

# Medical ethics and islam: principles and practice research paper examples

[Religion](#), [Islam](#)



## **Introduction**

One needs to at least have a certain level of cultural understanding in order to be fully sensitive about its environment and religion to which he/she is leaving in. In this paper, I am going to deal on how Islam understands health and they also compare it with science as far as there ethics is concerned. (Ullmann, M, 88). There social implications will also be given broader view. The Islam physicians will also through this paper learn on how to carry out their duties and at the same time ensuring that the Islamic medical ethics are followed to the latter. (Porter, R, 54). While discussing about ethics in any society, it is very crucial to first of all appreciate the beliefs, conceptual frameworks and perspectives of that particular religion. (Ullmann, M, 28). Hence, medical ethics can be defined as the analytical activity in which particular activities such as concepts, attitudes, emotions, reasons, assumptions, beliefs, and arguments underlining medico-moral decision making are examined critically. (Ullmann, M, 83). There exist the guiding principles of Islamic ethics and law and some of them include; Maintenance of life, Protection of an individual's freedom of belief, maintaining the intellect, Preservation of honor and integrity and last but not least Protection of property.( Porter, R, 52). In Islamic religion, the process of deductive reasoning and logic is being provided by Jihad. Here, the law is being made of viewed to solve the dynamic problems facing the Islamic community while taking care of the Islamic fraternity. (Ullmann, M, 78).

## **Genetic manipulation, assisted conception, and adoption**

According to Islamic belief, each and every human being has he/her unique inherent value of goodness as well as its importance. (Porter, R, 34). At the same time, human beings have the right to remain autonomous and choose the right path which leads to the right path. The scientific genetic invention ensures that the human race is traced but this should not provide room for the violation of the Islamic beliefs. A very accurate and a clear understanding of anybody's pedigree are considered in the Islamic culture as one of the fundamental human right. (Saunders, J. 98). There, it is recommended that only somatic cells should be used in transplanting of genetics materials. This is so, since it is the only way in which the parental integrity is not compromised and furthermore, the hereditary characteristics of a generation is not tampered with. This is to ensure that children are born through a valid union that is through marriage and this makes them to know their lineage fully. The Islamic culture only allows artificial to be carried out in the context that sperms from the spouse's husband is used. This still bring out the issue of marriage into real practice. (Porter, R, 11).

Adoption also is not recommended in Islamic practice since it directly transfers the parental rights of a child to the adoptive parents. However, fostering is somehow not prohibited since is does not directly transfer the parental right to the adoptive parents. However the surname of the real father should be maintained. (Saunders, J. 45).

## **Prenatal screening and termination of pregnancy**

It is believed that each and every person have been created in his/her mothers womb as a drop normally known as (nutfa) for a period of forty days, followed by a leech like clot (alaqa) for also the same period of time. After all those, then comes a piece of flesh (mughda) for also another same period. (Saunders, J. 87). Finally, God sends the angel to blow the spirit (ruh) into him. This is the general way in which God creates human beings. The Islamic community believes that a fetus is formed in the womb 120 days after the date of conception. Therefore after these days when one aborts then this will be considered murder. (Saunders, J. 65). The already existing life is preferred over the developing one because of his/her responsibilities and ties. The funny bit is that when in any case the pregnancy posses the life of the mother in danger then the pregnancy may be terminated. Any other reason to terminate pregnancy other than the already mentioned is highly prohibited and not allowed at any time.

Islamic culture does not encourage any sex and getting a child before marriage. In considering married people, they may use contraceptives when they are experiencing tough economic situations. (Huff, T, 162). This will help them have enough children which they can raise up comfortably. Just to clear the issue of abortion, according to Islamic belief, it is the termination of pregnancy after 23 weeks by the use of chemical or drug means. (Saunders, J. 89). When the zygote is prevented from being formed, it is not considered abortion. This is because, life begins at conception and at this particular moment, life has not yet begun. Any way the Islamic religion gives the foetus the right to life just like any other person. (Dolls, M, W 76).

Generally speaking, slams consider elective elimination of foetus from an healthy mother as murder and is highly prohibited. (Huff, T, 59).

Furthermore, pregnancy which might result from a woman being raped may during war, and then a abortion may be permitted. Finally, contraceptives which may lead to elimination of the foetus are not allowed since they results to termination of the fetus's life. (Saunders, J. 76).

## **End of life issues and brain death**

It is believed that the hand of God is the soul of human being and any miscarried foetus draws its mother to the paradise using the umbilical cord. (Saunders, J. 165). This is when the foetus tries to seek reward for the loss soul from God. In this regard, every child should die in good faith. (Huff, T, 62). Every child is born very pure in front of God and should remain holly to the sacred laws for him/her to be called healthy or considered whole. If a child dies, the relatives are told that the children are pure and they will be on the forefront in paradise. (Saunders, J. 65). One should not take away human life for murder or corruption is considered fully as someone who has taken the whole life of mankind.

No body is actually allowed to deliberately end the life of a human being even own life. Life is being saved at whole stages even in the process where one is critically ill. This belief is supported by the fact that actions are being judged by intentions. (Huff, T, 66). When one is being treated, there should be no withdrawal of any drugs or food for the person to die. Medication should be given until the point of death.

## **Physician and Islamic medical ethics.**

Just to begin with, access to human health care is considered as a human fundamental right. In medicine, sometimes it becomes very difficult for a medical practitioner to separate science and the Islamic laws. (Huff, T, 21). Therefore he/she has to choose the best practices in order to save life of a patient. This become crucial since as mentioned earlier when someone kills one person then he/she is considered to have taken a way the life of all mankind. This forces a physician to draw conclusion from rules of Islamic laws as well as the Islamic medical ethics. There are two main principles of Islamic medical ethics which says that, one who saves a life saves the life of a whole mankind. The second one says that each and every disease which is considered to be created by God, he must as well create a cure for it. This rule is not applicable to old age since it is inevitable in the human race. (Huff, T, 98).

The whole discussion denote that a physician do not only make decision according to its knowledge and experienced but also based on Islamic teachings and medical ethics. This is in the best interest of his/her patient whether a Muslim or anon Muslim.

## **Postmortem examinations and organ transplantation**

Islamic religion has it that when one breaks the borne of the dead then it is like breaking the borne of the living.(Huff, T, 71). It has been stated in the Quran that there is a possibility that the dead can also feel pain. This is one of the main reasons why Islamic community is very reluctant to allow postmortem examinations. In addition, it is prohibited and against the law for

someone to act inhumanly to fellow human being whether dead or a live. It is a common knowledge that postmortem examination process involves some operations as well as scooping of some parts of the dead body. (Huff, T, 32). This is considered inhuman by the Muslims hence they always burry the dead without carrying out postmortem even if it is a mysterious death which needs examination. May be the use of magnetic resonance necropsy may solve this problem in future. This is due to the fact that it does not involve the open body method.

Organ transplantation is nowadays being practiced in many Arab Muslim countries, and considered by some as a “ perpetual” charitable act. Despite this, the selling of human body parts is not encouraged. Xenotransplantation options is becoming is being practiced majorly but the interchanging of organs is also highly condemned since for instance one cannot exchange an organ with a pig and yet Muslims do not eat pigs. (Dolls, M, W 98).

## **Circumcision**

One of the most controversial medical ethics among the Muslims is a bout circumcision. This is due to the fact that it is not stated clearly in the Quran. It cannot be denied that it is widely spread in the modern world. (Huff, T, 33). When it comes to the issue of female circumcision, it brings a bout more confusion because some women also prefer circumcision. (Dolls, M, W 234). The discussion is still on going especially on how the cultural values should accommodate this. Circumcision is performed according to the religious belief as well as according to the customary law. As we all know that Islamic do not encourage bodily harm not unless the harm is geared towards

bringing on recovery. (Huff, T, 76). Circumcision sometimes is misunderstood as a way of castration but this is not the case with the islami9c belief. It does bring bodily harm but has got several merits. This has made the Islamic community to accept circumcision and make it part and parcel of there life. The issue of circumcision in female is controversial. Even though it is believed that the first woman to get circumcised is Hagar who was Abraham’s second wife. Nevertheless, this was a punishment from Sarah who was Abraham’s first wife. Because of that it brought a bad image among the women and in addition, it damages women sexual organs. Because of the above reason, it is really discouraged among the Muslim community. (Dolls, M, W 88). On the other hand, circumcision is considered purity among men and hence it is being encouraged in the highest terms possible.

## **Doctor-patient relation**

One of the most important things in any doctor-patient relation is that do the patients have faith in the doctor? (Dolls, M, W 79). This is applicable everywhere and not only in Islamic religion. It is quite important for he doctor to be experienced and have a wide knowledge in medicine. But we find that among the Muslim community, there are some rules and regulations which govern doctor-patient relation. One of the biggest question which is being asked is whether a male doctor should treat a female doctor and vice-versa. it is better understood that whether a female doctor is examining a male patient or vice versa, the private part of the patient should be overlooked in order to provide human dignity. (Huff, T, 29). Also when a doctor and a patient of the opposite sexes are locked inside a room, then it



raises eyebrows since according to the Islamic belief, one should only be in a private place with his or her couple; for instance wife or husband. (Dolls, M, W 100).

Any way, any doctor who is committed to treating patients cannot have the intention of terminating his/her own carriers. If at all, doctors should have hobby of healing patients not rousing temptation. Therefore male doctor can just treat a female patient and vice-versa even though same sexes are strongly encouraged. A devoted Muslim doctor is considered to have only one soul. Meaning she/he serves only the purpose to which he is suppose to serve. (Porter, R, 52).

## **Conclusions**

Islamic teachings include all aspects of life which include material, individual and societal, economics and politics, national and international. (Dolls, M, W 76). This was well taught by Prophet Mohammed during His farewell pilgrimage. He stated categorically, " This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed my favor upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion" (5: 3). In the a above discussion, it should be appreciated that in each and every religion there should be rules and regulations which govern all sectors medical included. The Islamic religion in particular has shaped the medical sector. They should be followed because they offer more of advantages than disadvantages. (Porter, R, 57).

## **Work-cited**

Al-Quran 5: 44-46

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