

## **PROTECTION OF THE INTELLECT OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES: IN THE HOLY QUR'ĀN AND THE SUNNAH PERSPECTIVE**

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Received on: 09-06-23

Accepted on: 14-08-23

<https://doi.org/10.57144/hi.v46i3.843>

### **Abstract**

This study examines how the *Holy Qur'ān* and the Sunnah protect the right to education, intellectual development, and wellbeing for people with disabilities and their families. The research explains the natural sympathy people feel towards these people and the empathy that is felt towards the families of children with disabilities, as Muslim jurists have addressed these issues. A deductive approach is used based on the foundations of Quranic education and the educational theories of the Sunnah of the Prophet (*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātam un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu 'alaihi wa 'alā Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*); moreover, the study relies on an analysis that establishes how people can deliver effective care for people with disabilities. The findings reveal that both *The Holy Qur'ān* and the Sunnah succinctly articulate the rights of those with special needs. These texts also preach the need to integrate people with disabilities into society and create a friendly environment for them to live in; they also teach and educate people about how they should interact with people with disabilities within their families.

**Keywords:** *Disability, The Holy Qur'ān, Sunnah, Rights, Education.*

### **Introduction**

In moral considerations, treating and safeguarding individuals with disabilities is significant. The intersection of religious teachings and protecting intellectual rights becomes a focal

point of exploration, particularly when examined through the microscope of *The Holy Qur'ān* and Sunnah. These sacred guidance sources provide spiritual direction and address believers' ethical and social responsibilities. In this article, we delve into the profound insights offered by *The Holy Qur'ān* and Sunnah on protecting the intellect and rights of people with disabilities.

In the Muslim community, the integrity of people with disabilities is safeguarded. Islam explicitly declares that the scourge that has plagued people with disabilities does not diminish their value in society. Therefore, there is no differentiation between them and others; instead, they are considered equals. Allah Almighty says, "And We have certainly honored the children of Adam (*'Alaih As-Salām*)." <sup>1</sup>

Additionally, the Prophet (*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātam un Nabiyyīn Ṣallallahu 'alaihiwa 'alā Ālihiwa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*) has been reported saying,

"Allah Almighty does not look at your figures, nor your attire, but He looks at your hearts and accomplishments." <sup>2</sup>

Therefore, no one is superior to anyone except in their level of piety. Persons with a disability may be better and more significantly honored in Muslim society than normal people. Allah Almighty says,

"...Surely the noblest of you, in Allah's sight, is the one who is most pious of you. Surely Allah Almighty is All-Knowing, All-Aware." <sup>3</sup>

The aspect of a person that matters is piety rather than external appearance. Based on this integrated and balanced point of view, the research tends to give grants in finding fruitful cooperation, especially since *The Holy Qur'ān* is clear in its introduction and addresses all aspects of life, including educational and scientific aspects, due to Allah Almighty saying:

"...We have not missed anything in the Book. Then, to their Lord all of them shall be gathered..." <sup>4</sup>

Islam takes great care of all segments of society, and Muslims have been keen to take full care of people with special needs because the latter is placed under the merciful system of Islam and its protectorate, which always calls for the empowerment of the weak person and for assistance to be provided as much as possible. Hence, the research topic has emerged to be in harmony with the authenticity

of Islamic values and its generous heritage to examine the ideas within Islam and achieve its educational goals towards the weak, among which disabled children.

Islam calls on people to treat children with disabilities with humanity by integrating them, preserving their dignity, and unlocking their potential by seeking the guidance of *The Holy Qur'ān* and the Prophet (*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu 'alaihi wa 'alā Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*) Sunnah.<sup>5</sup> This study is an attempt to confirm that Islam calls for the motivation of persons with disabilities and integrates them into education.

The discourse on protecting the intellectual rights of people with disabilities has become particularly relevant in today's global context. With the advancement of technology and the growing awareness of inclusivity, societies are called upon to uphold the rights of all individuals, including those with disabilities. In this light, the timeless teachings of *The Holy Qur'ān* and Sunnah offer a profound ethical framework that can guide contemporary discussions on inclusivity, intellectual property, and human rights.

Therefore, this article aims to shed light on the Quranic and Sunnah teachings emphasizing protecting the intellectual rights of people with disabilities. By exploring these teachings, we hope to contribute to a deeper understanding of the ethical obligations that underpin the treatment of individuals with disabilities. As societies strive for greater inclusivity, the profound insights from *The Holy Qur'ān* and Sunnah. It will also explain the foundations of that motivation, its requirements, and how to overcome obstacles. The study also explains the basic criteria upon which the need of people with disability is based and their aims to achieve a good life and happiness for them and their families.

### **Literature Review and Conceptual Framework**

The Cambridge Dictionary defines disability as “illness, injury, or condition that makes it difficult for someone to do some things that other people do and that is usually permanent or lasts for a long time.” This definition agrees with the Disability Commission of Northern Ireland, which says that disability is “A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.”<sup>6</sup>

It is also defined as deprivation or restrictions that prevent some segments of society from participating in social activities and public life because they differ from the public based on a defect or deficiency in a capacity or function.<sup>7</sup> A person with a disability may have suffered a deficiency in their body or mind from birth or at a

certain point when they were left with a physical impairment that prevents them from working like others in society.<sup>8</sup>

A person with a disability suffers from a deficiency in some of their physical capabilities, and a dysfunction in their body prevents them from fully carrying out life activities. It is thus necessary to attend to their cultural, health, psychological, educational, rehabilitative, social, and professional needs to increase their self-sufficiency and ability to assume their responsibilities and social responsibilities.<sup>9</sup>

According to this understanding, people with disabilities differ from others based on their physical, mental, sensory, or behavioural capacities; this difference causes them to be excluded or discriminated against within the community.<sup>10</sup> Since the beginning of recorded history, people with disabilities have been documented, whether their disabilities emerged at birth or following an accident.

Additionally, Article 1 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities states, “Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.”<sup>11</sup>

Siti Fitriah analyses the legal view from an Islamic perspective on the rights of children with disabilities. Her study shows that children with disabilities in South Tangerang City are divided into two categories: adults and children. She submitted that Islam recognizes five kinds of human rights, often referred to as *maqashid al-Shari’ah*, namely the maintenance of religious rights, the maintenance of the soul, the maintenance of honor and offspring, the maintenance of reason, and the maintenance of property.<sup>12</sup>

Ali Atlaf contended that the “*ahliyyat al-wujūb*” concept served as a theoretical sanctuary for individuals with disabilities. In this manner, jurists of the ḥanafī School in the medieval period furthered the compassionate and nurturing attitude demonstrated by the Prophet (*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*) towards those with mental challenges. He proposed that even though these jurists supported those afflicted with “*majnūn*” conditions and limited their definitions of mental disabilities to cognitive impairments rather than emotional or psychological ones, their overarching teachings still promoted the Prophet (*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*) empathetic concern for individuals with mental disabilities.<sup>13</sup>

Hiam Al-Aoufi affirms that even though Muslims hold similar beliefs and values, the way they perceive and respond to these ideas, as well as their interactions with disabled individuals, can differ due to factors like the strength of their faith, socioeconomic status, education level, awareness, and notably, the cultural environment they are in. The significance of cultural distinctions in shaping attitudes towards marginalized individuals is particularly highlighted in the discussion of how various cultural viewpoints impact Muslims' interpretation and application of Islamic principles.<sup>14</sup>

MS Bazna and TA Hatab stated that *The Holy Qur'ān* focuses on societal disadvantage, which emerges when certain individuals lack the social, economic, or physical qualities society currently values in a specific context. *The Holy Qur'ān* emphasizes that it is the collective responsibility of society to address this inequality. It consistently urges Muslims to acknowledge the challenges faced by the less privileged and work towards enhancing their situation and standing.<sup>15</sup>

Islam places considerable emphasis on the upliftment of people with special needs at all levels, guiding their family members to be active in caring for children with disabilities; Islam also provides a wealth of scientifically sound information on different disability issues. Islam has two approaches to disability: first, the legal approach prescribes certain behaviours that promote welfare benefits to persons with disabilities through the rules of religion.<sup>16</sup> The second approach provides a guide because Islam is a way of life. Therefore, Islam provides rules and regulations that guide family members' activities toward their children with disabilities. This approach sets behavioural guidelines for routine activities in the life of persons with disabilities. Islam has guided people to ensure their happiness and wellbeing, which occurs when people obey the orders contained in *The Holy Qur'ān* and steer away from prohibited acts; following this guidance can enhance the effectiveness of the care provided to people with disabilities.<sup>17</sup>

Therefore, the attention, assistance, and protection of the rights of persons with disabilities is inherent in the religion of Islam. Based on the demonstration above, the author ascertains that the available literature still needs the analysis of this segment of society's intellectual development and education; this research fills this gap.

### **Methodology**

This study focuses on tackling an issue in Arab and Islamic communities regarding the quality of support and advice given to families in caring for their children with disabilities. The research

draws from the teachings of *The Holy Qur'ān*, the Prophetic Sunnah, and insights from Islamic education scholars.

Hence, this study uses a deductive approach and analytical-qualitative method, relying on the foundations of Quranic education and educational theories based on the Sunnah of the Prophet (*Ḥaḍrat Muḥammad Rasūlullah Khātam un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu 'alaihi wa 'alā Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*). The study also refers to publications by scholars of Islamic education, such as books, journal articles, and conference proceedings, which are analyzed to establish their effectiveness in helping people care for people with disabilities.

### **Persons with Special Needs in Light of *The Holy Qur'ān* and the Sunnah**

Allah Almighty created humans from one origin, Adam (*'Alaih As-Salām*), and from one mother, Eve. Allah Almighty says,

“O mankind, fear your Lord, who created you from one soul and created from it its mate and dispersed from both of them many men and women”<sup>18</sup>

Allah Almighty also says, “And He produced you from one soul and [gave you] a place of dwelling and storage.”<sup>19</sup> Allah Almighty says in another verse,

“It is He who created you from one soul and created from it its mate that he might dwell in security with her.”<sup>20</sup>

Allah Almighty further says, “He created you from one soul. Then, He made from it its mate.”<sup>21</sup>

The Prophet (*Ḥaḍrat Muḥammad Rasūlullah Khātam un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu 'alaihi wa 'alā Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*) said, “O you Mankind, know that, verily, your Lord is one and your father is one.”<sup>22</sup>

Allah Almighty created a connection between those with special needs and others by creating the brotherhood that requires Muslims to cooperate with people with disabilities and share their concerns no matter how distanced people's paths and houses may be. “And cooperate in righteousness and piety... In addition, fear Allah Almighty; indeed, Allah Almighty is severe in penalty”.<sup>23</sup> Here, Allah Almighty commands Muslims to cooperate on everything that benefits the *Ummah* (nation) in the context of religion and worldly affairs, and there is no doubt that this social principle is benevolent. The number of nations has increased, and national trajectories and interests have become more varied. Therefore, more than individual

efforts are required, no matter how robust. Rather, there must be cooperation and support from others.<sup>24</sup> Therefore, to strengthen society and revive the tradition of caring for acquaintances, the right of people with disabilities and their families to receive collaborative assistance and guidance has gained prominence. Allah Almighty says, “O mankind, We have created you from a male and a female, and made you into races and tribes, so that you may identify one another...”<sup>25</sup>

This guidance enhances mutual love, mercy, and compassion among all creatures, including people with disabilities.<sup>24</sup> Indeed, everyone is the child of Adam (*‘Alaih As-Salām*). This is why the Prophet (*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātam un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*) said, “All people are sons of Adam (*‘Alaih As-Salām*) and Adam (*‘Alaih As-Salām*) who are of dust.”<sup>26</sup> Therefore, the Muslim community is based on brotherhood, interdependence, and compassion, which is expected since that community stems from divine justice. In their multiple forms, these qualities can only be established, strengthened, and stabilized through true Islamic education because education is the key to social behaviours. Islamic education puts the state on the right path to care for different races, ethnic groups, religions, and the healthy, the diseased, and the disabled; indeed, Islamic education teaches people to be proper and responsible towards the latter because they live together.

People with special needs are among those Allah Almighty has afflicted with impairment in their capabilities or senses. They have become limited in their movements and ability to work and earn a living like others. Indeed, they need continuous care in all aspects of life and require continuous medical care. The Prophet (*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātam un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*) said, “He who shows no mercy to the people, Allah, the Exalted and Glorious, does not show mercy to him.”<sup>27</sup> To be passionate to Allah's servants means having a soft heart. Anyone who has a soft heart will be passionate toward weaker people, such as people with disabilities or deformities, orphans, or people with low incomes, and will be charitable.<sup>28</sup>

One of the features that most distinguishes the law of Islam is how the vulnerable are treated, among them women, children, older people, deformed people, and people with disabilities and diseases. The law of general mercy, which emerges out of the worlds of *jinn* and humanity, and the law of salvation, which dictates to hold the hand of the weak, make all people equal in their rights, although every person gets the share apportioned for him or her in this world.<sup>29</sup>

We live in an age of anxiety and an era of domination. Globalization has caused those in need of special care to be crushed. Indeed, today's globalization is based on the basic theory that some should control while younger people should fade, and healthy people should live while the weak die. Therefore, it is expected that the level of social welfare will be affected in the face of this attack because it is not economically profitable to care for unproductive groups. To counter this disastrous result, we must urgently do the following:

1. Support people with special needs through social guarantees, even if they do little work: "Allah Almighty and Exalted love if one of you does a job that he perfects it"; support charitable and profitable projects concerning care for people with disabilities.<sup>30</sup>
2. Use the media to spread awareness regarding the needs of people with disabilities so those with capital can establish not-for-profit educational homes and rehabilitation centers for people with disabilities, support them morally and financially, and thus extend benefits to others. The Prophet (*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu 'alaihi wa 'alā Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*) said, "The most beloved people to Allah Almighty are those who benefit others".<sup>31</sup>
3. Fully expand social welfare in all Arab and Islamic countries and remove limits to social welfare because those with special needs spread across borders of neighboring countries. Moreover, the Prophet (*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu 'alaihi wa 'alā Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*) said, "The similitude of believers regarding mutual love, affection, benevolence is that of one body; when any limb of it aches, the whole-body aches, because of sleeplessness and fever".<sup>32</sup> We must also support research related to people with special needs by establishing research centers connected to educational centers and rehabilitation centers.
4. *The Holy Qur'ān* and Sunnah care for educating people with disabilities, and their rights are protected in Islam.

The care of the two revelations for disabled people has reached an extreme level of highness and prestige. To adduce evidence about this, here is the story of the great companion Abdullah ibn Umm Maktum (*Raḍi Allah 'anhu*) when Allah Almighty revealed the following of *The Holy Qur'ān* because of him:

"He (the Prophet) (*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu 'alaihi wa 'alā Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*) frowned and turned his face because the blind man came to him! What could tell you (O prophet about the



prospects of the blind man?) May be, (if you had attended him properly,) he would have attained purity, or have received the advice, and the advice would have benefited him. As for the one who does not care (about faith), you are anxious to pursue him.”<sup>33</sup>

In these verses, Allah Almighty blamed His Prophet (*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*), and he is His best creation and the unique model of mercy, compassion, and humanity, which are the characteristics confirmed by *The Holy Qur’ān*. Allah Almighty says,

“There has certainly come to you a Messenger from among yourselves. Grievous to him is what you suffer; [he is] concerned over you and to the believers is kind and merciful.”<sup>34</sup>

Since then, respect for people with disabilities has relied on a Quranic approach and has great religious value by which people with disabilities receive support and acceptance until some of them reach great degrees of knowledge, glory, and genius.

*The Holy Qur’ān* prohibits anything prejudiced to the honour of humanity, which He made honourable in his humanistic status. He prohibited ridiculing another person, mocking him or her, and insulting him or her by any means. Allah Almighty said that believers should not let people ridicule others based on physical attributes, even if they are perhaps better than them; women should not ridicule [other] women, even if they are perhaps better. In addition, people should not insult and call each other by [offensive] nicknames. Wretched is the name of disobedience after [one's] faith. In addition, those who do not repent are the wrongdoers.

Here, Allah Almighty the Exalted forbids people from ridiculing and mocking others, as shown in the authentic hadith from the Messenger of Allah Almighty (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). He said, “The arrogance is the disregard of truth and the undermining of people”<sup>35</sup> This situation is prevalent and real. Cynicism occurs only from a heart full of bad morals marked by vile qualities. The Prophet (*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*) said “It is a serious evil for a Muslim that he should look down upon his brother Muslim.”<sup>36</sup> He also said, “Shall I inform you about the people of Paradise? They comprise every obscure unimportant humble person, and if he takes Allah’s Oath that he will do that thing, Allah will fulfill his oath (by doing that). Shall I inform you about the people of the Fire? They comprise every cruel, violent, proud, and conceited person”.<sup>37</sup>

Some Muslims laughed at the thin legs of Abdullah bin Mas'ud (*Radi Allah 'anhu*) the day he climbed the tree of *Arak* (he was fetching the chewing stick of *Arak*; he had thin legs, and the wind was shaking him). The people laughed. The Messenger of Allah Almighty (May the peace and blessing of Allah Almighty be upon him) said, "Why are you laughing"? They answered, "O Prophet of Allah Almighty, because of the thinness of his legs." The Prophet (*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātam un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu 'alaihiwa 'alā Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*) said: the two legs are heavier on the scale than the Mountain of *Uhud*.<sup>38</sup>

Thus, it is clear why Allah Almighty generally forbids Muslims from using the moral defects of people to make fun of them, defame them, or underestimate the personalities of those tested with impairment. Rather, it is compulsory to give people with disabilities the right to full equality with others so that they can lead a decent life. Giving anyone power over them, regardless of their social class, is not befitting because people with special needs are also human beings. Allah Almighty says, "And We have certainly honored the children of Adam (*'Alaih As-Salām*) and carried them on land and sea..."<sup>39</sup> The mercy of Allah Almighty encompasses all aspects of life. Allah says, "Your Lord has decreed upon Himself mercy..."<sup>40</sup> Allah Almighty also says, Allah also says, "And My mercy extends to everything."<sup>41</sup>

The abovementioned honoring is for all people, regardless of their races, ethnicity, religions, or sects, both righteous and the unrighteous, the believer and the unbeliever; there is no creature except that the mercy of Allah Almighty, His grace, and kindness reaches him.<sup>42</sup>

Islam advocates for the right of people with disabilities to live with respect and appreciation from others, as well as for the right to education as much as possible, the right to health and social care, the right to work in the fields they have studied, the right to marry and bear children, the right to participate in sports activities, the right to participate in conversations and discussions and to share their opinion whenever possible, and the right of ownership if their disability does not prevent it. At the same time, Islam calls for people to show indulgence in fulfilling the needs of people with special needs. The Prophet (*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātam un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu 'alaihiwa 'alā Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*) said, "There is no servant that Allah Almighty has bestowed favor upon him and perfected such a favor upon him and then Allah causes some needs of people in the hands of that person, but he shows anger that person has set that favor on the verge of going away from him".<sup>43</sup>

Therefore, it is incumbent upon every financially able Muslim to spend on his needy relatives, whether their needs are due to chronic poverty or an emergency; otherwise, the threat of taking away his blessing has been set forth. *The Holy Qur'ān* has also excluded people with special needs from some *Sharī'ah* rulings because of their special status, which requires their exclusion from some interpersonal dealings, including fighting. This is why Allah Almighty said:

There is not upon the blind any guilt or upon the lame any guilt or upon the ill any guilt [for remaining behind]. In addition, whoever obeys Allah Almighty and His Messenger—He will admit him to gardens beneath which rivers flow, but whoever turns away—He will punish him with a painful punishment.<sup>44</sup>

Allah Almighty also says

“There is no sin on you, if you have some inconvenience due to rain, or you are sick, in putting your arms aside, but take your precautionary measures...”<sup>45</sup>

Allah Almighty says, “..However, should any one of you be sick or on a journey, then (he should fast) a number of other days (equal to the missed ones); and those who have the strength, (still, they do not opt for fasting,) on them there is a fidyah (compensation), that is, the feeding of a poor person..”<sup>46</sup>

Based on this emergency, there are exceptions to the fasting obligation. Additionally, it is permissible to shorten the prayer, perform dried ablution instead of water ablution, combine the two prayers, and eat the dead animal is permitted for survival. All these exceptions to the general rules apply to all Muslims. Moreover, someone afflicted with an ill in his organs or senses is more entitled to such exceptions. His ruling is like that of the patient who is permitted to pray sitting or on the side if he cannot stand or has his duty waded up if he suffers from the insanity of mind; in this case, he is cleared from sin. All these cases confirm the general approach in Islam to these conditions if the situation entails acts of worship, transactions, or penalties.

If the exception concerns the above-listed segments of the population, even in the case of war, it is more applicable to those at home with disabilities. They are exempted from participating in wars for their protection and to abide by the requirement to protect their rights and interests and keep them from harm. This exception confirms that individuals with special needs are entitled to the highest

level of care. Considering their condition, their needs come before those of others.

### **Discussion**

To this end, it could be inferred from the provisions of the two revelations that the care of persons with disabilities through the following:

**First**, we must activate and intensify awareness programs for family members of persons with disabilities. Indeed, we note that the family is the first cause of many disabilities, and family members can prevent many disabilities if they are made aware of the causes. They should also be aware of ways to address different situations, and negative views of people with disabilities must be corrected.

This awareness calls for the participation of more than one societal constituency at all stages: the authority, associations, individuals, rehabilitation centers, and educational institutions. All available means and capabilities should be put in place to reduce the concerns of the families and relieve their needs; this is what the Messenger (*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātam un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*) of Allah Almighty used to urge by saying: “If I walk with a brother of mine who is in need to solve his problem is more beloved to me than to observe in this masjid of mine a month.”<sup>47</sup>

**Second**, we must provide appropriate treatment for people with disabilities. People with special needs—in addition to treatment for ordinary diseases—need to be provided, at least at the onset, with the necessities to treat the diseases that have afflicted them or the effort must be made to treat them, for example, in some cases of blindness. Moreover, alternative limbs must be provided when limbs have been damaged or lost. Jurists have expressly stated that “If the original is not possible, the alternative will take place”.<sup>48</sup>

**Third**, we must provide people with disabilities with opportunities for an appropriate education. The state must take care of this group in the various stages of life by providing them with the needed education. The importance of education for the vulnerable and disabled stems from the fact that it provides them with the necessary awareness and skills to face the situations in which they live. It also provides them with a purpose that guarantees their stability and ensures their involvement in society in various fields according to the specializations available to them, which makes them feel themselves and that they are not a burden on the society they depend on.<sup>49</sup>

*The Holy Qur’ān* seeks to see all members of the *Ummah* in a position that preserves their humanity. *The Holy Qur’ān* says,

“And we have certainly honored the children of Adam (*‘Alaih As-Salām*) and carried them on land and sea and provided for them of the good things and preferred them over much of what We have created, with [definite] preference”.<sup>50</sup>

*The Holy Qur’ān* tells people about how Allah Almighty preserves the dignity of humanity anywhere people are, in their community and outside of them. This protection is impossible for a person unable to work and earn a living because of a disability. Therefore, it is necessary to precisely define what the Muslim state should provide, especially as Islam goes beyond the concept of the handicap to provide aid and assistance.

Achieving this level of assistance depends on the honesty and sincerity of the work, the affirmation of individual responsibility, and the need for knowledge and experience on the part of the specialists obligated by the state; moreover, emphasizing human perfection requires honest and impartial performance of work. We must be careful not to neglect or criticize people with disabilities. This attention is a response to Allah’s saying: “O Children of Israel, remember My favour which I have bestowed upon you and fulfill My covenant [upon you] that I will fulfill your covenant [from Me], and be afraid of [only] Me alone”.<sup>51</sup>

Hence, in Islam, sincere work, whether by the state or members of society, represents one of the acts of worship, which are covenants between a person and his or her Creator and comply with the following words of Allah: “And (success is attained) by those who honestly look after their trusts and covenant.”<sup>52</sup> Additionally, the Qur’an says, “O you who believe, do not betray the trust of Allah and the Messenger -, and do not betray your mutual trusts, while you know.”<sup>53</sup>

The greatest institutions in which guidance and counseling are offered are schools, and one of the most important concerns of schools is education. The educational process needs improvement based on achieving a healthy psychological atmosphere that includes respect for people with disabilities as individuals and as members of a class, school, and society. Education leads to achieving freedom, security, and satisfaction in a way that allows the opportunity for the overall growth of people’s personalities and facilitates the process of education and guidance.

**Fourth**, all members of society and its various subgroups should be involved in caring for people with disabilities. The state, with the powers given to it by Allah Almighty can encourage members of society, groups, and institutions to passionately interact with people with disabilities by educating society about the latter’s

conditions, the obligation contained in the *Shari'ah*, and the reward promised by Allah Almighty for those helping people with disabilities. The Prophet (*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātam un Nabiyyīn Ṣallallahu 'alaihi wa 'alā Ālihi waAṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*) said, "Whoever walks with his brother in need until he establishes it for him, Allah Almighty will make his feet firm in the day when the feet will slip".<sup>54</sup>

It is a sign of faith to love goodness for others and to try to put others first. To this effect, *The Holy Qur'ān* says:

“They love those who emigrated to them and find not any want in their breasts of what the emigrants were given but give [them] preference over themselves, even though they are in privation, and whoever is protected from the stinginess of his soul - it is those who will be the successful...”<sup>55</sup>

On this basis, the role of Mosques appears relevant in assisting people with or without disabilities. Through sermons and religious lessons, Mosques should create awareness about the causes of organ disability. The idea of social solidarity should be promoted through cooperation with families of people with disabilities, explaining the importance of appropriately serving the needs of these people. Improvements to family conditions should be encouraged to facilitate the physical activity of people with disabilities and improve their image. The latter should know their capabilities and how to overcome their disabilities. Their inclusion should be encouraged through mosque activities such as memorizing *The Holy Qur'ān* and Hadith and workshops, which would bring a positive image of the mosque's youths, reminding them of the reward Allah Almighty has prepared for those who cooperate with people with disabilities. Support services should be provided to the families of people with disabilities, encouraging donations of items that may interest those with disabilities.

The religion of Islam has always attempted to prepare all members of the *Ummah* to be in good condition and preserve their freedom and dignity, and the religion embraces them without discrimination. Scholars have noted that this embrace cannot be achieved in the case of people with disabilities unless the following is provided:

First, we must provide people with disabilities<sup>56</sup> With opportunities to rehabilitate as a prelude to their return to the jobs and professions they practiced before their disability or train them to engage in other jobs or professions consistent with their inclinations, abilities, and circumstances.

Second, we must provide people with severe disabilities with opportunities to rehabilitate through part-time work, directing them to sectors that suit them and fit their abilities and obliging institutions and departments to absorb a certain percentage of this population into some of the work they can do.

Third, we must care for people who cannot work fully by establishing social welfare centers and other centers and complexes where business is conducted to suit this population segment and provide them with an appropriate income.

Fourth, people with disabilities must be excluded from some general rules that apply to other state workers, such as official working time and places of work.

Fifth, we must make express laws that guarantee the rights of persons with disabilities and for caring for their conditions within the relevant sections of the laws.

This legislative approach responds to the weakness and desire to participate in people with disabilities. It is meant to serve them, meet their Creator's will, obtain rewards, and alleviate their affliction. Whenever he heard of a patient, the Messenger of Allah Almighty (May the peace and blessing be upon him) would quickly run to greet him in his home and express his feelings in the face of pain and affliction.

As the Prophet (*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*) cares for and loves a patient, he will pray for the sick person and give him glad tidings. To this effect, Umm Alaa reported, “The Messenger of Allah Almighty visited me while I was sick.” He said, “Be glad, Umm al-Ala' for Allah Almighty removes the sins of a Muslim for his illness as fire removes the dross of gold and silver”.<sup>57</sup>

Moreover, he, the Prophet (*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*), used to respond to the patient's needs and walked with him until he fulfilled his needs. Anas Ibn Malik (*Raḍi Allah ‘anhu*) said that a lady who had mental problems said: “O you, the Messenger of Allah Almighty, I need your assistance;” then the Prophet (*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*) said, “Mother of so and so, see on which side of the road you would like (to stand and talk) so that I may do the needful for you.” He stood with her on the roadside until she obtained what she needed.<sup>58</sup>

People with disabilities should be the first to be treated nicely and given the best care. Therefore, someone should be assigned to

them to help them. It was reported that Umar bin Abdulaziz (*Raḍi Allah ‘anhu*) wrote to all provinces under Sham (Syria). He said,

“Register the names of all the blind, crippled, or hemiplegia, or an impotent that prevents him from standing up to prayer. Therefore, the list was sent to him, and he ordered that each blind person be assigned a guide, and every two impotent be assigned a servant”.<sup>59</sup>

Al-Walid bin Abdul Malik (*Raḍi Allah ‘anhu*) did the same thing. He cared for the sick, the blind, and the disabled and provided them with the necessary stipends and appropriate government grants; he assigned a servant to each person with disabilities and a guide to every blind person. He also built a hospital for treating leprosy and a shelter for the elderly in Damascus. That hospital has been named after him and still exists.<sup>60</sup> Similarly, Abu Al-Mansur built a hospital for blind people, a shelter for the lepers, and another shelter for the old in Baghdad.<sup>61</sup> Hence, social solidarity is the responsibility of all members of society, and people should help each other.<sup>62</sup>

The early Muslims established various endowments and spent those endowments on different charities. The amount of their *Awqaf* is inconceivable for a person in the East or West. It is not possible to assess the amount of endowments going to mosques. Similarly, the amount of endowments devoted to students’ education and the sheltering of lepers and sick people is incommensurable.<sup>63</sup> Therefore, “the endowment is an open door for those who want individuals or institutions to resort to the pleasure of Allah Almighty and gain reward. Hence, putting smiles on the faces of people with disabilities and bringing comfort to their souls should be the priority. Facilities that make life easy for them should be established so that people with disabilities feel that their brothers show solidarity towards them by striving to fulfill their needs.”<sup>64</sup> The Prophet (*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*) says.

“A Muslim is a brother to his fellow Muslim. He should not oppress him nor betray him, and whoever meets the need of his brother Allah Almighty will give him and whoever removes hardship from a Muslim; Allah Almighty will remove hardship from him from among the hardships on the day of resurrection”. The Messenger of Allah Almighty (*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*) was asked: what works better? He said, “Bringing pleasure in a believer by feeding him when he is hungry, cover his nakedness, or help him meet his needs”.<sup>65</sup>



Muslims continue to pay attention to these recommendations, as jurists expanded the interpretation of an important category of zakat beneficiaries, which is *fi Sabillah* (cause of Allah Almighty). Indeed, these beneficiaries include people with special needs, such as people with disabilities, paralysis, and chronic diseases. It was reported that Umar Ibn Abdul Azeez (*Raḍi Allah ‘anhu*) ordered Ibn Shihab Al-Zuhri (d. 124 AH) (*Raḍi Allah ‘anhu*) to write the Sunnah for charity. He wrote, “The share of people with low incomes is half for each of the poor who has a deficiency who cannot work or move around the earth.”<sup>66</sup> Hence, treating people with disabilities became part of Islamic civilization.

### **Conclusion**

An examination of how Islamic culture treats people with special needs reveals that *The Holy Qur’ān* grants rights to these people. Therefore, Islam seeks to integrate people with disabilities into societies and address the environment in which they live. *The Holy Qur’ān* teaches and educates people on behaviours they must adopt when facing their brothers with disabilities and their families. Islam expressly mentions that what happens to disabled people does not diminish their social position and does not affect their value in society. All people are equal. This study emphasizes the activation of Islam's noble principles, which are contained in *The Holy Qur’ān* and the Sunnah of the Prophet (*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātam un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā Ālihiwa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*), as central, intellectual, and cultural components in countries in the Islamic world. In particular, these principles apply to people with disabilities and create a place for them based on brotherhood, love, and equality.

The effective integration of people with disabilities that the two revelations call for and the dignity they give these people must become an integral part of educational practice across all countries in the Islamic world and all stages of education and Rehabilitation. What is meant here is to maintain what may be found in different educational policies that urge for human dignity and respect for human rights but the deepening, refining, and spreading of these values. This study stresses the importance of investing modern and advanced technology in the Islamic educational project and, in particular, the importance of employing all of this technology in the service of the vision of Islam on people with disabilities; this vision includes dignity and equality. Therefore, Islam is ahead of other religions in development, production, and creativity; it also communicates information to people quickly and easily without any obstacles.

Counseling does not depend on providing primary care and ensuring that persons with disabilities have access to material needs. Rather, it extends to social care in which the process of engaging individuals with special needs—people with disabilities—in society and interacting with them is facilitated to make them feel valued by society. There are many mosques in the Islamic world, and those are the most widespread social institutions there; therefore, mosques have a profound impact on the Muslim community members, and their role must not be neglected. They should instead be activated and strengthened to serve people with disabilities and provide them with a decent life within the societies in which they live.

### Notes and References

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