THE ROLE OF ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS TEACHINGS IN SOCIAL INTEGRATION IN ZANZIBAR: A CASE OF MARRIAGE INSTITUTION

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ABSTRACT

Zanzibar is a cosmopolitan society located in East African coast. Ninety-nine per cent (99%) of its population are Muslims and Islam provides a complete code of law and guidance. The purposes of this paper are; to investigate the nature of Islamic religious teachings applied to the marriage issue and its contribution in encouraging marriage among the people from different ethnic groups in Zanzibar. The study involved collection of secondary data from relevant documents which are related to the topic. These include; electronic journal articles, dissertations and the books from various websites, including that of Waqf and trust commission in Zanzibar, Government and Non-Governmental Organisations and other individual scholars. Also, the phone call-in interview was undertaken from three government officers who are responsible for marriage and death registration for more clarification about the topic. The content analysis technique was employed for document analysis. The study revealed that the perfect application of Islamic religious teachings in the marriage institution plays different substantial roles in bringing about social integration in Zanzibar. Among these include; the family is the initial stage for a child's education, the family provides a shelter and protection for the individuals, the family gives support for the individuals, and the family provides and maintains a sense of belonging among its members. Much effort might have been taken to provide Islamic religious teachings to prepare the youths and reminding the adults in marriage life; however, the expected contribution of the marriage institution as a unifying factor in the society seems not to be attained. Therefore, it is sensible to recommend that the fiancés should get correct and perfect training on the rules of Islamic marriage so that they will be aware and well-versed with the rights and responsibilities of each member in the marriage life.

KEYWORDS: Cosmopolitan society, Islamic Religious Teachings, Social Integration, and Marriage Institution.

1. INTRODUCTION

The teachings of Islam have spread out all over the world. Islam as the second populous world religion after Christianity has been playing a substantial role as a unifying factor among the Muslims. Kuliniak (2016) affirms that "The Muslim community, which originated on the basis of religion and traditional group bonds, is characterised by greater solidarity" (p. 8). Islam as a complete way of life its teaching embraces all aspects of human life including the marriage issue. Marriage as an institution serves as the initial tie towards social integration. In Islamic point of view, the bond between the couples can only be effective if the correct and perfect application of its teachings is implemented. Alghafli, Hatch & Marks (2014) reveal that Islam influences marriage relationships, unites families and (when understood and lived properly) protects women from abuse and oppression (p. 814). Indeed, the Qur'anic conception of the family is an open conception. The individual is surrounded by a set of circles of memberships, of eccentric circles, each one of them opens on another, wider one. Every circle forms a family / '*ahl*. The individual, then, is supposed to be protected by the whole society" (Haddad, 2006: 60). Under the traditional Islamic jurisprudence, marriage creates a unit of society that mutually accepts God as an integral part of every situation and decision, and recognises mutual rights and obligations between spouses. Through marriage, couples commit to a lifelong bond that is based on mutual mental, spiritual, and physical gratification. Such a home promotes and ensures equity and harmony, and is a source of shelter filled with peace, comfort, security, and continuity (Alkhateeb, cited in-Alkhateeb, 2012).

As far as the Islamic teachings in Zanzibar are concerned, they can be traced back to 8th century, when Islam advent in East Africa and thus *Madrasahs* or Qur'anic schools became part of the indigenous learning system (Said, Mushi and Lodhi cited in Gunda et al., 2016). At that time, learning the Qur'an and how to write Arabic script, reading and calculating were the basic principles of education (Mushi, 2009). In highlighting the current status of Qur'anic education, the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar (1999) reports that:

> "In the framework of early childhood education, care and development that had previously been overlooked, this parallel education system is dominated by the Qur'anic schools (or Madrasas) that are fairly extensively and intensively distributed throughout Zanzibar. Almost every Muslim child goes through these institutions (Zanzibar is nearly 99% Muslims). Entry into these institutions is open, starting with around age three. The exit is also open depending on the child's learning speed. A quick learner can master the Qur'an after only about seven years and it can take a slow learner up to double that duration" (pp. 7-8).

Based on the above quotation on the nature of the provision of religious knowledge, it is obvious that Islamic training is dominant and has been affecting the entire life of the people in the country. Marriage as one of the social institution has also been exposed to this trajectory of observing the religious experiences for centuries. As a cosmopolitan society, the people of Zanzibar are originated from diverse ethnic backgrounds in which marriage cuts across those existing differences among them. Some of these ethnic groups include the natives, the Arabs, especially those originated from Oman and Yemen, the Comorians, Hindus, Chinese and other Africans from neighbouring countries like Tanzania Mainland (Tanganyika by then), Malawi, Mozambique and Kenya. With all the existing differences in terms of ethnicity, colour, place of origin and even political affiliations,

intermarriage among these groups of people has been a normal deed that takes place brotherly. Supporting this, Alwiya Omar as interviewed by Pennington (2010) discloses the nature of marriage in the country as follows:

> "My father is from Yemen, he came from Yemen to Zanzibar," says … [He] married my mother who was born and raised in Zanzibar, but had grandparents — paternal and maternal — from the Comoro Islands; so they were also of mixed descent." (para, 2).

In relation to the topic for the discussion, the above situation in the excerpt seems to have motivated by the dominant religious teachings which are after the propagation of unity and solidarity among the people irrespective of their differences. In this regard, this study sought to investigate the nature of Islamic religious teachings applied to the marriage issue and its contribution in encouraging marriage among people from various ethnic groups in Zanzibar. Moreover, previous studies inadequately focused on how Islamic religious teachings play a significant role in bringing about social integration, especially at the marriage institution in Zanzibar.

The paper covers the following aspects for discussion. They include an overview of Islamic religious teachings, the factors for social integration, the concept of the marriage institution, the application of Islamic religious teachings in the marriage institution and the research gap. This is followed by the methodology. The subsequent section presents a significant impact of the study and the role of Islamic teachings in the marriage institution as facts and findings. Finally, the paper ends with concluding remarks and recommendations.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In this section, the survey of some literature related to the topic is discussed. It is divided into four parts: a) a brief overview of Islamic religious teachings on social integration, b) the factors of social integration, c) the concept of the marriage institution, and d) the application of Islamic religious teachings in the marriage institution. The survey attempts to give an insight of each work that matches it from the present study. The research gap to be filled is provided at the end of this section as a conclusion.

2.1 A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS TEACHINGS ON SOCIAL INTEGRATION

According to Fatmir (2011), "Muslims perceive their Dīn (religion) of Islam as sincere and total submission to God's Will, and this submission is enacted willingly as absolute obedience to the law revealed by Him to man through the Office of Prophethood. Rather, man's character in his everyday feelings, thoughts, judgements and endeavours regarding the double aspects of life - *al-Dunyā* (Earthly Life) and *al-Ākhirah* (Hereafter life) should please and fall under the Will and Mercy of God" (p. 104). It is through the teaching of Islam that Muslims have been integrating not only in performing rituals like prayer and pilgrimage but also in dealing with economic, political and social matters. Various organisations at international levels have established on the basis of Islam. The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), Islamic relief, World Islamic Call Society and Muslim World League are some examples. In examining the utility of the OIC in solving conflicts in the Muslim world, Siddiqa (2016) gives out a brief about OIC as a point of reference as follows:

> The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, formerly the Organisation of the Islamic Conference, is the second-largest intergovernmental organisation after the United Nations and has a membership of 57 states spread over four continents. The organisation is the collective voice of the Muslim world with a mandate to ensure, safeguard, and protect the interests of the Muslim world in the spirit of promoting international peace and harmony among various peoples of the world (p. 2).

In Africa, Dramani-Issifou (1981) reveals that Islam as a religion, is a constituent part of the spiritual and social culture, is one of the fundamental aspects of modern African civilisations, to such an extent that many inhabitants of the continent often regard Islam and Africa as being a single entity. Several organisations governed by Islamic principles have introduced in Africa. In West Africa, for instance, many organisations have been active particularly in Nigeria. The famous Islamic organisation in the country is the Jama'atu Nasril Islam, which was established by Ahmadu Bello, Chief of the northern region in January 1962. Its main objective was to organise Muslim efforts in Nigeria. During the time of Ahmadu Bello, this Islamic organisation was very active in building mosques, organising conversion campaigns, and publishing newsletters (Akinade, 2013).

In South Africa, Mahida (1993) points out different Muslim associations which have established since the advent of Islam in the country up to date. Each organisation focuses on bringing Muslims together so as to achieve their desired socioeconomic goals. Some of the recent examples include; The Islamic Educational Organization of Southern Africa which was established in 1985 with the objective of providing a unified *madrasah* education in the Durban area. The fact is that the society's philosophy was to provide non-controversial and effective Islamic education to Muslim children. Also, in 1986, The Islamic *Da'wah* College International was introduced for the purpose of training *du'āt* (preachers) in which students are trained in comparative religion and missionary work. In addition, the Association of Muslim Schools launched in 1989. Its objective was to overcome the negative impact brought by the separation of secular and religious education through integrating secular and religious education into one unit.

In East Africa, Lodhi (1994) reveals that "through the commercial activities of the Muslims, eastern Africa was brought in closer contact with the rest of the world… Islam also brought literacy and literature and gave the Muslims of diverse origins a common uniting language - Swahili - which has also been a blessing for non-Muslims (p. 96). Similarly, Vilhanova (2010) argues that in Eastern Africa, Islam had advanced largely through trade, but also kept spreading through a certain civilising mission, carrying with the new monotheistic religion literacy and a sense of belonging to a world civilisation. According to Nimtz (1980), about two-third of East Africa Muslims reside in Tanzania including Zanzibar.

In Tanganyika (the present Tanzania), the role of Islamic religious teachings in bringing about social integration has not ignored. Bakar cited in Mhina (2007) reports that: "Political leaders SAW religion as a potentially decisive factor in a newly independent state facing the challenging task of bringing together about 120 tribes and people of different races and religious denominations into nationally integrated politically community" (p. 17). In addition, The East African Muslim Welfare Society (EAMWS) which was founded in Mombasa in 1945 by the then Aga Khan aimed at promoting Islam and raising the standard of living for the East African Muslims. EAMWS concentrated on building schools and mosques, providing scholarships and spreading literature (Lodhi and Westerlund, 1997). Further, Davis (2006) expounds that many religious organisations provide social services and address crucial problems within the country. For example, BAKWATA (National Muslim Council of Tanzania) provides HIV/AIDS education and fights against discrimination (National HIV/AIDS Program Office).

Specifically, Islam in Zanzibar has dominated all spheres of peoples' life. Katrina (2012) explains that, in Zanzibar, there are more than 2,000 Muslims religious schools (*Madrasa*) and they are under funded and staffed by volunteer teachers. More importantly, the parents are sending their children to these schools and pay a very small amount of money to make sure that their kids are growing in the better foundation of the Islamic religion. In recent years, there has been an increasing interest in using Islamic religious teaching in Zanzibar to solve different problems through *madrasa*. In 2014, there were 5,926 out of 8,497 registered *Madrasa* students in 30 communities in Unguja and Pemba islands who received health education and participated in interactive behaviour change exercises about schistosomiasis. It is reported from the *Madrasa* teachers that, their contribution is added value in the society and they got an opportunity to educate their students about schistosomiasis transmission, prevention, and treatment (Celone, et al., 2016). Clearly, there is a need to carry out research that can contribute to an expansion of knowledge that explains the essence of Islamic religious teaching in the social integration.

2.2 THE FACTORS OF SOCIAL INTEGRATION

According to the dictionary of sociology (1998), social integration refers to the principles by which individuals or actors are related to one another in a society. It is not a means to impose someone, but it is a participatory process between all members in order to achieve and maintain peaceful social relations. Cruz-Saco (2008) exposes that social integration enables persons regardless of their attributes, to enjoy equal opportunities, rights and services that are available to the so-called mainstream group. Some of these personal attributes include socioeconomic class, age, gender, sexual preference and expression, political ideas, ethnicity and cultural traits, religion, citizenship (national origin) and geographical region of origin. According to the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) the concept of social integration can be clarified into three different ways; inclusionary goal, implying equal opportunity and rights for all human beings. In this case, becoming more integrated implies improving life chances. There are various factors that can promote integration and cohesion among the people in the society. One of these factors includes the marriage institution which is the focus point of the discussion.

2.3 THE CONCEPT OF MARRIAGE INSTITUTION

The meaning of marriage differs depending upon the cultural views and beliefs of a particular society. Marriage is a societal institution mechanism designed to regulate and control human relations which arise out of the physical fact of bisexuality[1]. Adizes (2013) argues that marriage is considered as an institution because there are the rules and code of conduct to be followed and respected. The rules of conduct are transmitted from one generation to the other, culturally, as to what is the role of the mother, what of the father, what of the first born and what of the last born and even the role of the grandparents. Timothy (2011) provides three definitions of marriage in the traditional Christian views; Firstly, **marriage is the uniting of elements that are fundamental, natural and beautifully different. Second, in marriage, the different elements of male and female unite in a complementary, creative and purposeful way. Third, the church traditionally has taught that the natural bond and creative complementarity of male and female is rooted in the created order.**

Based on Islamic perspective, Rida (2012) exposes that from the time marriage has established between a man and a woman, Islam regards this bond as an institution. As the Prophet (*SAW*) stated, "There is no institution more beloved to God than the institution of marriage" (Mustadrak, vol. 2, p. 531). According to *Imam* Abu Hanifah, Hanbal and Malik, marriage is recommendatory; however, in certain individuals, it becomes obligatory. On the side of *Imam* Shaafi'i, marriage is *nafl* or *mubah* (preferable). The general opinion is that if a person, male or female fears that if he or she does not marry, they will commit fornication, then marriage becomes '*wajib*'. If a person has strong sexual urges then it becomes '*wajib*' for that person to marry. Marriage should not be put off or delayed, especially if one has the means to do so. The institution of marriage has been given marvellous significance in Islam and it is a legal contract between man and woman with their own free wills. It is the only legitimate or a *halal* way to indulge in intimacy between a man and a woman. The Holy Prophet (*SAW*) said:

> "The best people of my Umma are those who get married and have chosen their wives and the worst people of my nation are those who have kept away from marriage and are passing their lives as bachelors" (Mustadrakul Wasail by Muhaddith Noori, vol. 2, p. 531).

Marriage is one of the most recognised and an unquestionable commandment in Islam. There are several verses in the Qur'an and Hadiths which encourage about marriage, some of these verses are in Chapter 24, Verse 32-33; Chapter 4, Verse 24; Chapter 2, Verse187; Chapter 30; Verse 21; Chapter 4, Verse 1. Allah (*SWT*) says:

> "Marry the single people from among you and the righteous slaves and slave-girls. If you are poor, Allah (*SWT*) will make you rich, through His favour; and Allah (*SWT*) is Bountiful, All-Knowing" (Qur'an, 24:32).

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[1] http://www.urantia.org/urantia-book-standardized/paper-83-marriage-institution

Thus, all these teachings emphasise the importance of marriage to the Muslims. The application of these teachings is unavoidable to marriage institution.

2.4 THE APPLICATION OF ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS TEACHINGS IN THE MARRIAGE INSTITUTION
Generally, the teachings of the Qur'an clearly offer the moral and legal guidance for all aspects of life, from marriage and divorce to inheritance and contracts to criminal punishment. For instance, in the aspect of marriage, a married Muslim couple is equated with clothing. Within this context, both husband and wife are each other's protector and comforter, just as the real garments "show and conceal" the body of human beings. The purpose of marriage in Islamic culture is to preserve the religion through the creation of a family. Islam teaches us that, the marriage must be between opposite-sex partners who are not too closely related to each other[2.] Also, a Muslim man can marry more than one wife but should treat them equally. The evidence of this statement is from the Qur'an. The Almighty God says that:

> "If ye fear that ye shall not be able to Deal justly with the orphans, marry women of your choice, two or three or four; but if ye fear that ye shall not be able to Deal justly [with them], then only one, or [A captive] that your right hands possess, that will be more suitable, to prevent you from doing injustice" (Qur'an, 4: 3).

Although Muslim men are permitted to choose wives from among fellow believers or from among other "people of the book" Allah (*SWT*) says:

> "...... [Lawful unto you In marriage] are [Not only] chaste women who are believers, but chaste women among the people of the Book revealed before your time..."(Qur'an, 5: 5).

Marriage is an important component to be done by human beings. The teaching of the Prophet Muhammad (*SAW*) Says:

> "Do not delay in three things; 1) The offering of the obligatory prayer. 2) The offering of the funeral prayer when the deceased's body is present. 3) The marriage of a woman when her couple is found"

On the same line, marriage is given a position for a Muslim as a completed half of his religion. The Messenger of Allah (*SAW*) says:

> "When a man marries, he has fulfilled half of his religion, so let him fear Allah regarding the remaining half."

Despite the legality of marriage in Islam, but there are some conditions must be fulfilled before the marriage (Abdur Rahman, 2013). Some of these conditions are:
Ijbar (A Safety Valve): There must be the agreement between man and woman. This is an essential aspect of marriage, and Islamic religion gives a woman to choose their own wanted partner in life. Allah (SWT) says:
> "Do not prevent them from marrying their husbands when they agree between themselves in a lawful manner" (Quran, 2:232).

The Free Consent of the Parties: There must be fully willing consent of all parties [man and women]. The Almighty God says:
> "And How could ye take it, when ye have gone In unto Each other, and They have taken from you a solemn covenant?" (Qur'an, 4:21).

The Prophet (SAW) says:
> "The widow and the divorced woman shall not be married until their order is obtained, and the virgin shall not be married until her consent is obtained." (Bukhari).

For more clarification from Imam Bukhari from his Sahih titled "When a man gives his daughter in marriage and she dislikes it, the marriage shall be annulled."
> "Once a virgin girl came to the Prophet (SAW) and said that her father had married her to a man against her wishes. The Prophet gave her the right to repudiate the marriage" (Abu Dawood).

Although, for Divorced women are given the freedom to contract their second marriage, but should be relying on the Shariah. The evidence from the Qur'an is that:
> "And when you divorce women, and they have come to the end of their waiting period, hinder them not from marrying other men if they have agreed with each other in a fair manner" (Chapter, 2:232).

Another condition is Prohibited Marriage Partners: In Islam, some man and women are strictly prohibited to get married. The prohibition can be either a permanent nature or a temporary. The following are permanently prohibited to get married.
> "And marry not those women whom your fathers married, except what has already happened [of that nature] in the past. Lo! It was ever lewdness and abomination, and an evil way. Forbidden unto you are your mothers and your daughters, and your sisters and your father's sisters and your mother's sisters, and your brother's daughters and your sister's daughters, and your foster mothers and your foster sisters, and your mothers in law and your stepdaughters who are under your mother in law and your stepdaughters who are under your protection [born] of your women unto whom you have gone into - but if you have not gone into them, then it is no sin for you [to marry their daughters] - and the wives of your sons from your own loins, and that you should have two sisters together, except what has already happened [of that nature] in the past. Allah is ever-Forgiving, Merciful" (Qur'an, 4:22-24).

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[2] http://guidedoc.com/muslim-marriage-beliefs-rules-customs

The temporary prohibition is, a man must not marry a woman during her *Eddah*, this also clearly stated in the Qur'an:

"... but do not make a secret contract with them except in honourable terms, nor resolve on the tie of marriage till the term prescribed is fulfilled" (Chapter, 2:235).

Two Suitors Seeking to Marry the Same Girl: It is prohibited for Muslims brothers to fight against each other to put a proposal of marriage against the proposal of another Muslim brother. The Prophet (SAW) disapproved of two persons competing with one another to secure marriage with the same girl. This is because it will create enmity between two Muslim brothers. The Prophet (SAW) says:

"A believer is a brother of a believer. Hence it is not lawful for him to bargain upon the bargain of a brother, nor propose to (the hand of a girl) after the marriage proposal of his brother, until the latter (voluntarily) withdraws the proposal" (Sunnan Abu Dawood).

The teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith have a uniquely significant to build a respectful society through marriage. In fact, before the relationship of marriage started, the religion plays its role by offering some guidance to follow in order to get you a partner. Huda (2017) said that the decision of getting married is one of the most important decisions as a person will do it in his/her lifetime. If a person makes it with prayer, careful investigation and family involvement, basically a good family will be preserved. Through many hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad (*SAW*) taught us about the characteristics of choosing a partner in your life and be your family respected. Among these hadiths include:

"A woman is married for her *deen*, her wealth or her beauty. You must go for the one with *deen* may your hands be in the dust! [If you fail to heed]" (Muslim).

"If someone with whose piety and character you are satisfied with comes to you, marry him. If you do not do so, there will be trials in the earth and a great deal of evil" (At-Tirmidhi).

The hadiths above, explain the steps when someone wants to get married in order to have a good and respected family. Generally, this implies that for marriage cannot be done without considering the teachings of Islam.

From the above literature, it is clear that there are many studies on the role of the teachings of Islam in bringing about social harmony which have been conducted in various parts of the world (Fatmir, 2011; Siddiqa, 2016; Dramani-Issifou, 1981; Mahida, 1993). However, a few of them are somewhat seem to focus on marriage institution Rida (2012). Since there are no studies which have conducted in Zanzibar with a special focus on the role played by teachings of Islam in bringing about social integration, particularly via marriage institution, there is an urgent need of having this kind of study. Therefore, this study intended to fill this gap of knowledge by investigating the role of Islamic religious teachings in social integration with a special focus on marriage institution in the country.

3. METHODOLOGY

This qualitative study on Islamic religious teachings was based on case study design. The study involved collection of secondary data from relevant documents which are related to the topic. These include; electronic journal articles, dissertations and the books from various websites, including that of Waqf and trust commission in Zanzibar, Government and Non-Governmental Organisations and other individual scholars. Also, the phone call-in interview was undertaken from three government officers who are responsible for marriage and death registration for more clarification about the topic. The content analysis technique was employed for document analysis while Kiswahili audio recordings were translated into English and then transcribed, coded, classified and analysed.

4. FACTS AND FINDINGS

This section presents two aspects: a) significant impact of the study and b) the role of Islamic teachings in the marriage institution. This second aspect covers the study findings, which answer the two set research questions identified earlier.

4.1 SIGNIFICANT IMPACT OF THE STUDY

Currently, many studies which have been undertaken in Zanzibar acknowledge the existence of the poor results in marriage in the development of social cohesion. This seems to be more influenced by overlooking the rights and responsibilities of the spouses. For instance, Arifin, Ibrahim and Talib (2012) state that, "It cannot be denied that the issue of divorce, particularly for the Muslim community in Zanzibar is at an alarming rate. Many steps and proposals might have been suggested and taken by the government in solving this problem; however, the rate seems not to decrease" (p. 176). This quotation shows the increase of divorce in the Isles, which can be linked to the disobeying of the Islamic teachings to the marriage issues, whereby all the rights and responsibilities between the spouses together with their children have clearly stated in the Qur'an and *Sunnah* of the Prophet Muhammad (*SAW*). This situation has led many negative effects in Zanzibar, including the disintegration of societies; surpassed for children born out of wedlock; increased harassment attempts made by the couple or their close relatives before, within and after marriage; abandoned women and children and lax enforcement of fundamental rights of marriage (Abdulla, 2011). Therefore, the contribution of Islamic teachings as discussed in this paper will contribute to minimise the rate of divorce and hence social integration could be easily attained.

In addition, it has been a tendency that most of the people used to get married without having adequate knowledge of marriage life. Indeed, in Islamic jurisprudence marriage is not a topic, but a complete course of study. It is through learning that an individual can get to know the necessary conditions in marriage, the criteria in selecting a partner, the rights of a husband to her wife and vice versa, the right of the spouses to their children, and so on. Regrettably, getting into is accomplished based only on personal experience. In fact, the life inside and outside the marriage is quite different. And this is due to the changes in the responsibilities assigned between the spouses. It is these changes which sometimes can influence even the changes of the whole lifestyle of an individual. This trend of ignoring knowledge on marriage does not go without having a negative impact not only in

the family life like un-ended conflicts and divorce but also to the society in general. Hence, the social integration becomes difficult to be reached.

Furthermore, almost three decades now, the social unity in the country seems to be under threat following the political tension that has been manifested after every general between two main opposing parties; the dominant ruling party (Revolutionary Party-CCM) and the main opposition one, (Civic United Front - CUF). Supporting this, Throup (2016) exposes that:

> Zanzibar has a long history of controversial, closely fought, violent elections. The Zanzibar Electoral Commission (ZEC) has played a critical role in sustaining the CCM, the ruling party in both Zanzibar and on the mainland, in power. In 1995, for example, international observers found evidence that CUF leader Seif Sharif Hamad was denied victory due to rigging by the ZEC. The aftermath of disputed elections in 2000 led to the army and police allegedly killing 35 protestors and injuring 600 others. Officials and militia from the CCM went on a house-to-house rampage, arresting and abusing suspected opposition supporters, prompting some 2,000 people to flee to Kenya. The nullification of the results of this year's election by the chairman of the ZEC Jecha Salim Jecha on October 28, following the declaration of 31 of Zanzibar's 54 constituencies, suggests that nothing has changed (para, 2).

The above excerpt reveals some indications which seem to be a threat to the existing social unity in the country. This is due to the fact that the trend has been repeatedly to the extent that the level of political tolerance among the supporters between the parties seems to deteriorate which in the long run might lead to the outbreak of civil war. In this respect, there is a need of having a permanent solution to address such an impasse. To the researcher, since the country is a Muslim-based, it is only through emphasising on observing the teachings of Islam in a practical manner that will guarantee the social sustainability.

Moreover, today most of the Muslims have been exposed to the problem of the division which has resulted in a number of conflicting groups among them. Some of these groups include *Sunni, Shia, Salafi, Khaarij, Sufi and Khalafi*. Supporting this, Lugo (2013) reports that "in both Iraq and Lebanon, Sunnis are considerably more likely than the Shias to rate sectarian conflict as a very big problem in their country…By comparison, 11% of Iraqi Shias and 27% of Lebanese Shias see sectarian conflict as a very big problem" (p. 107). Indeed, separation has no room in Islam. It is Allah only who knows the pious and non pious one. This is due to the fact that, it has been a tendency for some Muslims to judge the inside of other Muslims in terms of piety. As a consequence, there is also a classification of more and less devout Muslims. All these groups weaken the strength of the Muslim world in one way or another. Therefore, the impact of the application of correct and perfect teachings of Islam in Zanzibar via marriage institution as propagated by this study, it will serve as a role model country in terms of stable peace, love, harmony, unity and solidarity.

4.2 THE ROLE OF ISLAMIC TEACHINGS IN THE MARRIAGE INSTITUTION

There are various merits that are met within the marriage institution which perfectly observes the Islamic teachings in its proper way. Some of these advantages include first, the family is the main centre in the provision of education for the children. Every individual learns about the norms, values, customs and religion within the family. Women on their hand are granted with the task of educating children, according to the norms and values of the society. Women are the focus and the locus of norms, values, restrictions, to preserve the Muslim family (Bouqia, 2006). Emphasising this, Sadar (2008) states that, "I grew up reading the Qur'an on my mother's lap. It's usual, once Muslim children are about four or five, for their mothers to start reading the Qur'an and getting the child to repeat the words, again and again, till they become familiar and can be easily recited from memory"(para, 1). In contrast, due to lack of complete or partial abiding by the Islamic teachings, currently, the family is no longer a main provider of education. In exposing the major changes in the family within Muslim societies in the 21st century, Bourqia (2006:50) states that "Nowadays, the school is not only competing with the family in the education of children, but it has become the main educational institution". She adds, "It seems likely that the family has lost the grip on the education, challenged by the school, by the media, especially by television, by peers and by informal channels where children are seeking information" (p. 48). This implies that the role of the Muslim family, especially women in upbringing the children starting from their early childhood has ignored. As a result, the children miss to cultivate the intended norms, values, customs, loves and religious teachings that could shape and prepare them to be responsive not only to their parents but also to the society and God in general.

Second, the family provides a shelter and protection for the individuals. Every individual gets security in case of any unsafe situation in the world. It is the responsibility of the spouses to ensure that they take care of their children, including understanding their children's cooperative peer groups, their interests in playing, the length of the time in which the children are outside their homes, the activities they involved in, and the place where they get to sleep and all their movements in the daily life. Bouqia (2006) affirms that "family is the institution which is still gaining the trust of individuals when facing precarious situations" (p. 49). Islamic teachings on its side have clearly elucidated the rights of the parents on how to take care of their children. As Allah (*SWT*): "O you who believe! Ward off from yourselves and your families from Hellfire, whose…" (Qur'an, 66:6). This verse implies that Islamic teachings have assigned the parents to take care of their respective children, including giving shelter and protection in general. This experience does not go without having an impact on preparing the children to be joyful, obedient, careful and helpful not only to their family members but also to the society in general. Hence, the social integration could be easily achieved.

Third, the family gives support for the individuals. Each member of the family, whether is man or woman has the right of getting support so as to live better. The support can be of various kinds depending on the time and needs. For instance, every child needs to have an access to education beginning from the early childhood. Education is well known to be the basic need and a key of life for every human being. Thus, giving a support to individuals within the family is unquestionable. In Islam, for instance, seeking knowledge is a religious obligatory for every Muslim man or woman. As the Prophet Muhammad (*SAW*) said: **"Seeking**

knowledge is an obligation upon every Muslim". This hadith of the Prophet reflects the first revealed five verses of the Holy Qur'an (96:5) that insist on seeking for education. As Allah says: *"Read [O Muhammad!] in the name of your Lord who created (1). He created man from a clot (2) Read, and your Lord is the Most Honourable (3) who taught by the pen. (4)".* In contrast, as argued by Bourqia (2006):

> "The Islamic societies have cultivated a kind of ambivalence towards women's education… Islam does not make differences between men and women when it comes to getting an education, but patriarchal norms, traditions and customs excluded the majority of women from having access to it" (p. 44).

This implies that the Muslim societies do not live according to the commandments of Islamic religious teachings. Consequently, the marriage institution turns to be the source of implanting hostility, jealousy, hate, favouritism and conflicts among the members instead of being the first destination of observing justice, affection and mercy.

Last, the family provides and maintains a sense of belonging among its members. This is another great role. It is only the children who are born inside the wedlock who can enjoy this right. Islamic teachings are against the western lifestyle of boy and girlfriend relationship. It is in the forefront to encourage marriage among the youths, both males and females. As the Prophet (*SAW*) said: "Oh Youth! Whoever is capable of marriage, should marry, most certainly it safeguards the eyes and protects the private parts [from that which is illegal]" (Sahih Bukhari, Kitabun Nikah: 4779). This implies that a single parent type of family has no room in Islamic teachings. This due to the fact that the children who belong to a single parent's lack the right of belonging. This phenomenon does not go without having an impact on the socialisation which has been slowing down among most of the children who are born out of wedlock. Hence, even the social integration in its broader perspective becomes very problematic to be attained.

5.   CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is undoubted that the perfect application of Islamic religious teachings in the marriage institution plays an important role in bringing about social integration in Zanzibar. Much effort might have been taken to provide Islamic religious teachings to prepare the youths and reminding the adults in marriage life; however, the expected contribution of the marriage institution as a unifying factor among the people seems not to be attained. To the researcher, this is a threat towards promoting the existing love and solidarity which may be regarded as the means for social sustainability. In this regard, it is reasonable to recommend that before marriage, the fiancés should get training about the rights and responsibilities of each member in the marriage life. This can be done in *Madrasahs* by introducing a particular subject entitled "Marriage education in Islam and its importance". Additionally, the Muslim leaders should spend much of their time to preach on the significance of marriage to the development of Muslim *Umma,* especially during Friday congregational prayers. Moreover, the Muslim scholars should organize various talks about the necessary steps to be observed in selecting a qualified spouse under the Islamic guidance and present them through the mass media.

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