



ISSN:2455-7838 (Online)

DOI : 10.36713/epra2016

SJIF Impact Factor(2023) : 8.574

ISI I.F Value : 1.241

EPRA International Journal of

RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

(IJRD)

Monthly, Peer Reviewed (Refereed) & Indexed International Journal

Volume - 9 Issue - 1 January 2024

Research & Development



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EPRA International Journal of Research & Development (IJRD)

Monthly Peer Reviewed & Indexed
International Online Journal

Volume: 9, Issue:1, January 2024

Indexed By:



Published By
EPRA Publishing

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THE DEPICTION OF CHILD UPBRINGING IN THE NOVEL “IMOMNING MANIKEN QIZI” BY AMINA SHENLIKO‘G’LI

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ABSTRACT

The child upbringing has been an important concern globally. This article aims to offer a comprehensive analysis of bringing up a child, focusing on the flaws, and strengths of how characters, particularly parents have while fostering their daughter in the novel by Turkish author Amina Shenliko‘g’li. It also highlights the pervasive impact of Westernization on the formation of mannerisms of the girl Fatima in the novel.

KEY WORDS. *Child upbringing, Central Asian Society, parental influence, societal expectations, familial bonds, tradition and modernity, identity formation, childhood experiences, autonomy.*

INTRODUCTION

The theme of child upbringing has been a topic of discussion in famous works of renowned English writers including Charles Dickens with his novel “Great Expectations”, Roald Dahl “Matilda”, Louisa May Alcott “Little Women”, E. Nesbit “The Railway Children”, and J.M. Barrie “Peter Pan”. While comparing and contrasting approaches to childhood in the novels of Charles Dickens, Daniela Němcová says “*The novel “Great Expectations” deals with the topic of one’s maturity and development. In this chapter, the power of an adult influence on children characters is emphasized.*” [17,2]. Also, several writers have created novels of formation in which they depicted the problem of upbringing. One of them is Alexandra Grenier, a researcher from Canada-based Montreal University, who said: “*This genre describes the processes by which maturity is achieved through the various ups and downs of life. It is definitely associated with the development of education and self-realization, which are concepts highly popular following the Enlightenment age.*” [2,8]

Even heads of the countries have talked about this intricate issue. One of them is Barack Obama whose fatherhood speech demonstrates some clear points about the difficulties and specific features of child upbringing while mentioning the obstacles encountered by young children. The following words are from his speech:

“...we also need families to raise our children. We need fathers to realize that responsibility does not end at conception. We need them to realize that what makes you a man is not the ability to have a child — it’s the courage to raise one.”[18]

METHODS

The novel written by one of the popular Turkish writers Amina Shenliko‘g’li also serves as a rich source of exploration into the intricate dynamics of parenting and the impact of upbringing on the development of children in the context of Central Asian society. Through a close reading of the narrative, the article examines the multifaceted nature of parental influence, societal expectations, and cultural norms in shaping a child’s character and worldview.

The work delves into the portrayal of familial relationships, the role of tradition, and the challenges the girl faces. To analyze the features of parenting depicted in the novel, the qualitative method of research, specifically content research is used to examine the strong and weak points of raising a child, the influences of people in society, and the spreading effect of Western-centered perspective on it. Child upbringing is one of the main themes of the novel “Imomning maniken qizi” written by Amina Shenliko‘g’li.

DISCUSSION

Through the analysis, it can be seen that from the beginning of the narrative, the parents, Imam Yokub and Gulkhanum, try to instill religious knowledge in their daughter, Fatima, including Kuran reading, a deep understanding of hadiths as well as the moral values such as honesty, integrity, and faith, because they are engaged in religion. However, the girl, who is always complaining about their poor financial status, is drawn to the allure of Western culture and the opportunities it offers. She holds hatred toward her father’s



job as an Imam who is a religious leader in Islam who typically serves as the prayer leader and spiritual guide for a community. This hatred can be depicted in her following words:

“Masjiddan beri kelolmaydi-ku. Kechayu kunduz shu yerda bo‘lsa. Birorta qoni buzuq gilamni o‘g‘irlab ketmasin deb, poyloqchilik qilib o‘tiradi. Sassiqlik o‘liklarni yuvib, suvni to‘kmaydimi? Topganiga baraka yo‘q. Tortayotgan azoblarimizga qarang. Eringizning soyasida it chekmaydigan azoblarni boshimizga tushyapti.” [1,3]

In these statements, the girl’s negative attitude toward her father, while pinning the blame for being poor on him, is clearly illustrated. The love for her father is not something she possesses. The girl does not show respect toward her father or her father’s job and complains about the meager income he earns working in the mosque. She thinks that all the hardships that they experience are because of her father’s fault. Because her father did not follow other people’s paths at that time, while high-ranking were earning a lot of money and piling up wealth, he wanted to be religious and inform people of the importance of worshipping and believing in Allah.

The main character’s bad behavior is also apparent in her opinions about a disabled neighbor boy who tries to lead his life despite his defect. She is depicted as someone who is too proud and rude to poor people around her.

“Oyi, anavi cho‘loqning onasiga aytib qo‘ying. Bolasiga tarbiya berib qo‘ysin, mening asabimni buzmasin. Cho‘loqligiga qaramay, boshimni aylantirmoqchi bo‘ladi. Men kimman, u kim? Unga nazar tashlarmidim? Nima o‘zini nogiron ekanligini bilmaydimi, nega buni tushunib yetmaydimi?” [1,4]

Her humiliating words vividly portray her bad manner and cruel nature, someone who feels indifferent about hurting others, specifically physically handicapped. For her, the disabled boy does not even have the right to look at her due to his disability, and even laughs at him. Despite her disrespect toward her father, her father shows the kind gestures of fatherhood and tries his best to take care of her. Therefore, one of the factors leading to Fatima’s ill-tempered character is her father’s leniency – not strict enough to scold his daughter even in extreme cases when Fatima exhibits her poor attitude. His innocence, simplicity, and willingness to care for her is portrayed in these words:

“Mayli, qo‘yaver, qizimni ranjitganimdan ko‘ra o‘zim ertalabgacha ishlaganim yaxshi.” [1,5]

This sentence openly shows the moment when he scolds his wife for making their daughter clean the floor after the raindrops leaked from the hole in the ceiling and shows his willingness to do the task on his own in order not to bother his daughter. This kindness, however, turns out to be fruitless but instead worse. The more kind he is to his daughter, the more ill-tempered she becomes. As she grows older, she becomes more attracted to the Western world and its ways of living, leading her to decide to be a model, a job that is seen as bad by her parents. Her family, being very religious and highly believing in the power and mercy of Allah, wants to prevent her from this decision, but in vain. The poor father blames himself for it when he finds out the hidden secret that his daughter has engaged in smoking. The father understands his fault in raising his daughter.

He says “...demak men namunali inson emas ekanman, namunali bo‘lganimda edi qizimni tarbiya qila olgan bo‘lar edim.” admitting his inability to guide his daughter in the correct direction.[1,20]

Day by day Fatima gets used to the passing pleasure of modern life, secretly getting a new job in a certain place, and the worst is the time when her father sees her in an unknown man’s car without her headcover, which is considered as the most important piece of clothing in her family. But even at that time, Imam Yakub does not blame his daughter, because his naive and simple character does not know the evil intent or seek faults in the actions of others.

His excessive trust in his daughter is another leading factor in developing his daughter’s bad personality. He continues to trust his daughter, consequently leading her to accomplish her fancy dreams that are against the principles of her family. This is more obvious from the following words:

“Opang aqlli qiz. Alloh bergan vujudini hammaga ko‘z-ko‘z qilmaydi. Shayton yo‘ldan urib, shunday qilgan taqdirda ham, darrov tavba qilgan bo‘lar edi” [1,42] he says when he is informed of the newspaper with a model girl looking exactly like his daughter but with a different name, featured in the front cover.

His daughter uses her father’s genuine trust for her own sake, continuing to lie to him and engage in activities against family values including modeling and wearing short or revealing clothes.



Peer pressure has a great role to play in shaping Fatima's dishonest and immoral manners. The company she keeps throws her into evil powers, including the use of drugs, particularly white pills. When her father finds out about it, he steps into a world of confusion, disappointment, and misery, stopping to talk with his daughter, the decision that does not do any good. Most people in the society depicted in the novel are portrayed as ones with bad intentions, who are always trying to earn money at the cost of an honest life. These people also play an essential role in molding Fatima's self. One of them is her boss in the fashion industry, a man who is a philanderer. Despite his old age, he is more inclined to like young girls who work for him and try to be in a relationship with Fatima.

"Oldimda mini yubka kiyasanku, ovqatlangani bormaysanmi?" [1,60]

These words clearly define his negative intentions toward her. People who surround Fatima when she is away from home are all in the wrong direction and are blind to the realities of the world and only follow the crowd instead of having their clear perspectives. His job is to find beautiful girls who are ready to tell their bodies to get fame and make them put on Western outfits in modeling exhibitions.

The period featured in the novel shows the ever-increasing rate of Western modernization and its prevalent influences, one of which is the common practice of individuals changing their genders. This is the case in one of her friends named Banu who has changed his gender into a female to be a part of girls' company, influenced by society. She says *"Meni yo'ldan urishdi. Ayol kishiga o'xsharkanman. Ko'cha-kuyda menga gap otadiganlar yo'ldan ozdirdi. Demak, aslida ayol ekanman-da, dedim. O'sha paytlarda unaqangi operatsiyalar juda shuxrat qozonyotgan paytlar edi."* [1,73] In these words, it can be seen that this girl is negatively influenced by people who look at him as an attractive girl, thus leading him to change his gender. This naive girl, once being a boy, resorted to changing her identity due to people's opinions that made her feel that she was a girl from the beginning. Perhaps he did not know that his being as a boy was meant to be so or just did not know the sins that come with changing one's gender.

Fatima spends more than five months with a group of model girls who prioritize fancy living and the temporary pleasure of this world. Looking at these girls' lives, the only difference between their and the main character's family is the fact that other girls have had troubled childhoods with irresponsible parents engaged in bad deeds whereas Fatima's parents are honest and simple people whose priority is their mission to Allah and lead people into the right path.

"Dadam bizni tashlab Germaniyaga ketgan. U yerda jozibali olmon ayollarini ko'rgach, onamni tashlab ketgan. Onam foxishalik qilib meni o'stirgan." [1,72] One of the girls called Nejla says these words recalling her dishonest father who betrayed his wife and left his family to "enjoy life" with other women and her mother trying to raise her daughter working as a prostitute. Having confronted various people going astray, Fatima comes back to her senses, realizing her mistake due to the valuable religious and spiritual knowledge that her parents have instilled in her from a very young age. These two cases clearly show the negative influence of the irresponsibility of parents and society on the development of young minds.

CONCLUSION

The upbringing of children holds significant global relevance. This article endeavors to provide a comprehensive analysis of parental nurturing, with a specific focus on the strengths and deficiencies evident in the characters, particularly the parents, as they raise their daughter in the novel authored by Amina Shenliko'g'li. Additionally, it intends to underscore the pervasive influence of Westernization on the cultivation of behavioral traits in the character of Fatima in the aforementioned literary work. A lack of money, social norms, peer pressure, and Western standards have had a profound impact on the development of the main character of the novel. Although at the beginning Fatima's parents cannot guide her, the valuable life lessons they have inculcated help her to regain her individuality and return to her parents, feeling self-pity. The experiences she has been through have made her rethink her priorities and purpose in life.

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