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# ISLAM AND REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE

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WOMEN IN ISLAM SERIES



MUSLIMS FOR  
PROGRESSIVE VALUES



# Reproductive Justice

**1**

**The right to  
have a child.**

**2**

**The right to not  
have a child.**

**3**

**The right to parent  
a child in a safe &  
healthy community.**



# Examples of Reproductive Justice

Contraception

Access to  
abortion

Sex education

Domestic violence  
assistance

STI treatment and  
prevention

Adequate  
postnatal care

Adequate  
prenatal care

Access to alternative  
birth options



# REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS VS REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE

## REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

Prioritizes a woman's legal right to reproductive health care.

Emphasizes legal / constitutional rights.

Primarily based in the electoral system.

Focuses on choice.

## REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE

Address the issues and barriers that women face in reproductive care.

Acknowledges social inequalities.

Grassroots movement led by women of color.

Focuses on access.



# Reproductive Justice & Dignity

In Islam, dignity is a fundamental right for all humans, as it lays the foundation for the wellbeing of humanity. To maintain this right, Islamic law calls on the protection of *maqasid al-shari'ah* - preservation of life, faith, intellect, property, and lineage.

Human rights  
derived from the  
*maqasid al-shari'ah*

The right to adequate and life saving  
healthcare, knowledge about sexual  
health, freedom from poverty, and  
freedom from hardship.

"We have bestowed dignity on the progeny of Adam [...] and conferred on them special favours, above a great part of Our creation." (Qur'an 17:70)



## Why is reproductive justice an important concept in Islam?

Although misunderstood by many, Islam takes a generally positive stance on sex and sexual relations between partners. This positive stance, as interpreted in the text, also includes the rights of individuals to proceed through life with reproductive choice, dignity, and safety, including a safe pregnancy, a safe sex life, and a safe environment to raise children. These rights, as decreed by Islamic jurisprudence, are not possible without the concepts associated with reproductive justice.



# Compatibility of Reproductive Rights & Islam

## **The Five Objectives of Islamic Law (or the *maqasid al- Shari'ah*)**

To preserve life

To preserve intellect

To preserve faith

To preserve property

To preserve lineage

## **Reproductive Rights Concepts (1994 International Conference on Population & Development)**

the right to attain the highest  
standard of sexual and  
reproductive health.

the right to freely decide the  
number and spacing of children,  
and the right to have the  
information and means to do so.

the right to have satisfying and  
safe sexual relations.

the right to make decisions  
concerning reproduction free of  
coercion, discrimination, or violence.



# Reproductive Justice in Islamic Jurisprudence

## **ADEQUATE PARENTAL SUPPORT**

“No soul should be compelled beyond capacity, neither the mother made to suffer for the child nor the father for his offspring...” (2:233)

## **BIRTH SPACING**

The mothers shall [breastfeed] their offspring for two whole years, if [the parents] desire to complete the term. (2:233)

## **CONTRACEPTION**

Jabir (Allah be pleased with him) reported: “We [the Companions of the Prophet (PBUH)] used to practise ‘azl during the lifetime of Allah’s Messenger (PBUH). This (the news of this practice) reached [the Prophet] and he did not forbid us”.





# Barriers to Reproductive Justice for Muslim Women

**MISINTERPRETATION OF ISLAMIC JURISPRUDENCE**

**RELIGIOUS STEREOTYPES, ESPECIALLY IN THE WEST**

**LACK OF INTERSECTIONAL EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL**

**RELIGIOUS REDUCTIONISM IN RJ SPACES**

**THE GLOBAL TOKENZATION OF MUSLIM WOMEN**

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