26282 - Bringing servants from abroad

the question

What is the ruling in islam about serving the inlaws if husband is making good money can he get a servant for his wife even though his parents did not like this but wife is very busy with the little kids and cleaning the house and husband does not have any time to help.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

There is much that could be said about female servants and the bad consequences of bringing them from abroad and letting stay in Muslim homes. Hence the Muslim should not resort to bringing servants to live in the home, especially if there are adolescent boys in the house. If the servants are not Muslim, then it is even more definite that they should not be brought into the home. The regrettable consequences of such actions are greater than can be enumerated.

The one who brings in a servant also commits other haraam actions, such as bringing her from her country without a mahram; causing her to be alone with non-mahram men in rooms and houses; and looking at her and vice versa.

Hence our scholars have warned against employing servants except in cases of necessity.

Shaykh Muhammad ibn Saalih ibn ‘Uthaymeen said:

Firstly:

We should not employ female or male servants except in cases of necessity. That is because bringing these servants involves spending money that a person does not need to spend. It was proven that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) forbade wasting money.

Secondly:

Some of them are not honest enough to deserve the trust we place in them, hence I say that we should not bring male or female servants from abroad unless the following conditions are met:

With regard to women:

Firstly:

The female servant should have a mahram with her, because it is not permissible to bring her to the country otherwise. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said, “No woman should travel without a mahram.” If a woman is brought in and has no mahram with her, this is going against the prohibition of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him).

Secondly:

There should be a need for her services. If there is no need and the only reason for bringing her here is to live a life of luxury and have no obligations, or to make life easy for his wife even though the housework is not much, then the issue is subject to further discussion.

The third condition:

There should be no fear of fitnah (temptation). If a man fears that he or one of his sons – if he has sons – may be subject to temptation, then it is not permissible for him to expose himself to that.

The fourth condition:

She should adhere to what is required of her of hijab, so she should cover her face and not uncover it. It is not correct to quote as evidence the verse (interpretation of the meaning):

“And tell the believing women to lower their gaze (from looking at forbidden things), and protect their private parts (from illegal sexual acts) and not to show off their adornment except only that which is apparent (like both eyes for necessity to see the way, or outer palms of hands or one eye or dress like veil, gloves, headcover, apron), and to draw their veils all over Juyoobihinna (i.e. their bodies, faces, necks and bosoms) and not to reveal their adornment except to their husbands, or their fathers, or their husband’s fathers, or their sons, or their husband’s sons, or their brothers or

their brother’s sons, or their sister’s sons, or their (Muslim) women (i.e. their sisters in Islam), or the (female) slaves whom their right hands possess”
[al-Noor 24:31]

and it is not correct to interpret that as meaning that it is permissible for a female servant to uncover her face in front of her male employer, because the one who hires a servant does not own her (as in the case of a slave); rather she is a hired worker employed by him, and a hired worker is like any other non-mahram female when it comes to hijab.

The fifth condition:

He should not be alone with her. If there is no one else in the house with him, it is not permissible for him to employ her at all. If there are other people in the house with him but the household members go out from the house and leave him alone with this servant, that is not permissible, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “No man should be alone with a woman unless her mahram is present.”

As’ilat al-Baab al-Maftooh, no. 619

He also said:

Bringing a female servant from her country without a mahram is haraam, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “No woman should travel alone without a mahram.” But if she is already in the country and he brings her to work as a servant in his house, if she is going to come to the house, do what is needed then go back to her own house, there is no doubt that this is permissible, but if she is going to stay in his house, this is a dangerous matter, especially if he has adolescent sons, for then there is the fear of immorality as has happened on some occasions. But if he does not have adolescent sons, then we hope – in sha Allaah – that there is nothing wrong with that, but it is better to avoid that and for her to stay elsewhere and come to do her work in the morning or afternoon and then go back.

As’ilat al-Baab al-Maftooh, no. 526.

In conclusion: because of the shar'i restrictions that we have noted above, and because there is no need in your case – since the parents do not want to bring a servant – then we do not advise the brother to bring a servant.

And Allaah knows best.