

## ISLAMIC PREVENTIVE MEASURES ON PREMARITAL TEEN SEX: A RELIGIOUS MODEL

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### ABSTRACT

*Premarital sex behaviors among adolescents or adults are subjected to the ethos of religious rules. Any form of sex outside marriage including adultery, homosexuality, rape, child sex abuse, lesbianism, prostitution, infidelity, and etc, is a criminal offence and subsequently prohibited in Islam. The objective of this research is to examine the position of Islam on premarital sex behaviors. The significance of the research lies on the fact that it studies the Islamic preventive measures on premarital sex particularly on teenagers. It is illegal and forbidden in the shari'ah; the general will of God which is revealed for the betterment of all mankind and for the protection of the progeny, family institution and the health of the individual. The methodology adopted in this research is library based analytical and evaluative methods. The data of this research is collected from reliable sources including the Qur'an and the hadith of the Prophet as well as other authentic sources. After various studies on the subject we now know that there are a range of factors that lead to premarital sex. These factors constitute; psychological factors, physical and social environment, sex orientations during the period of adolescence and puberty, global trend and economic status.*

**Keywords:** premarital sex behaviors, teenagers, Islam, religion, adultery, Teen Sex

### INTRODUCTION

To begin with one should argue that, religion be it Islam or other Godly and human beliefs advocate marriage and condemns premarital sex including adultery and other forms of sexual behavior. In Islam particularly, the Qur'anic position is crystal clear. Recent academic researches on the subject also confirmed that religion plays crucial role in adolescent sexual activities. Research has also shown that religious role is associated with abstention, delaying or limiting premarital sex among teenagers. The impact of religion on the sexual behavior of the adolescent depends largely on the social characteristics, including; age, ethnicity, gender, and family circumstance and background. It is unfortunate that the mainstream modern Muslims debate on the punishment of adultery but less people talk about the devastating impact on the teenagers who are, in fact, the most vulnerable group to adultery in the society.

#### **The Nature and History of Premarital Sex: Adultery**

Before we embark on the Islamic viewpoint on adultery it is significant to establish the nature and the history of adultery. From a Latin word *adulterium*, adultery is a form of disloyalty, faithlessness, betrayal, treachery and infidelity. In English dictionaries, it refers to a sex between a married woman and a person other than her husband. In other words; it is a voluntary sexual intercourse between married man or woman and a partner other than the legal spouse. However, this view on adultery is rather a single Western interpretation of adultery and it does not, in any way, represent comprehensive view (Webster's New World Dictionary and Thesaurus).

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In effect, it ignores the views of the bible and early civilizations on adultery. It is therefore interesting to note that the bible in its religious content sees adultery more than an illicit sex. The bible commands that: "You shall not commit adultery". Not only that, but the bible goes further to remind Christians and Jews that: "anyone who looks on a woman to lust for her has committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Matt. 5:27-28). Adulterers according to the bible have nothing to do with God. In one of its version the bible states that: "homosexuals... adulterers...shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Cor. 6:9-10).

Obviously therefore, the definition of the English dictionaries on adultery is a misguided interpretation as it reduces adultery to cheating on one's lawful spouse. The Arabic word for adultery is zina. Arabic dictionaries when defining zina state the view that zina is an unlawful sexual intercourse, that is, an intercourse which is outside the boundaries of a lawful marriage. This Arabic lexicographical definition of zina is in line with the view of Islam on premarital sex.

The History of adultery could be sketched in the edicts and the legal documents of Ancient societies; including primeval Egyptian laws, Hindus' social regulations, Babylonian edicts, as well as the Greeks, Persian and Roman legal and social systems. One thing that these societies have in common in their approach on adultery is that they emphasized on the capital punishment for the adulterers. At the same time they also related adultery to marriage.

The Babylonian's most famous laws are those developed by King Hammurabi in the 18th century BC, and Hammurabi code on adultery is indeed an important insight. The code on adultery recommends death punishment for both individuals involved by drowning. Interestingly the law also mentioned on adultery by incest and sets down deferent levels of punishments in terms of severity depending on which relative involved in the case. If a son involves with the mother both were burned to death. The ancient Egyptians on the other hand used to castrate and cut the nose of the adulterers. The early Hindus were more concerned on family community order and the purity of the castes (Muhamad Zafiriddin Nadvi, 1982).

The early Hindu edicts on adultery resort to threats about hell after death, reincarnation as a creeping insect and denial of sacred waters. It however, provides no specific penalty for the adulterers. The Chinese meanwhile adopted diverse approaches to deal with the adulterers. Fines and castration were the most common measures considered as a punishment for the adulterers. On the other hand, the Jewish Torah recommends death penalty for adultery, while the Greeks also used death for adultery adulterers. In fact, in the Greek civilization the adulterers were disqualified from holding any government office. Persians tossed the adulterers down headlong into a deep well to die. In the Roman system the husband puts his adulteress wife to death in whatever way he wished and the adulterer husband's were usually exiled after confiscating their wealth or put them to death. In a similar outlook, in the pre-Islamic Arabian societies death punishment was used for adulterers (Ajijola, 2008).

### **Islamic Outlook on Premarital Adultery**

According to Islamic point of view, adultery is a violation of human existence and one of the major sins condemned by Allah. The Qur'anic commentators (*Mufasirun*) have agreed that adultery is a crime not against one person but against the whole society. It is a distraction of the marriage institution. This institution is the backbone of the society and responsibility to be assumed by those who are ready to live according to rules set by the al-mighty Allah. In the third year of Hijrah Allah affirmed adultery as a blameworthy act; however it was not considered as a crime at that time, the reason being that the law enforcement agencies were not in place to deal with it and subsequently it was a social crime against the family institution. In this regard the Qur'an in Surah al-Nisa states that:

*"If any of your women are guilty of lewdness, take the evidence of four (Reliable) witnesses from amongst you against them; and if They testify, confine them to houses until death do claim them, or Allah ordain for them some (other) way" (Al-Qur'an, 4:15).*

Three years later after the legal systems have consolidated Allah revealed other verses that prohibited adultery for good. These verses also, to an immediate effect, abrogated the above verse, at the same

time have prescribed Allah's punishment for adultery. The most central verse on adultery in the Qur'an in relation to our study is this verse which reads:

*"Nor come nigh to adultery: for it is a shameful (deed) and an evil, opening the road (to other evils)" (Qur'an, 17:32).*

When Allah outlawed adultery in this verse He the almighty blocked all the roads, networks, mechanisms and attitudes which lead to this evil sin. This is because, adultery metes out malevolence injures upon the family and persons' religiosity, dignity, honor and genealogy. In fact, this verse is a persuasively powerful discourse which is vividly expressive on the prohibition of the ways and acts which are preliminary introduction to entire process and approaches of adultery. Closing the doors that may lead to committing it is a major method used by Allah whenever He proscribes an evil sin of this nature. In a hadith the Prophet said:

*"The adultery of the eyes is evil looks. The adultery of the feet is to walk towards the sin. The adultery of the tongue is lustful talk. The adultery of the heart is the evil desire and in the end the sexual organs testify all this or deny it." (Bukhari) In a similar hadith the Prophet said: "The hands also commit adultery; their adultery is touching; the feet also commit adultery; their adultery is walking towards adultery; the mouth also commits adultery, its adultery is kissing" (Muslim and Abi Dawood).*

In the present days we witness Muslim parents consenting or tolerating their teenage children bring there boyfriends or girlfriends to the house. Indeed, this verse teaches mankind wide-ranging lessons which forbid men and women meeting alone in seclusion let alone to touch, kiss or romance. The Qur'an also forbids gratuitous or motiveless mixing of the sexes and further bars promiscuous gazing at the opposite sex. Allah states in the Qur'an that:

*Tell the believing men that they should reduce/lower their gaze and guard their private parts and tell the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their private parts (Al-Qur'an, 24:31).*

It is apparent that, Muslims are on the verge of loosing their modesty as we adhere to Western ethos and norms. Adopting the civilizational outlook or lifestyle of irreligious footing inflames immorality. In an authentic hadith the Prophet said: *"Modesty is a part of Iman"* (Bukhari and Muslim). It is unfortunate that in our current Muslim social set up, adultery is becoming a widespread and commonly acknowledged; it moves stealthily into Muslim households. On the punishment of the adulterer and adulteress, the definite penal punishment in the Qur'an; *had*, plural *huduud*, is an applicable punishment to the teenage adulterers who reached the age of puberty. Islam as a system which advocates pure family institution prescribes archetypal or standard punishment. Adultery in fact, destroys the household; the future of those involved, and completely ruins the family status. Allah says to this effect:

*"The woman and the man guilty of adultery or fornication, flog each of them with a hundred stripes: Let not compassion move you in their case, in a matter prescribed by Allah, if ye believe in Allah and the Last Day: and let a party of the Believers witness their punishment" (Al-Qur'an, 24:2).*

In another verse Allah says:

*"And those who accuse chaste women and then do not produce four witnesses - lash them with eighty lashes and do not accept from them testimony ever after. And those are the defiantly disobedient, except for those who repent thereafter and reform, for indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful" (Al-Qur'an, 24: 4).*

In a related verse Allah reminds:

*"Those (are the servants of the Most Gracious Allah) who invoke not, with Allah, any other god; nor take the life which Allah has forbidden except for just cause; nor commit adultery; and whosoever does this, shall meet the punishment. The punishment will be doubled for him on the Day of Resurrection, and he will dwell therein disdained forever" (Al-Qur'an, 24:68).*

The hadith is in line with the Qur'an on the punishment of adulterers. The authentic hadith of the Prophet reads that:

*"When an unmarried male commits adultery with an unmarried female they should receive one hundred lashes and exile for one year, and in case of married male committing adultery with a married female, they should be stoned to death." (Muslim)*

In another hadith the Prophet said:

*"A person who commits adultery does not commit it in the state of Iman. A person who drinks alcohol does not drink it in the state of Iman" (Bukhari and Muslim).*

One should not be astounded by the severe punishment imposed on the act of on adultery, since it is one of the gravest sins of all the major sins in Islam Allah has prescribed serious punishment. The Prophet said:

*"There is no sin after shirk (polytheism) greater in the eyes of Allah than a drop of semen which a man places in the womb which is not lawful for him" (Bukhari and Muslim).*

Therefore, the relentless punishment is due to the fact that the underlining philosophy of Islam is based on modest and righteousness. Chastity in a person is seen paramount in the eyes of Allah as well as in the eyes of the public. Evidently the most important two elements in a society are individual modesty and social order. Adultery, based on all revealed edicts and acquired laws is a life-threatening level of immodesty and disorder.

### **The Sanctity of Fetus and the Status of Abortion in Islam**

Whenever Muslims discuss the status of fetus in Islam they relate it to legal endorsement, pregnancy and the methods of abortion and conception. As a matter of fact, therefore, the rules of abortion and that of fetus are indivisible in Islam. Abortion is a deliberate termination of human pregnancy and it refers to the ordinary eviction of a fetus from an expecting mother before birth. If it occurs instinctively is called miscarriage; it could also be an induced abortion and that is when the fetus is brought out purposefully. In other words, abortion is a procedure to end a pregnancy and it uses medicine or surgery to remove the fetus and placenta from the uterus (Abul Fadl Mohsin Ebrahim, 1988).

World religions and early civilizations have banned the plummet of fetus and primeval societies saw it as a crime both against the fetus and the mother. In actual fact, in the early Hebrew traditions the husband of the aborting woman shared the crime. Hammurabi's code is the best code of early civilizations on abortion. In this code abortion was punished with monetary fines. The Greeks gave more rights to the fetus over the mother and the offenders received death punishment as a consequence for their action. Religious early Christians valued and cosseted the fetus. Christians who adhere to the divine principles of Christianity in general uphold the sanctity of life and personality for the fetus; thus, debarred abortion. Indeed, early Christian churches excommunicated the offenders.

In Islam, abortion involves the life and body of human being. Both are sacred and dignified from the ensoulment to the state of corpse. In actual fact, Islam recognizes the preciousness of fetus life, and believes it should be protected fully. As this is human seed. The fetus is the unborn young of a viviparous vertebrate having a basic structural resemblance to the adult person. Scientifically speaking, fetus is unborn young from the end of the eighth week after conception to the moment of birth. In other words, fetus is the developing young in the uterus, specifically the unborn offspring in the postembryonic period from eighth weeks after fertilization until birth. On balance, fetus is a term used to describe a developing human infant from approximately the third month of pregnancy until delivery (Abul Fadl Mohsin Ebrahim, 1995).

Islam values fetus life and saving it from misuse, murder or abortion is the duty of all mankind, therefore taking the life of fetus without legitimate valid reasons (illa bi al-Haqi) is deemed severe offense. In the Qur'an Allah clearly reminded His disapproval of killing human being: "Take not life which Allah has made sacred" (al-Qur'an, 6:151). In another verse Allah warn mankind the

consequences of killing a believer. The verse reads: "If a man kills a believer intentionally, his recompense is Hell, to abide therein (for ever)" (Al-Qur'an, 4:93).

In actual fact, killing of a single individual human being equals to mass murder of the whole of mankind, Allah says:

*"Because of that, We ordained for the children of Israel that if anyone killed a person not in retaliation for murder or for spreading mischief on earth, it would be as if he killed all mankind. And who saved a life; it would be as if he saved all mankind" (Al-Qur'an, 5:32).*

The Qur'an warns Muslim believers in particular that:

*"Kill not your children for fear of want. We shall provide sustenance for them as well as for you. Verily the killing of them is a great sin" (Al-Qur'an, 17:31).*

In the Qur'an Allah bestowed man divine dignity, the *karamah*. This honor is due to the fact that human life is sacred and therefore it should be protected and preserved. The Qur'an on this reads:

*And indeed We have honored the Children of Adam, and We have carried them on land and sea, and have provided them with At-Tayyibat, and have preferred them above many of those whom We have created with a marked preferment (Al-Qur'an, 17:70).*

In a related verse Allah has honored the human beings by creating them in the best form. He says: "Verily, We created man in the best mould". (Al-Qur'an, 95:4). Indeed, in the ranking of the *maqasid* or the objective of the shari'ah human life is the second most important principle. The Qur'an legitimizes medical advances in saving human life, at the same time it bars other illegitimate methods such as euthanasia, abortion and suicide. In point of fact, advocating prevention or *wiqayah* and taking preventive measures against diseases are the crux of religious teachings in Islam. The Prophet has said both diseases and cure are from God. The hadith reads: "There is no disease that Allah has sent down except that He also has sent down its treatment" (Bukhari).

So be it the fetus or the cadaver, the holiness and sacredness of human life is assured by Allah. Homicide and carnage on children is condemned by the Qur'an as they are the vulnerable fatalities in all societies. In this regard, the Qur'an reads:

*"You shall not kill your children due to fear of poverty. We provide for them, as well as for you. Killing them is a gross offense" (Al-Qur'an, 17:32).*

The fetus or in Arabic *Janin* takes gradual formation in the womb. Both the hadith and the Qur'an are in agreement on this fact. Allah mentioned in the Qur'an the process of creation; it reads:

*"We created man from an extract of clay. Then We made him as a drop (nutfah) in a place of settlement, firmly fixed. Then We made the drop into an 'alaqah (leech, suspended thing, and blood clot), then We made the 'alaqah into a mudghah (chewed substance)... Then we made out of mudghah, 'izam (skeleton, bones), then We clothed the bones with lahm (muscles, flesh), then we caused him to grow and come into being and attain the definitive (human) form. So, blessed be God, the best to create" (Al-Qur'an 23:12).*

In another verse Allah mentioned that fetus is created from a drop of a mingled fluid (nutfahamshaj). The Qur'an reads:

*"Verily we created man from a drop of a mingled fluid-drop (nutjahamshaj), in order to try him: so We gave him (the gifts), of hearing and sight" (Al-Qur'an, 76: 2)*

In Surah al-Tariq Allah reminds that fetus is created from water. Allah says:

*"So, let man consider of what he was created. He was created of gushing Water" (Al-Qur'an, 86: 5)*

Fetus is also created from a sperm. The Qur'anic dictum on this reads:

*"He has created man from a sperm (fluid-drop) and behold this same (man) becomes an open disputer" (Al-Qur'an, 16:4)*

The creation of fetus was not without purpose. Allah reminds us:

*"Does man think that he will be left uncontrolled (without purpose)? Was he not once a fluid-drop of ejected semen) (Al-Qur'an, 75: 36)*

The Sunnah of the Prophet also studies the creation of the fetus. The hadith bestows lengthy passages on the creation of the fetus to indicate the importance of its life. The Prophet said in this regard:

*"Each one of you is collected (as nutfah) in the womb of his mother for forty (40) days, and then turns into a clot ('alaqah) for an equal period (of forty days) and turns into a piece of flesh (mudghah) for similar period (of forty days) and then God sends an angel and orders him to write things, i.e., his provision, his age, and whether he will be of the wretched or the blessed (in the Hereafter). Then the soul is breathed into him." (Bukhari).*

In another hadith, the Messenger of Allah teaches us that:

*"When 42 nights have passed from the time of the nutfah, Allah sends an Angel to it, who shapes it and makes it hearing, sight, skin, muscles and bone. Then he says: 'O Lord! Is it a male or female?' And your Lord decides what He wishes and the angel records" (Muslim).*

Similar ahadith could be cited:

*"When nutfah (zygote) has been established in the womb for forty (40) or forty-five (45) nights, the angel comes and says: 'My Lord, will he be wretched or fortunate?' And both these things would be written. Then the angel says: 'My Lord, would he be male or female?' And both these things are written. And his deeds and actions, his death, his livelihood; these are also ' recorded. Then his document of destiny is rolled and there is no addition to and subtraction from it" (Muslim).*

*"When forty (40) nights pass after the nutjah (zygote) gets into womb, God sends the angel and gives him the shape. Then He creates his sense of hearing, sense of sight, his skin, his flesh, his bones and then says: 'My Lord, would he be male or female?' And your Lord decides as He desires and the angel then puts down that also and then says: 'oMy Lord, what about his age?' And your Lord decides as He likes it and the angel puts it down. Then he says: 'My Lord, what about his livelihood?' And then the Lord decides as He likes and the angel writes it down, and then the angel gets out with his scroll of destiny in his hand and nothing is added to it and nothing is subtracted from it" (Muslim).*

*"When 42 nights have passed from the time of the nutjah, Allah sends an Angel to it, who shapes it and makes it hearing, sight, skin, muscles and bone. Then he says: "o Lord! is it a male or female? And your Lord decides what He wishes and the Angel records" (Muslim).*

The aforementioned Qur'anic verses and ahadith explained the time and the status of the fetus or the janin. Based on these authentic sources Muslim jurists made their opinion on the legality of abortion. Therefore, as far as the timing of aborting a fetus is concerned ensoulment is seen as an indicator. Ensoulment means to give a soul or to endow with a soul; and that is when the almighty propel the *ruh* into the fetus. In Islam there are clear indications and time frame of ensoulment as mentioned by the Qur'an and the hadith.

The mainstream of the jurists view it being 120 days into a pregnancy. Abi Hanifah and his adherents are of the opinion that a pregnant woman could have an abortion without her husband's permission provided that she is nursing infant. The adherents of this school of thought contend that a "new pregnancy put an upper limit on lactation, and the jurists believe that if the mother could not be replaced by a wet-nurse, the infant would die". Imam al-Shafi'i also allows abortions to be performed up to day 120. The Maliki School permits abortion with the consent of both husband and wife up to day 40; after which the Malik's outlaw the process. The Hanbalis on the other hand disallow abortion after the 40<sup>th</sup> day of pregnancy. The Shiite scholars outlaw abortion except in cases where the pregnancy endangers mother's life.

### **Puberty and Adolescence in Islam**

Puberty is the stage of adolescence in which an individual becomes physiologically capable of sexual reproduction. In other words it is the stage in the development of humans and other primates marked by the development of secondary sex characteristics, including menarche in females. Puberty occurs at the onset of adolescence, between the ages of about 11 and 14 in girls and 13 and 16 in boys. The

term adolescence refers to a period of human development which represents particular characteristics of immaturity, or a young person who has undergone puberty but who has not reached full maturity. This is teenager or inchoative personality that begins to develop mentally, consciously and physically. (Syed Muhammad Rizvi, 2012)

Both the Qur'an and the hadith have spoken about Puberty and Adolescence in diverse ways. Islam presents these conceptions in a form of *bulugh*. In Islamic definition of puberty (*bulugh*) is determined by age (fifteen years) or by acquisition of womanhood or manhood through nocturnal emission or Semen accumulation (*ihtilam*), for boys at least, and other physical changes for both girls and boys. On balance, adolescence is the time between puberty and adulthood and this stage of life is largely characterized with psychological maturation, which a person possesses adult-like behaviour. He or she needs parental guide. Allah commands the believing parents (the mu'minun) to protect their children. In Allah says in the Qur'an that:

*"O' you who believe, protect yourselves and your families from a fire whose fuel is men and stones."* (Al-Qur'an, 66:6)

In the hadith we read that all children are created with pure innate nature (*fitrah*) and the parents play a major role to maintain that *fitrah* or annihilate it. The Prophet said:

*"Every child is born on Fitrah (man's innate disposition to monotheism), his parents make him Jewish, Christian or a fire worshipper"* (Bukhari and Muslim).

When parents fail their responsibilities or fall short on their role the child goes stray in life. The Prophet also reminds us that parents are the guardians of their children. The hadith on this reads:

*"All of you are guardians and all of you are responsible for things under your guardianship; the ruler is a guardian (managing his state's affairs) and he is responsible for things under his care, the man is a guardian over his family and responsible for them, the woman is a guardian of her husband's house and she is responsible for it. All of you are guardians and responsible for things under your control"* (Bukhari and Muslim).

Unlike other civilizations and cultures Islam does not discern between boys and girls in all aspects of their life. In fact in Islam raising girls generate more rewards from Allah for the parents. To this effect, the Prophet has said that:

*"Whoever has a daughter, tutors her on good morals, educates her well and feeds her properly; she will be a protection for him from Hell-Fire"* (Bukhari and Muslim).

Based on these Qur'anic verses and ahadith dictums parents should teach Islamic values to their children and be an example in their conduct. The Prophet said: "Order your children to pray at the age of seven." It is the responsibility of the parents to choose good company and provide good environment for the child. The Prophet said: "Man is inclined to get influenced by his friend's manners, so one must be careful in choosing friends" (Abi Dawud and At-Tirmidhi).

### Islamic Preventive Measures on Premarital Sex

One of the distinctive features of Islam is social order based upon revealed values. In fact, in Islam the shari'ah is a preventive mechanism against any crime committed by mankind. The Qur'anic terminologies and the approach in which it treats diverse issues and subjects including adultery indicate that it advocates prevention rather than punishment. The Qur'anic terms *ijtanibu* (get away) in the case of common sins, gambling and etc. and *lataqrabu* (do not get close to it) in the case of adultery are indications of this affirmation. The life of teenage children today presents a horrific scenario of vice activities, sexual violence, premarital sex and abuse of drugs. These future leaders of nations and societies are mainly the most susceptible individuals in any society to moral degradation and destructive social ills. In general terms, the lives of millions of teenagers across the globe have been ruined by early premarital sex which, in most cases, results into unwanted pregnancy, abortion, abuse of fetus, traumatic suffering and merciless desolation of mental and physical nature. All because today's teenagers repudiate to observe the limits set by the divine will of God; the shari'ah. Allah in the Qur'an reminds:

*"These are the limits set by Allah, so approach them not. Thus, does Allah make His commandments clear to men so that they may become secure against evil" (Al-Qur'an, 2:188).*

Preventing premarital teen sex is a daunting task not only for the school councilors but also for the government and parents. In this section of the reaserach it is only appropriate to over some preventive measures for the above predicament. Teenage or puberty age is a problem for the entire social and institutional levels including the individual, the parents, the school system as well as for the government throughout the world.

It takes committed individuals including parents, policy makers, religious leaders, professionals, the business community and school counselors and officials to make a difference. School counselors have distinctive opportunity to provide students with the information they need to make the right decisions and protect themselves from negative influences. The causes of early teen sex which subsequently results in unwanted and illegitimate pregnancy are diverse and multidimensional. They include at least intricate socio-economic and cultural issues in the heart of the society.

In the Western outlook of the matter it was historically thought that teen sex and its subsequent package resulted from insufficient sex education, short of access to contraception and deficiency in sexual health services. Muslim position to prevention has always being abstinence in the form of self-discipline although Muslim societies should not ignore other factors influencing child or teen sex.

Presumably, in fact, most disadvantaged teens are in the Muslim world living under taunting and hurtful socio-economic and cultural factors. These teens lack opportunities and live with disoriented cultural norms and most of the times are alienated in the school system. All these factors lead to unlawful teen sex. This section of the research provides some preventive measures from Islamic perspective in a form of model for future explorations.

### **Parents as an Apparatus for Preventive Measures**

People who have children are called parents in general but only handfuls of them have the readiness and preparation before they produce a child. In Islam parents are viewed the source of child's development, the first school and the molders of the child. Their role is therefore crucial in protecting the child. This task becomes even harder during the teenage stage.

The family is the basic unit of the society and ultimately to have a healthy and safe society one has to safe the child and the family; that method will set the social system on the right footing. Family starts with two married responsible adults who will set the foundation for multiplicity and expansion within the unit; the family. (S. Zakir Aijaz, 1990)

The Qur'an has an elaborate structure for the establishment of a rigorous family life. Together with the sunnah the Qur'an is also a chockfull of verses which describe the values and the importance of the family system. It explains the duty of parents in protecting their children. Indeed, parents play the role of shaping the child's personality. Religiously and morally, it is the duty of the parents to assess the moral comportment of the children from early stage. The parents also are obliged by the Qur'an and the sunnah to provide suitable, sufficient, sound and adequate religious, ethical and moral guidance for the children. Bestowing them true universal values will help them in their entire life. The Qur'an directs the parents to save the children. Allah commands the parents that:

*"O ye who believe! Save yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is Men and Stones."(Al-Qur'an, 66:6).*

Having children is a responsibility and parents are responsible to their parents. Children also are trust from God and parents should view this trust as religious obligation as they will be responsible on the Day of Judgment. The hadith of the Prophet on this reads:

*"Every one of you (people) is a shepherd. And every one is responsible for whatever falls under his responsibility. A man is like a shepherd of his own family, and he is responsible for them" (Bukhari and Muslim.)*



Other mechanisms for prevention include giving good advice and instructions to the teenagers in a way that corresponds to their understanding without generating negative consequences. The Qur'an on this advises that: (Al-Qur'an, 16: 125).

To prevent vice activities against the teenage child parents should find the way to acquaint their children's friends and their families as well as other peer individuals and groups who directly or indirectly influence them. Personal experience of this researcher teaches that giving them full trust builds confidence. Therefore, parents should bequeath responsibility on the teenage child. This however, should not be without limits and boundaries. The point here is to help them to make good decisions and at the same time build their self-esteem. Studies show that teens with low self-esteem are more likely to try out vice or illegal activities including premarital sex.

In boosting their self-esteem they become accountable for their actions. Independence is a natural development and teaching them to be independent will eventually give the teenage child the power to resist external pressures. Realistic, respectful, and responsible decisions are always made with certain level of conscious personal independence. They need to see the fact that their action affects themselves and others, and good option will lead to a better outcome. On a related preventive mechanism parents should assume the task of being a role model and this role will engender greatest influence on the teenage child. In fact, it will stimulate positive relationship between them. The attitude of the parent is a two-edged object, they could be protective factor or/and risk factor depending on their attitude as role model.

Most cases in life, children tend to follow the footsteps of their parents. A role model is not the one who encourage, request and motivate others to perform a task which he has no intention to perform it himself. "Practice it then preach it to others" should be the attitude of a role model. As the Qur'an reminded us children may stick to the behavior which they inherited from the parents. The Qur'an reads:

*"And when it is said to them, follow what Allah has revealed, they say: No! We follow what we found our fathers upon. What! And though their fathers had no sense at all, no did they follow the right way" (Al-Qur'an, 2:170).*

Setting the stage for conducive environment for communication, spending time with them, both at home and while taking part in activities outside the home, choosing the right time to talk to them and speaking calmly and being prepared for resistance when emotional or difficult topics come up are some preventive mechanisms related to being a good role model. In Islam the father leads the family by consultation and the mother is the source and frame of reference for the entire household.

Providing love is another preventive measure. Teenage children need love and affection from the parents and this will positively encourage abstention from illicit activities as they feel more guilt to hurt the parents. Parents should know that loving their children brings the pleasure of Almighty Allah. In a hadith Abu Hurairah narrates that:

*"The Holy Prophet once kissed his grandson Hasan. Aqra bin Habis who was also present on the occasion said that he had ten children but he never kissed any one of them. The Holy Prophet looked at him and said, "Allah is never kind to him who is not kind to others" (Bukhari and Muslim).*

In another hadith, Anas ibn Malik related that:

*"I never saw any could love members of his family more than the Holy Prophet" (Bukhari and Muslim.)*

Love comes in form of commitment and passion; therefore, parents should maintain the teenage child financially and regularly enquire if he or she needs any funds before they even request. This will create close links and friendship between the parents and the teenage child. In a hadith the Prophet said:

*"When a person spends upon his children and wife with a view to please Almighty Allah and get rewarded in Hereafter, then this expenditure is taken by Allah as Sadaqah." (Bukhari and Muslim)*

Bearing the expenses of children from birth to adulthood is one of the basic responsibilities of parents. Parents should discuss with the teenage child about the saving accounts which the parents put aside for them for their future. The hadith of the Prophet on this reads:

*“It is better for parents to leave their children well provided (financially) than to leave them in poverty” (Bukhari and Muslim).*

On another preventive dimension, parents should provide suitable education with Islamic and value-ethics in mind. By education we do not mean sending the teenage child to school every morning rather additional and on top of school education to gain general knowledge on current issues, interesting positive entertainment and value-oriented physical activities are paramount means of education.

On related measures, Muslim parents should be open to early marriage, provided that they are party to it. Parents should also collaborate with schools and work hand in hand with teachers. In addition, they should also encourage and expose the children to do more beneficial communal activities such as sport and community services to further increase their soft skills and save valuable time. Better general environment such as goodneighborhood will certainly help to reduce the risk of early and illegal premarital sex for teenage children. Similar to the aforementioned preventive measures, parents should reduce the usage of internet to at least control negative influences. This could be done by providing an alternative way to gain information. The most influential component of the environment is the peer teenage groups. Since humans are social beings they, in all ages, require interaction with humans. Interacting with good friends in the vicinity of the residence provides health environment.

### **The Role of Government in Preventing Premarital Teen Sex through Religious Mechanisms**

The government is the authoritative body which allocates values in the society. It manages and controls the resources of the society; as such it is incumbent for Muslim government to take serious measures to tackle this ever rampant predicament. (Hamid Enayah, 1982) The government should provide the teenagers with professional skill building, training, moral development and leadership skills.

Concentrating on the attitude of the teenage and the consequences of premarital sex committed by teenage children alone may however, lead to inertia of plan and lack of thoughtful solutions. Instead, governments, particularly Muslim governments, should provide support for teenage mothers and families and use more comprehensive premarital sex preventive measures which are more in line with Islamic ethos and teachings both in schools and in out-of-school settings. Islamic Governments should implement effective laws on social clubs disco settings. These locales influence teenage children as they are the centres of vice activities.

In the Qur'an Allah highlights the evil consequences of the activities which take place in these settings, such as consuming intoxicant beverages, gambling, and other despicable evil practice. The Qur'an on this reads:

*“O you who believe, intoxicants, gambling, ansab (stones, and reflect on the fate of it is dirty work) and despicable than the evil practice of leave you may be successful” (Al-Qur'an, 5: 90).*

Stringent rules on excessive entertainment on social outlets are instrumental to better preventive measures by the government; as teenage children are easily influenced by their surroundings. In fact, one of the reasons for social ills, including illicit premarital sex occurs as teens are exposed to excessive entertainment. The role of government is to therefore, initiate restrictive measures on the manners these outlets are operated and to revisit the regulatory mechanisms since these outlets encourage immoral coupling, consummation of intoxicant elements and unhealthy socialization which eventually lead to illicit premarital sex. In the Qur'an Allah the almighty on this issue reminds:

*“And of mankind is he who purchases idle talks (i.e. music, singing, etc.) to mislead (men) from the Path of Allah without knowledge, and takes it (the Path of Allah, the Verses of the Qur'an) by way of mockery. For such there will be a humiliating torment (in the Hell-Fire)” (Al-Qur'an, 31:6).*

In Islamic formula of governance, the government should set up an entity which looks into enjoining good and forbids misconduct (*al-Amr bi al-Ma'rufi wa nahyu 'an al-Munkar*) among teenagers. Al-Amr bi al-Ma'rufi wa nahyu 'an al-Munkar as one of the main task of government is the process of allocation universal values and the implementation or commanding what is right and forbidding what is wrong and it incorporates a whole scheme of duties and responsibilities. It is imperative to note that the Qur'an makes it the task of the believers:

*"You are the best of Peoples evolved for humankind, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong and believing in Allah" (Al-Qur'an, 3:110)*

Likewise the hadith of the Prophet emphasized on this preventive mechanism. The Prophet teaches the believers that:

*"Whoever among you sees a vice (or wrong), he should change it with his hands; if he is not able to do that, then he should check it with his tongue; and if he cannot do that, then he should consider it bad in his heart (and wish for its removal) and this is the sign of weakest in faith" (Muslim, Tirmidhi, Abi Daud and Ibn Majah).*

In another hadith the Prophet equates *al-Amr bi al-Ma'rufi wa nahyu 'an al-Munkar* to Jihad. He says:

*"The best Jihad is to say what is just (or truth) in the face of a tyrant" (Abi Daud, Tirmidhi, Nisai and Ibn Majah).*

When *al-Amr bi al-Ma'rufi wa nahyu 'an al-Munkar* is not performed the malevolent spreads and covers all the citizens including those who have not involved in any sinful act. The Prophet says:

*"When people see a tyrant and do not hold his hands, it is not far that Allah sends a common punishment on them" (Abi Dawood and Tirmidhi).*

*Al-amr bil maruf wa nahi an al-munkar* surely necessitates freedom of expression, transparency and accountability. This denotes that teenage children are not subjected to the rules of preventive measures without explanation. The government is obliged to form units and ministries which are designed to provide advice (*nasiha*) and enjoining good and forbids misconduct (*al-Amr bi al-Ma'rufi wa nahyu 'an al-Munkar*) for teenagers to prevent premarital sex. This is in line with the fact that, in Islam the government is the custodian of faith and establishes faithfulness and religiousness among individual citizens.

In implementing Islamic preventive measures on premarital sex the government should utilize the media; printed or electronic. Islamic channels could be initiated and supported ideologically and financially by the government. News, films and documentaries revolving around social issues should be increased; and social awareness programmes on teenagers has to be linked to their concern towards family institution and society. In other words, when the teenagers became aware of the danger and the impact of this social problem in the family and the society, they will necessarily take appropriate initiatives to overcome the predicament. In the Qur'an Allah reminds that the righteous is the one who believe with absolute conviction. He says:

*"It is not righteousness that you turn your faces towards the East and the West, but righteous is the one who believes in Allah, and the Last Day, and the angels and the Book and the prophets, and gives away wealth out of love for Him to the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer and to those who ask and to set slaves free and keeps up prayer and pays the poor-rate; and the performers of their promise when they make a promise, and the patient in distress and affliction and in the time of conflict. These are they who are truthful; and these are they who keep their duty." (Al-Qur'an, 2: 177)*

Diverse mediums including audio-visuals should be used to influence teenagers to realize the role of religion such as voluntarism and charitable deeds through the involvement of these activities invaluable conducts is avoided. In fact, the Media can bring about a change in the attitudes and way of thinking of the teenagers. The persuasive nature of the content presented over media influences the thoughts and the behavior of these teenage children. Allah says in the Qur'an:

*“ and by the soul and by Him Who perfectly proportioned it, and imbued it with (the consciousness of) its evil and its piety: He who purifies it will prosper, and he who suppresses it will be ruined.” (Al-Qur’an, 91 7-10)*

Akhlaq as a vital mechanism of control should be practically taught through the media as a preventive tool on premarital sexual activities. Akhlaq refers to character, behavior, attitude, temperament and disposition. The general hermeneutics of the term indicates that it is the faculty of the soul which is the source of man’s voluntary and natural actions. Akhlaq emanates or operates within the human soul and it can be purified or made depending on the orientations given to the soul. The soul or nafs is a natural Godly essence which functions within the various organs of the human body. Its faculties, for instance, are embodied in the power of intelligence, the power of anger, the power of desire and the power of imagination.

These are the powers which dictate the teenage children to distinguish between good and evil, right and wrong, true and false and face the forces of sexual attraction and desires. Captivatingly, Islam, as a religion, made akhlaq one-third of its teachings. Akhlaq teaches voluntarism, generosity and sacrifice. Allah reminds in the Qur’an:

*"And they give them preference over themselves even though they were poor" (Al-Qur’an, 59:9)*

These values should be emphasized using the media as a tool. Akhlaq also teaches the qualities of the just. The Qur’anic dictum reads:

*"And when you judge between people, do judge with justice" (Al-Qur’an, 4:58).*

In the hadith of the Prophet we read:

*"O Allah I seek your refuge from weakness, laziness, cowardice and meanness" (Bukhari and Muslim)*

In another related hadith the Prophet teaches that:

*"A Muslim would never be a slanderer, an abuser, nor would he be a loudmouth shouting in the markets" (Muslim).*

The Prophet in a famous hadith reminded that his role as a prophet was mainly to prevent misconduct including premarital sex through religious teachings. In his words the Prophet said: *"I have been sent to perfect your conduct"* (Bukhari and Muslim). He was appointed a prophet for his akhlaq and not for anything else such as wealth or status.

### **The Machinery of the School System to Prevent Premarital Ten Sex through Religious Teachings**

School is an institution designed for the instruction of children, teenagers or adult people. It trains, educates, teaches and disciplines. The aim of having a school is not to teach some subjects or make the students skilled in some techniques, rather the purpose is to develop and nurture personalities. Religious teachings could be implemented to prevent premarital sex through the school system. This educative scheme of learning organization can be a powerful platform to prevent premarital sex.

Today, worldwide, we talk of sex education as method to prevent premarital sex by schooling teenage children. However, there are no agreement among stakeholders of the school system, how it should work, what information may be or may not be taught in class, is it religious or irreligious to implement it? Teaching teenagers sexual activities, transmitted diseases, pregnancy and other issues related to sexuality is contentious subject particularly for those who base sexuality education programs primarily on religious teachings. This group advocates abstinence until marriage. Engaging in sexual intercourse outside of marriage violates the precepts of human decency and corrupts the moral standards of the society. This is where Islamic teachings become the crux of premarital sex prevention. The school should adopt appropriate measures in implementation religious teachings. School rules should be based on Islamic teaching, hence, creating Islamic culture and environment. In most cases sex influences take in the back seat when Islamic rules are in place.

Implementing Islamic dress code in the school vicinities will certainly ensure a healthier environment and makes it easier to prevent sexual activities in school. In fact, Islamic dress code includes covering the body based on the limits of 'awrah for men and women, methods of behavior before the same and opposite sex, promoting privacy, and prohibiting loose intermingling between males and females. The ultimate objective is to encourage high level of chastity, decency and modesty in Islamic terms. This should be applied both to the teachers and students as well as on the administrative staff. The Qur'anic injunction on the purpose of covering the 'awrah are clear. Allah commands mankind that:

*"O you Children of Adam! We have bestowed on you raiment to cover your shame as well as to be an adornment to you. But the raiment of righteousness, that is the best. Such are among the Signs of Allah, that they may receive admonition"* (Al-Qur'an, 7:26).

Allah also reminds both men and women should lower their gaze and guard their modesty to avoid sexual temptations. Both men and women should not also put on view their exquisiteness and ornaments. Teenagers can be attractive as they are in the best period of age and attracting the opposite sex could result into dangerous consequences. Allah says to this effect:

*"And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty; that they should not display their beauty and ornaments except what must ordinarily appear thereof; that they should draw their veils over their bosoms and not display their beauty except to their husbands, their fathers, their husbands' fathers, their sons, their husbands' sons, their brothers, or their brothers' sons or their sisters' sons, or their women or the servants whom their right hands possess, or male servants free of physical needs, or small children who have no sense of the shame of sex, and that they should not strike their feet in order to draw attention to their hidden ornaments. And O you believers turn you all together towards Allah, that you may attain bliss"* (Al-Qur'an, 24:31).

Allah has given specific instructions to His Prophet Muhammad on Islamic dress code which denotes the imperativeness of the subject matter. All for one good reason, to prevent illicit sex. Allah says:

*"O Prophet, tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to draw their cloaks close round them (when they go abroad). That will be better, so that they may be recognised and not annoyed. Allah is ever Forgiving, Merciful"* (Al-Qur'an, 33:59).

The hadith of the Prophet also teach us Islamic dress code. Abi Dawood narrates that `Aishah (raa) said:

*"Asmaa' the daughter of Abu Bakr (raa) came to see the Prophet wearing a thin dress; so the Prophet turned away from her and said: O Asmaa', once a woman reaches the age of menstruation, no part of her body should be seen but this-and he pointed to his face and hands (Abi Dawood).*

It is obvious that the purpose of the aforementioned verses and Prophetic dictums is to wipe out premarital sex and any preliminary step which may lead to the order of such shameful acts. The Qur'an as a sensible, realistic and dynamic revealed document takes into account the actual circumstances of life. For that reason, the school authorities have to see the circumstances of the teenagers at risk and help them, not to punish them, in implementing these divine injunctions to prevent premarital sex.

Islam encourages reading, and inculcation of this habit by the school system could be a source of preventive mechanism. Practically speaking, newspapers are the best in developing reading habits in teenagers. Encouraging them to read newspapers, magazines and other interesting books, will indisputably prevent them thinking of evil activities. Islam was established on reading, to be somebody in the society one has to read, to be knowledgeable or scholar one has read, to have status and position one has to read and to be respected among peers and have edge over them one has to read. In the Qur'an we read:

*"Read! In the name of your Rabb (Cherisher and Sustainer) Who created— created man, out of a leech-like clot: Read! And your Rabb is Most Bountiful Who has taught (the use of) pen. He has taught man that which he knew not"* (Al-Qur'an, 96: 1-5).

Since seeking knowledge is incumbent upon every Muslim, it is crucial therefore, to organize workshops, seminars and public talks on religious preventive measures. In the Qur'an Allah reminds us that:

*"And Allaah has brought you out from the wombs of your mothers while you know nothing. And He gave you hearing, sight, and hearts that you might give thanks (to Allaah)" (Al-Qur'an, 16:78).*

Allah also commanded His Messenger to seek more knowledge. Allah says:

*"My Lord! Increase me in knowledge" (Al-Qur'an, 20:114).*

Allah in fact, bestowed an immense kindness on the believers when He sent to them a teacher, who teaches religion and wisdom from revealed sources. Allah in this says:

*"Indeed, Allah conferred a great favor on the believers when He sent among them a Messenger (Muhammad) from among themselves, reciting unto them His Verses (the Quran), and purifying them (from sins by their following him), and instructing them (in) the Book (the Quran) and Al-Hikmah [the wisdom and the Sunnah of the Prophet (i.e. his legal ways, statements and acts of worship)], while before that they had been in manifest error" (Al-Qur'an, 3:164).*

Allah has given the knowledgeable people to higher rankings and positions in here and hereafter. The Qur'anic dictum on this reads:

*"Allah will raise up, to (suitable) ranks and (degrees), those of you who believe and who have been granted knowledge. And Allah is well-acquainted with all you do" (Al-Qur'an, 58:11).*

In the Qur'an Allah links knowledge to *taqwa* or God consciousness, which means teenage with the right knowledge is more matured, with tranquility and closer to the teachings and the wisdom of God. Allah says to this effect:

*"It is only those who have knowledge among His servants that fear Allah" (Al-Qur'an, 35:28).*

Teenagers with knowledge are not like their ignorant peers, they are in fact, different: Allah says on this:

*"The blind man is not equal with the seer; Nor is darkness (tantamount to) light; Nor is the shadow equal with the sun's full heat; Nor are the living equal with the dead. Lo! Allah maketh whom He will to hear. Thou canst not reach those who are in the graves. Thou art but a Warner" (Al-Quran, 35:19-23).*

In another verse The Qur'an also glorifies knowledgeable people and it compares it those without knowledge: He says:

*"...Say: 'Are those equal, those who know and those who do not know? It is those who are endowed with understanding that receive admonition" (Al-Qur'an, 39:9).*

In the hadith of the Prophet we read:

*"Among the signs of the Hour are the following – knowledge will decrease and ignorance will prevail, fornication and the drinking of wine will be common..." (Bukhari).*

According to the hadith seeking knowledge generates the pleasure of Allah. The Prophet says:

*"Whoever follows a path in the pursuit of knowledge, Allah will make a path to Paradise easy for him" (Bukhaari).*

Knowledge is acquired, according to ibn qayyim al-jawziyyah, based on six stages; asking questions in a good manner, remaining quiet and listening attentively, understanding well, memorizing as well as teaching, and finally Acting upon the knowledge and keeping to its limits.

Another imperative measure is the role of the teachers in implementing Islamic preventive measures. Educational progress mainly depends on the qualities of the teachers; they are the driving force and the instrument which can influence the outcome and the final product. The definitive aim of religious-laden education system in Islam is to produce superior, spiritually and professionally, Muslim

personality with faith, dedication, knowledge, and virtues. A teacher is a Murabbi which means bearer, fosterer and nurturer as well as someone who has the ability to simplify Islamic concepts for the conception of the teenagers. If religious teachings in the class are related to the life of the teenager he or she will be able to reflect and the impact will be greater. The current syllabus on Islamic values in school should be revised to relate more to the current issues affecting teenagers. In a hadith the Prophet said:

*"Whoever guides [another] to a good deed will get a reward similar to the one who performs it" (Muslim).*

School authorities should also encourage congregation prayers for students, the prayer is more effective when it is performed in the mosque in a congregation; it helps to become conscious of unity, brotherhood and equality. In fact, for the same reason, the Prophet said that:

*"Offering the prayer in congregation carries 27 times greater reward than offering it alone individually" (Bukhari and Muslim).*

In the process, teachers should encourage teenagers to lead the prayers and call for the azan, in form of giving them responsibilities. The weight given to the congregation prayers in the form of reward signifies effort and exercising patience in attending the mosque. To this effect, the Prophet said:

*"He who attended the congregation for Isha prayer, he received the reward of half the nights worship and he who attended both Isha and Fajr prayer with the congregation he received the reward of the whole nights worship" (Tirmidhi).*

Separation between genders to avoid close proximity and unnecessarily corrupting the environment in the school vicinity is also an effective mechanism to prevent premarital sex. The predicament faced by teenagers today is the failure to manage the relationship between girls and boys. On this, the Prophet said:

*"Whenever a strange man and woman meet in seclusion satan is definitely the third one joining them" (Tirmidhi).*

To make premarital sex preventive measures, through Islamic teachings, more effective, practical counseling sessions should be provided for teenagers. Islamic counseling accentuates spiritual solutions and religious guidance. The constituent of its key principles are trust, respect, and confidentiality. School authorities including teachers should develop the culture of listening, partnership and professionalism. In addition, showing concern and compassion is the Islamic way. In the Qur'an Allah describes Himself in His own words:

*"And say, He is (all) ear." Say, "He listens to what is best for you: he believes in Allah, has faith in the Believers, and is a Mercy to those of you who believe" (Al-Qur'an, 9: 61).*

Allah teaches to give attention to your clients in counseling.

*"Have you not considered that Allah knows what is in the heavens and what is on the earth? There is in no private conversation three but that He is the fourth of them, nor are there five but that He is the sixth of them - and no less than that and no more except that He is with them [in knowledge] wherever they are. Then He will inform them of what they did, on the Day of Resurrection. Indeed Allah is, of all things, knowing" (Al-Qur'an, 58:7).*

Islamic counseling is a part of a general wisdom call *nasihah* or advice in Islam. In the hadith the Prophet describes Islam are a religion of advice. Note that, as we understand from the hadith, the Arabic word *nasihah* does not mean advice or counseling only, rather, it denotes deeper meanings including sincere advice. The Prophet said:

*"The religion is nasihah." The companions asked, "To whom?" The Prophet replied, "To Allaah and to His Book and to His Messenger and to the leaders of the Muslims and the common folk" (Bukhari and Muslim).*

## CONCLUSION

Premarital Sex or sex outside marriage is one of the major sins in Islam, (in Arabic *kabair* plural or *kabirah* singular). These malevolent deeds are the spiteful actions outlawed by the almighty Allah in the Qur'an and in the Hadith. Indeed, preventing one the major sins in Islam through religious teachings engenders great reward from Allah. In the Qur'an Allah reminds Muslims the extent of its devastation and the recompenses bestowed upon those who avoid these sins:

*If you avoid the major (part) of what you have been forbidden (to do), We will cancel out for you your (other) evil deeds and will admit you (to Paradise) with a noble entry (Al-Qur'an, 4:31).*

In another related verse Allah assured paradise to those who avoid major sins which are proscribed by Islam:

*Those who avoid the greatest of sins and indecencies, and forgive when they are angry (al-Shra 42:37) Those who avoid the greatest sins and indecencies, except for oversights, (will find that) surely your Lord is ample in forgiveness (Al-Qur'an, 53:32).*

Preventing evil act such as premarital sex dictates mental, physical and emotional preparation. It is the conviction of this research that religious teachings particularly Islamic teachings, provided that they are implemented with wisdom and knowledge, provide superior preventive mechanism against premarital sex.

It is also the belief of this research that schools, parents and government authorities could coalesce forces and resources in preventing premarital sex through religious teachings. As we have mentioned in the above passages, the Qur'an teaches Muslims that being proactive and having the ability to predict, anticipate, and forecast evil deeds minimize the risk and maximizes the chances of avoiding the sin.

The Qur'an also teaches what to be avoided and what to be necessarily done before major sin, such as sex outside marriage, is committed. This however requires being sensitive and reflective. Sensitivity in this regard is to be conscious of the consequences. The cost of adultery or zina on the teenager is unwanted pregnancy, baby-dumping, committing *kabirah* (one of the gravest sin in Islam), abortion and emotional and psychological distress with perpetual and everlasting agony. Reflectivity of the other hand, refers to the ability to comprehend the status of the teenager be it social, economical or educational aspects before prescribing remedy for his or her predicament.

Hence, schools, government and parents should make use of the religious approach as it is competent in preventing premarital sex among teenagers. Marriage, Islam teaches, is an effective means of protecting teenagers from indulging into premarital sexual activities.

The Qur'an teaches mankind to control their sexual urge and avoid behavior and habits which could rouse sexual desires and lead to unlawful sexual contact as we have seen in the above-mentioned passages. In the Qur'an Allah forbid provocative sexual activities such as pornography, sexually stimulating songs, dancing with opposite sexes, uncensored movies and films, which will subsequently tantalize and arouse sensual feelings. Allah says in the Quran:

*"Some people indulge in frivolous activity, so that they may, in their ignorance, lead others away from the path of Allah and hold it up in ridicule. These will receive a shaming punishment" (Al-Qur'an, 31:6).*

To prevent this evil act both the government, schools as well as parents should adopt religious mechanism suitable to the teens at risk. Spiritual, mental, and social instructions should be molded together to maximize benefit.



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