

Darul Ifta Birmingham

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Question

Dear Shaykh,

I have a few questions regarding the marriage process.

1. Is it permissible for me to get to know a girl with the intention of marriage? (i.e. texting, video calling, meeting in person)
2. My friends say that it is permissible if the girl involves her mehram (i.e. brother) as a chaperon in the process? As example, a WhatsApp group is created and I add her and her brother and then we chat with each other in the group in the presence of her mahram. Or if I meet her in person at some public place (i.e. cafe) and she is accompanied with her brother.
3. If not, what would be the permissible way to get to know someone within the boundaries of Shariah? As some of the parents in the western countries, have no connections in the community, therefor many single people use Muslim marriage apps to find spouse. Where the prospect is totally stranger and it's difficult to commit in a relationship of marriage without a clear picture.
4. What's the ruling of texting/calling after engagement?

جزاك الله خيرا

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

Answer:

It will be permissible, rather preferable to get to know a girl and her family before marriage as the intention for marriage is not a temporary one and a person will have to interact with the family of his wife very often after the marriage.

The Prophet s.a.w. has mentioned concerning this "Get married to women who are loving and childbearing"¹. This hadeeth guides us to understand that we are advised to investigate the condition of the family of a prospective bride and the environment that she was brought up in because this is the only way of finding out if a woman possesses these qualities. If the women of her family are observed to be childbearing, loving and righteous then there is a great chance of her being similar.

The hadeeth does not give us the permission to be alone with her at any time before marriage as this is extremely dangerous due to the risk of temptation. The more logical method of permissible courtship will be to have her brother or other male mahram present in all meetings and the whats app method with her mahram included into the group will also be allowed.

There will be no prohibition in speaking with her in the presence of her mahram or even taking gifts to her or the family. Marriage engagement is only an agreement to get married at a specific date but does not change the fact that she is still a stranger or non mahram, the above laws of hijab and chaperon will still apply because the engagement is not a marriage contract but an intention alone and intentions are subject to change. Therefore any texting, video calls or communication is still to be done within the previously discussed parameters.

Only Allah knows best

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¹ Abu Dawood 2050, An Nasaai' 3227