

Religious Matters of Youth Education for Marriage in Uzbekistan

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Introduction

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Introduction

The transformation of Uzbek society, conditioned by the expansion of market consciousness on one side and the strengthening of religiosity on the other, contributes to the emergence of new family values that go beyond traditional paradigms. In the context of antagonism between traditional and modern family values, educating young people to marital life imposes serious tasks on parents. Accordingly, religious education for marriage is especially important in light of changing traditions. Considered as secular, Uzbek society is supposed to refuse religious interpretation of family affairs. Nevertheless, religiosity in this country prevents divorces the most and preserves families, when agnostics and atheists are often helpless of family dissolution.

Marriage is one of the primary goals of the Muslim community, as every human being is expected to leave a generation after himself. According to Islam, family and marriage are not only the result of the physiological desires of two people of the opposite sex. Simplistic model of a family indicates to the men, as a head of family, assigned to fulfill both day-to-day and spiritual tasks along with the natural instinct to continue humanity.¹ The religious interpretation of the family makes this

institution a targeted mechanism of social reproduction. From this standpoint, the family is a union between a man and a woman created based on the spiritual and psychological disposition of a religious nature. In Uzbek society, the family institution has a special structure, since it involves the coexistence of different people often living in “extended family system”².

The family formation varies from each other because different religions have dissimilar attitudes towards the duties of family members. The approach of religion to the family is very diverse in Muslim countries due to the strict regulation of intra-family relations, as well as the implication of polygamy. Eastern, especially Muslim people, choose a bride in the literal sense, which does not apply to many western societies. Uzbek society also in most cases chooses a bride inquiring about a potential daughter-in-law, while attending wedding events and sometimes make special visit to educational institutions. It may seem strange, but many Uzbek people spend years in search a bride, but often marry completely unfamiliar girls. This non-standard approach to searching for and choosing a life partner demonstrates the strong influence of matchmaking practice in Uzbek society.

The search for a bride takes place everywhere, and if interests and age parameters coincide, the wedding

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does not take long. From this point of view, many Uzbek families still prefer arranged family type. With the intensification of religiosity, arranged families acquiring popularity, many families first try to get an answer to the simple question “*Does the family of the groom (or bride) do prayer?*” The level of education and social and economic status are also unquestionable factors in finding a partner in Uzbekistan. This is comparable to Japan, where married couples take into consideration education level, job availability, and expectations from the husband in the family. When it comes to marriage, the level of religiosity is not a key element in Japan, but the level of education is important when choosing a partner.³ The psychological compatibility of the groom with the bride usually does not come to the fore among Muslim Uzbeks. Minor outlook to psychological matching between couples often hides a religion, which strictly regulates intra-family relationships. In religious families, sharia adjusts psychological compatibility regardless of the personal character of a man or woman. Taking into account the ethnic-social composition of Uzbek society and the level of religiosity, the study of the religious aspects of education of Uzbek youth for family life requires a close approach to each of the social groups. At the same time, it is essential to pay special consideration to the strengthening of religious influence, cultural globalization, and value transformation.

1. Normative essence and religious aspects of the family

Family is a group of people—usually related by ancestry, marriage, or adoption—who form a cooperative economic unit to care for offspring and each other and who are committed to maintaining the group over time.⁴ It is the most important institution that legitimizes the coexistence of a couple, regulates sexual relations, and the birth and upbringing of a new generation. At the same time, Islam acts as a doctrinal document in the protection of every Muslim in marriage⁵. Uzbekistan as a traditional Muslim country feels a religious impact in many aspects of life. The Soviet atheistic upbringing could not remove the sacred Islam from public consciousness, a great revival of which is going on after gaining independence. Recent Islamic resurgence has made the belief a major factor in family affairs, children’s education, and the regulation of family disputes and di-

vorces in this country.

Given the process of marriage in Muslim communities, where the bride and groom are not necessarily to know each other well, their families may hide many psychological issues. In addition to a couple, the traditional Uzbek family often involves living together with other members of the groom’s family. That is, Uzbeks usually accept a daughter-in-law, and she lives with them as one of the family members. When building relationships with her husband, in resolving the issue of childbearing and upbringing, in the formation and management of the family budget, the daughter-in-law will have to deal with her husband’s relatives.

Contrasting Japanese society, where the level of women’s education contributed to a decrease in marriage rates⁶, starting a family is paramount for Uzbeks regardless of education level. Here an important condition is faith, which recommends parents not postpone marriage, when young people reach marital age. Islam considers it destructive for a Muslim to live without matrimony, and the lack of sufficient financial resources is not an obstacle to marriage. Consequently, theologians cite Ayat 32, Surah Nur of the Holy Quran, which states “*Marry off the “free” singles among you, as well as the righteous of your bondmen and bondwomen. If they are poor, Allah will enrich them out of His bounty. For Allah is All-Bountiful, All-Knowing.*”⁷ Religion even specifies the marriage of male and female servants, which is an important task for the master. Here, theologians give extended advice to Muslims about the marriage of their children. At the same time, Sharia indicates how to choose a bride; how Nikah conducts, how to hold a wedding, build relationships with husband and relatives in accordance to Islam. Islam classifies every aspect of the relationship between all members of the family according to Islamic legislation, which is not easy to understand. Family relationships Islam considers the most important and sacred among all human relationships. The family begins with a religious oath ceremony called Nikah, performed in the name of Allah, according to the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.V.) with two Muslim witnesses. According to Islamic scholarship, Sharia covers in detail the tasks of men and women in managing family relationships, economic matters, divorce, childbearing, etc.

It is common knowledge that a family in modern

society does not always require religious approval; families can be formed even without official marriage. This can be called a family, i.e. official marriage (religiously recognized if it is created on the basis of Nikah), consensual unions, common-law marriage⁸, cohabitation, etc. Islam is against life without marriage for both men and women⁹. The Companions of the Prophet (May God bless and grant them peace) were so afraid of leaving the world unmarried that they were eager to get married even before death.¹⁰ In traditional societies, every marriage usually documented by religious institutions. Traditional religions receive confirmation from the couple that they follow the rules of family relationships based on the sacred canons of the Holy Books like Bible, Quran or the Torah. In the process of this oath procession of the bride and groom, in addition to earthly witnesses on both sides, the main witness is the Almighty. After such a religious ceremony, the family receives a sacred blessing, which raises the couple's responsibility to the level of the spiritual and moral constitution in observing family laws. In the well-known book of "*Khidoya*" of the great Uzbek theologian Burhoniddin Marginoniy (XII century), the following conditions for marriage are noted:

- *the freely expressed consent of the man and woman entering into marriage;*
- *marriage with the participation of witnesses;*
- *the health of each of the parties, the absence of close family ties;*
- *the achievement by both parties of marriageable age;*
- *giving a mahr (gift) to a wife.*¹¹

Compared to liberal societies, Muslim communities differ dramatically in preparing their children for family life. Undoubtedly, Muslim nations of different continents have similar features in the matter of family education. However, depending on the level of religiosity, preparation for marriage and family may vary significantly in different Muslim regions. For example, fundamentalist approach requires preparing children for marriage very strictly, supposes complete submissiveness of wives to husbands, which seriously limits their freedom.¹² Although Uzbekistan is a secular society, religious values have a tremendous impact on family values and relationships. Since independence, an incredible amount of religious literature has been published. A special place

among religious literature is given to family issues. Religious scholars, researchers and religious figures in their research turn to the Qur'an and Hadith. We will refer to the book of Sheikh Muhammad Sodik Muhammad Yusuf "Happy Family", one of the famous Uzbek theologians, who writes that "*when Almighty Allah created the human race as a couple, male and female, He gave each of them their own characteristics, and through marriage He ordained that they live honestly and cleanly in order to leave behind posterity, and thus, the prosperity of the world and the human race until the Day of Resurrection, He wished to continue the path.*"¹³ Here, the author points out that each person has his own predestination; that is, Allah sets the task of marriage for a person. Usually, Uzbek families adhere to this rule and make early plan the marriage of a daughter and/or a son. In this viewpoint, spiritual features of preparing the youth for marriage are a special topic in this country. Therefore, it can be assumed that one of the reasons for the comprehensive preparation of Uzbeks for their children for marriage concerns precisely religious considerations.

Shaykh Muhammed Sodik Muhammed Yusuf, explaining the sanctity of marriage, states that in the *Ayat # 21, Surah "Rum" of the Holy Qur'an*, "*Man and woman were created as a couple to find peace and rest in each other.*" While interpreting this surah, the author points to the fact that God created human beings as a couple, like all other bodies, and bestowed love on them, in order to create a family. That is, the Holy Qur'an recognizes that men and women are encouraged to build a family with love. Recognizing this, a man and woman mutually find peace, love, and tranquility in each-other.¹⁴

2. Uzbek Family in the Structure of Society

The modern average Uzbek family consists of four to five people, living mainly based on centuries-old traditions. Religious values profoundly penetrated into customs in this country, unwittingly regulating social norms. As mentioned above, religion sets the goal for a Muslim to create a family with certain tasks. Uzbek people are under the constant influence of Islam; religious values infiltrate society during Friday prayers. Although the number of religious people who attend Friday prayers is limited, society still receives a variety

of religious instructions about family regulation during social events such as weddings and funerals. People listen to the deep lectures of the clergy during weddings, morning ceremonies called “*Nahor osh*”¹⁵ where the religious figures mainly emphasize family relationships. The main reason for choosing a family topic is the wedding, in which the mullah is required to give instructions on family relationships and problems. Since there are many weddings, the majority of families constantly receive religious instructions on creating a family, having children, and building relationships with the groom’s relatives. The main purpose of inviting religious leaders to the *Nahor-osh* is to listen to a religious speech and *take a duo* at the end of the event. Before the distribution of palov, mullahs and qori¹⁶ make Amr-Ma’ruf¹⁷, and after the meal, they make a *duo* - a procession of prayer for the bride and groom. At the same time, the mullah also asks guests to join this procession to pray, asking Allah for happiness for this new family. *Duo* is the main and final part of the morning breakfast, which has a strong impact on both the groom and the guests. Below we will dwell in more detail on the *duo*, which accompanies Muslims all over the world, including Uzbek society, all their lives. *Nahor osh*, funerals, *aqiqa*, other events associated with the wedding are a kind of school for young people and for society in general, which offer many rules of a religious nature. Based on hadith and sacred ayats of the Qur’an, the lectures presented during such social events have a tremendous impact on people. People rely on them when solving family problems, raising children based on Sharia.

In addition, at present, electronic publications, social networks and information channels are also stuffed with religious content; a significant part of the published materials focuses on family issues and divorce reasons. Compared to overwhelming religious information of recent decade, Uzbek society receives less secular knowledge for building family relationships. In other words, secular education on family relations has insufficient impact on society compared to religious one. The non-religious part of the population adheres to secular rules, which are obtained during education, public events, and media sources. However, neither secularism, nor legal mechanisms are able to save families from the collapse if serious tensions occur between couples. The family primarily implies a spiritual union, and religion, concen-

trates on the provision of this cohesion.

It often seems that families created without religious content, that is, agnostic, atheistic or secular families, break up easily and at the same time, parents do not even think about the fate of their children. It can even be said that such families are a priori ready to break up, which often affects the psychological development of children. For a broader understanding of this condition, it is necessary to dwell on the structure of society, where a certain part of the population belongs to the category of a non-titular nation, substantial part of which remain outside the influence of Islamic way of family education. European ethnicities have peculiar standards of family relations. Regardless the religiosity they do not ignore local traditions and show respect for Islamic rites, however try to follow their ethnic traditions; prefer not to mix with others (especially with the Muslim ethnicities) in marriage. At first, young European families tend to live together; the breakup of their families usually occurs in the second decade, if alcohol (sometimes drug) abuse is overwhelming.

A considerable number of Caucasian nationalities, Koreans and other Central Asian peoples, as well as Russian-speaking Uzbeks living in Uzbekistan consider themselves close to the titular ethnic group of Uzbekistan on anthropological, religious and racial grounds. However, many of them, in terms of lifestyle, remain outside the field of vision and influence of the Islamic community. They live rather close to European ethnic groups, although most of them marry Muslim ethnicities. Among this cohort, there is a special category, Russian-speaking Uzbeks, and Tajiks, considered being a titular nation naturally identified themselves as Muslims, but most of them adhere to neither Christian, nor Islamic traditions. However, their lifestyle is diametrically opposed to that of Muslims, which they also do not deny.

In such families, children were brought up according to secular traditions, without significant religious effect. Religious appearance or outfit in the form of a hijab or beard are not acceptable to them. Preparation for a family in a Russian-speaking environment occurs according to secular traditions. Children observe behavior of older generations, usually copying them, and often repeating the fate of their parents. The majority do not receive special religious information on how to properly start and run the family. Social and cultural

values characteristic of Uzbek society created certain family standards, which are a mix of legal norms, local traditions, and religious standards, becoming a kind of template for the main part of the population. Most inter-ethnic families are a cultural symbiosis, supposedly not related to the titular nation. However, they try to build family relationships based on stable family norms and traditions of the titular nation, regardless of ethnic and religious affiliation.

In Uzbek society, there is a special category of population that remains outside the field of view of any moral paradigms, for which the divorce of a family, leaving the family to their fate, leaving babies in maternity hospitals or parks, putting children in orphanages becoming the norm. Although society expresses extreme shock by such news in social networks and media, nevertheless, the growth of antisocial elements of this kind is becoming a sign of modern times. Unfortunately, this picture is characteristic of many societies regardless the religion. This category does not perceive religion in any form; they lack moral values; they do not prepare for family life, just as they do not plan to raise children normally.

This category of the population does not belong to any particular social category. It does not recognize the norms of the worthy upbringing of children. It is most of all guided by mercantile values, which live among all social groups. This category has a specific consciousness without any ideological attitudes, and refuses religious education of any form. They take drugs, drink alcohol until they lose consciousness and debauchery; most importantly, they have children and they grow up among them. The ancestors of this cohort grew up in Soviet times and alcohol accompanied them their entire lives. Not without reason, throughout the former Soviet Union, alcoholic person is one of the most common personages of movies and comedy shows. Insignificant part of Uzbek population still lives in this way, who also get married, give birth, raise children, but are completely not amenable to religious education.

In contrast to this category of the population in traditional Uzbek mahallas, children attend an incredible number of religious rites. At community events such as weddings, funerals, iftar, aqiqa, hen party, etc., children are present and receive a huge amount of religious information. In Uzbekistan, these rites and rituals are an important opportunity for making social networks.¹⁸

Community members unwittingly observe social norms, which have emerged in these events, often mistakenly perceived as religious rule.

Religious literature confirms the hierarchical construction of a Muslim family, which is often cited by theologians. For example, the Holy Quran points to the strict hierarchy in the family, absolute obedience to the husband; the responsibility of men for the material provision of their wives and families; the responsibility of a woman to preserve her moral character and the property of her husband. These understandings are presented as follows in the Holy Qur'an: *Men are the caretakers of women, as men have been provisioned by Allah over women and tasked with supporting them financially. And righteous women are devoutly obedient and, when alone, protective of what Allah has entrusted them with.*¹⁹ Such strict rules of Islam, openly pointing to the principle of subordination in the family, are distributed in society and religious people strictly adhere to them. In religious families, there is no question of psychological compatibility between husband and wife, since the Qur'an openly indicates the role and place of a man and a woman in the family. However, although Uzbek society considers itself to be predominantly Muslim, the majority still does not belong to religious families. Consequently, this indicates the weak validation of Sharia norms in all part of society. Children of non-religious parents remain outside the scope of religious influence, even they listen religious speeches while attending social events, funerals and other ceremonies.

Each information concerning the relationship between family members, disputes, issues of childbearing, social norms, observance of religious norms becomes a rule of conduct for the younger generation. Thus, they learn to be a member of the family and manage the family. In this angle, the topic of the behavior of the daughter-in-law, her submissiveness is interesting for our discussion.

3. Consent of a Girl for Marriage

Article 14 of the Family Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan states that *"Marriage is optional. In order to enter into marriage, the future couple must have the ability to freely express their consent. It is forbidden to force marriage."*²⁰ In the public literature

of Uzbek theologians, as well as researchers, there are a lot of verses and hadiths about family relationships. As mentioned above, all religious aspects of wedding processions are described in detail in articles, books, and manuals by Uzbek specialists. Issues concerning the mutual consent of the bride and groom for marriage, described in detail in books, are usually resolved in the mahalla through matchmakers and close relatives. Religious literature indicates the importance of the girl's consent. For example, one of the companions of the Prophet Muhammad Abu Hurairah (R.A.) testifies that the Prophet (S.A.W.) stated that *"It is not allowed marriage of innocent girl without her consent and a young woman without warning"*. To the question of the companions about, *"How is the consent of the girl can be known?"*, The Prophet (S.A.V.) replied that *"Silence is a sign of consent."*²¹

Usually, an Uzbek girl agrees to get married through matchmakers, since parents initially prepare her for a traditional marriage. When asked about when she is going to get married, traditional Uzbek girl answers *"khu-do khokhlasa"*, which means *"at the will of Allah."* This is one of the most common answers in Uzbekistan, applicable in all cases of life. Here it is necessary to dwell on such an answer from the girl, which gives a lot of information about her. Firstly, this is the most humble answer, which undoubtedly indicates the piety of the girl. Secondly, in doing so, she gives a hint that she is a traditionally brought-up girl. Thirdly, this answer also provides primary information that a girl can leave at the request of the groom and through matchmaking.

In traditional Uzbek society, the issues of moral, professional, and economic development of both the individual and the family are always accompanied by spiritual instructions. This supports the spirit of the family, directs them to creativity, listening to the instructions of the older generations. The girls are persistently pointed out that they must skillfully fulfill the desire of the groom and his relatives. This, for religious families, first, is the fulfillment of the instructions of Islam, which is, performing Namaz five times a day, Fasting during the Months of Ramadan and other mandatory rules, such as wearing a headscarf - Hijab.

Uzbek girls are not characterized by a verbal manifestation of the desire to get married. Only after the official wedding, the future bride can talk about the details of the future wedding ceremony or talk about the groom.

Usually, close relatives do not advise talking about the future husband, as there are many envious people who can ruin the relationship between the future wife and husband. The girl gives signal to those around her, demonstrating the gifts of the groom, which means the approach of the wedding and the absence of disagreements between the bride and groom.

Thus, it can be stated that social events and fathers, uncles and brothers are mentors in preparing Uzbek young people for marriage. And for girls, mothers and close female relatives give knowledge about family matters. In general, the mahalla, with all social relationships, value orientations, is an excellent school for educating young people for marriage and family. There are many non-verbal incidents taking place that nurture the community to a healthy family. Religious figures constantly remind about the ongoing events during social events where the entire mahalla is present. For example, cases are often cited that are associated with negative consequences due to the lack of religiosity in society.

One family problem that took place in the summer of 2022 in one of the southern districts of the Kashkadarya region, according to religious figures, arose precisely because of the lack of religiosity. This marriage-related incident shocked the mahalla community when a new daughter-in-law, who had lived for two months in the groom's house after the wedding, turned out to be 5 months pregnant. During the wedding, close relatives of the groom witnessed that the daughter-in-law was indeed a "virgin" as she passed the virginity test by the bloodstains on the white sheet after the first night with the groom. The display of blood on a sheet is a long tradition that is still preserved in many regions, representing the honor of the family, where the daughter-in-law ends up and where she marries. The issue of virginity is intensified many times after religious interpretation and strengthening by specific Sharia norms. After the trial, it turned out that a gynecologist in the city of Samarkand vaginally restored the virginity of the girl a few days before the wedding. This caused strong condemnation on the part of the groom's parents, and the groom's father sued the gynecologist.

The aftermath of this incident indicates that there are serious misleadings in preparing young people for family relationships. Such cases untie the hands of religious fundamentalists, who only point to the lack of religious

education as the reasons for such phenomena. The public sectors such as Mahalla Committee, Women's Committee, the Youth Affairs Agency, and the Education Sector usually prefer to be silent in such cases. These sectors in this matter simply do not have justificatory arguments or any intelligible explanations. Such cases occur in many regions, and they indicate the uncertain state of society on the issue of virginity assessment. Virginity in Uzbekistan is still the main criterion for the honor of the family where girls are brought up. Virginity is carefully preserved by the parents, and tested at the time of marriage, for it may destroy the authority of the family.

On the other hand, it should be noted that the monitoring of the social problems of youth by the Institute for the Study of Youth Problems²² indicates the inconsistency of this issue. Studies indicate that among young girls (schoolgirls, college and lyceum students) there is a tendency to engage in a full sexual life, who engage in other types of sexual intercourse while maintaining virginity. Oral and anal sex is common among teenagers according to confidential studies. During the increase of sexual activity of young people, in the context of globalization and religious resurgence, virginity is one of the interesting topics to be studied in more detail.

4. Educational Value of *Duo* in Uzbek Society

Duo is a special religious exclamation/prayer, has a special significance in Uzbek society. People make *duo* on daily basis and in almost every circumstance. After eating, when visiting a place, when leaving a place, an elderly person or a person with religious knowledge asks Allah what He desire. *Duo* can be made for those who participate in any social event, for the owner of the house, for the patient, for those who have passed, for the future, to get God's approval, to ask for worldly wealth, to ask for knowledge, to ask for a career, to ask for health. *Duo* has no limits; its scope is very wide, and any person can make a *duo*, regardless of the existence of religious knowledge. Anyone who has authority in the community or the person in age is able to raise hands for the common *duo*. If the person is not recognized in mahalla as an alcoholic or bad moral person, people will follow *duo* he makes. Because the *duo* can be performed countless times, its religious significance has

diminished and it has absorbed into ordinary custom. Therefore, even if a person who does not have special religious knowledge prays, no one will deny it. Everyone rises their hands and asks God for what they want or what the supplicant emphasizes and ends the prayer with the exclamation "Ameen Allahu Akbar".

Parents always pray for their children, grandparents and grandchildren, asking Allah for health, good luck, and to become a bride and groom in a good family. Due to its relevance to our topic, we will focus more on this prayer for building a family. From a young age, children grow up with *duo* from their parents, close relatives and grandparents asking them to be a good bride or groom. Such a prayer has serious spiritual and educational significance. As children grow up with the endless love of their parents and grandparents, the *duo*, they say is the highest expression of this love. For example, children grow up regularly hearing their loved ones ask God for the best wishes for the future. Such a *duo* primarily affects the subconscious of children. Children directly and completely accept such mental and spiritual influence of adults. Here it is necessary to distinguish between the religious and educational effect of *duo*.

Praying to a child while fondling his head and shoulders has a very strong effect on him and creates programmed changes in his subconscious. Such physical and verbal caresses help to code the child's mind to positive behavior and love for the family. In psychology, this is called mind programming, and it has a profound effect on a person's way of thinking.²³ It is a process aimed at consistently planning, organizing and codifying the human mind in order to obtain a goal-oriented response in the form of thoughts, images, states, desires, motivations and behavior by uploading information to the psyche.²⁴ From this perspective, loved ones through *duo* prayer model the mentality of young people. In the future, it is subconsciously interpreted as a religious requirement for them to build a good family, that is, to be a good daughter-in-law and a good son-in-law. The fact that the prayer is mentioned in the Holy Qur'an increases its spiritual effectiveness and educational importance. As a proof of this, the scholars cite the Ayat # 60 of the Surah "Ghafir": Your Lord has proclaimed, "*Call upon Me. I will respond to you. Surely those who are too proud to worship Me will enter Hell, fully humbled.*"²⁵

No one doubts such a serious promise given by Allah

in the Holy Qur'an. Prayers that have a strong influence on people are widely used as a means of education and for programming the mind. People who believe in the power of the *duo* also turn to special prayer mullahs. It is common in Muslim societies, including Uzbeks, Asking Allah a child, who is childless, the health, who is sick, debtors ask to get rid of debt, and even unlucky people ask the luck and prosperity. All families make duo asking the Allah to give a good bride and a good groom.

There are some clergy in Central Asia, including Uzbekistan who made making duo a professional activity. They have special place at home, usually a room allocated near to the street, convenient for the customers. Some entrepreneur Mullahs pray not only in the presence of the people who need to be prayed for, but also for their pictures, clothes or any item. The mullahs who recite *duo* also recite *duo* for water, yogurt, tea, coffee, and other consumer goods. Of course, since there are many people who believe in the power of prayer in traditional societies, they have the opportunity to accumulate huge amounts of money, and therefore, among the praying mullahs, one can see those who live richly like big businessmen. In many countries, the prayer aimed at "exorcism" is also used for the purpose of "cleansing" brides and grooms of devil, "warming" and "cooling" them to each other. This practice is still preserved not only in Islamic societies, but also in Christian nations.²⁶

There are also many people in the community who believe in the power of *duo* of elderly people in the community, especially who made Hajj pilgrimage. People believe and easily accept such prayers because they often appear as wishes. Due to the high educational value of a *duo* directed at a girl or a boy in terms of starting a family by loved ones, people willingly accept it. The reason for this is also related to the effect of the *duo*. Because *duo* has both positive and negative effects, people are afraid of getting "cursed". This means that children strongly believe that receiving a curse from their parents will have very negative consequences. Therefore, when it comes to starting a family and choosing a bride or groom, children often agree to marry to the candidate approved by their parents. Given that, the majority of society has a traditional worldview, one of the main themes in the minds of young people is to serve their parents and get their approval.

This is the reason why parents strongly believe in

their children in Uzbek society. The fact that children take care of their parents through generations is the most perfect, effective and unique social care mechanism that the human race has discovered. The support of this tradition by Islam is the highest honor for Muslim societies. The fact that Uzbek society has a strong tradition in this regard is evident from the respect for the elderly. In Uzbek society, it is a rare phenomenon that someone is outside the family, and it is common for family members to take care of the elderly. One of the most important factors behind this social construct is religion. Children grow up under the care of grandparents, who occupy a high authority in the family. Grandparents rise hands for a duo prayer every day at the table and wish well. Everyone loves them and obey their directions. In this process, children perceive all activities in the family through the Islam and believe the positive result can be expected only following all these rules.

Conclusion

Islamic scholars point to the presence of religious norms on almost all delicate issues in the family based on the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.V.). These norms concern the following aspects in the family:

- A naming baby;
- Reciting the azan and takbir in the ear of a baby;
- Performing aqiqah;
- Raising and educating a child;
- Relationship of parents to children;
- Intra-family hierarchy;
- Property distribution among children;
- Expressing love and kindness;
- Equal treatment of children;
- Cursing children.²⁷

In a word, society is completely covered by religious rules, and the influence of these rules is strong in areas that live by tradition. In society, there are examples of negative consequences due to the violation of the established order in society, and this becomes the subject of discussion and reflection for everyone. People and families whose lives have been ruined by their parents' curses are regularly discussed in the neighborhood. Local elders, mullahs and hajjis (people who have made hajj) give many speeches on these topics, and this reaches families through religious lectures.

In this article, I tried to take a first look at the religious

aspects of preparing for family life in Uzbek society. This topic is so complex and interesting that it is impossible to cover all its aspects in one article. Everything that is connected with the family in Uzbekistan, from the point of view of sociology, pedagogy, religious studies, cultural studies, requires close study. As we can see, the Uzbek society is simultaneously experiencing the rapid development of market relations, accompanied by a religious revival. Under these conditions, the post-communist country, which still has the cultural characteristics of the former political system, forms a special culture of family relations. We tried to consider this topic based on the ethno-social structure of society. As a result, each question revealed more and more new aspects to be explored in more extended studies. Consequently, the topics of our next research will include questions of family preparation in exclusively religious families, as well as the question of virginity and polygamy.

Notes

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Religious Matters of Youth Education for Marriage in Uzbekistan

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This study discusses youth education for marriage in Uzbekistan from a religious perspective.

Based on the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad, Islamic scholars rationalize the presence of religious norms on almost all issues regarding the family.

Uzbekistan society is greatly dominated by religious norms, and its influence takes on greater power in more traditional areas. There are numerous examples of the negative consequences that come from violating the established order of society's rules, which become the subject of public debate. Individual people and whole families may have their lives ruined because of some parent's or ancestor's actions, resulting in a sort of family curse, heard in commonplace gossip throughout the neighborhood. Local elders, *mullahs* and *hajis* (people who have made *hajj*) give speeches on these topics, and such news is spread through religious lectures.

This research looks at the religious aspects of preparing for family life in Uzbek society. As modern Uzbek society is experiencing the rapid development of market relations, the introduction of new social norms, and a resurgence of religious ideologies, the consideration of the role of religion and family becomes significant. In a post-communist country with lingering cultural characteristics from the former political system, research that illuminates such changing family notions are timely and necessary.

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