



FAMILY VALUES – A KEY FACTOR IN PRESERVING TRADITIONS AND IDENTITY

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Abstract

The article discusses the key role that family plays in shaping a person, helping them find their place in life, earning respect and honor within their community, and instilling high moral principles.

Keywords: Family, value, identity, traditions, social environment, younger generation, marriage

Introduction

The family is a unique institution where the continuity of life is ensured, the individual is shaped, ethnic culture, customs, moral and national values are preserved and developed, and the foundation of a society's economic and spiritual life is laid and strengthened. If the family is united and harmonious, peace and solidarity can be achieved in society, and stability and order prevail in the state.

A human being is born for happiness and goodness and lives with those hopes. But that alone is not enough; in order to achieve those hopes, a person must strive, show determination, and do good to receive good in return. The family plays a central role in shaping an individual, helping them find their place in life, gaining respect within society, and embodying high moral values.

The family is also the basic structural unit of any society and a vital element in a person's life. Valuing one's own family and preserving its customs and values is important not only for individuals but also for society as a whole. Family values have historically been the main carriers of social development, passed down to younger generations through both written and oral traditions. Customs and values play a significant role in shaping the moral and cultural life of people.

Family values refer to a set of interactions between family members based on traditional and cultural principles. These values are closely linked to respect, mutual





support, love, and trust among family members. At the same time, family values serve to instill feelings of kindness, justice, and conscience in the younger generation.

In the East, family relationships have been highly valued since ancient times. Family values and traditions are key factors in people's lives. They define not only relationships within the family but also the development of society as a whole. Through these values and customs, the successes and failures of the past are studied, and they help individuals maintain respect for their identity and national culture. For example, in the Zoroastrian religion, particular attention was paid to family duties and child-rearing. H. Hamidov, who studied the sacred Zoroastrian text Avesta for many years, wrote the following about families of that era: "If a man was capable of having children but remained unmarried, he was branded or forced to walk with a chain around his waist. Sometimes, such men were beaten while stuffed in sacks. The Avesta prohibited marriages between close relatives. This was done to keep bloodlines pure and offspring flawless. Families with many children were to be supported by the state, and women who gave birth to two or three children at once were awarded rewards."

The patriarchal family was the earliest historical form of family among Central Asian peoples. This family was also the basic unit of production in society. That's why family relationships and each family member's behavior received special attention. The patriarchal family emerged in Central Asia in the first millennium BCE. Gradually, nuclear families began to appear. With the emergence of nuclear families, the terms and conditions of marriage also began to change.

Marriage is a specific union between a man and a woman, recognized and approved by society and the state. Society regulates natural relations between men and women through marriage and establishes moral and legal obligations between spouses and between parents and children.

The word nikoh (marriage) in Uzbek originates from the Arabic word meaning "union." Through marriage, families become related. Families grow through the birth of children or the creation of kinship ties through marriage. Matchmaking, betrothals, and kinship through in-laws help bring people closer.

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In our land, strengthening families and protecting motherhood and childhood have always been given great importance. In general, women in Central Asia have historically been respected. Women enjoyed equal rights with men in society. A bright example is the patriotic woman Tomiris, mentioned in Herodotus's Histories. Under Tomiris's leadership, the people of Turan repelled the invading army of Kay Khosrow. Another ancient Greek historian, Elion, reported that among the Saka tribes of Central Asia, a man wishing to marry had to wrestle with the woman he wanted to marry in





an underground chamber. Only if he won could he marry her. Thus, wrestling played the role of a marriage test in that context.

In the famous Central Asian epics such as Oguznama, Alpomish, and Manas, traditional marriage customs emphasized physical ability and testing. To determine if a man was worthy of a woman, competitions like horse racing, archery, and wrestling were held. Such traditions are also reflected in rituals like Kiz quvlash (girl chasing) and Tortishmachoq (tug of war).

Even today, some traditional wedding customs persist, such as matchmaking, engagement, introduction ceremonies, wedding celebrations, and traditional pre-wedding rituals. As our society develops, these customs are also evolving.

Let's briefly review how family values changed throughout history:

Ancient Times:

In early civilizations such as Egypt, Mesopotamia, Greece, and Rome, family values played a vital role. Relationships among family members were based on religious and moral norms. In Rome, the head of the family (paterfamilias) had control over all members, and each had a defined role.

Middle Ages:

In medieval Europe, under the influence of Christianity, family values became more solidified. Relationships based on mutual love and respect were significant. The family also played a key role in implementing many aspects of religion, with the elder generations providing religious and moral education to the youth.

Medieval Societies:

In feudal societies, family values largely aligned with the social structure. Relationships were shaped by feudal relations. Customs within families were intended to preserve hierarchy and follow laws and social order.

Eastern Societies:

In the East, especially in the Middle East and Asia, family values held great importance. For example, in China, Confucian teachings helped maintain love, respect, and hierarchy within families. In Japan, traditions and values of ancestors were highly respected. In India, a person's family role was often tied to the caste system.

Family Values in Eastern Europe and Russia:





In Russia and Eastern Europe, family values were shaped by customs and the influence of the Orthodox Church. Mutual respect, love, and reverence for women and children were highly valued in Russian families.

Modern Transformations in Family Values:

Historically, family values were shaped by social order and natural laws. In today's world, globalization and cultural shifts have changed the concept of family relationships and values. These changes have created tensions between right and wrong, trust and distrust in family relations.

In modern society, family values depend on socioeconomic and political changes. The significance of roles, traditions, and values in the family has shifted. Joint decision-making, increased individual freedoms, and economic participation are forming new family dynamics.

Though family values and customs have changed over time, their importance remains. These values are essential not only for individual development but also for societal stability. Family values guide future generations and help them preserve their identity. In conclusion, the East has long been a center of knowledge and enlightenment. This can be attributed to the advanced development of family institutions compared to the West. Our traditions, values, and customs not only preserve family institutions but also ensure their continued development.

Indeed, preserving family values and traditions is not just an individual duty, but a preservation of cultural heritage for the entire society. If family values are upheld, each generation will have the opportunity to understand and cherish their national and cultural identity. To ensure the preservation of identity and the spiritual stability of the nation, the importance of the family must be recognized. Especially in today's world of globalization and cultural change, preserving and transmitting family values to the next generation is of critical importance.

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