

Received: December 2023 Accepted: January 2024

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.58262/ks.v12i2.408>

Preserving the Family Entity and its Values "Constitutional Study"

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Abstract

The strength and stability of any nation depend on the cohesion of its people and the extent to which they uphold values and principles that contribute to the nation's advancement. Among these values, the preservation of family values stands as a cornerstone. This paper delves into the critical role played by the constitutional legislator in Iraq in preserving family values and the responsibility it places on federal authorities to translate these constitutional commitments into practical actions. The research problem addressed in this paper revolves around the preservation of family values within the constitutional framework of Iraq. Through a comprehensive analysis of constitutional provisions, laws, and the responsibilities of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches, this study aims to shed light on the intricate interplay between constitutional law and the preservation of family values, as well as the constitutional guarantees related. The paper shows through its conclusion that there is a constitutional protection to preserve the family entity and its values through the constitutional texts that guarantee the values of the family, in addition to the role of the federal authorities in applying these constitutional texts to obtain an integrated guarantee to preserve these values.

1. Introduction

The strength of any nation is contingent upon the cohesion of its people and the extent to which its citizens uphold values and principles that contribute significantly to the nation's advancement. When families within a nation become fragmented and lack homogeneity, it can lead to internal disintegration, surpassing external threats in its potential harm to the nation's stability and political system. Therefore, the constitutional legislator plays a pivotal role in preserving the essence of the family and its values. This matter stands as one of the most important topics that must be included in the constitutional document, as it constitutes a fundamental principle upon which the constitution's existence and the legality of the state rely.

Furthermore, this constitutional text requires the transition from theory into practicality. This can be achieved by assigning constitutional responsibility to the federal authorities within the state, each according to its jurisdiction and constitutional powers, to preserve the essence of the family and its values. As well, this paper explores the role of federal authorities in fulfilling their constitutional duty to safeguard the family and its values, examining the responsibilities of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches in this regard. Through a comprehensive analysis of these components, this research endeavors to shed light on the intricate interplay between constitutional law and the preservation of family values, emphasizing the pivotal role of the state in nurturing a cohesive and virtuous society.

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The importance of this paper is demonstrated by the central role that the family plays in building society, and consequently, in building the state. The better and values-preserving the family is, the more it will reflect on the cohesion of the state and its development in all areas of life. Therefore, it is necessary for the constitutional legislator, if it wants to preserve the entity of the state and its people, to strive to preserve the entity of the family and its values.

The researcher adopted the analytical approach, which is a method of research that involves breaking down a complex concept or issue into its constituent parts in order to understand it better. In this case, the researcher analyzed the constitutional texts of the Constitution of the Republic of Iraq for the year 2005 to understand their relationship and role in preserving the family entity and its values. He also analyzed the laws related to this field in order to provide a comprehensive understanding of the legal framework for family protection in Iraq. As well as discussing the noble Qur'anic verses and prophetic tradition (Sunnah) that demonstrate the importance and necessity of preserving the family entity and its values.

The research problem is represented by several questions that the research seeks to answer, namely:

- 1- Did the constitutional legislator really care about the family?
- 2- What are the limits of the constitutional legislator's care for the family in the event of its existence?
- 3- What are the constitutional guarantees that the constitutional legislator has created in the constitution to preserve the family entity?
- 4- What is the meaning of family values and what are the types that the constitutional legislator seeks to preserve?

By answering these questions, the researcher will be able to identify any legal deficiencies in the protection of the family. The research will then propose some recommendations for how to address these deficiencies.

The researcher aims to prove that the Iraqi constitutional legislator has given significant attention to the family by enacting constitutional texts that guarantee the rights of the family and preserve its entity and values. The researcher also aims to show that the constitutional legislator has imposed obligations on the federal authorities to carry out this constitutional commitment.

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2. Concept of the Family and its Value

The family has always been a fundamental necessity for human beings. Humans cannot do without the family in their growth and development. The need for a family is natural and essential. This is why people have lived in families since ancient times, regardless of whether they lived in forests, mountains, or cities. The family is the reason for the existence and survival

of humans, as well as the reason for their happiness and suffering (al-Saffar, 2006). Hence, to understand the constitutional protection of the family and its values, we must first define the concept of the family and its values, and then discuss them in the following two branches.

2.1 Definition of the Family

The term 'family' has garnered diverse legal interpretations, reflecting the nuanced perspectives surrounding this foundational social institution. One conventional legal definition characterizes a family as:

A relationship and a bond consisting of the spouses and their children (Al-Shawi, 2013). In contrast, another, more comprehensive legal perspective posits:

The family is a great human institution that arises from a sacred marital bond in which man and woman complement each other psychologically, socially, and humanely with sympathy, cooperation, and raising children. Usually, the general policy of the family is organized by a wise and compassionate person called the head of the family, who is the man, assisted by a person with a great soul, a kind and loving heart, and a sacred responsibility, which is the woman (al-Saffar, 2006).

The first definition is more literal, as it simply states that the family is a group of people related to each other by marriage. The second definition is more comprehensive, as it provides a more detailed description of the family's role and function in society.

Based on this, it is possible to define the family as:

The relationship between a man and a woman within the legal framework and the children that result from that, aiming to cooperate among them based on affection and mercy to achieve benefits and prevent harm from all persons belonging to this relationship.

This definition is more comprehensive than the first definition, as it includes the notion of a legal framework for the family. It is also more subjective than the second definition, as it uses the terms "affection" and "mercy" to describe the family's relationships.

This multifaceted legal understanding underscores the intricate and dynamic nature of the family as a pivotal legal institution within society."

2.2 Definition of the Family's Values

The concept of values has been expounded through a range of definitions, among which one elucidates values as:

"Qualities by which an entity, whether an action, an individual, or a system, distinguishes itself, rendering it deserving of commendation or criticism. These attributes imbue intrinsic worth upon the associated entity" (Ali, 2005).

Furthermore, values have been posited as:

"Foundational principles and normative guidelines that steer individual behavior, facilitating the evaluation of one's beliefs and actions, ultimately culminating in the pursuit of loftier ideals and ethical ascension at both personal and societal levels" (Mughali, 2019).

In light of these perspectives, we can define values as:

"Immutable and established ideals with the overarching objective of promoting human well-being and moral rectitude, both in this world and the Hereafter.

Therefore, it can be asserted that these values, in all their forms, are rooted in the teachings of prophets and wise individuals. Indeed, human beings alone cannot determine their values unless there is a guide and instructor who, from the moment of their creation, instills in them the innate ability to distinguish between the distinction between good and bad things, and this is what Allah almighty elucidated in the Holy Quran, where he said: “ by the soul and Who shaped it, and inspired it with its sin and its piety” (Holy Quran, Surah Al-Shams, verses 7 and 8.).

Therefore, denying the correlation between reality and moral values necessitates affirming the authenticity and centrality of human beings in choosing their moral value system. This consideration may justify the emergence of a form of chaos within the ethical framework (Al Mousawi & Haqiqat, 2011).

3. The Importance of Preserving the Family Entity, and its Values and Types

To preserve the integrity of the family unit and its associated values, which significantly impact the maintenance of societal values and righteousness, a state that safeguards the values of its people reaps substantial benefits across various dimensions. This extends beyond the realm of religion alone, encompassing societal facets that contribute to good citizenship. Moreover, it stands as a pivotal element in upholding the principle of legality.

These values are diverse and multifaceted, each bearing a specific influence on the overall welfare of society. Therefore, this topic will be addressed in two separate and sequential sections.

The issue of preserving the family unit is intricately intertwined with the matter of safeguarding family values. A family can only be considered successful and virtuous when it is built upon and guided by the values that govern the relationships among its members. Otherwise, even if it appears intact superficially, it may be internally dilapidated.

Hence, the topic of preserving family values holds significant importance across various levels and dimensions, which we will elucidate in the following paragraphs.

1- The Religious Importance

The issue of preserving family values is considered one of the most crucial matters emphasized by Islam, and it has been made an obligatory and specific duty for every individual. Numerous pieces of evidence support this, including as stated in the Quran in the Almighty's saying:

" Believers, guard yourselves and your families against the Fire" (Surah Al-Tahrim, verses 6.).

And the saying of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his family): "Each one of you is a shepherd, and each is responsible for his flock" (al-Majlisi, 1983).

Furthermore, the message of Imam Ali ibn Hussain (peace be upon him), known as the "Treatise on Rights" (Risalat al-Huquq), serves as a prime example of this emphasis. It delineates a comprehensive framework for the relationships among all family members (Al-Harrani, 1986).

2- Constitutional Importance

One of the most crucial factors for the success and stability of a state is the supremacy of the law within it. This is articulated in Paper 5 of the Iraqi Constitution of 2005, which states: "The law is sovereign. The people are the source of authority and legitimacy".

Therefore, ensuring the well-being of the family through the preservation of its values leads to two significant outcomes in the pursuit of upholding the principle of legality and maintaining state stability, are:

- 1 - The righteousness of individuals is achieved through the well-being of the family, which leads to a reduction in rebellion, law violations, and criminal activities. Consequently, this will contribute to enhancing security and stability within the state.
- 2 - Since the people are the source of authority, it follows that the authorities are composed of individuals from the populace. Therefore, if the people are righteous, this will lead to the righteousness of the authorities, ultimately resulting in the attainment of prosperity and progress for all.

3- Social Importance

Proper upbringing of children and the preservation of values by parents lead to enriching the community with virtuous individuals who are devoted to goodness and righteousness for all. This, in turn, results in the advancement of society and the acquisition of benefits for everyone.

Therefore, one of the essential pillars in the process of sound education is the righteousness of parents, if they are not righteous, they cannot instill righteousness (Habib, 2002).

3.2 Types of Family Values

Family values encompass various types, but we will focus on the most significant values outlined in the Iraqi Constitution of 2005, which are as follows:

Firstly: Religious Values

These are the principles and standards established by the Holy Quran and the Prophetic tradition (Sunnah). They serve to assess an individual's behavior and guide them toward the path of righteousness. This is achieved by promoting virtuous conduct and discouraging engagement in vices and immoral actions that diminish one's character and standing in society (Obeid, 2020).

Secondly: Moral Values

These values pertain to the factors of social upbringing and the methods of education within the family, school, and the broader social environment in which a child grows and acquires these values (Salman, 2020).

Thirdly: National Values

These values revolve around the child's sense of national identity, attachment to their homeland, pride in their cultural heritage, and loyalty. They also involve efforts to elevate the nation's status among other countries (Ibid, 446).

4. Constitutional Guarantees to Preserve the Family Entity and its Values

Preserving the integrity of the family unit and its associated values necessitates a concerted effort and the equitable distribution of responsibilities between family members and the state. When parents do not find an appropriate environment for their children's upbringing outside of their homes, their mission of upholding the values they instilled in their offspring becomes exceedingly challenging. This challenge arises from the fact that children and adolescents are inherently influenced by the environment in which they live. Consequently, it has been argued that the state serves as the embodiment of moral ideals.

From this perspective, a constitutional responsibility lies squarely on the state to ensure the preservation of what parents have cultivated within the familial domain concerning family values. This imperative demands the inclusion of constitutional provisions designed to secure the necessary safeguards for preserving the family unit and its values. Where, the Constitution serves as a reflection of the ideology and convictions of the populace (Vedel, 2002), in addition to the measures taken by the three authorities of government to ensure the enforcement of constitutional provisions. These aspects will be expounded upon in the ensuing two sections.

4.1 The Constitutional Provisions Preserving the Family Entity and its Values

Constitutional provisions designed to safeguard the family unit and its diverse values may take two distinct forms. Firstly, there are indirect, general constitutional provisions that address the overarching frameworks of societal identity. Secondly, there are direct, specific constitutional provisions that explicitly outline the state's responsibility for preserving this institution and its values. These two distinct forms will be explored in detail in the following:

4.1.1 General Constitutional Papers

Numerous constitutional provisions have addressed the broad framework of Iraqi society, within which the state's obligation to safeguard the family unit and its associated values can be discerned. These values constitute an integral component of Iraq's social identity. To illustrate, Paper 2/First of the Iraqi Constitution of 2005 explicitly states:

"Islam is the official religion of the state, and it is a fundamental source of legislation."

This declaration signifies that all legislation enacted by the Iraqi Council of Representatives must conform to the principles of Islam, given its status as a foundational source of legislation. Consequently, no legislation may contravene the principles and values associated with the family, nor may it advocate for its dissolution, as the family is one of the central pillars of Islamic jurisprudence.

Furthermore, the second paragraph of the same paper underscores this commitment:

"This Constitution guarantees the Islamic identity of the majority of the Iraqi people and guarantees the full religious rights to freedom of religious belief and practice of all individuals such as Christians, Yazidis, and Mandeans Sabians."

This provision reinforces the commitment to preserving the Islamic identity, which encompasses the values associated with the family, among the majority of the Iraqi populace. Moreover, Paper 3 provides further clarification:

"Iraq is a country of multiple nationalities, religions, and sects ... and it is part of the Islamic world."

This signifies that Iraq is an integral part of the Islamic world, which encourages the respect of familial relationships and the promotion of family values. Any neglect or deficiency in preserving these values would risk excluding Iraq from this Islamic and international sphere.

4.1.2 Private Constitutional Papers

Paper 29/First/A of the Iraqi Constitution delineates the critical importance of preserving the integrity of the family unit and the associated values it embodies within the broader societal context. This paper explicitly states:

"The family is the foundation of society, the State shall preserve it and its religious, moral, and national values".

This text underscores the profound interrelationship between the well-being of the family and the overall welfare of society. It posits that the family's flourishing contributes intrinsically to the overall societal well-being, and conversely, the safeguarding of societal values is contingent upon the preservation of the values that uphold the sanctity of the family institution. This interdependence underscores the pivotal role of family values in shaping the societal fabric.

The second paragraph of Paper 29 reinforces these principles, elucidating:

" Children have the right to upbringing, care, and education from their parents. Parents have the right to respect and care from their children, especially in times of need, disability, and old age".

This clause accentuates the intrinsic religious values that underpin the cultivation of societal harmony. It underscores the notion that honoring parents and a good upbringing for children contribute to a culture that reveres its elders and embraces compassion. Furthermore, it underscores the pivotal role of parents in inculcating virtuous values and ethical conduct within society through responsible child-rearing practices.

Furthermore, the fourth paragraph of the paper addresses a pivotal issue:

" All forms of violence and abuse in the family, school, and society shall be prohibited".

This prohibition holds substantial significance, as it fosters a culture characterized by values of tolerance and compassion, positioning these as the fundamental pillars upon which interpersonal relations within the community are built.

Collectively, these constitutional provisions serve as a testament to the paramount significance of family values in shaping a cohesive and ethical society. They construct a constitutional framework that underpins societal harmony and accentuates the role of family dynamics in nurturing values that transcend the confines of the family nucleus, ultimately fostering a harmonious and virtuous community.

4.2 The Role of the Federal Authorities in Preserving the Family and its Values

The responsibility for the preservation of family integrity and values is a shared one, involving not only parents but also society at large. Additionally, individuals who possess influence and financial resources are not exempt from this responsibility. The highest degree of responsibility and care, however, falls upon the government and its governing authorities (al-Shirazi, 1997). This fundamental principle is reflected in the Iraqi Constitution, specifically in Paper 29/First, which places the primary responsibility for safeguarding the family unit and its values squarely on the shoulders of the state.

In the context of our inquiry, focusing on the constitutional aspect of the state's responsibility to preserve the family unit and its values, we will examine the role of federal authorities in fulfilling this duty across three branches. The first branch will delve into the role of the legislative authority in preserving the family unit and its values. The second branch will explore the responsibilities of the executive authority in this regard, while the third branch will address the role of the judicial authority in upholding this constitutional responsibility.

4.2.1 The Role of the Legislative Authority

The role of the legislative authority is manifested in the enactment of laws that address the aspirations of the people and the implementation of the state's policies (Abdullah, 2021). One of the most significant matters addressed within the constitutional framework, particularly in

Paper 29/First/A, is the preservation of the family unit and its values. However, it is a condition that these values do not conflict with the principles of Islam, for two main reasons:

Firstly, these values are derived from religious principles and rulings, as previously discussed. Therefore, they cannot be regulated in a manner that contradicts the provisions already established by Islamic law.

Secondly, as long as the Constitution did not designate another primary source, it is implicitly built upon the premise that Islam alone is the primary source with the highest status. Consequently, anything not in alignment with Islam may be deemed contrary to the constitution, subject, thus, to challenge on the grounds of unconstitutionality (Metwally, 2004).

Such is indicated by Paper 2/First/A of the current Iraqi Constitution, which states, "No law may be enacted that contradicts the established provisions of Islam".

Building on this, the role of the Iraqi Council of Representatives in preserving the family unit and its values is evident through the legislation it has passed in this area. Some of these laws include:

Anti- Prostitution Law No. 8 of 1988.

Narcotics Drug and Psychotropic Substances Law No. 50 of 2017.

Official Holidays Law No. 110 of 1972, amended by Amendment Order No. 18 of 2005, designated the day of Ashura as an official holiday. This designation aims to preserve the religious values of the society and provide individuals with the opportunity to mourn Imam Hussein, peace be upon him.

Additionally, the Federal General Budget Law of 2017 allocated specific percentages to ensure national security and address the needs of internally displaced persons, thereby contributing to the preservation of the country's stability and social values.

4.2.2 The Role of the Executive Authority

The role of the executive authority, in accordance with the principle of legality, is to adhere to the laws (Duverger, 1970). Consequently, it is obligated to implement the laws related to the protection and establishment of the family unit, especially considering that the Prime Minister is typically the candidate of the largest parliamentary bloc. Therefore, governmental and parliamentary cohesion is expected in this field (Duhamel, 2000).

The executive authority possesses various means to achieve this legislative policy, including:

Temporarily suspending official working hours in the majority of Iraqi provinces to allow employees and citizens to participate in the pilgrimage to Imam Hussein's shrine. For instance, this was reflected in the decision made by the governor of Diwaniya, numbered 4659, dated September 22, 2021.

The issuance of a circular by the head of the Iraqi Bar Association numbered 4756, dated May 2, 2023, which emphasized the commitment of lawyers to a dignified appearance suitable for the legal profession, with specific reference to prohibiting the wearing of jeans, tight, strange, revealing, or provocative clothing. Violations of these guidelines may result in legal accountability.

A decision by the head of the Iraqi Medical Association, numbered 3063, dated August 7, 2023, instructing all branches and formations of the association to cease cooperation with social

gender programs, due to their content conflicting with human biological realities, religious values, and honorable customs.

4.2.3 The Role of the Judiciary Authority

The judiciary assumes a paramount role in safeguarding societal values and preserving fundamental rights and freedoms within a legal framework. It acts as a deterrent against encroachments and transgressions committed by individuals or governmental authorities. The judicial system is tasked with preventing such violations, rectifying them when they occur, and ensuring appropriate compensation for any harm incurred.

In the context of upholding societal values, the judicial authority plays a vital role in shaping and maintaining the moral and ethical fabric of society through its decisions and legal judgments. Several illustrative instances underscore the judiciary's role in preserving values:

A landmark decision rendered by the Federal Supreme Court, identified as case number 582/Civil/2022, in sequence 5764, issued on July 17, 2002, is particularly instructive. This decision emphasized the importance of preserving the religious values of the family unit by advocating the retention of virtuous names, ones imbued with meaning and associated with the *Ahl al-Bayt* (peace be upon them). Such names, it was argued, contribute positively to a child's psychological development. In this case, the court rejected a father's request to change his daughter's name from "Zainab" to "Eileen" on the grounds that "Zainab" was a culturally significant and commonly used name that did not carry indecent connotations or contravene societal norms.

Furthermore, a significant ruling emanating from the Karkh Misdemeanor Court, under case number 500/Part 1/2023, dated February 7, 2023, exemplifies the judiciary's commitment to upholding values. In this instance, the court sentenced the defendant (S) to a six-month term of simple imprisonment for her involvement in the production and dissemination of several films and videos containing explicit and offensive content, which ran contrary to prevailing public morals and decency. The court deemed these materials as inappropriate for public exhibition.

An additional illustration of the judiciary's role in safeguarding values is demonstrated through an official directive issued by the Head of the Supreme Judicial Council, identified as document number 204/Office/2023, dated February 8, 2023. This directive underscored the necessity of implementing stringent legal measures against individuals who engage in criminal activities related to the dissemination of content that offends public decency and promotes unethical behavior through various social media platforms.

In summary, the judiciary functions as a vital guardian of societal values, ensuring their preservation through a combination of legal rulings, judgments, and directives, thereby reinforcing the ethical foundations of the society it serves.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, through the research conducted, it becomes evident that preserving the integrity of the family unit and its values has positive effects on the stability and well-being of the state. These effects encompass religious, social, and constitutional dimensions, all of which contribute to upholding the state's entity. Where, religious impact preserves family values aligned with religious principles, as family values are integral to the social fabric of Iraq. as well

as the Iraqi Constitution recognizes the importance of preserving family values. In addition, the whole bears part of the joint responsibility between the head of the family and the federal authorities in the country by providing the appropriate means and mechanisms to preserve the family entity and its values. Thus, several noteworthy findings and recommendations have concluded:

Firstly: Findings

- 1- Preserving the integrity of the family institution and its inherent values constitutes one of the paramount constitutional responsibilities vested in the state.
- 2- The imperative of safeguarding the family institution and its associated values emanates from a nexus of religious, social, and legal tenets.
- 3- Constitutional provisions governing the preservation of this matter exhibit variances between direct and indirect approaches.
- 4- The protection of family values and the family institution transcends mere constitutional provisions, extending to practical actualization through the mandates and jurisdictions of federal authorities.

Secondly: Recommendations

- 1- It is suggested that the Iraqi legislature formulate dedicated legislation addressing the safeguarding of family values, coupled with the imposition of stringent penalties targeting individuals seeking to transgress these values.
- 2- It is recommended that federal authorities, with particular emphasis on the executive branch, undertake initiatives to incentivize and reward individuals who uphold family values, refraining from an exclusive reliance on punitive measures against violators.
- 3- We advocate for the executive and educational entities to disseminate informative discourse among students, instilling values and ethics that underscore the perils associated with alien ideologies that undermine societal values.
- 4- It is proposed that the executive and judiciary intensify their vigilance over contemporary media platforms, frequently exploited for the propagation of moral decadence and the erosion of established values. Such vigilance should extend to pre-publication content scrutiny to preserve the fabric of society's values.

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