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Reproductive Challenges and Assisted Technologies: An Islamic Historical and Contemporary Perspective

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Abstract

The Islamic concepts of birth and death are very clear and make the foundation of Islam. Society along with the Quran also provides concept about infertility. The current study aims to review the historical concept of infertility and ARTs as a treatment for infertility in an Islamic society. The concept of children bearing a trial for believers is further expanded with the concept of infertility in the Quran. Infertility is regarded as a test for believers. We have examples of Prophets such as Ibraheem and Zachariya who bore children in old age. We also have examples of many companions of Prophet Muhamad (PBUH) and even among Umahatul Momineen who faced fertility issues. The 20th century was the century of great scientific advancements. Now it is possible to treat infertility in many ways. Assisted reproductive technology is a group of infertility treatments. In Islamic law, all ARTs are allowed, provided that the source of the sperm, ovum, and uterus comes from a legally and currently married couple. Surrogacy in any form is forbidden.

[199]

Donation of sperm, ovum, and uterus from a third party is not allowed. Islamic lawmakers have provided ways for the cure of infertility keeping in lawful bounds of Islamic jurisprudence. Many Muslim countries including Pakistan lack advanced IVF technologies. Where available these facilities are very expensive. Moreover, there is a great misconception about the legality and religious stance on various ART techniques. For this purpose, religious beliefs, knowledge, and attitudes of the Pakistani population regarding ARTs and infertility should be assessed. Islamic religious scholars need to play their part in this regard through their expertise, assessment of religious beliefs, knowledge, and attitude would be a first step towards the process of law-making or ruling out fatwa regarding ARTs.

Keywords: Islamic Law, infertility, ARTs.

Introduction

1. Background and Context

Backgrounds and reference Islamic concepts of birth and death are fundamental to faith and provide detailed accounts of human education with the Qur'an. The Muslim ideology strongly believes that Allah is the only donor to kill, and everything in the universe is designed by his will. According to the Qur'an, everything was created by Allah, the earth, the sky, and the between. No soul can enter the world without the consent of Allah, and no soul can leave without its knowledge and consent. Even the centuries before modern embryology described the Qur'an stages of fetal development with remarkable accuracy, emphasizing the divine power of creation. Islam provides a complete life code for believers, forming the basis of the Islamic society with concepts of birth and death. Allah Almighty creates life and controls his course alone

“ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْحَقُّ وَأَنَّهُ يُحْيِي الْمَوْتَى وَأَنَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ”¹.

“That is because Allah is the Truth and because He gives life to the dead and because He is over all things competent” (22:6)

2. Problem Statement / Research Gap

While much scholarly work exists on Islamic perspectives regarding family, procreation, and general bioethical principles, less attention has been specifically paid to the detailed intersection of historical Islamic understandings of infertility with the contemporary application and acceptance of Assisted Reproductive Technologies (ARTs) within Muslim societies. Furthermore, the nuances between

different Islamic legal traditions, such as the Sunni consensus on using only gametes from the married couple versus the Shia permissibility of third-party donation under specific conditions, have not been extensively compared in the context of addressing infertility. This research seeks to bridge this gap by providing a focused review of both the traditional Islamic views on infertility, as evidenced in the Quran and the lives of revered figures, and the evolving legal perspectives on ARTs, thereby contributing to a more nuanced understanding of this complex issue within the Islamic ethical framework.

3. Objectives / Aims of the Study

This study aims to:

- Review the historical understanding of infertility in Islamic writing and tradition.
- Check modern Islamic Sunni Muslim and Shia Legal approaches to various subsidiaries (Art).
- Discuss the social implications and challenges facing infertile couples in Muslim communities, especially in the light of Islamic teachings.
- Highlight the role of religious guidance in addressing misconceptions and promoting sound infertility treatment morally.
- Review the historical understanding of infertility in Islamic writing and tradition.
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- Highlight the role of religious guidance in addressing misconceptions and promoting sound infertility treatment morally.

4. Research Questions

- How is infertility portrayed and understood within the Quran and the Sunnah?
- What are the important thing differences and similarities in the Sunni and Shia Islamic prison perspectives regarding the permissibility of various ARTs?
- What are the primary social stigmas and demanding situations encountered by infertile people in current Muslim societies?

- How can Islamic non-secular scholarship contribute to a more informed and compassionate know-how of infertility and the ethical use of ARTs?

5. Significance of the Study

This contributes to the field of Islamic bioticians by providing a comparative analysis of traditional Islamic ideas of infertility and modern Islamic legal reactions to research art. It addresses the existing gap in extensive studies. The findings of this study can inform religious leaders, political decision-makers, and extensive Muslim communities, and promote more fine and supportive approaches to infertility and its treatment in an Islamic structure.

2.1 Classical and Foundational Works

The commitment of early scholars to tests of infertility in the purchase, family, and an Islamic context can be traced back to the basic texts of Islam and later interpretations of classic Islamic scholars. Well-known figures such as Imam al-Ghazali (D. 1111 CE), discussed in their seminal work *Ihya Ulam Al-Din* (Revival of Religious Science), the moral dimensions of marriage on a large scale, the importance of family life and moral responsibilities in these conditions. While al-Ghazali did not directly address modern reproductive technologies, his emphasis on the intentions behind the works and the general welfare of the family gives a basic moral structure that can be used on contemporary problems such as infertility treatment. Their discussion about the purpose of marriage, which involves buying with connection and mutual support, highlights the importance of children within the Islamic tradition.

Similarly, Ibn Tayamiah (D. 1328 CE), is known for his hard legal logic, various aspects of family law and social welfare in his *majamu 'al-Fatawa* (collection of legal regulations). While his direct connection to art is absent due to historical reference, their principles of conservation (nose) and the ban on mixing it with foreign elements are very relevant to the moral debate around third-party donation in relief production. The emphasis on IBN Taimiah to avoid clarity in parents and ambiguity in family relationships affects contemporary Islamic legal discussions about these issues.

Shah Waliullah Dehlavi (D. 1762 CE), an influential scholar from the Indian subcontinent, *Hujjat Allah al-Bai Bal*

2.2 Contemporary Scholarly Perspectives

In recent decades, modern scientists have discovered the subject of infertility and art through various lenses, including Islamic law (fiqh), morality, and medical jurisdiction. For example, Mohammad Hashim Kamali (various tasks) is largely written on bioethics in Islam and often analyzes how

traditional Islamic legal principles can be used in modern medical progress, including reproductive technologies. Their work emphasizes the importance of balanced medical progress with the main values of Islamic law, such as the holiness of marriage and preservation of the descent. Kamali often criticizes criticism such as donations and surrogacy and surrogacy and corresponds to the majority of Sunni Muslims that these methods introduce external elements in marital conditions.

On the other hand, after some contemporary Shia teaching, Ayatollah Ali Hussain Khameni's Fatwa, an example, has taken a more allowed attitude to third-party donation in specific, regulated circumstances. This perspective, as discussed by scholars such as Afanah Fatima (in her analysis of Shia bioethics), often emphasizes the intention of reducing victims and building families, provided the process follows some moral and legal security measures, such as a temporary marital contract (Nikah Mubah). This deviation highlights the dynamic nature of Islamic legal interpretation in response to new medical opportunities.

This growing literature mass reflects a change in the purely traditional exclusion and a change of comparative approaches, including the morality of the fetus, morality in genetic manipulation (although it is less directly relevant to basic subordinate treatment), and the social effects of reproductive technologies. The discussion often involves informed Islamic rulers referring to both classical legal principles and modern scientific understanding.

2.3 Thematic Gaps and Unexplored Areas

Despite specific discussions about the rich body and work to work with Islamic biotics, some regions remain untouched. For example, while many studies discuss general permission from the IVF using couples, have less focused on infertility experiences and social implications, especially in different Muslim cultural contexts. The stigma associated with infertility, especially for women, and how to use Islamic doctrine to solve these social challenges, more intensive analysis guarantee.

In addition, a comprehensive comparative analysis and more learned need extensive comparative analysis, and more researchers require extensive comparative analysis and more scholars of a broad comparative analysis of a broad comparative analysis of a field of nuances of a field for moral arguments behind various art processes (just outside IVF, such as ICSI, Gaver,) and their permission. For example, while the Sunni Muslim consensus against donations to third parties is clear, specific justification and implications can be detected better for families seeking such alternatives.

To build your example: Although many scholars have examined moral principles in the Qur'an related to family and purchases, especially as a test, a minimum work has been done to analyze Islamic

psychological and moral structure regarding infertility and how these structures inform acceptance or rejection of different art in different Muslim communities.

2.4 Contribution of the Current Study

The current study seeks to fill this academic gap by offering a focused analysis of the Islamic ethical and legal perspectives on infertility, with specific reference to both traditional understandings and contemporary applications of ARTs. By bridging classical Islamic teachings on the family and divine will with the evolving legal opinions on reproductive technologies in both Sunni and, to a lesser extent, Shia traditions, this research aims to make a meaningful contribution to both traditional and modern scholarly discourse. It intends to shed light on the possible role of Islamic guidance in highlighting the social context of infertility in Muslim communities and navigating the challenges associated with it.

By examining the Base of Scripture to see infertility as a test, with legal decisions on medical intervention, this article contributes to a more general understanding of Islamic morality about how Muslim individuals and couples inform about experiences and alternatives for couples.

Research method

This research adopts a qualitative, analytical approach. The study will include a text analysis of primary Islamic sources (the Qur'an and chosen Hadith), which is to understand the religious and moral approach to the concept of buying and infertility. Secondary sources will also be investigated by Islamic beauticians, prestigious Islamic institutions and scholars (Sunni Muslim and Shia) on Legal Fields (FATWA), and scholars including learners on relevant social science research on infertility in infertility in Muslim contexts. The analytical structure will include identifying the most important Islamic legal principles (eg protection of descent, the holiness of marriage, and allowing medical treatment) and applying them in the discussion of different art. Comparative analysis will be used to highlight equality and differences in Sunni Muslim and Shi Perspectives.

3.1 Research Design

The present study adopts a qualitative research design, primarily employing analytical and comparative approaches. Given the intricate nature of the research topic, which necessitates a deep understanding of religious texts, legal interpretations, and ethical considerations surrounding infertility and Assisted Reproductive Technologies (ARTs) within Islamic contexts, a qualitative framework is deemed most appropriate.

The **analytical approach** includes an in-depth examination of the number one Islamic resources, namely the Holy Quran and the corpus of Hadith, to figure out the foundational ideas and perspectives on procreation, the understanding of infertility as offered within these texts, and any implicit or explicit guidance that might inform the ethical evaluation of present-day scientific interventions. This analysis extends to the classical tafsir literature, wherein early Islamic scholars provided interpretations and contextual understandings of relevant scriptural passages. This analytical strand aims to unpack the core Islamic theological and moral frameworks that bear upon the concern be counted. Complementing the analytical approach is a **comparative approach**, which is crucial given the diversity of thought within Islamic jurisprudence. This involves comparing the perspectives of the Sunni and Shia schools of thought, particularly concerning their legal rulings (*fatwas*) on various ARTs. The comparison will focus on identifying areas of consensus and divergence, understanding the rationales behind different legal conclusions, and appreciating the methodological differences in their application of Islamic principles to contemporary medical advancements. This comparative lens aims to provide a nuanced and comprehensive overview of the Islamic legal landscape concerning infertility treatment.

While the study is primarily qualitative, drawing on textual analysis and legal hermeneutics, it is inherently **descriptive** in its aim to articulate the Islamic perspectives on infertility and ARTs as they emerge from the analyzed sources. The research seeks to describe the theological underpinnings, the legal frameworks, and the ethical considerations that shape the Islamic discourse on this topic. It does not aim to quantify attitudes or practices but rather to elucidate the normative and ethical dimensions as articulated within Islamic scholarship.

3.2 Sources of Data

The research draws upon a rich array of both primary and secondary sources to ensure a comprehensive and well-substantiated analysis.

Primary Sources:

- **The Holy Quran:** As the foundational text of Islam, the Quran serves as the ultimate source of guidance. Verses related to creation, procreation, trials, and tribulations, and the general principles of Islamic ethics and law will be central to the analysis.
- **Selected Collections of Hadith:** The sayings and traditions of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) provide crucial context and elaboration on Quranic teachings. Authentic and well-regarded collections of Hadith will be consulted to understand the Prophet's views on family, health, and related matters.

- **Classical *Tafsir* Literature:** The interpretations of the Quran by early and authoritative scholars, such as Tafsir al-Tabari, Tafsir al-Qurtubi, and Tafsir Ibn Kathir, offer invaluable insights into the historical understanding of relevant scriptural passages. These works help to contextualize the theological perspectives on fertility and its absence.
- **Contemporary *Fatawa*:** Legal opinions issued by reputable Islamic institutions and scholars (both Sunni and Shia) that specifically address the permissibility and ethical guidelines for various ARTs constitute a vital primary source for understanding the current legal landscape. These *fatwas* reflect the application of Islamic legal principles to modern medical practices.

Secondary Sources:

- **Academic Journal Articles:** Peer-reviewed articles in the fields of Islamic bioethics, Islamic family law, religious studies, and medical ethics provide scholarly analyses and discussions relevant to the research topic. These sources often offer critical evaluations of Islamic perspectives on reproductive technologies.
- **Books and Theses:** Scholarly monographs and academic theses that delve into Islamic ethics, jurisprudence related to health and family, and the specific issue of infertility and its treatment from an Islamic viewpoint offer in-depth analyses and syntheses of existing knowledge.
- **Online Research Databases and Digital Libraries:** Access to digital repositories of academic work and Islamic texts facilitates the retrieval of a wide range of relevant materials, including scholarly articles, *fatwas*, and digitized versions of classical texts.

3.3 Data Collection Methods

The collection of data for this study was primarily conducted through a systematic and extensive review of the pertinent literature and a careful textual analysis of Islamic sources.

- **Literature Review:** A thorough search was undertaken across academic databases (e.g., JSTOR, Google Scholar, PubMed for relevant bioethics articles), online repositories of Islamic scholarship, and digital libraries to identify key scholarly works addressing Islamic perspectives on infertility and ARTs. This review aimed to map the existing academic discourse, identify key arguments and debates and pinpoint areas requiring further investigation.
- **Textual Analysis:** This involved a close reading and interpretation of relevant Quranic verses and Hadith narrations. The analysis focused on understanding the literal meaning, the historical context, and the broader theological implications of these texts concerning procreation, the concept of trials (including infertility), and the permissibility of seeking medical treatment. Classical *tafsir* works were consulted to gain insights into traditional

interpretations of these primary sources. Contemporary *fatwas* were examined to understand how Islamic legal principles are applied to the specific technologies involved in ARTs.

The extracted data, comprising scriptural texts, scholarly interpretations, and legal opinions, were systematically organized according to emerging themes relevant to the research questions, such as the theological understanding of infertility, the ethical principles governing medical interventions in reproduction, and the specific rulings on different ART procedures within Sunni and Shia jurisprudence.

3.4 Analytical Tools and Techniques

The primary analytical tool employed in this research is thematic content analysis. This method allows for the identification, organization, and interpretation of patterns of meaning across the collected data.

- **Thematic Coding:** The process involved identifying recurring ideas, concepts, and arguments related to infertility and ARTs within the Quran, Hadith, *tafsir*, and *fatwas*. These were then grouped into broader themes, such as the divine will and procreation, infertility as a test, the sanctity of lineage, the permissibility of medical intervention, and the specific ethical considerations for different ART techniques (e.g., IVF, third-party donation, surrogacy).
- **Comparative Analysis:** Once the thematic coding was completed, a comparative analysis was conducted to examine how these themes are addressed and interpreted within Sunni and Shia Islamic thought. This involved identifying points of agreement and disagreement, as well as understanding the underlying reasoning and legal principles that lead to different conclusions.
- **Hermeneutical Interpretation:** Given the nature of the primary data (religious texts), principles of Islamic hermeneutics (*usul al-fiqh*) were implicitly applied to ensure a sound and contextually aware interpretation of the Quran and Hadith. This involved considering the linguistic nuances, the historical context of revelation, and the established principles of legal reasoning within Islamic scholarship.

The goal of these analytical techniques was to move beyond a mere description of different viewpoints to a deeper understanding of the underlying theological, ethical, and legal frameworks that inform the Islamic discourse on infertility and ARTs.

3.5 Limitations of the Study

While striving for academic rigor, this study acknowledges certain inherent limitations:

- **Language Bias:** The primary focus on literature in Arabic, Urdu, and English may inadvertently overlook valuable scholarship and legal opinions published in other languages relevant to the Islamic world.
- **Scope of Legal Traditions:** The study primarily concentrates on the dominant Sunni and the influential Shia (specifically the Twelver Shia perspective that has seen the most discourse on ARTs) schools of thought. Other minority Islamic legal traditions and their views on this topic may not be fully represented.
- **Absence of Empirical Data:** The research is based on textual and legal analysis and does not incorporate empirical data regarding the attitudes, beliefs, and experiences of Muslim individuals and couples dealing with infertility or utilizing ARTs. Such data could provide valuable insights into the practical and social dimensions of the issue but fall outside the scope of this methodology.
- **Evolving Nature of *Fatawa*:** Legal opinions on novel medical technologies can evolve as new information emerges and scholarly discussions progress. The *fatwas* analyzed represent a snapshot of current thinking but may be subject to future revisions.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

Throughout the research process, the highest standards of academic integrity have been maintained. All sources have been meticulously cited to avoid plagiarism and to give due credit to the work of other scholars. The interpretation of Islamic texts and legal opinions has been undertaken with a commitment to accuracy and fairness, striving to represent the different viewpoints respectfully and without misrepresentation. The research aims to contribute to a nuanced understanding of a sensitive topic within the Islamic ethical framework.

4. Data Analysis and Discussion

This section presents a critical analysis of the data collected from Islamic primary and secondary sources, exploring the research questions outlined earlier in light of these findings. The discussion is organized thematically to provide a structured understanding of the Islamic perspectives on infertility and Assisted Reproductive Technologies (ARTs).

4.1 Thematic Presentation of Findings

Theme 1: The Islamic Understanding of Procreation and Family

The Quran and Sunnah consistently emphasize the importance of marriage and the establishment of a family. Procreation is often viewed as one of the fundamental purposes of marriage, a means of

continuing the human race and fulfilling divine will. Numerous verses in the Quran speak of Allah as the creator of humankind from a single soul, then making from it its mate, and dispersing from them many men and women (Quran 4:1). This underscores the divine design for procreation. Furthermore, the Quran describes children as both a trial and a bounty (Quran 8:28), indicating a balanced perspective where offspring are valued but also carry responsibilities. Classical exegetes, such as **Ibn Kathir** (n.d.) in his *Tafsir*, elaborate on these verses, highlighting the societal and spiritual significance of family. The desire for children is also evident in the supplications of prophets, such as Prophet Zakariya's plea for an heir (Quran 19:4-6), illustrating the natural human inclination for offspring within a religious context.

Hadith literature further reinforces the value of procreation. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is reported to have encouraged marriage with women who are fertile and loving, emphasizing the growth of the Muslim community. However, this encouragement does not imply a diminishment of those who are unable to have children.

Theme 2: Infertility as a Test and a Divine Decree

The Islamic perspective on infertility frames it primarily as a test or a decree from Allah. The Quran states that Allah grants children to whom He wills, withholds them from whom He wills, or gives both males and females and makes barren whom He wills (Quran 42:49-50). This verse highlights the divine sovereignty over the realm of procreation. The stories of Prophets Ibrahim and Zakariya (peace be upon them), who were granted children in their old age after periods of infertility, as discussed in the introduction, serve as powerful reminders of Allah's power and the potential for hope. These narratives, also elaborated upon in *tafsir* works like that of **Al-Qurtubi** (n.d.), provide solace and a theological framework for understanding infertility as part of a larger divine plan.

The examples from the life of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), where several of his wives did not bear children, further illustrate that infertility does not equate to a lack of worth or divine favor. His treatment of his wives, as mentioned earlier, underscores the importance of compassion and respect within marriage, irrespective of the ability to procreate.

4.2 Comparative Analysis of Sunni and Shia Perspectives on ARTs

The analysis of contemporary *fatwas* reveals a significant point of divergence between the majority Sunni and the Shia (specifically Twelver) perspectives on ARTs involving third-party donation.

"ثُمَّ خَلَقْنَا النُّطْفَةَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْعَلَقَةَ مُضْغَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْمُضْغَةَ عِظْمًا فَكَسَوْنَا الْعِظْمَ لَحْمًا ثُمَّ أَنْشَأْنَاهُ خَلْقًا آخَرَ ۚ فَتَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ الْخَالِقِينَ"

“Then We made the sperm drop into a clinging clot, and We made the clot into a lump.

[of flesh], and We made [from] the lump, bones, and We covered the bones with flesh; then We

Developed him into another creation. So blessed is Allah, The best of creators” (23:14)

The Muslim ideals of procreation and birth arise from the firm belief in the powers of

Almighty Allah. As in Quran Allah Says

"الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا ۚ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ"

“[He] who created death and life to test you [as to] which of you is best in deed - and He

Is the Exalted in Might, the Forgiving” (67:2)

Islam provides a complete code of life for believers. The Islamic concept of birth and

Death is very clear and makes the foundation of Islamic society on which the building of Islam.

Religion is based. Allah Almighty is the one who creates life and He alone controls the course.

Of one's life. Quran says in this regard:

"وَلَمَّا وَرَدَ مَاءٌ مَدْيَنَ وَجَدَ عَلَيْهِ أُمَّةٌ مِّنَ النَّاسِ يَسْقُونَ وَوَجَدَ مِنْ دُونِهِمُ امْرَأَتَيْنِ تَذُودَانِ ۚ قَالَ مَا خَطْبُكُمَا ۖ قَالَتَا لَا نَسْقِي حَتَّىٰ يُصَدِّرَ
الرِّعَاءُ ۖ وَأَبُونَا شَيْخٌ كَبِيرٌ"

“O People, if you should be in doubt about the Resurrection, then [consider that] indeed, We created you from dust, then from a sperm-drop, then from a clinging clot, and then From a lump of flesh, formed and unformed – that We may show you. And We settle in. The wombs whom We will for a specified term, then We bring you out as a child, and then [We develop you] that you may reach your [time of] maturity. And among you is He who is taken in early death, and among you is he who is returned to the most

Decrepit old age so that he knows, after [once having] knowledge, nothing. And you see the earth barren, but when We send down upon it rain, it quivers and swells and grows [something] of every beautiful kind” (28:23)

Along with birth and death, the Quran also provides concepts about infertility. Allah is most Benevolent and merciful for His creatures. Muslims believe that He tests his believers.

During the life for their faith and strengths in different ways. As the Quran says that

"وَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَأَوْلَادُكُمْ فِتْنَةٌ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ عِنْدَهُ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ"

"And know that your properties and your children are but a trial and that Allah has with Him a great reward" (8:28).

The concept of children being a trial for believers is further expanded with the concept of infertility in the Quran. The concept of infertility is explained in this ayat of the 42nd surah where the Quran says,

"أَوْ يُزَوِّجُهُمْ ذُكْرَانًا وَإِنْتَسَابًا وَيَجْعَلُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ عَقِيمًا إِنَّهُ عَلِيمٌ قَدِيرٌ"

"Or He makes them [both] males and females, and He renders whom He wills barren.

Indeed, He is Knowing and Competent" (42:50)

The Islamic concept of marriage is related to procreation and the Holy Prophet is encouraged. Marrying women who are loving and can bear many children. However, the concept of infertility is always discussed with the concept of procreation. Infertility is regarded as a test for believers.

The **Sunni view**, as reflected in the initial fatwa by Al-Azhar University and subsequent rulings, generally permits ARTs such as IVF, ICSI, GIFT, and ZIFT, but strictly limits their application to the use of gametes from the legally married couple. The rationale behind this stance is the emphasis on the preservation of lineage (*nasab*) and the sanctity of the marital bond, aligning with principles discussed by classical scholars like **Ibn Taymiyyah** (n.d.). Third-party donation of sperm, eggs, or uterus, as well as surrogacy, are typically prohibited as they introduce external elements into the marital relationship and could potentially blur the lines of parentage.

This account is narrated in the Quran as follows:

"وَلَقَدْ جَاءَتْ رُسُلُنَا إِبْرَاهِيمَ بِالْبُشْرَى قَالُوا سَلَامًا قَالَ سَلَامٌ قَمَا لَيْتَ أَنْ جَاءَ بِعِجْلٍ حَنِيدٍ فَلَمَّا رَءَا أَيْدِيَهُمْ لَا تَصِلُ إِلَيْهِ نَكِرَهُمْ وَأَوْجَسَ مِنْهُمْ خِيفَةً قَالُوا لَا تَخَفْ إِنَّا أُرْسِلْنَا إِلَى قَوْمٍ لُوطٍ- وَأَمْرَانَهُ قَائِمَةٌ فَضَحِكَتْ فَبَشَّرْنَاهَا بِإِسْحَقَ وَمِنْ وَرَاءَ إِسْحَقَ يَعْقُوبَ- قَالَتْ يَوَيْلَتَى أَأَلِدُ وَأَنَا عَجُوزٌ وَهَذَا بَعْلِي شَيْخًا إِنَّ هَذَا لَشَيْءٌ عَجِيبٌ"

"There came Our messengers to Abraham with glad tidings. They said, 'Peace!' He answered, 'Peace!' and hastened to entertain them with a roasted calf. But when he saw their hands went not towards the (meal), he felt some mistrust of them and conceived a fear of them. They said: "Fear

not: We have been sent against the people. Of Lut. And his wife was standing (there), and she laughed: But we gave her glad tidings of Isaac, and after him, of Jacob. She said: "Alas for me! Shall I bear a child, seeing I am an old woman and my husband Here is an old man? That would indeed be a wonderful thing!" (11:69-72)

Another brief account of infertility and later on giving birth in old age is about the Prophet. Zakariya. Prophet Zakariya was the most pious man of his time. He was given the guardianship.

Of Prophet Maryum when she was sent to the house of God. He used to see many fruits and others. Blessings near Maryum and when he asked Maryum about the fruits she answered him that these Were sent to her from Allah.

"فَتَقَبَّلَهَا رَبُّهَا بِقَبُولٍ حَسَنٍ وَأَنبَتَهَا نَبَاتًا حَسَنًا وَكَفَّلَهَا زَكَرِيَّا كُلَّمَا دَخَلَ عَلَيْهَا زَكَرِيَّا الْمِحْرَابَ وَجَدَ عِنْدَهَا رِزْقًا قَالَ يَمْرِئُكَ أَنَّى لَكَ هَذَا
قَالَتْ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ"

"So her Lord accepted her with good acceptance and caused her to grow in a good. Manner and put her in the care of Zechariah. Every time Zechariah entered her in The prayer chamber, he found her provision. He said, "O Mary, from where is this? [coming] to you?" She said, "It is from Allah. Indeed, Allah provides for whom He wills without account." (3:37)-

This miracle further strengthened the belief of the prophet Zakariya and then in his old age. He made the supplication to Allah as Quran narrates:

"قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي وَهَنَ الْعَظْمُ مِنِّي وَاشْتَعَلَ الرَّأْسُ شَيْبًا وَلَمْ أَكُنْ بِدُعَائِكَ رَبِّ شَقِيًّا وَإِنِّي خِفْتُ الْمَوْتِ مِن وَرَآءِی وَكَانَتِ امْرَأَتِي عَاقِرًا فَهَبْ لِي مِن لَّدُنْكَ وَلِيًّا- يَرْئِي وَیرثُ مِنْ ءَالٍ یَغْفُوبٌ وَأَجْعَلْهُ رَبِّ رَضِیًّا- یَزَکَرِیَّا إِنَّا نُبَشِّرُكَ بِغُلَامٍ اسْمُهُ یَحْیٰی لَمْ نَجْعَلْ لَهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ سَمِیًّا- قَالَ رَبِّ أَنَّى یَكُونُ لِي غُلَامٌ وَكَانَتِ امْرَأَتِي عَاقِرًا وَقَدْ بَلَغْتُ مِنَ الْكِبَرِ عِتِيًّا- قَالَ كَذَلِك قَالَ رَبُّكَ هُوَ عَلٰی هَیِّنٍ وَقَدْ خَلَقْنَاكَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَلَمْ تَكُ شَیْئًا-

"He said, "My Lord, indeed my bones have weakened, and my head has filled with white, and never have I been in my supplication to You, my Lord, unhappy. And indeed, I fear. The successors after me, and my wife have been barren, so give me from Yourself an heir. Who will inherit me and inherit from the family of Jacob? And make him, my Lord, pleasing [to You]." [He was told], "O Zechariah, indeed We give you good tidings of a boy whose name will be John. We have not been assigned to any before [this] name." He said, "My Lord, how will I have a boy when my wife has been barren and I have reached extreme old age?" [An angel] said, "Thus [it will be]; your Lord says, 'It is easy for Me, for I created you before, while you were nothing'" (19:4-9)

In contrast, the **Shia view**, particularly following the fatwa of Ayatollah Ali Hussein Khamenei, allows for third-party donation of eggs and embryos under specific conditions. This perspective often emphasizes the ethical imperative of helping infertile couples to have children, provided that certain safeguards are in place, such as the solemnization of temporary marriage (*nikah mut'ah*) with the donor in the case of egg donation. This approach, as discussed in works on Shia bioethics (**Fatimah** n.d.), reflects a different balancing of ethical considerations, prioritizing the fulfillment of the desire for children within a framework that attempts to address concerns about lineage. Sperm donation remains more contentious within the Shia tradition.

To adopt a child she found in the Nile. As Quran narrates:

"وَقَالَتِ امْرَأَتُ فِرْعَوْنَ قُرْتُ عَيْنٍ لِي وَلَكَ لَا تَقْتُلُوهُ عَسَىٰ أَن يَنْفَعَنَا أَوْ نَتَّخِذَهُ وَلَدًا وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ"

"And Pharaoh's wife said: A refreshment of the eye to me and thee – slay him not; Maybe he will be useful to us, or we may take him for a son. And they perceived not" (28:9) Asiyah nurtured prophet Moses in the household of Pharaoh as a mother and when Moses started preaching about One God she was ready to embrace the true religion of Allah. Once her beliefs were publicized and noticed by Pharaoh her hardships started and she was eventually tortured to death on the orders of the Pharaoh. Quran further talks about Asiyah in the highest. Regards as:

"وَضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا امْرَأَتَ فِرْعَوْنَ إِذْ قَالَتْ رَبِّ ابْنِ لِي عِنْدَكَ بَيْتًا فِي الْجَنَّةِ وَنَجِّنِي مِنْ الْكَاثِمِينَ
الظَّالِمِينَ"

"And God sets forth, as an example to those who believe the wife of Pharaoh: Behold she said: 'O my Lord! Build for me, in nearness to Thee, a mansion in the Garden, and save me from Pharaoh and his doings, and save me from those that do wrong" (66:11)

The Muslim tradition of veneration of Aasiyah is further consolidated by a sahih hadith. Of Prophet Muhammad PBUH where Prophet of Allah says: Many men reached perfection but none among the women reached perfection except Mary, the daughter of Imran; and Asiya,

Pharaoh's wife. Sahih Al-Bukhari Hadith 7.329.

This comparison highlights the different methodologies and priorities within Islamic legal reasoning when confronted with modern medical technologies. While both traditions adhere to core Islamic values, their application to novel issues like ARTs can lead to varying conclusions.

4.3 Relation to Previous Studies / Literature

The findings of this study align with much of the existing literature on Islamic bioethics, particularly concerning the Sunni emphasis on the marital bond and lineage in the context of ARTs, as discussed by scholars like **Kamali** (n.d.). The analysis also confirms the divergence in Shia perspectives regarding third-party donation, an area increasingly explored in contemporary Islamic bioethical scholarship (**Fatimah** n.d.). This study builds upon this existing body of work by providing a focused analysis that integrates both the traditional Islamic understanding of infertility and the contemporary legal responses to ARTs from both major schools of thought. It further underscores the thematic consistency of viewing infertility as a trial within Islamic theology, a concept that underpins the ethical considerations surrounding its treatment.

4.4 Implications of the Study

The analysis reveals several key implications:

- The Islamic tradition provides a robust theological framework for understanding infertility, which can offer comfort and resilience to affected individuals.
- The legal permissibility of ARTs within Islam is contingent upon adherence to principles of lineage and the sanctity of marriage, with significant differences in how these principles are applied between Sunni and Shia jurisprudence regarding third-party donation.
- There is a need for greater awareness and education within Muslim societies about the Islamic perspectives on infertility and the ethically permissible ART options, to address stigma and misconceptions.

4.5 Summary of Key Points

In summary, this analysis has shown that:

- Islam values procreation and family life but also recognizes infertility as a reality, often viewed as a test from Allah.
- Sunni Islamic law permits ARTs to use the gametes of the married couple but prohibits third-party donation and surrogacy to preserve lineage.
- Shia Islamic law, particularly the Twelver tradition, offers a more permissive view on egg and embryo donation under specific, regulated conditions.
- The Islamic ethical framework emphasizes compassion, the seeking of medical treatment, and the importance of maintaining the integrity of the family structure when addressing infertility.

Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

This study aimed to explore the Islamic ethical and legal perspectives on infertility, examining both the traditional understanding of this condition and the contemporary views on Assisted Reproductive Technologies (ARTs). Based on a detailed review of the literature and thematic analysis of Islamic primary and secondary sources, the following key conclusions can be drawn:

The study reveals that Islamic scripture and tradition acknowledge infertility as a reality, often framed as a test or a part of divine decree. Narratives from the Quran and the lives of revered figures offer a theological context for understanding and coping with infertility.

It was also observed that there are differing Islamic legal perspectives on ARTs, primarily between Sunni and Shia jurisprudence. The Sunni view generally permits ARTs to utilize the gametes of the married couple while prohibiting third-party involvement to uphold lineage and the sanctity of marriage. In contrast, the Shia perspective allows for third-party egg and embryo donation under specific, regulated conditions.

Furthermore, the research emphasizes the importance of addressing the social stigma associated with infertility within Muslim societies and the need for greater awareness regarding ethically permissible treatment options available through ARTs.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

Academic Recommendation: Future research should delve deeper into the comparative analysis of the ethical reasoning employed by different Islamic legal schools concerning the permissibility of various ARTs. Additionally, studies exploring the social and psychological impact of infertility on Muslim individuals and couples are needed.

Practical Recommendation: Efforts should be made to increase access to accurate information about the Islamic stance on infertility and ARTs within Muslim communities. Religious leaders and educational institutions have a crucial role in dispelling misconceptions and promoting a compassionate understanding of infertility. Furthermore, where ethically permissible ARTs are available, steps should be taken to make them more accessible and affordable.

Research Recommendation: More empirical studies are needed to assess the knowledge, attitudes, and practices of Muslim populations regarding infertility and ARTs. Understanding these factors can help tailor educational initiatives and inform the development of culturally and religiously sensitive guidelines for infertility treatment.

5.3 Limitations and Future Research Directions

While this study provides valuable insights into the Islamic perspectives on infertility and ARTs, it is limited by its primary focus on textual and legal analysis, without incorporating empirical data. Future studies may include qualitative or quantitative research to explore the lived experiences of infertile Muslims and their attitudes toward different ART options. Additionally, further research could broaden the scope to include the perspectives of a wider range of Islamic legal traditions and to examine the ethical considerations of more advanced reproductive technologies.

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