

PROGRESSIVE ISLAM IN
PRACTICE



BODILY AUTONOMY AND ISLAM

AD'IYAH COLLECTIVE X MUSLIMS FOR PROGRESSIVE VALUES



bodily autonomy



the right for a person to govern what happens to their body without external influence, pressure, or coercion.

Bodily Autonomy in Islam

Lā ikrāha fī al-dīn

- The Islamic principle enshrined in Qur'an 2:256 that endows all individuals with the right to be free from coercion of any kind, but especially from religious coercion.
- This freedom affords all Muslims with the right to make their own choices

Dignity

- In Islam, the human body is considered to be a divine miracle that people are tasked with caring for.
- In caring for the body, God commands the **individual** to maintain dignity over their body, by preserving and caring for it as they see fit.





God does not demand that Muslims act contrary to the dictates of conscience. However, it also implies a much more significant responsibility for the individual human being to make ethical judgments and take moral actions. Qur'anic regulations, in this case, must be seen as only a starting point for the ethical development of the human being, as well as for the transformation of human society.

KECIA ALI



Why is Bodily Autonomy so Important in Islam?

- Autonomy is an ethical principle that allows an individual to exert independence over their own affairs. This is encouraged through the Islamic concept of ijtihad, which calls on individuals to practice independent reasoning.
- This independence is the cornerstone of human freedom, a freedom which can only be practiced if one is free from coercion and can exercise their free will, two important concepts in Islamic ethics that ensure individuals can live as full human beings as God intended us to.
- Likewise, coercing an individual or limiting their free will to maintain bodily dignity through legislation of any kind, secular or religious, violates an individual's right to ijtihad.





Supporting women to have choices in their lives [need] not threaten the social fabric. Ensuring that people enjoy the full measure of their rights strengthens the community. And by way of shared values, it extends the sense of community, even to the global level.

THORAYA AHMED OBAID



In the Real World

- In the real world, bodily autonomy impacts every aspect of our lives. Without bodily autonomy, we lack the independence that we are granted through Quranic mandates.
- Individuals who have their bodily autonomy restricted also lack access to economic freedom, freedom of expression, and freedom of belief and religion.
- Therefore bodily autonomy is not just a right, it is the foundation upon which all other human rights are built.



WHEN YOU DENY A PERSON A RIGHT TO BODILY AUTONOMY, YOU DENY THEM A RIGHT TO:

- Economic advancement
- Empowering & affirming healthcare
- Informed consent
- Sexual and reproductive health decisions
- Family planning
- Freedom of expression
- Freedom of belief
- Healthy and fulfilling relationships
- Freedom of movement
- Freedom of religion
- Educational opportunities





'Muslim women have the God-given right and autonomy to make their own spiritual and moral decisions. And whether or not we like it, that includes a woman's right to make mistakes. It includes her right to make choices that others may see as Islamically wrong. It includes her right to use her own judgment to arrive at a decision of her choosing – even if that decision is one that an imam, Twitter sheikh or aunty might frown upon.'

AFROZE FATIMA ZAIDI



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