



## "INNOVATIVE ACHIEVEMENTS IN SCIENCE 2025"

### A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF WEDDING CEREMONIES IN UZBEK AND ENGLISH TRADITIONS

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**Abstract:** *This article examines the traditional and modern wedding ceremonies of Uzbek and English cultures, focusing on their historical roots, symbolic practices, social meanings, and contemporary transformations. Through comparative analysis, the study highlights the similarities and differences in the structure, functions, and cultural values expressed in both wedding traditions.*

**Key words:** *Uzbek wedding ceremonies English wedding ceremonies, comparative study, cultural values, traditional, symbolic practices, social functions/meanings.*

Tradition serves as a way of passing down the spiritual heritage and accumulated wisdom of ancestors to future generations, and it holds a central place in the life of every ethnic group. It is a cultural phenomenon shaped throughout history by both natural and social needs. Traditions are inherited from past generations and can influence people's spiritual lives in either positive or negative ways. Essentially, they consist of practices and rules accepted by society or by particular groups, becoming shared social values that take root in people's consciousness.

Weddings are being a part of traditions mainly bear the nations style of living and their attitude towards ceremonies of any custom. For this occasion, weddings are one of the most significant social institutions across cultures. They reflect a community's beliefs, customs, and social organization. Marriage marks the beginning of the family, the fundamental and smallest unit of society. For this reason, since the earliest periods of human history, marriage has been accompanied by ceremonies designed to uphold family unity and stability through specific customs. These practices were originally communal celebrations and, over time, evolved into more formalized rituals.

Uzbek wedding ceremonies, shaped by Central Asian traditions and Islamic cultural heritage, are known for their multi-stage structure and collective participation. For example: In Uzbek society wedding ceremony consists of three stages: pre-wedding traditions, the customs performed during the wedding itself, and the rituals observed after the marriage. In contrast to Uzbek weddings English weddings, rooted in Western European customs and Christian traditions, emphasize legal formalities, individual choice, and ritual symbolism. Understanding these traditions provides insight into the values and identities of both societies.

Wedding traditions have been widely explored by anthropologists, sociologists, and cultural historians. Many studies emphasize that marriage ceremonies function not only as social events but also as reflections of cultural identity and long-standing values. Researchers note that Uzbek wedding customs are deeply connected to ancient nomadic and agriculture traditions, where hospitality, collective participation, and respect for elders play key roles. Rituals such as yor-yor, kelin salom, and pre-wedding gatherings symbolize community



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solidarity and the joining of families. Scholars also state that despite modern influences, Uzbek weddings continue to preserve historical rituals that strengthen cultural heritage.

While habits are practiced in everyday life, rituals are performed only during significant moments in a person's life. What distinguishes a ritual from ordinary daily activities is its ceremonial and formal nature. Rituals mark and give structure to the most important stages in human life—such as birth, marriage, and death. In Uzbek families, an entire system of rituals and ceremonies has developed, including the birth of a child, naming ceremonies, the postpartum “chilla,” the cradle ceremony, the first haircut, the first tooth celebration, the first step, the circumcision ceremony, the “muchal” age ritual, the marriage ceremony, and many others. These traditions act as a spiritual “ladder” guiding the younger generation through key life events—from a child's birth to maturity and eventually to forming their own family.

Overall, previous research reveals that Uzbek and English wedding traditions differ in structure, symbolism, and social participation but share the common purpose of marking the union of two individuals.

Uzbek wedding traditions have ancient origins connected to Turkic, Persian, and Islamic influences. Historically, Uzbek weddings functioned not only as family celebrations but also as social events that reinforced community unity. Pre-wedding rituals such as “fotiha qilinishi”, “sovchilik”, and “kelin salom” illustrate the importance of family approval and respect for elders.

English wedding customs developed from Anglo-Saxon, medieval Christian, and Victorian traditions. The church ceremony became central after the establishment of Christianity, emphasizing religious blessing and legal recognition. Over time, the focus shifted toward personal choice and symbolic gestures, such as exchanging rings and reciting vows.

Uzbek wedding ceremonies		English wedding ceremonies	
1.	Matchmaking ( <u>Sovchilik</u> )	1.	Engagement proposal
2.	Engagement ( <u>Fotiha to'yi</u> )	2.	
3.	<u>Nikoh</u> ceremony connected by an imam	3.	Church ceremony or civil registration
4.	<u>Kelin salom</u> (welcoming the bride) traditional greeting rituals	4.	Exchange of vows and rings
5.	<u>To'y tantanasi</u> (Wedding ceremony) with music, dance and hospitality	5.	Signing of the marriage register
6.	<u>Kuyov navkari</u> (the groom's traditional ceremonial attendant) and other regional customs	6.	Wedding reception with speeches, toasts, and a first dance
7.	<u>Ota-ona duosi</u> expressing moral and spiritual values	7.	Giving away the bride – father walks the bride down the aisle (symbolic permission, but not a prayer or blessing)

Table 1. Structure of Wedding Ceremonies

While Uzbek and English weddings differ in scale, symbolism, and ritual practice, both share common functions: marking the transition to marital life, expressing cultural values, and strengthening social bonds. Uzbek ceremonies emphasize community and tradition, whereas English weddings highlight individual choice and legal commitment. Despite these differences, both traditions continue to evolve in response to global cultural shifts.



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Uzbek and English wedding ceremonies represent two distinct cultural models rooted in their respective histories and social structures. Uzbek weddings are rich in ritual stages and collective participation, reflecting a strong sense of community and continuity. English weddings, in contrast, emphasize personal vows, legal formality, and symbolic expressions of partnership. The ongoing modernization of both traditions shows that wedding ceremonies remain dynamic cultural phenomena shaped by changing social realities. Comparative study of these traditions offers valuable insight into how societies express identity, values, and relationships through ceremonial

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