

## *The role of custom in establishing family security*

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### **Abstract:**

This research explores the concept of custom as one of the influential factors in family life, highlighting its impact on achieving family security, especially in light of the social and cultural transformations occurring in contemporary societies. Family security is considered one of the most essential pillars of social stability, as it is closely linked to the stability of the marital relationship, child care, and the regulation of family interactions based on specific values and norms. The study includes a definition of custom and its conditions, as well as an explanation of the concept and importance of family security. It then analyzes the role of custom in reinforcing the economic, psychological, social, and intellectual foundations of family security. The research concludes that custom is a significant factor in strengthening family security—provided it aligns with the spirit and objectives of Islamic legislation. Furthermore, family security is regarded as one of the key components of overall social security.

**Keywords:** Custom, Security, Family, Impact.

## 1. Introduction :

Custom is regarded as one of the most important sources of social regulation due to its effective role in guiding individual behavior and shaping relationships within both the family and the broader society. It represents a mixture of traditions and practices passed down through generations, often acquiring a binding force that grants it a significant role in organizing daily life—particularly in the family sphere, which constitutes the foundational unit of society.

In light of the rapid social and cultural transformations witnessed today in the Arab and Islamic world, families are facing increasing challenges that threaten their stability and security. These challenges stem both from internal dynamics—such as strained relationships between family members—and from external pressures resulting from the collapse of values and the shift in certain customary norms. Given the pivotal role that custom plays in shaping and preserving family security, this research raises the following key question: To what extent does Custom influence the achievement of family security? Can custom be considered a contributing factor to family stability, or does it sometimes act as a threat to the family's structure and function? Furthermore, what is the concept of family security, and where does its importance lie?

**Research Objectives:** This study aims to achieve several key objectives, including:

- Clarifying the concept of Custom and its necessary conditions.

- Defining the concept of family security and highlighting its importance.
- Analyzing the relationship between Custom and family security, by demonstrating its role in either reinforcing or weakening family stability.

**Methodology:** This research adopts an inductive approach, by tracing the dimensions of the topic across available sources and references, and a descriptive-analytical approach, through identifying the key aspects of the subject, illustrating their significance, and analyzing the ways in which Custom influences family security.

**Research Structure:** The study begins with an introduction that provides a general overview of the topic, presents the research problem, and outlines the objectives and adopted methodology. Chapter One defines Custom and outlines its conditions, along with clarifying the concept and significance of family security. Chapter Two examines the role of Custom in reinforcing the key dimensions of family security: economic, psychological, social, and intellectual. Finally, the conclusion presents the main findings of the study.

## **2. Defining Key Terms of the Study:**

### **2.1. Definition of Custom and the Conditions for Its Validity:**

#### **2.1.1. Definition of Custom:**

Linguistically: The Arabic root letters ‘Ayn ,(ع) Rā’ ,(ر) and Fā’ (ف) have two authentic meanings. The first refers to the succession and continuity of things, while the second relates to calmness and

reassurance. An example of the first is the word Custom (mane of a horse), named so due to the consecutive layers of hair. The second root meaning is knowledge and recognition. One might say, “So-and-so knew so-and-so (‘irfānan and ma‘rifa),” and Custom is that which is known and accepted, as it brings comfort to the soul. (Ibn Fāris, 1979, p. 281). This usage appears in the Qur’anic verse (وَالْمُرْسَلَاتِ عُرْفًا) : (al-Mursalāt: 1) Some interpret this as referring to angels sent one after another, or to winds following each other in succession. (Markaz, 2017, p. 561)

From the above linguistic meanings, Custom conveys continuity, calmness, and refers to things familiar and commonly accepted by people.

In Terminology: There are various definitions of Custom, among them:

Aḥmad al-Nasafī defined it as: “That which settles in the hearts through intellect and is accepted by sound nature, and upon which the majority of people consistently act, so long as it is not rejected by the Sharī‘a.” (Fahmī, 1947, p. 8)

Imām Abū Zahrah stated: “Custom is what people are accustomed to in their transactions and what their affairs are based on.” (Abū Zahrah, p. 273)

Dr. Muḥammad Maḥaddah defined it as: “The custom of the majority of a group—whether in speech or action—on which people have become accustomed and by which their affairs are managed.” (Maḥaddah, p. 298)

From these definitions, Custom can be understood as: That which people agree upon in word or deed and has become a stable practice, provided it does not contradict the fundamental principles and objectives of Islamic law (Sharī‘a).

### **2.1.2. Conditions for the Validity of Custom:**

Islamic jurists have outlined several conditions for Custom to be considered and relied upon, including the following: (‘Unqurī, 2001, pp. 100–102; Fahmī, 1947, pp. 56–68)

**Generality:** The custom must be widespread among the public, not specific to a certain individual or group.

**Consistency:** The custom should be continuous and free from disruption.

**Sharī‘a Compliance:** It must not contradict explicit religious texts or the overarching objectives of Sharī‘a; otherwise, it is deemed invalid.

**Not a Temporary Habit:** The custom must not be newly emergent or unfamiliar to the people.

## **2.2. The Concept and Importance of Family Security:**

### **2.2.1. Definition of Family Security:**

#### **Definition of Security (Al-Amn):**

**Linguistically:** The Arabic root letters Hamza , (ء) Mīm ,(م) and Nūn (ن) point to two closely related meanings: Amāna, meaning trust or safety, which implies a state of tranquility. Īmān, meaning belief or

affirmation. (Ibn Fāris, p. 133) The words amān and amāna refer to safety and security, while amn is the opposite of fear. (Al-Jawharī, 1987, p. 2071)

In Terminology: Security is defined as: “The feeling of reassurance due to the absence of tangible threats to one’s person or rights, along with the removal of restrictions that prevent one from fulfilling spiritual and emotional needs, all while enjoying social and economic justice.” (Al-Shaqqah, 2004, p. 14)

### **Definition of Family:**

Linguistically: The word usra (family) derives from asr, meaning to bind or tie. It is said: asara-hu (he bound him) with isār (a cord or bond), and the plural is usar. The term usra refers to one’s close kin or group, signifying a collective bound by shared ties. (Al-Jawharī, p. 579)

In Terminology: A family is: “A man and woman united by a lawful marital bond and the children resulting from this union, governed by a set of ethical and moral standards established by Islamic law.” (Maḥmūd, 1992, p. 18)

**Definition of Family Security:** The term family security is relatively modern and has emerged as a response to the growing threats facing the family unit from various directions. It aims to highlight the aspects necessary to preserve the integrity of the family. Notable definitions include:

Dāliyāh al-Hawwārī: “Providing protection for family members in all forms—whether physical safety or the safeguarding of property—against internal or external threats, enabling each member to fulfill their duties and enjoy their rights.” (Hawwārī, 2022, p. 365)

‘Azīz al-Ḥasanī: “Comprehensive security encompassing all aspects of family life—material and emotional, psychological, economic, health-related, cultural, etc.—so that families can enjoy their rights in peace. These areas form an integrated system of family security, which is a continuous, dynamic process.” (Al-Ḥasanī, 2016, p. 171)

Ḥamzah Naṣrāt: “Family security is a comprehensive and collaborative process involving the provision of protection and care through all means and available resources, whether by the family members themselves or through society and the state, allowing families to live stable, peaceful, and dignified lives free from fear or harm.” (Naṣrāt, 2025, p. 32)

From the above, we can formulate a definition of family security as follows: Achieving comprehensive protection for family members in all areas of life to ensure stability, through the combined efforts of both the family and the surrounding community.

**2.2.2. Importance of Family Security:** The significance of family security is highlighted in the following points:

It is essential to human life, allowing individuals to thrive, contribute to development, and feel safe in terms of personal well-being, faith, property, and dignity.

Providing security within the home is vital for nurturing children's personalities and guiding their moral and emotional growth. Family security fosters individuals who are emotionally stable, psychologically balanced, successful in education, behavior, and career, while also protecting the family from disintegration. (Al-Ḥasanī, p. 169)

Family security is a cornerstone of social stability. Attention to family security is inherently attention to social harmony. A stable family leads to a stable society, and since the family represents both the present and future of the nation, investing in it means securing the nation's future. The state of the younger generation determines the nation's future, and a righteous, upright youth signals a hopeful future. (Al-Jahdamī, 2003, p. 252)

A secure family produces righteous, patriotic individuals who are ready to sacrifice for their country and defend its interests. Many successful leaders throughout history came from families known for piety, integrity, and faith, and this success is undoubtedly the result of their family's security and stability. (Naṣrāt, p. 36)

### **3. The Role of Custom in Establishing the Pillars of Family Security:**

#### **3.1. Economic Security:**

Achieving economic security for the family and its members is one of the major challenges that directly affects its stability and safety. Overcoming this challenge depends on the family's ability to respond effectively.

Custom in Determining the Dowry (Ṣadāq): The dowry (ṣadāq), which is synonymous with "mahr", is an obligatory payment required of the husband upon the marriage contract, in return for the marital benefits, whether it is specified or left undefined. Islamic law has left the determination of its amount to customary practices and mutual agreement between the spouses, in order to ease the burden on people and remove hardship. At the same time, Islam encourages modesty in the dowry amount. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: "Among the signs of a woman's blessing is the ease of her engagement, the ease of her dowry, and the ease of her womb (childbirth)." (Ibn Ḥanbal, 2001, p. 27) In Algerian society, dowry customs vary. In some southern and eastern regions, dowries reach unreasonably high amounts, while in the Kabyle region, customs tend toward simplicity and moderation—an approach consistent with the spirit of Islamic legislation that advocates leniency.

Furthermore, it is customary in Algeria for the entire dowry to be paid in advance. A woman is not typically married or cohabitated with until she has received her dowry, which often returns to the marital home in the form of household furnishings and appliances. This custom aligns with the Mālikī school of thought, which considers the delay of dowry payment as discouraged (*makrūh*). (Ibn 'Arafah, p. 309)

Custom in Financial Maintenance (Nafaqah): Nafaqah is defined as providing the necessary means of living—food, clothing, housing, and their necessities. In Algerian society, it is customary that the husband is not obligated to financially support his wife until consummation of the marriage. Prior to that, even if the contract is finalized and she

remains in her father's house for an extended period, her father remains responsible for her support. Islamic law entrusts the estimation of nafaqah to the customs of the local community and the financial capability of the husband. Allah says:

(لِيُنْفِقَ ذُو سَعَةٍ مِّن سَعَتِهِ وَمَن قَدِرَ عَلَيْهِ رِزْقُهُ فَلْيُنْفِقْ مِمَّا آتَاهُ اللَّهُ لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا مَا  
 (وَعَلَى الْمَوْلُودِ لَهُ رِزْقُهُنَّ وَكِسْوَتُهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ لَا تُكَلِّفُ (Al-Talāq: 7) :  
 (نَفْسٌ إِلَّا أُسْعَاهُ) (Al-Baqarah: 233) The father of the newborn is obligated to provide for the mother's maintenance and clothing in a reasonable manner, that is, according to what is customary in her country, without extravagance or stinginess.

Also, in the ḥadīth of 'Ā'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her), Hind bint 'Utbah complained to the Prophet that her husband Abū Sufyān was miserly and did not provide sufficiently for her and her children. The Prophet said: "Take what is sufficient for you and your child, according to what is customary (bi-l-ma'rūf)." (Al-Bukhārī, 1993, p. 2052) This demonstrates that Islamic law leaves the amount of nafaqah open to custom, contributing to economic security by meeting the family's daily living needs—such as food, clothing, and shelter.

### 3.2. Psychological Security:

Psychological security within the family is rooted in affection and love among its members. It promotes emotional stability and a sense of safety.

Custom in Marital Selection: The first step toward achieving family psychological security lies in the appropriate selection of a spouse. Islamic law considers sound customary practices in choosing a

partner. Abū Hurayrah narrated that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "A woman is married for four reasons: her wealth, her lineage, her beauty, and her religion. Choose the one who is religious." (Al-Bukhārī, p. 1958) The ḥadīth acknowledges all common, customary criteria for marital selection—wealth, lineage, status, and appearance—while emphasizing the importance of religion. Likewise, the Prophet said: "If a man whose religion and character you approve proposes marriage, then marry him. If you do not, there will be fitnah (temptation) and widespread corruption on earth." (Al-Tirmidhī, 1975, p. 387) Islam does not reject other selection factors like beauty and wealth, as they also foster affection and harmony. These criteria—when aligned with sound custom—promote psychological stability. However, modernity has corrupted some of these customs, leading families to prioritize wealth and appearance over religion and character, resulting in increased divorce and marital infidelity, and ultimately undermining psychological security. Additionally, proper spouse selection contributes to the family's physical health by preventing hereditary diseases and fostering moral, religious upbringing of children, producing a values-oriented generation.

Custom also requires the husband to work and provide for the family. Islam urges the pursuit of lawful sustenance:

(فَإِذَا قُضِيَتِ الصَّلَاةُ فَانْتَشِرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَابْتَغُوا مِنْ فَضْلِ اللَّهِ) (Al-Jumu'ah: 10)

The Prophet also said: "No one has ever eaten better food than what he earned with his own hands." (Al-Bukhārī, p. 730) Earning a living through halal work maintains economic and psychological security,

whereas anxiety over financial insufficiency breeds emotional distress. Islam also teaches that sustenance comes from Allah:

(وَفِي السَّمَاءِ رِزْقُكُمْ وَمَا تُوعَدُونَ) (Al-Dhāriyāt: 22) This liberates the believer from fear of people's control and reinforces reliance on Allah.

### 3.3. Social Security:

The family, being the basic unit of society, forms the foundation of all human relationships. It is built on a web of ethical values and customs that strengthen family ties, ensure personal stability, and protect individual rights, freedom, wealth, honor, and safety.

Islam affirms these values through obligatory principles, such as good marital companionship (وَعَاشِرُوهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ) (Al-Nisā': 19) Custom dictates that husbands treat their wives kindly with good words and behavior. In the parent-child relationship, Islam commands respectful treatment of parents

(وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا إِمَّا يَبُلُغَنَّ عِنْدَكَ الْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كِلَاهُمَا فَلَا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا أُفٍّ وَلَا تَنْهَرْهُمَا وَقُلْ لَهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا وَأَخْفِضْ لَهُمَا جَنَاحَ الذَّلِّ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ وَقُلْ رَبِّ ارْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيَانِي صَغِيرًا) (Al-Isrā': 23–24) Cultural norms require children to show kindness and gratitude to their parents, which sets a pattern for how they will be treated by their own children—ensuring social continuity and cohesion.

Providing food, clothing, and adequate housing for each family member ensures social security. Islam grants people the natural right to consume lawful food and drinks and enjoy standard clothing and housing appropriate to local customs. (Sharīfī, 2015, pp. 169–170) A

spacious home that provides peace and accommodates guests is also essential. Allah says: (وَاللَّهُ جَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِنْ بُيُوتِكُمْ سَكَنًا) (Al-Nahl: 80) one that offers enough space to ensure the comfort of family members and can also accommodate guests. The Prophet said: "From a man's happiness are: a spacious home, a good neighbor, and a comfortable mount." (Al-Bukhārī, 1998, p. 62) It is customary in Algeria that the husband provides a separate, furnished home for his wife and children, in accordance with his financial capacity.

Education is also a critical social necessity. It contributes to social stability and personal development. It is customary for Algerian fathers to enroll their children in school at age six, covering fees and monitoring academic progress.

Health security is similarly important. The husband is expected to cover medical expenses for his wife and children, maintaining the affection and mercy Islam commands. Today, healthcare has become as essential as food and shelter. (Sharīfī, p. 168)

### **3.4. Intellectual Security:**

Islam places great emphasis on intellectual security, as it is a pillar of societal stability. It protects the religious, cultural, and moral framework of individuals and families from deviant or extremist ideologies. (Hassānī, 2017, pp. 16–17)

Intellectual security starts with preserving religion—one of the five essential objectives of Islamic law. It requires learning religious knowledge, avoiding innovations, and steering clear of extremism. Children typically follow their parents' beliefs and values. It is

customary to enroll them early in Qur'ānic schools and accompany them to the mosque to instill Islamic practices.

Parents also monitor their children's use of television, smartphones, and the internet, shielding them from inappropriate or extremist content. Such parental involvement ensures the family is raised in line with Islamic teachings and protected from intellectual and cultural invasion, thus maintaining its intellectual security

#### **4. Conclusion:**

Through this study on the role of custom in establishing family security, several key findings can be drawn:

- Custom refers to the practice or statement commonly agreed upon by people and consistently applied, as long as it does not contradict the general principles and objectives of Islamic law. Scholars have defined it with specific conditions to regulate its application.
- Family security refers to the comprehensive protection of all family members across various areas of life, in order to achieve family stability. This can only be accomplished through the combined efforts of family members and the surrounding community.
- Islamic law has left certain family-related matters to custom, to facilitate ease and remove hardship from people's lives.
- Family security holds immense importance both for the individual members of the family and for the society they live in.

- Custom a significant role in strengthening the pillars of family security—whether economic, psychological, social, or intellectual.

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