babaya Sessiz Veda (Hekaton'la Son Tango Örneği)

Özet

Bu makale, modern dünyada görmezden gelinen en derin krizlerden biri olan baba figürünün sistematik olarak itibarsızlaştırılmasını, kimlik, inanç ve ahlak ekseninde yaşanan çok yönlü bir çözülmenin temel dinamiği olarak ele almaktadır. Mustafa Merter'in Hekaton'la Son Tango adlı eseriyle Kur'an'daki peygamber-baba örneklerinin incelendiği bu çalışma, sadece aile kurumundaki değil, bireyin ruhsal bütünlüğü, toplumsal sadakat ve inanç gibi temel alanlardaki sarsıntının da baba otoritesindeki kopuşla doğrudan ilişkili olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. Seküler ideolojiler, medya söylemleri, eğitim politikaları ve psikoanalitik

* Yazar makalede *Etik Kurul İzni* gerektirecek bir durum bulunmadığını beyan etmiştir.

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yaklaşımlar üzerinden zayıflatılan baba otoritesi, bireyde Tanrı tasavvurunun bozulmasına, ahlâkın köksüzleşmesine ve kimliğin parçalanmasına yol açmıştır. Bu çalışma, İslam düşüncesinde Hz. İbrahim, Hz. Yakup ve Hz. Lokman gibi örneklerle Kur'anî rehberliği merkeze alarak babanın inanç ve ahlâk inşasındaki rehberlik rolünü teolojik ve pedagojik düzeyde analiz etmekte ve bu alandaki boşluğu doldurmayı amaçlamaktadır. Baba kimliğinin yeniden inşası, bireyin dirilişi, ailenin yeniden ayağa kalkışı ve milletin ruh köklerine dönüşü için zaruridir. Türkiye'de 2025 yılının "Aile Yılı" ilan edilmesi ailenin yeniden inşası için iyi bir fırsat olarak görülmektedir. Makalenin temel hedefi; okuyucuda, babalığın yalnızca bir soy bağı değil, aynı zamanda adalet, sevgi, sorumluluk ve ilahî temsil taşıyan bir varoluş kimliği olduğu yönünde bir farkındalık oluşturmaktır. Unutulmamalıdır ki güçlü bir baba yalnızca bir ailenin değil aynı zamanda bir milletin ve medeniyetin maddi, manevî temellerini ayakta tutar. Bu nedenle, babalığın ihyası insanlığın varoluşsal dengesinin yeniden kurulmasının temel esaslarından bir tanesidir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Aile, İslâm, Kur'ân, Baba, Hekaton'la Son Tango, Toplum.

Structured Abstract

This article analyzes the process of systematic discrediting of the father figure, which is the basic dynamic of the family institution in modern society, by focusing on the multifaceted dissolutions that emerge on the axis of identity, belief and morality. The main purpose of the study is to reveal the effects of paternal authority, which is weakened through secular ideologies, media discourses and educational policies, on the spiritual integrity of the individual, social loyalty and divine imagination; by synthesizing the data of Mustafa Merter's "Last Tango with Hekaton" along with the examples of prophets-fathers in the Qur'an, it is to remind us of the essential role of fatherhood in the construction of faith and morality. The research was carried out with literature review and qualitative text analysis methods. First of all, the erosion of the father figure at social, cultural and psychological levels in the modern world; It has been handled with a systematic analysis on media, popular culture and education system. Then, the prophet-father relations in the Qur'an and the theological and pedagogical role of fatherhood in classical Islamic thought are detailed and synthesized with Mustafa Merter's psychospiritual analysis. In addition, current practices in gender equality and family policies in Turkey were also discussed.

The main findings of the study are as follows:

1. Erosion of Father Authority: In modern society, the figure of the father has been reduced to either an authoritarian and oppressive or passive and insignificant character, especially through secular ideologies, media, and education. This situation leads to serious breaks in the spiritual integrity of the individual and the formation of social identity.
2. Manipulation in Media and Education: The discrediting of the father character in popular culture and media productions has led to a decrease in respect for the father and therefore the authority in children and young people. In the education system, traditional family roles have been questioned with "gender" projects, and fatherhood has sometimes been presented as a "toxic" identity.
3. Theological and Pedagogical Perspective: As seen in the examples of Prophet Abraham, Prophet Jacob and Prophet Luqman in the Qur'an, the father is not only the one who meets material needs; At the same time, he is a basic guide who conveys the values of faith, morality and responsibility to his children. In Islamic thought, fatherhood is accepted as the representation of God's justice and love on earth.
4. Modern Identity and Belief Crisis: According to Mustafa Merter's analysis, the weakening of the father figure causes the deterioration of the conception of God in the individual, the rootlessness of morality and the disintegration of identity. Psychological and sociological data show that a father figure integrated with love and justice in childhood plays a decisive role in mental health and social adaptation.
5. Developments in Turkey: The traditional role of the father figure has been weakened in Turkey through the EU harmonization process, international policies such as the Istanbul

Convention, and media productions. The fact that custody is often given to the mother in divorce cases has led to the exclusion of the father from emotional guidance.

In the modern world, the phenomenon of "missing father" is at the center of individual and social crises. The absence or pacification of the father figure in the family leads to fragmentation of identity, moral weakening and a crisis of faith. The model of the father presented in the Qur'an emphasizes the ideal of guidance that guides with love, surrounds with morality, and instills a sense of responsibility. The main suggestion of the article; it is the establishment of in the social consciousness that fatherhood is not only a biological bond, but also an identity of justice, love, responsibility and divine representation. The declaration of 2025 as the "Year of the Family" in Turkey also offers an opportunity for this transformation.

INTRODUCTION

The formation of individual identities and the stability of belief systems in modern society are directly related to the existence of the family institution and its central figure, the father. The basic building blocks of human personality are formed during childhood, and the father plays one of the most influential roles in this process. The father is not only a biological being but also a deep-rooted value representing love, justice, responsibility, and wisdom. Throughout history, the role of fatherhood has been a determining factor in the formation of the individual's identity, the stability of society and the continuity of belief systems.¹ In societies where the authority of the father has been weakened, the family structure has been shaken, cracks have formed in the ground of belief, and this situation has progressed to social disintegration.²

The Qur'an defines the father as the most important guide of morality and faith in the family. The advice in Surat al-Luqman is an important example of how a father should instill in his child the consciousness of tawhid and moral responsibilities. In the modern world, however, the father figure has become increasingly passive. Sometimes it is reduced to the position of a mere provider of material goods, and at other times he is condemned to a vacuum of authority. This change has led to serious consequences such as identity fragmentation, irresponsibility, and disbelief in the psyche of the individual.³

Mustafa Merter's psychologically and spiritually based analyses reveal that the collapse of fatherhood causes not only a crisis within the family but also a crisis of faith and existence in society at large. In his work "Last Tango with Hekaton", Merter states that the modern mentality leads people to a multifaceted drift by detaching them from their own nature and divine reality. The weakening of the father figure, the blurring of gender roles, identity crises and the definition of the individual as a mere physical being

¹ Ahmet Cevizci, *Felsefe Sözlüğü* (İstanbul: Paradigma Publishing, 1999), 661.

² Cuma Karan, "Modern Ailenin Çıkılmazları ve İslam Ailesi" *İlahiyat Akademi Dergisi*, 11, (2020), 127 – 155; Faruk Gün, "İman ve Küfür Pratikleri Üzerine Bir İnceleme: el-Mebhut Örneği", *Şarkiyat* 16/1 (Haziran 2024), 192.

³ Atalay Yörükoğlu, *Değişen Toplumda Aile ve Çocuk*, 4. b., (İstanbul: Özgür Yayınları, 1992), 109.

are the main reflections of this rupture. According to Merter, this process is fueled by the positive understanding of science, secular ideologies, and reductionist psychological approaches.⁴ The existential role of the father figure is not limited to the individual level. It is also a determining factor on a social and civilizational scale.⁵

The main purpose of this study is to demonstrate that the father figure is not limited to a biological role but is an indispensable spiritual guide in the construction of faith, morality, and identity, and to present an alternative father model by analyzing the erosion of this figure in modern society both theologically and pedagogically. In this context, the study presents an evaluation framework that intersects the prophet-father narratives in the Qur'an with Mustafa Merter's psycho-spiritual analysis and aims to show how this approach can be functional in solving current social problems.

In this study, first, the relationship between the function of the father figure in the Qur'an and contemporary crises will be concretely presented. Secondly, a holistic model will be proposed by reconciling the contemporary diagnoses in Merter's work with Qur'anic pedagogical teachings. Thirdly, theological, and social suggestions for the reconstruction of fatherhood will be presented. According to the findings, the father figure in the Qur'an, especially through the examples of Prophet Abraham, Prophet Jacob, and Prophet Luqman, is not only a biological being but also a moral leader, spiritual guide and educator. Mustafa Merter's analysis of the existential crises of modern man directly overlaps with the identity crisis, sense of worthlessness and intergenerational rupture experienced with the weakening of paternal authority. By combining these two planes, we conclude that 'a father model nourished by Qur'anic pedagogical principles is capable of responding to the psychological and social needs of the contemporary individual'. In this context, both awareness-raising educational programs based on religious references and supportive social policies to strengthen the social roles of fathers are an inevitable necessity for the reconstruction of fatherhood.

This study was written with an interpretative method and structured within the framework of qualitative content analysis. In the study, firstly, the father-prophet parables in the Qur'an (Prophet Abraham, Prophet Jacob, Prophet Luqman, Prophet Noah, Prophet David, etc.) were analyzed as primary sources. Then, the conceptual framework in Mustafa Merter's "Last Tango with Hekaton" is evaluated in terms of its findings on spiritual dissolution and the modern father figure crisis, as well as suggestions for solutions. Then, a comparative analysis between theological and pedagogical data is made and points of compatibility between modern pedagogical and

⁴ Mustafa Merter, *Hekaton'la Son Tango* (İstanbul: Ketebe Publishing, 2024), 105-158.

⁵ Çağfer Karadaş, *Hidayet Rehberleri Peygamberler: Kur'an'da İsmi Geçen 25 Peygamber* (Ankara: Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı Publishing, 2013), 49, 56,66, 78, 83, 129. Kemal Çakmaklı, *Anne-Baba Olmak* (İstanbul: Seha Publication, 1995), 16.

psychological theories and Qur'anic models are revealed. Finally, descriptive analysis, thematic interpretation and comparative analysis were used in the research process.

In this study, a six-stage process was followed. In the first stage, a conceptual framework was established through a comprehensive review of sociological, psychological, and theological literature on the father figure. In the second stage, the father-prophet parables in the Qur'an were identified and analyzed with the support of classical exegetical sources. In the third stage, Mustafa Merter's *Last Tango with Hekaton* was taken as a centerpiece and the crises of father identity in the modern period were identified. In the fourth stage, a theological-pedagogical synthesis was developed by comparing Qur'anic narratives with contemporary pedagogical and psycho-spiritual approaches. In the fifth stage, the analyses obtained were written academically in a holistic structure and the writing of the study was completed. In the final stage, the results of the study are presented by offering suggestions for the reconstruction of the father figure in line with Qur'anic guidance and contemporary criticisms.

1. The Erosion of Fatherly Identity in Modern Times from Mustafa Merter's Last Tango Perspective with Hekaton

1.1. Basic Dynamics of the Father's Identity Extinction

One of the deep and silent crises of modern times is the "systematic discrediting of the paternal personality."⁶ The father is not only a biological being but also a fundamental factor in the family, representing religious values, moral rules, social and cultural awareness. In the modern world, under the influence of secularism, the concepts of individualism and freedom have been exalted. In the process, the sanctity of patriarchy was broken, and fatherhood was reduced to an ordinary social role, thus weakening the spiritual structure in the family and eroding one's root identity.⁷

Merter evaluates the collapse of the father figure as the result of a multidimensional destruction at psychological, sociological, and spiritual levels. Factors such as the collapse of ancient upbringing, the artificial redesign of male and female roles, and the dissemination of homosexuality and sexual perversions are among the dynamics that eviscerate fatherhood. These dynamics are not only caused by individual identity crises also lead to a weakening of faith, moral disintegration, and a loss of the resilience of society.⁸

In particular, some radical theses of feminist movements have deliberately denigrated male identity and its symbol, the father figure, and portrayed them as

⁶ Merter, *Hekaton'la Son Tango*, 37.

⁷ Mustafa E. Erbal, *Hiz. Peygamber ve Aile Hayatı*, "Türk Ailesi ve Batı Avrupa'daki Bazı Değişmeler", (ts.), 261; Merter, *Hekaton'la Son Tango*, 26.

⁸ Merter, *Hekaton'la Son Tango*, 26, 37, 43, 46.

discredited and oppressed in the eyes of society.⁹ The transformation of these movements — which began with legitimate demands — into forms of ideological rigidity over time has led to the portrayal of the father figure as a “tool of oppression” in social consciousness.¹⁰

1.2. Systematic Attrition through Media, Culture and Education

The media and popular culture have been one of the most effective tools to weaken the father's personality. For example, in globally popular productions such as *The Simpsons*, the image of the "stupid father" is normalized, while the healthy, generous, and wise father characters are made almost invisible. The same trend has manifested itself in music videos, social media content, and online influences.¹¹

Mustafa Merter defines the most effective fronts of the global attack on father identity as media, education, and culture industry. According to him, messages placed in the subconscious through global media channels such as Netflix, Disney, TikTok, etc. discredit the image of the father in the minds of young generations by making the father authoritarian figure, inadequate or a subject of ridicule. This process, which is supported by the ideology of "gender" in the education system, disrupts the natural perception of gender of generations and turns into a social engineering program in which fatherhood is abused.¹²

Educational systems have also played an important role in this process. While individuals are encouraged to develop critical attitudes towards authority in modern schools and pedagogical curricula, the sense of respect and obedience in the traditional father-son relationship within the family has been eroded. In the context of "gender equality" projects, masculinity and fatherhood have sometimes been presented as "toxic identities" and these roles have been questioned as a sign of consciousness.¹³

1.3. Social Engineering Activities and Global Agendas on Fatherhood

The discrediting of the father figure has not only remained at the level of ideas but has been organized through social engineering projects carried out at the national and global levels. In the culture of individual therapy, it was encouraged to link the origin of psychological problems to the personality of the father, thus spreading a distant and

⁹ Merter, *Hekaton'la Son Tango*, 148

¹⁰ Merter, *Hekaton'la Son Tango*, 158.

¹¹ Merter, *Hekaton'la Son Tango*, 116, 125, 128; Bkz. Veysel Erol, “Sosyal Medyanın Türk Aile Yapısına Etkisi”, *Karamanoğlu Mehmetbey Üniversitesi Sosyal ve Ekonomik Araştırmalar Dergisi* 24/43 (2022); 1127-1139.

¹² Merter, *Hekaton'la Son Tango*, 26, 105, 106, 110; Mustafa Yürekli, “Sosyal Medyanın Aile Üzerindeki Etkisi: Dijital Aile”, *Haber7*, August 28, 2022, <https://www.haber7.com/yazarlar/mustafa-yurekli/3234916-sosyal-medyanin-aileuzerindeki-etkisi-dijital-aile> (access May 1, 2025).

¹³ Merter, *Hekaton'la Son Tango*, 26, 37, 159, 161.

critical approach to the personality of the father. In the process, in the inner world of the individual, the father ceased to be a source of love and guidance and began to be perceived as a pressure figure.¹⁴

According to Merter, the dissolution of father identity is not a spontaneous transformation but part of a conscious and organized social engineering project. Practices such as “gender equality” discourses, “eliminating the difference between men and women” projects, gender identity interventions at a young age and the normalization of homosexuality target the family, which is the root cell of societies, and fatherhood, which is its nucleus. It is emphasized that behind these projects are global structures that aim to transform humanity into a new kind of posthuman. On the other hand, some international organizations and NGOs have used a language that portrays all men and fathers as potential criminals when addressing important issues such as violence against women. These cognition studies have produced the effect of directly blaming masculinity and parental identity and devaluing their value in the eyes of society. On the other hand, the capitalist economic structure has emotionally separated parents from their families by condemning them to full-time work and has virtually emptied them of their spiritual leadership role in the home.¹⁵

1.4. Thoughts on Turkey and the Weakening of the Father Figure

Turkey has also experienced developments parallel to these global processes. Especially after 2010, gender equality projects implemented within the scope of the EU Harmonization Process and the Istanbul Convention have opened the roles within the family to discussion. On the other hand, in media productions (e.g. in TV series such as *Aşk-ı Memnu* and *Kırgın Çiçekler*), the father figure has been portrayed in a very negative or cynical way, and strong and honorable father figures have almost disappeared. Documents such as the Istanbul Convention and the discourses behind it construct a negative father image in social perception by presenting the traditional father figure as an instrument of domination. The authority of the father, one of the ancient values of Turkish society, is being eroded by modern law, media, and academia, leading to serious cracks in the family structure¹⁶

As Mustafa Merter *explains in Last Tango with Hekaton*, one of the invisible and deep crises of modern times is the deliberate wear and tear of the father's personality. Valuable concepts such as freedom, individuality, and equality have sometimes been used and made part of a battle for patriarchy. This process has eroded not only the institution of the family but also the construction of human identity based on divine will. Therefore, the

¹⁴ Merter, *Hekaton'la Son Tango*, 15, 43, 53.

¹⁵ Merter, *Hekaton'la Son Tango*, 26, 43, 267.

¹⁶ Merter, *Hekaton'la Son Tango*, 62, 245, 262, 265, 267; Ahmet Tabakoğlu, “Batıda Aile ve Kadın”, *Sosyal Hayatta Kadın (İlmî Toplantı)*, (İstanbul: Ensar Publications 2005), 192.

rehabilitation of paternity is an important place not only to preserve the family unity but also to create a solid foundation for orientation to oneself and one's faith.¹⁷

2. Theological Approaches to the Problem of Modern Fatherhood in the Context of Mustafa Merter's Analysis

Throughout history, the father figure has been accepted as the head of the family and a basic guide that guides the spiritual and mental development of the child. Research in the fields of modern psychology and theology reveals that an individual's conception of God is shaped in childhood, and that the father figure plays a decisive role in this process. According to Mustafa Merter, the father is the most concrete reflection of the child's inner world of God. For this reason, the fact that the father is a just, compassionate and consistent figure directly affects the child's trust and submission to God.¹⁸

During childhood, the individual learns through concrete examples rather than abstract concepts. Therefore, the father is not only a guide who teaches the belief system but also a guide who models this system with his life. The fact that the father figure conveys to the child values such as the awareness of monotheism, prayer, patience, goodness and abstinence from arrogance should be realized with deeds as well as words. As Merter points out, a loving but consistent father figure strengthens the child's self-confidence as well as his connection to the divine being.¹⁹ In the Qur'an, the words of the Prophet Jacob on his deathbed are a clear indication of this responsibility: The question "What will you worship after me?"²⁰ emphasizes that the transmission of faith is not only a doctrinal but also a conscious responsibility. This approach fully corresponds to the principle of "teaching values through experience" in the understanding of modern education. As a matter of fact, the forgiveness and consistency of Prophet Joseph in the face of the betrayal of his brothers is a reflection of the spiritual inheritance he received from his father and his generosity toward his children.²¹ This role of the father figure is not limited to Qur'anic narratives; It is also important in a theological context. In Islamic theology, faith is not just a matter of rational evidence; it is a state of consciousness that is embodied in moral life. According to Merter, the identity crisis and spiritual void experienced by the modern individual often stems from the fact that he was deprived of a monotheistic moral guidance in childhood.²² Other father-son relationships in the Qur'an also support this situation. Other father-son relationships in the Quran also support this situation. The polite address that Prophet Abraham used towards his

¹⁷ Merter, *Hekaton'la Son Tango*, 291-295; Dilara Sevimay Özer- M. Kâmil Özer, *Çocuklarda Motor Gelişim* (Ankara: Nobel Publication Distribution, 2004), 20.

¹⁸ Merter, *Hekaton'la Son Tango*, 51.

¹⁹ Merter, *Hekaton'la Son Tango*, 56. Kemal Çakmaklı, *Anne-Baba Olmak* (İstanbul: Seha Publications, 1995), 16.

²⁰ Al-Baqara 2/133.

²¹ Yûsuf 12/90-98.

²² Merter, *Hekaton'la Son Tango*, 61-63.

polytheist father Azar²³, Prophet Ishmael's submission²⁴, Prophet Zechariah's desire for a pious child²⁵, Prophet Noah's compassionate call to his son²⁶ are the best examples of a father figure reaching out to the child not only through intellectual but also heartfelt, human, and spiritual values. These narratives show that the Quran aims to present universal pedagogical principles by giving examples of historical scenes from the past. In Merter's words, today's pushing of fatherhood to a reduced, ineffective and devoid of authority is not only a domestic problem; it also damages the existential relationship that the individual establishes with God.²⁷

2.1. Building Morality and Conscience under the Guidance of the Father

The sense of faith and responsibility, the foundations of which are laid in childhood, allows the individual to establish a balance in his inner world and to develop virtues such as justice and empathy in social life. In this process, the father figure assumes a central role. The father is a protector who meets the material needs of the child, as well as the first person to represent authority, the first teacher of justice and the first bearer of values. If a strong sense of responsibility is not developed in the soul of the individual, the person becomes dependent on external control mechanisms, and his inner sense of morality weakens. In this respect, the father figure is of great importance as the first example that shapes the consciousness of serving God and the awareness of social responsibility in the inner world of the child.²⁸

The relationship between the prophets mentioned in the Qur'an and their families is ideal in terms of value education. The struggle between Adam's sons, Abel and Cain, revealed the nature of individual choice and responsibility. While advising his son to believe, Prophet Noah also emphasized the moral and social responsibility of being with the right community.²⁹ In the Qur'an, Luqman's advice to his son is as follows: "My child! Even if your work weighs as much as a grain of mustard, whether it is found in a rock, in the heavens, or in the depths of the earth, God will reveal it. Very, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Knowing, All-Knowing."³⁰ With this advice, Hazrat Luqman instilled a sense of spiritual responsibility in his son. These examples show that the "ability to self-organize" and "awareness of accountability" emphasized in modern pedagogical theories are included in the teachings of the Qur'an. In Mustafa Merter's approach, the father figure is

²³ Maryam 19/42-47.

²⁴ Al-Saffat 37/102-107; Günay Tümer, "Âzer" (İstanbul: TDV Publishing, 1991), 4/316.

²⁵ Maryam 19/5-6.

²⁶ Hüd 11/42-43; Ebü'l-Meâlî Muînüddîn Muhammed b. Abdirrahmân b. Muhammed el-Îcî, *Câmi'u'l-beyân fî tefsîri'l-Kur'ân (Tefsiru'l-Îcî)* (Beyrut: Daru'l-kütübi'l-ilmiyye, 2004), 2/211.

²⁷ Merter, *Hekaton'la Son Tango*, 66; Taberî, *Camîu'l-beyân fî te'vili'l-Kur'an*, 16/331.

²⁸ Merter, *Hekaton'la Son Tango*, 37; Atcı, İsa, "Hak Sahibi Bir Birey Olarak Çocuk", *Hız Peygamber ve İnsan Yetiştirme Düzeni*, (Ankara: DİB Publishing, 2015), 146.

²⁹ Al-Hüd 11/42-43; İbn Âşûr, *et-Tahrîr ve't-tenvîr*, 12/76.

³⁰ Luqmân 31/16.

not only a teacher who transmits knowledge but also a living mentor who embodies faith and moral values in his life. Teaching values is not about accumulating abstract knowledge in a child. It is to make him a responsible individual by establishing a conscientious control mechanism in his inner world. At this stage, the father figure is the main source that guides the child with love and provides a living example of faith and morality in his life. According to him, if the individual does not acquire an invisible control mechanism, that is, conscience education, at an early age, he will either act criminally or experience narcissistic dissociation. In this context, Prophet Jacop reminded his children of the sense of faith and responsibility on his deathbed³¹, and Prophet Joseph maintained patience, humility, and forgiveness throughout his life, revealing the source of individual resilience and spiritual stability.

The father should teach his child's soul to believe in God, as well as to live with the knowledge of being responsible to Him. In the Qur'an, Prophet Moses and Prophet Aaron impose responsibility on their people along with faith; Prophet Suleiman, on the other hand, reminded them that blessing is a test and emphasized the importance of gratitude and a sense of responsibility.³² According to Merter's point of view, the father should convey this integrity of belief and responsibility to the child in his life, not in words. When a solid belief is supported by a strong sense of moral responsibility, the individual finds peace in his inner world and contributes to the healthy functioning of the social structure. It is an undeniable fact that the innate potential talents and character structure of human beings need the right guidance. The most basic and effective institution in this guidance process is the family; in the heart of the family, especially the father figure, he has an indispensable place in giving the child a sense of faith, morality and responsibility. Hazrat Luqman's advice to his son represents the father's mission in transmitting moral values. These admonitions, which begin with the phrase "My son, do not associate with God", offer not only a theological teaching but also an aesthetic of conscience and behavior. Resurrecting Luqman, the father is an architect of value who bridges the divine and earthly dimensions of life.³³ In this context, the idea of "resurrecting the conscience with the father" emphasized by Mustafa Merter finds a concrete response within the framework of the Qur'an.

2.2. The Pedagogical Power of Fatherhood against Modern Drift

Belief is a basic state of consciousness that is at the center of an individual's existence but the internalization of this consciousness and its transformation into action is possible with a regular discipline of worship. In this context, the father figure is not only a theoretical source of knowledge that shapes the child's belief world but also a

³¹ Al-Baqara 2/133

³² Al-Naml 27/40.

³³ Muhammet Yılmaz, *Kur'an'da Peygamberlerin Evlatlarına Nasihatleri*, (İstanbul: Okur Akademi, 2018), 73.

behavioral model that conveys worship practices through his life. In modern pedagogical understanding, the principle of "modeling" states that children learn by imitating practical examples rather than verbal expressions. As Mustafa Merter emphasizes, consistency between belief and behavior is the basis of human spiritual integrity.³⁴ This integrity is achieved through sincere practice of worship, especially prayer.

The Qur'an, while emphasizing that prophets are primarily guides for society, also clearly indicates that they play an active role in family education. The advice given by Luqman to his son was not only the belief in monotheism; It also includes moral principles and the responsibility of worship that will ensure that this faith is intertwined with life.³⁵ The introduction of Hazrat Ismail (peace be upon him) as a father who commanded prayer and zakat to his family indicates that the father should undertake worship not only as a personal obligation but also as a spiritual inheritance that is passed on to the family. In this respect, the father is not only a moral guide who teaches faith but also model who embodies that faith through his life. Modern psychological and sociological research also reveals that the worship habits acquired in childhood positively affect the vital characteristics of the individual such as self-discipline, ability to cope with stress, patience and moral determination. In the Qur'an, the prayer of the Prophet Zachariah for a righteous son and the fact that the Prophet John assumed the responsibility of worship at an early age emphasize the importance of acquiring this habit in childhood. ³⁶ The fact that Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him said, while still a baby, that Allah had commanded him to pray and give zakat shows that the consciousness of worship is not merely an intellectual learning but also a spiritual disposition. ³⁷

When evaluated in a theological context, according to Mâturîdî, although faith and deeds are separated, true faith must be confirmed by deeds. In this respect, the father not only instills an abstract belief in the child but also serves as a model by embodying concrete acts of worship such as prayer and salah. Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) said, "My Lord! Make me and my descendants among those who perform the prayer properly," This pray shows that faith is a responsibility that is passed down from generation to generation.³⁸ Worship awareness is a basic building block that enables an individual to transform their belief system into behavior. In this process, the father is the one who teaches and also educates through his behavior; It is not only a guide but a living example. In Mustafa Merter's words, the solution to the identity crisis and inner emptiness experienced by modern people is possible by gaining a faith life integrated

³⁴ Merter, *Hekaton'la Son Tango*, 169, 221, 259; Ebü'l-Kâsım Zeynülislâm Abdülkerîm b. Hevâzin b. Abdilmelik el-Kuşeyrî-İbrahim el-Besyûnî, *Letâ'ifü'l-işârât (Tefsiru'l-kuşeyrî)* (Mısır: el-Hey'etü'l-Mısıryye, ts.), 1/127.2/256.

³⁵ Luqmân 31/17.

³⁶ Maryam 19/55.

³⁷ Maryam 19/31; Abu'l-Layth Imam al-Huda Nasr b. Muhammad b. Ahmad b. Ibrahim es-*(Tefsiru's-Semerkandî, Daru'l-kütübi'l-ilmiyye, 1993)* 1/213.

³⁸ İbrâhîm 14/40.

with worship from an early age, especially through the father figure. In this respect, the father is not just an authority; he is a bridge, a spiritual fulcrum where faith is transferred to life. As a matter of fact, in one example, the Prophet (peace be upon him) woke up Hazrat Ali and Hazrat Fatimah for the morning prayer with a sweet language. Hazrat Ali narrated: "One day, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) came to us to wake me and Fatimah for the Fajr prayer and opened the door and said, 'O Ahl al-Bayt! Let's pray! Surely, prayer keeps (a person) from doing evil.'"³⁹ In this context, the father figure is a breadwinner or a disciplinarian. At the same time, the first model shapes the child's world of faith and introduces him to concrete religious practices such as worship and prayer. At this point, one of the reasons for the father's existence is to set an example for his family by experiencing the awareness of worship. The spiritual example engraved in the child's mind through prayer, salah and other forms of worship ensures that faith does not remain only at the level of words. In the Holy Qur'an, the transmission of faith is considered not only as a theoretical but also as a practical process. Prayer, as an act in which the individual establishes a direct relationship with God, leaves deep traces in the inner world of the child.⁴⁰

2.3. The Place of Fatherhood in the Construction of Moral Values

The father is not a figure who contributes to the child's biological existence or meets their material needs. He is also a fundamental figure who shapes the child's self, providing the first example of a system of beliefs and morals. While the belief world of the individual is often shaped by the example given by the father; Morality is the transformation of this belief into life practices. In Mustafa Merter's words, "The doors of the soul do not open unless the soul is seen." In this framework, the father assumes a dual role: he serves as a spiritual guide for the child's development and as the initial instructor who kindles the awakening of the soul.⁴¹

The modern cultural atmosphere, especially through the media and popular series, reduces the father figure to either an overly authoritarian or a completely passive character. In series such as *Woman*, *The Girl in the Glass*, *Unfaithful* and *Cranberry Sorbet*, male characters are often portrayed as passive or oppressive types who avoid responsibility; This prevents the formation of a healthy father in the minds of children. On the other hand, some ideological approaches build the family only around motherhood and systematically ignore the role of the father. This situation threatens both the formation of individual identity and the continuity of social morality.⁴²

³⁹ Muhammed b. İsmâil el-Buhârî, *el-Câmi'u's-sahîh*, thk. Mustafa Dîb el-Bugâ (Beyrut: Dâru İbn Kesîr, 1414/1993), "Teheccüd", 21.

⁴⁰ Al-Baqara 2/186; Luqmân 31/17.

⁴¹ Merter, *Hekaton'la Son Tango*, 90.

⁴² Merter, *Hekaton'la Son Tango*, 137.

According to the Qur'anic narrative, the father functions not simply as a familial figure, but as a carrier and exemplar of faith and moral virtue. Prophet Abraham's decision to sacrifice his son Ishmael at Allah's command⁴³ is not only an example of submission but also a concrete demonstration of moral responsibility and adherence to the divine command. Prophet Jacob's forgiveness towards his sons and his asking God for forgiveness⁴⁴ for them shows that forgiveness is a moral principle intertwined with faith. Hazrat Shu'ayb's command of a just social order and honesty in the scales of his people⁴⁵ reveals that faith should spread to the economic and social spheres, and for this, fathers should be educators and role models for new generations in this field.

Although the relationship between faith and deeds has been interpreted in different ways in kalām, most scholars agree that faith should be supported by behavior. In this context, Mustafa Merter's views coincide with the Māturīdīte line. According to Merter, when the individual is detached from the consciousness of God, he is not liberated but rather becomes a prisoner of his own self. Faith becomes a nostalgic assertion when it is confined to a mere mental acceptance; Only when combined with moral attitudes and behaviors does it find its true meaning. The prophet father figures mentioned in the Qur'an are vivid examples of this unity. The fact that Prophet Abraham addressed even his father, who was a polytheist, with kindness⁴⁶ shows how faith and morality are inseparable. Prophet Noah's asking forgiveness from Allah for his parents⁴⁷ reminds us of that loyalty to parents continues not only while they are alive but also after death. These examples indicate that the Qur'an views obedience to parents not as a mere cultural convention, but as a religious obligation grounded in faith.⁴⁸ On the other hand, parents are not obeyed when they order an act that requires rebellion against Allah, that is, shirk, sin, or an act that is haram. In this regard, obedience is limited based on the hadith "There is no obedience to the creature in rebellion against Allah". But goodness is essential in the world.⁴⁹

This model of the father in the Qur'an stands out with its pedagogical as well as healing dimensions. The patience and forgiveness demonstrated by Prophet Jacob extends beyond principles of child education; they also serve as a model for overcoming trauma and safeguarding familial cohesion. In the story of Joseph, both the emotional and spiritual leadership role of the father coincides with the understanding of "spiritual guidance" defined by Merter. The figure of the father presented in the Qur'an offers a solid solution to the moral and identity crises in the modern world. In this model, the

⁴³ Al-Sāffāt 37/102–107.

⁴⁴ Yūsuf 12/98.

⁴⁵ Hūd 11/85.

⁴⁶ Maryam 19/41.

⁴⁷ Nūḥ 71/28.

⁴⁸ Al-Isrā' 17/23–24.

⁴⁹ Ebû Ca'fer et-Taberî, *Camîu'l-beyân an te'vîli âyi'l-Kur'an* (Müessesetü'r-risale, 2000), 20/139.

father is not only the material provider but also the bearer of faith and morality - the child's first guide and spiritual leader. Reviving this holistic concept of fatherhood in the modern era will enable the reconstruction of both family cohesion and the broader foundations of social harmony and personal spiritual wholeness. Faith cannot be reduced to a sentiment of the heart; it requires practical expression through responsible conduct.⁵⁰ To put it in the common sense of Mustafa Merter and the Islamic tradition, true faith gains depth only when it is integrated with moral consistency.⁵¹

2.4. Fatherhood as a Role Model in Identity Formation

One of the most important reference figures in human development is unquestionably the father. Because the father is the first representative of the belief and moral system, a guiding and character-building actor. In the Qur'an, the story of Abel and Cain represents the first murder and moral deviation in human history. Despite this, the Prophet Adam is portrayed as a grieving father who did not give up on the human family.⁵²

Mustafa Merter criticizes the authoritarian understanding of fathers based on pressure and fear, emphasizing that real education will be based on love, patience, and exemplary life. According to him, "paternal guidance" is a profound influence that shapes not only the external behavior of the child but also his inner world. This understanding is conceptualized in modern pedagogy as "learning through behavior" or "modeling". That is, the child grows up with what we live rather than what we say, especially with the life of the father. Merter also states that the values and role models acquired in childhood build the psychological balance and identity of the individual. Fatherhood done with love but consistency nurtures both the inner discipline and the self-esteem of the child.⁵³

Psychology and sociology data reveal that a father figure who offers emotional warmth and high moral standards in the family significantly improves children's social adaptation, empathy and justice skills. In the Qur'an, the Prophet David's teaching of justice to his son⁵⁴ and the Prophet Solomon's explanation of wisdom and tawhid⁵⁵ show that fatherhood is not only a role within the family but also an authority of wisdom that shapes faith and society. This understanding coincides exactly with Mâtürîdî's theological approach, which is based on the integrity of faith and deeds. According to Merter, faith only gives rise to spiritual integrity when it is combined with a moral life.⁵⁶

⁵⁰ Ebu M. Mansur el-Mâtürîdî, *Tefsîrû'l-Mâtürîdî (Te'vilâtü'l-Ḳur'ân)* (Bayrut: Dârü'l-kütübî'l-ilmîyye, 2005), 6/289.

⁵¹ Merter, *Hekaton'la Son Tango*, 57, 89.

⁵² Ebû Ca'fer Muhammed b. Cerîr etTaberî, *Târîhu'r-rusûl ve'l-mülûk*, ed. (Muhammed Ebü'l-Fazl, Kahire: 1960-19709), 1/162-163.

⁵³ Merter, *Hekaton'la Son Tango*, 59-60.

⁵⁴ Şâd 38/26.

⁵⁵ Al-Naml 27/15-19.

⁵⁶ Merter, *Hekaton'la Son Tango*, 63.

Noah's persistent yet compassionate efforts to save his disbeliever son⁵⁷ demonstrate that guidance should be grounded in love and patience rather than coercion. This coincides with Merter's understanding of "the spiritual father to whom the child's soul will take refuge".⁵⁸ In today's world, where individuals face spiritual and identity crises, the models of fathers in the Qur'an provide timeless guidance.⁵⁹ In particular, in Luqman's call to his son, the emphasis on both monotheism and morality is intertwined: "My child! Pray straight, enjoin what is good, abstain from evil, and be patient with what happens to you."⁶⁰

The contemporary crisis, which Merter defines as the phenomenon of the "missing father", is not only pedagogical; it is also an existential rupture. Fatherlessness or dysfunctional father causes identity disintegration, mental imbalance and moral weakening in the child.⁶¹

2.5. The Role of Father's Advice in Building the Future

The Qur'an depicts the father figure as a power that represents authority, as well as a source of love, compassion, and wisdom. This approach positions fatherhood not as an instrument of power but as a guiding authority with pedagogical, theological and psychological integrity.

Merter evaluates this Qur'anic approach in a psychospiritual context. According to him, faith and inner discipline in the child can only develop with a love and wisdom-centered approach that is not based on pressure. As Merter underlines, the father figure is the first source of the child's world of belief and morality. Hence, the father is more than a didactic figure; he is a role model whose life provides guidance. A father characterized by tenderness, steadfastness, and patience cultivates a secure inner environment for the child. Modern sociological research has shown that love-based and consistent father-child relationships; It shows that it positively affects the development of skills such as self-confidence, empathy, internal discipline and social adaptation in the individual.⁶² The patience, trust, and forgiveness displayed by the Prophet Jacob in the story of Joseph, presented by the Qur'an; Prophet Abraham's trial with Ishmael⁶³ and his compassionate approach; Noah's loving call to his disbeliever son during the flood⁶⁴ shows that fatherhood is not only an individual but also a communal transmission of faith.

⁵⁷ Hūd 11/42-43.

⁵⁸ Merter, *Hekaton'la Son Tango*, 68.

⁵⁹ Luqmān 31/13-19; al-Ahzâb 33/21; al-Sâffât 37/102.

⁶⁰ Luqmān 31/17; Abdurrahman Kasapoğlu, "Kur'an'da Anne Çocuk İlişkisi", *Ekev Akademik Dergisi* (2007), 90.

⁶¹ Merter, *Hekaton'la Son Tango*, 158, 240.

⁶² Merter, *Hekaton'la Son Tango*, 169-221; Michael E. Lamb, "Kültürler Arası Bakış ile Babanın Çocuk Gelişimindeki Rolü ve Önemi", *Çocuğun Yaşamında Babanın Rolü ve Önemi Sempozyum Raporu, December 20, 2000*, (İstanbul: AÇEV Publishing, 2001), 34.

⁶³ Al-Sâffât 37/102-107.

⁶⁴ Hūd 11/42-43.

Prophet David's teaching of justice and gratitude to his son⁶⁵ Zachariah's demand for a righteous son⁶⁶ Prophet Yahya's endowment with wisdom and piety at a young age⁶⁷ and Jesus' innate faith⁶⁸ all reveal that fatherhood is a value carrier that guarantees both individual religiosity and intergenerational spiritual continuity. According to Merter, the contemporary individual's relationship with God has often been reduced to a soulless level of knowledge. Nevertheless, the Qur'an does not regard faith as a purely intellectual affirmation; it frames it as a behavioral commitment demonstrated through one's actions.⁶⁹ In the prayer of the Prophet Abraham regarding his descendants, the invocation of "Make me and my descendants from those who pray straight⁷⁰" shows that fatherhood is not only a momentary duty; but also that there is a responsibility of worship and morality that spans generations.

CONCLUSION

It is understood that the phenomenon of "absent father" is at the root of individual and social crises in today's world. The absence or passivization of the father figure in the family cause's identity fragmentation and moral weakening in the child. However, the father model presented by the Qur'an offers a multidimensional vision of leadership that guides with love, educates with patience, and encompasses with morality. The father model drawn by the Qur'an is more than a historical representation; it is an ideal of moral and pedagogical guidance that transcends the ages. Mustafa Merter's approach carries this holistic model to today's individual by making sense of it from a psychospiritual perspective. The role of the father extends beyond familial presence; he stands as an identity founder, a witness to faith, and a defender of moral principles. A strong father is not only a figure who keeps the roof of the house standing but also the soul of the child and the conscience of society. Indeed, individual and social peace is only possible through the revival of this holistic father model.

The model of father-son relationship presented by the Qur'an is very much in line with today's psychological, sociological and legal data. The lives of the prophets show that the responsibility of fatherhood should be based on faith, morality and love. Instilling in children's moral values such as justice, patience, humility and benevolence along with the knowledge of faith is the Qur'an's basic pedagogical method. Just as Luqman addressed his son, a father should approach his son by calling him "my son!" and teach him that everything is known in the sight of Allah, the responsibility to pray, to avoid arrogance and

⁶⁵ Şād 38/26.

⁶⁶ Maryam 19/5-6.

⁶⁷ Maryam 19/12-13.

⁶⁸ Maryam 19/30.

⁶⁹ Merter, *Hekaton'la Son Tango*, 63-65.

⁷⁰ İbrâhîm 14/40; Ebü'l-Hasen Alî b. Muhammed b. Habîb el-Basrî el-Mâverdı, *en-Nüket ve'l-uyûn (Tefsiru'l-Maverdı)* (Lübnan: Daru'l-kütübi'l-ilmiyye, t.y.), 1/193.

to be patient with a sweet tongue. This approach will lay the foundation for healthy personalities and social peace. Both the Qur'an and modern science have in common that the father should be a leader in the family based on love and compassion. In today's family structure, adhering to this principle is indispensable for building healthy individuals and societies.

At the root of the modern individual's fundamental problems such as identity crisis, weakness of faith and social disintegration is the collapse of the father figure. According to Mustafa Merter's findings, this collapse is not limited to the individual but points to a multi-layered existential rift from the family to the state, from belief systems to social structures. The father has a central role in the spiritual integrity of the individual as the first carrier of the feelings of boundary, justice, and love. The absence of this figure causes inner chaos in the individual and a lack of justice and belonging in society. Merter emphasizes that with the weakening of the patriarchal function of the state, the individual's perception of God also deteriorates, which leads to pathological forms of belief. Healthy belief and social structure are only possible through the revival of a father model that can balance between love and justice. This reconstruction is a call for a genuine resurrection based on truth, not tradition. The re-establishment of the father's personality is a fundamental step towards reconciling man with his own being and establishing a true relationship with God. Today, individual integrity and social peace can only be possible through the revival of the holistic father model presented by the Qur'an. The father is a guide, not an authority. He is wisdom, not punishment. A leadership molded with love grows both faith and humanity. In this context, the father is a process of building and living beyond being human.

This study concludes that the loss of the father figure's reputation in modern society has a profound impact not only on the family structure but also on the individual's world of faith, moral development, and social integrity. As demonstrated by the central issue outlined at the beginning of this research, the father is not simply a biological entity; he is likewise a leader in faith, a moral role model, and a constructor of personal identity. The comparative analysis between Mustafa Merter's *Last Tango with Hekaton* and the prophet-father figures in the Qur'an clearly demonstrated the authenticity of this assumption.

In line with the qualitative, interpretive, and comparative methodology of the study, the conclusion reached is that the weakening of the father figure leads to the deterioration of the individual's conception of God, the erosion of the consciousness of inner responsibility and the increase of moral degeneration. The modern individual, although seemingly liberated, is deprived of spiritual and internal control mechanisms. This leads to alienation at both personal and social levels. While the lack of a father is a pedagogical deficit, it also brings with it an ontological and spiritual emptiness.

The observations obtained in the research show that the father figures in the Qur'an (Prophet Abraham, Prophet Jacob, Prophet Luqman, etc.) present a model that guides, advises with wisdom, and balances between love and responsibility. The principle of

“modeling”, which is often emphasized in modern education, has its historical equivalent in Qur'anic pedagogy in these father figures. This shows that faith is transmitted from generation to generation not through pure theoretical knowledge but through exemplary experience and behavior.

As outlined in the introduction, the aim of this study is to show that fatherhood extends beyond biological lineage to an identity imbued with justice, love, responsibility, and a sense of divine mandate. At this point, this goal has been realized within the framework of a concrete and applicable father model through theoretical knowledge, narratives in the Qur'an and modern psycho-spiritual analysis. By overlapping Merter's approach with Qur'anic figures, a guidance model that can be adapted to today's family structure has been created.

According to the results of the research, the following concrete suggestions can be put into practice for the revival of the father figure:

- Education policy should define fatherhood not solely through authority, but through guidance, emotional involvement, and ethical leadership.

- The media and cultural content should abandon discredited father stereotypes and give visibility to wise, compassionate, and just father figures.

- Religious and theological institutions should make the father-prophet figures in the Qur'an more functional and up to date in their educational materials.

- Family policies should recognize fatherhood not only as an obligor of alimony but also as the spiritual guide of the child and strengthen legal and social mechanisms to support this function.

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