



Resolution of Islamic Fatwa: F02206

In the Name of Allah, Most Kind, Most Merciful

All praise is due to Allah Almighty, and may peace and blessings be bestowed upon His noble Messenger Muhammad (pbuh), His family and righteous companions.

The Islamic Fatwa Council (IFC) has ruled on the absolute prohibition of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) - also known as Female Circumcision - due to the damaging psychological, physical, and social impact of FGM on women. The eminent Islamic jurists of IFC present the following Islamic and concrete evidence as the source for their deduced verdict.

The Sunnah

The teachings of the Holy Prophet (pbuh) have emphasized on protecting our bodies and souls as they belong to the Almighty alone. Any form of change or alteration to the human body is an alteration to the creation of Allah Almighty. The Holy Prophet (pbuh) stated:

لعن الله المغيرات لخلق الله - متفق عليه عن ابن مسعود

"Allah curses those who change His creation."

(An agreed-upon Hadith - Muttafaqun 'Alayh).

In addition, Islamic rulings are laid down to benefit the people and to prevent any harm that could be imposed on them. For example, Allah said to Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) in the Holy Qur'an:

[...] Thus doth Allah (by parables) Show forth truth and Vanity. For the scum disappears like froth cast out; while that which is for the good of Mankind remains on the earth,"

- The Holy Quran, Ar-Ra'd, verse 17

Furthermore, Islam forbids inflicting harm upon health. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) says: ***"There should be neither harming nor reciprocating harm."*** (1)



The "FGM Hadith"

Advocates of Female Genital Mutilation cite the following Hadith attributed to the Holy Prophet (pbuh):

الختان سنة للرجال مكرمة للنساء

"Circumcision is Sunnah for men and Makramah [virtuous deed] for women"

The above Hadith is classified as weak by Al Hafiz Zin El-Din Al Iraqi in his comment on Imam Ghazali's 'Revival of Religious Sciences'. In his book Talkhis al-Habir fi Takhrija hadith al-Rafi`i al-Kabir, Ibn Hajar also asserted that this Hadith is weak, citing the relevant opinion of Imam Al Baihaqi (it is very weak), and the opinion of Ibn Abdul-Barr's in al-tamhid lima fil Muwatta min ma'any w asani'd, that its narration is untrustworthy, and that it is, therefore, unreliable. (2)(3)

Scholarly Consensus - 'Ijma

In 1998, scholars from over 35 Islamic Countries came together at Al-Azhar University, Cairo to discuss Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). They came to the conclusion that FGM is a habit that is non-obligatory in Islam, given that it has never been mentioned in the Holy Quran, and there are no citations in the Holy Prophet's Hadith containing any evidence of authentic *Isnad* (chain of narration) that could justify a Sharia provision on so important an issue for human life as FGM. Additionally, Muslim jurists have not reached unanimous consent on FGM.

Expert Testimony

In Islamic Law, the testimony of the *experts* is vital in considering a Fatwa. The General Assembly of the International Federation of Gynaecology and Obstetrics (FIGO) endorsed a resolution to consider FGM/C as violation of the provisions of Convention of Child Rights (CRC) and a breach of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). It also called for greater efforts and procedures to eradicate all traditional practices involving violence against both children and women. The Islamic Fatwa Council deems this expert position as a legitimate source of secondary evidence.

And Allah Knows Best



Sources and References:

(1) Narrated by al-Daraqutni in his sunan Kitab Al-Bayou' 3/ 77, P. 288, about Abu Saeed al Khudri, and narrated by Al-Hakim in al-mustadrak; Kitab Al-Bayou' 2/ 66, P. 2345, about Abu Saeed Al Khudri, was announced authentic Hadith by Al-Hakim and backed by Imam Az-Zahabi.

(2) A'n Al-Ma'boud fi Sharh Sunan Abi Dawood" by Shams Al-Shaq Al-Azeem Ayadi, 14/ 124.

(3) Imam Shawkani said in Nil Al-Awtar, volume 1, P. 139, "... This Hadith was reported by Ahmed, and was reported by Al-Khalal about Shadad Ibn Aws, and was reported by Imam Bayhaqi citing the narration of Hajaj Ibn Artah, about Abu Mulaih, about Usamah, about his father. Hajaj said: misleading Hadith, and Qutadah was confused about it and said: it is weak Hadith.