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An Analysis of The Socio-Philosophical Views of Central Asian Scholars on Human Health and Lifestyle

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Abstract: This article examines the socio-philosophical views of Central Asian scholars on human health and lifestyle, with particular emphasis on reproductive health and its reflection in classical Eastern thought. The study analyzes the works of prominent medieval thinkers including Abu Ali Ibn Sina, Abu Rayhan Beruni, Yusuf Khass Hajib, and Abu Hamid AlGhazali, demonstrating that these scholars addressed questions of physical, mental, and spiritual well-being, family relations, and the role of women in the family long before the concept of reproductive health was formally defined by international institutions. Drawing on primary sources such as Ibn Sina's "Tadbiri Manozil," Beruni's "Mineralogy," Yusuf Khass Hajib's "Qutadgu Bilig," and Al-Ghazali's "Kimyoi Saodat," the article reveals that the foundations of a healthy lifestyle and reproductive well-being are deeply rooted in the scientific and philosophical heritage of Central Asia. The findings underscore the relevance of classical Eastern wisdom for contemporary discourse on health, family values, and social development.

Keywords: reproductive health; Central Asian scholars; Islamic philosophy; healthy lifestyle; family relations; socio-philosophical views

INTRODUCTION

One of the most important blessings in human life is health. By achieving physical and mental well-being, a person ensures their direct and active participation in social life. "As an invaluable asset for every individual, health remains one of the most important conditions for the socio-economic development of society. A person can live happily only when they possess robust health [1]. Only a physically and spiritually healthy person can create all the historical, cultural, and national values that are sacred to every nation and every country. Therefore, 'health should be valued as the highest of all existing values.' A person's health cannot be purchased with any amount of material wealth or funds [2]. In a democratic society where every individual is considered responsible for their conduct, human health is elevated to the level of a supreme value of critical importance; every person emerges as the architect of their own health, which must be built in such a way that it never falters and can withstand any harmful influences. To this end, every person must deeply understand the path to achieving robust health, the secrets of well-being, and realize that a healthy lifestyle is the only way to complete health"[3].

METHODOLOGY

When we seek an answer to the question of how a person achieves both physical and spiritual health, it is beyond doubt that the initial knowledge on the path to physical and spiritual maturity is formed within the family. The spiritual and physical maturity of a family is directly based on the health and spiritual well-being of the members who constitute it. The family is a strong fortress where spousal relationships, the development of children, and society's most important mechanism all flourish. Today, the establishment and formation of a health culture in families are based on many material and spiritual values cherished by society. Specifically, knowledge about reproductive health within families is always a matter of urgent importance. This is because the future prosperity and stability of the family directly depend on the reproductive health of its members. At this juncture, it is appropriate to elaborate on the concept of reproductive health [4]. "Reproductive health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity, in all matters relating to the reproductive system and to its functions and processes." The term "reproductive health" was first mentioned at the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo, where it was explained as follows: it reflects issues of protecting human rights, improving quality of life, enhancing access to basic social services for the population, uniting efforts to combat poverty, reducing the spread of diseases, and protecting the environment.

The following source also provides a general definition of the concept: "Reproductive health: reproductio - to reproduce [5]. The ability of a human to preserve themselves as a species". From this definition, it can be understood that the main emphasis is on the idea that a person's reproductive health is a unique characteristic and capability.

Reproductive health is now directly and officially recognized by international law and enshrined in international human rights documents. The scientific basis for reproductive health did not emerge recently; it has long been reflected in the social views of both Western and Eastern scholars [6]. This is particularly evident in the works of a group of thinkers who highlighted the family and its social significance. This can be analyzed from the perspective of Eastern civilizational views as follows.

The works of Eastern thinkers include many treatises on personal health, especially on reproductive health, which is crucial for both men and women within the family. In the early Middle Ages, many encyclopedic scholars flourished in Central Asia. Their encyclopedic nature is evident in their comprehensive research across nearly all fields. Among them are hadith scholars like Abu Ali Ibn Sina, Abu Rayhan Beruni, Abu Nasr Farabi, Muhammad Khwarizmi, Ahmad Al-Fergani, Imam At-Tirmidhi, and Imam al-Bukhari, as well as other great thinkers [7].

As an example, Abu Rayhan Beruni, in his views, places special emphasis on the fact that the peace of the family lies directly in the hands of wise, intelligent, discerning, and well-bred women. In his work "Mineralogy," he cites parental advice to girls who are starting a family, stressing that peace, harmony, and happiness in the family fall more heavily on women's shoulders: 'Oh, my daughter! You are leaving the home you grew up in and moving into an unfamiliar household. You do not know all the traits of your future husband [8]. You be the earth, he will be the sky. If you are as humble as the earth before him, he will be as noble as the sky. Just as the sky makes the earth green with its healing rain, he too will delight you with his affection and compassion. Let your husband hear only gentle and sweet words from you; do not sit before him in unsuitable or old clothes, or with your face unadorned and your hair untidy' [9].

In this context, reproductive health can be understood as a person's comprehensive well-being. Mental, physical, and spiritual maturity is the foundation of reproductive health. Abu Rayhan Beruni also described the spiritual and physical maturity of women in families according to the principles above. The views of the great scholar Abu Ali ibn Sina on matters of family relations are also noteworthy. His work "Tadbiri Manozil"

discusses the importance of women having good character. This work emphasizes that women should possess the following qualities:

- ☉ To be knowledgeable;
- ☉ She should be devout;
- ☉ She should be modest and shy;
- ☉ She should be brave by nature;
- ☉ She should love her husband deeply;
- ☉ She should be concerned with childbirth and raising children;
- ☉ She should not be a nag;
- ☉ She should be submissive to her husband;
- ☉ She should be honest, humble, and sensible;
- ☉ She should never tarnish her own honor;
- ☉ She must be considerate of her husband, respect him, and be courteous;
- ☉ She should know her duties and obligations well;
- ☉ A wife should know how to use household items properly and economically;
- ☉ She should overcome her husband's shortcomings with her good nature and positive qualities;

Furthermore, the scholar conducted numerous other studies on human health, which include the concepts of "The Science of Health Preservation," "Healthy Lifestyle," "Healthy Generation," "Mental Health," and "Healthy Natural Environment." The scholar did not overlook the fact that human health depends not only on the body's internal environment but also on the surrounding environment, various ecological factors, and spiritual influences. Ibn Sina stressed the critical importance of carefully studying each patient, as well as becoming acquainted with their family and living conditions, before beginning treatment. His ideas are similar to the objectives of the science of psychohygiene. In Ibn Sina's works, we also find many writings on psychoprophylaxis [10]. For example, the thinker placed special emphasis on upbringing in the prevention of diseases. "Upbringing should begin in early childhood," said Ibn Sina. He also taught that a child should not be raised to be cowardly, melancholic, or overly spoiled; that parents must always be attuned to what their child desires and strive to provide it, while steering them away from harmful things. He emphasized that adhering to these rules ensures that a child will grow to have a sharp mind and a healthy body [11].

In Yusuf Khos Hojib's famous work "Qutadg'u bilig," valuable insights are offered regarding which qualities and virtues should be considered when choosing a husband or wife, the role, place, and significance of personal character traits in managing family life, the norms of spousal relationships, and the essential conditions for a prosperous life. In the work, the author gives the following advice on the matter of choosing a bride: "When you take a wife, take one of lower station than yourself; do not look to one of high birth, lest you become her slave. Her origin, lineage, and stock should be good; seek one who is modest, considerate, and pure. Do not seek a beautiful face, but seek one of good character; if her disposition is good, she will brighten your countenance. If her disposition is good, she will be complete. If her character is upright, she will be most suitable; a wife is a beautiful character, he who knows this understands [12]. If you are fortunate enough to find a well-mannered woman, do not let her go (take her at once), O good man; if she is considerate and pure, such a person is of noble quality. You should seek a considerate and intelligent wife, O wise one; if a considerate and intelligent wife is found, then prudence, wealth, beauty, and lineage will all be present".

In particular, the work "Kimyoi Saodat" by Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, one of the pillars of Islamic philosophy, also touches upon the inner qualities of a person, primarily providing answers with evidence from the Holy Qur'an and Hadiths. This shows that the

issue of reproductive health is not, as we might think, a concept introduced solely by the West, but is in fact part of the scientific heritage of many scholars who were active in the East, specifically in the Central Asian region.

The aforementioned work of Imam al-Ghazali contains the following reflections:

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Thus, one group of people has supposed that God created man merely to eat, sleep, have intercourse, and take pleasure. This is an utterly incorrect, corrupt, and vain delusion. By this, they spend their entire lives on worthless, futile pursuits [13]. A thousand regrets and sorrows be upon them! Then there is another group who supposes that they were created to dominate others by becoming angry and wrathful without reason, by shouting at them with loud voices, and by scolding and rebuking them. They devote their time, and even their lives, to these kinds of actions. Both of these suppositions, common among many peoples, are erroneous, for eating and intercourse are driven by carnal desire. All of these are but futile delusions. Eating, drinking, and having intercourse are also found in animals. The four-legged animals eat more than man does [14]. The sparrow has more intercourse than man does. So, in what way could man be more noble than them? The desire to dominate and be superior stems from wrath, which is a characteristic of predatory beasts. Therefore, man has also been given the attributes found in predatory and four-legged animals. But beyond this, He has given a more perfect and noble quality, which is the blessing of reason. Thus, with this intellect and understanding, man comes to know Allah, the Almighty and Majestic, who created him. By contemplating the wondrous and marvelous creative powers of Allah, he frees himself from the clutches of wrath with the light of reason [15]. This is a quality of the angels. This quality prevails over the qualities of all wild beasts. Allah has made all beings on the face of the earth subservient to man. He has made them submit. The Almighty has informed us in His Glorious Word:

"Wa saxxara lakum mo fi-s-samovati vama fil-arzi jami'an minhu."

Interpretation of the verse: He has subjected to you whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth – all from Him.

(Jathiya, 13))

CONCLUSION

Indeed, observations have shown that the issue of women's health in the family has consistently been among the most problematic. This is because a woman is a mother, a wife, a sister, and the one who continues the family's future generation. Therefore, her health, especially her reproductive health, must always be a matter of importance. In this regard, the religion of Islam also offers much advice and wisdom. People always strive to find the true solution to problems, and there is no doubt that studying experiences and following them yields good results. In particular, every young person on the threshold of marriage should always be concerned about their reproductive health, which is considered their most important blessing, and should also heed the historical teachings in this regard. It is well-known that the scholars of our past paid special attention to every aspect of their views. It is certain that we can find the answers we need for today from their reflections on both family relations and health, as their ideas have many aspects relevant to every era. Therefore, to study, analyze, and accept what is necessary is also a skill.

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