

## Recommendation to Prohibit, Un-Islamic and Harmful Cultural Custom of Female Genital Mutilation

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### ABSTRACT:

Female genital mutilation and female genital cutting that undertakes partial or complete removal of female genital organ, is practiced in certain parts of the world in general and in African Arab countries particularly. This is not religious but cultural and Muslim, Christian and to some extent by Jew communities are involved in this custom of circumcising the girls and women prior to their marriages. On the other hand, female circumcision involves the removal of prepuce which should not be confused with FGM (female genital mutilation), for they are completely two different procedures. However, Keeping the circle of the discussion to Muslims, it is very important to mention that there is no Ayat/verse in Al-Quran which even refers to female circumcision, which is also called as Islamic Circumcision. Only weak hadiths are found to support the procedure. However, these hadiths completely forbid FGM as well as Islamic Shariah scholars prohibit this procedure after in carefully conclusive analysis of the said hadiths to be performed on women. FGM doesn't has any health benefits instead this is very harmful and leads such victims to many gynecological, psychological, emotional and mental complications.

**Keywords:** female genital mutilation, muslim, Christian, Jews, un-Islamic.

### Female genital mutilation:

FGM is a non-medical procedure conducted on women in almost 30 countries of the world. These girls mainly belong to Muslim, Jew and Christian communities to undergo this procedure which is completely a cultural ritual, unnecessary and carries no medical value. Generally, people of certain communities (Men and women both), believe that they are doing good to their daughters and so, this oppressive procedure is performed on their female relatives generally, more specifically on their daughters. In some cases, women have some awareness about the side effects of this procedure, or they feel doubtful about the medical benefits of female circumcision. They continue to follow the ritual only because this has been deeply rooted in their societies since centuries.

### Parents, FGM and their daughters:

FGM is pre-Islamic and was practices in Arab and African Arab region extensively.

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They have continued for centuries to follow their custom of circumcising their females at a very early age, which may be their pre-teen and in some of the cases just after their birth. This ritual not only mutilate the victims physically but even psychologically they are deteriorated. These women are not only told but observe that they are destined to undergo any procedure which is desired by the paterfamilias. It is the basic teaching of such communities to make women realize that, men can decide anything good or bad for them and no importance will be given to the opinion of the any female in the family. Even the outcome effects of the FGM are not taken to consideration. Most of the times this is practiced only to bow down before the ancient ritual and to continue the family legacy which keeps their societal custom alive. There is no concept of getting some knowledge that if this custom has some moral, ethical, religious or medical value. This is very cruel domestic violence against girls who suffer on non-medical grounds, by the hands of their own parents or guardians. It is needed to understand that these virgins suffer from trauma and humiliation at the time of genital cutting and mutilation, and later they suffer the complications, caused by this procedure at the time of their marriage when a bride meets her husband. These victims suffer from gynecological problems for the rest of their lives, due to the harmful results of FGM, which is forced on young girls and women by their own family members, they trust the most. Jean Sasson writes about few female characters, who were, Princess Sultana's elder sisters and a young girl Ilhan, were victimized due to this ritual. These victims suffered all their lives due to the outcome of this ritual<sup>1</sup>. Princess Sultana was told about this ritual by her elder sister Princess Nura, who further explains to Princess Sultana that a foreigner physician told Prince Nura's, the complication FGM caused to her and she was destined to face several gynecological complications throughout her life. While on the other hand Ilhan, the young granddaughter of Princess Sultana's maid went through the female genital mutilation of the extreme kind known as *firOni Khatna/pharaonic circumcision*<sup>2</sup>. This type of circumcision is the most terrible of all its kind and leads to many complications to the victim<sup>3</sup>. These descriptions shed light on the consequences these victims faced all their lives. In the later years a foreign doctor convinced Princess' father to stop practicing this ritual over his other young daughters that included Princess Sultana as well. This description sheds light over the painful suffering of these victims from this biographical novel *Princess*. It has been said that this ritual is declining but I like to quote<sup>4</sup>, "Around 130 million women and girls in the world are estimated to have undergone female genital mutilation (FGM) and each year, about 3 million girls and women are at risk of undergoing the procedure."

### **Classification of Female Genital Mutilation:**

Female circumcision and FGM are two different things and the later one is further classified into several types as they are practiced in several regions of the world. Western scholars refer to female circumcision and female genital mutilation, as one procedure, which on large scale is known as FGM divided into the following types: The removal of the foreskin or the prepuce which may extends to the removal of a

part or all of the clitoris gland is known as type one of FGM. The second type includes the removal of the clitoris including the partial or full removal of labia minora. Third type is defined as the removal of external genital organs and stitching which aims at narrowing the vaginal orifice and this is also known as infibulation. The fourth type is unclassified which may include piercing, pricking, stretching or incising of clitoris and labia. This may include the burning of clitoris and tissues round it. There can be additional things which extend the painful process of FGM in which the tissues that surround vaginal orifice are removed or the vagina is cut where they place some kind of herbs which narrow the vagina for the purpose of tightening it. Or there can be any other procedure to be the required results is called FGM<sup>5</sup>.

If the second type includes only the removal of inner labia, leaving the clitoris intact, is called female circumcision in the light of the hadith, some of the Muslim scholars refer to, thought these hadiths come from the weak sources. This according to many scholars is also not acceptable but the last one is the most horrible form of this procedure is called infibulation as discussed above. The involves the incision of victim's clitoris, inner and outer labia are removed, later the vaginal orifice is stitched to an extent that only small hole is left for urination and menstruation blood. As discussed that any procedure which is done to get the intended results can be performed and that makes the situation more fatal if an unexperienced practitioner of FGM run the procedure on the victim for it has also been reported that they stitch the whole area and so menstruation blood ceases to pass through, which makes these victims infertile. When a victim becomes infertile, she faces social and psychological pressure for a woman's importance is most likely counted by herself being fertile and if she is found out to be sterile, this may result in a divorce<sup>6</sup>. The fourth type of Female Genital Mutilation (infibulation) is practiced on its victims before marriage, after divorce, after the death of husband. If the family of such female decides for her to remarry, she is cut open once again and the same procedure will be followed up.

#### **Difference between circumcision and FGM:**

As discussed above, if a woman undergoes a procedure which dissect only the inner labia without removing the clitoris gland is known as female circumcision and can be called Islamic female circumcision. this is not mandatory unlike the circumcision of muslim men. Furthermore, men circumcision bears many health benefits which modern medical research has already proven true. On the other hand, there are no strong evidences that it was suggested by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to be conducted on the females of his family. The hadiths quoted for the support of the circumcision are weak, though they only speak of second type of FGM with restriction which doesn't allow clitoris to be touched and only the outer labia is removed. All the other types are not in any way supported by Islam for the hadiths do not support such extreme FGM to be practiced on women. This is now clear that there is huge difference between FGM and Circumcision and these should be referred to as two different procedures.<sup>7</sup> Until 1980 the term used for this procedure was called female circumcision, without any settled difference to FGM. During the third

conference of the Inter-African Committee in 1991, it was advised by WHO to United Nations that the practice of the traditional ritual which bring harm to the women and children's health in Ethiopia, should be called FGM. This draws lines between Female Genital Mutilation and female circumcision.

### **Catastrophes resulted by FGM:**

In 2013, a young man Fawad in Afar, married her cousin Ayesha who died due to the excessive bleeding as Ayesha was one of the FGM victims. She was left with a very small opening to urinate after she underwent the procedure at the age of ten. On the second night when Fawad found it again difficult, he cut Ayesha's flesh open with a knife and consummate the marriage. Unfortunately, it was dark in the tent and Fawad could not see the consequences of his act and Ayesha passed away at some moment during the night<sup>8</sup>. This custom (FGM) is still practiced in more than 30 countries including Muslim, Jewish and Christian developing countries and is responsible of taking lives of several women and young girls. It is important to note that it is practiced in developing Christian countries and not the developed ones. If these victims survive this what Ayesha could not, they are left with several health issues. They live abnormal lives and they after the birth of their babies are sometimes face lower abdominal paralysis. Ayesha's husband Fawad was taken in police custody for the charges of the murder but there are many other criminals in this case such as her parents who walk free and perhaps will continue to victimize the females in the family. Another woman Malika, suffered from the after consequences of the FGM as she remained sterile for 3 to 4 months. Later, she suffered acute pain for she also was cut open with a sharp edge by her husband so the marriage could be consummated. She faced complication during child birth and after wards, she could never stand on her feet again and now she cannot walk. She is destined to live sedentary in her bed (made up of the blanket on the floor) inside her hut. She believes that death for her was a better option if she could choose over her current condition of a painful sedentary life. Her mother regrets and put blame to her very own ignorance. She says if she had awareness, her daughter Malika would have been saved from FGM which led her endure the tragedies of sedentary life<sup>9</sup>. Deeqa Dahir Nurr, a ten years old child died of severe bleeding for two days after she underwent the hostile procedure of FGM in Somalia. Mohamad opines, that we only come to know of only a few cases who seek the medical assistance after the circumcision goes wrong on the victims. These people sworn to secrecy with the practitioner prior the procedure is performed. There might be dozens who suffer to death which are never officially reported<sup>10</sup>.

The ratio of the girls forced to undergo FGM in Somalia is 98%, most of which undergo infibulation (pharaonic Circumcision) and that is the most critical form of this procedure. This is a huge number which is higher than any other country practicing this ritual, in the world. There is no record of these girls who die and no record of the complications, that effect the victims for the rest of their lives for most of the cases are never reported. The unexperienced woman who performed that ill practiced on Deeqa Dahir Nurr, was not even arrested. As a matter of fact, there is a

law which could punish such killers. According to constitution this is forbidden in Somalia but due to the lack of awareness regarding the harmful medical complications of this ritual, conservative families and religious groups force the pressure on the government's law enforcement agencies and institutions to implement the law to punish these criminals<sup>11</sup>. Infibulation is the worst kind of mutilation which makes almost impossible for the couple to consummate the marriage. Cutting the flesh remains an only option which is done by her husband, or in some cases by a midwife, generally, observing the complete secrecy. Full consummation of marriage generally takes 3 to 4 days of time but in extreme cases this duration prolongs to a couple of months. At the time of the delivery these victims face another procedure called defabulation, when they are further cut open. After giving birth to her child she will be re-infibulated. This re-infibulation is performed again if a woman is divorced, separated or widowed. This has been a continuing custom which brings pain over pain on the victims. Another fatal side effect of this procedure results in the demise of the mother and in some of the cases the demise of their babies too. The FGM, thus results in, frigidity, infibulation, anorgasmia, sometimes anal orifice and ureteral meatus are used and lastly consummation of marriage may take several weeks. And during the process of infibulation the victim would have to seek the medical help for the cure of infertility that may be one of the major consequences of FGM<sup>12</sup>.

#### **FGM/Female circumcision is culture; not religion:**

**Hadith:** The scholars in Canadian council whose fundamental purpose is secure the rights of Canadian muslim women, especially the ones who migrated from other countries of the world. They documented a case of an immigrant girl named Fatouma, a victim of female circumcision<sup>13</sup>. She underwent the procedure when she was only four. She later came to Canada and always suffered complications in conceiving and delivering children, she remained shy to see a doctor for she did not like to explain the mutilated condition of her genitalia. Once she was admitted to the hospital but after questioning from a doctor, she left for home without getting the medical aid she needed. Later she was being pressurized by her community fellows and her husband to take her daughter back to her home country so her daughter must also get though the same procedure. Fatouma does not like this fate to fall upon her daughter, though she still loves her culture and wants to be respectful towards her husband and community group in Canada. She is respectful towards her religion and it is important to know if this procedure is a religious obligation or just an ancient customary ritual. the unauthenticity of FGM and female circumcision that the this is the customary ritual which is pre-Islamic. Al-Quran has no verse which confirms the practice of the ritual among women. There is one hadith on this topic. Islam advises husband and wife to bring love and harmony towards each other and in their relation, which comes from closer contact of physical self. Medically there are consequences of female circumcision and FGM on woman where she may suffer from frigidity, so when the FGM brings hindrance for wife to make a healthy relationship with husband than it is arguable on spiritual grounds<sup>14</sup>.

Furthermore, the argument is strengthened when come to know the fact that no Quranic verse, not even one, is there in Al-Quran. This is one integral point of the focus in this research paper that for female circumcision.

Hadith in support of female circumcision is as follows, A women used to do circumcision in Medina. This hadith is as follows, "It was narrated from Muhammad bin Hassan - 'AbdulWahhab (one of the narrators) said: Al-KUfi - from 'Abdul-Malik bin 'Umair, from Umm 'Atiyyah Al-Ansariyyah, that a woman used to circumcise females in AlMadinah, and the Prophet saidto her: "Do not go to extremes in cutting, for that is better for the woman and more liked by the husband." (Da'J) Abū Dāwud said: A similar report was related from 'Ubaidullāh bin 'Amr from 'Abdul-Malik with this chain. Abū Dāwud said: This is not strong; it has been related in a Mursal form. Abū Dāwud said: Muhammad bin Hassan is unknown, and this Hadith is weak<sup>15</sup>."

There is, but an only weak hadiths is associated to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). This hadith is one of the three hadith on the topic of female circumcision. This is perhaps most quoted for it is referred to Prophet Muhammad. This hadith clearly demonstrates that Prophet Muhammad advised the woman to be restricted to a little cut, when he saw this ritual was being performed on a girl. This hadith clearly points to removal of prepuce, means only the fore skin on the clitoris while leaving the whole of clitoris intact. The important point is that even Abu Dawud himself opines in his book that this is a weak hadith. Even if this hadith is considered to come from a brilliant source, this hadith suggests, the removal of prepuce not any other part of female genital. So, the removal of clitoris is called clitoridectomy, which is against the sunnah circumcision must not be practiced and only the removal of the prepuce is suggested by the Prophet Muhammad. It is important to note that prepuce removal without touching the clitoris gland is suggested in the only hadith, people rely upon to support female concision. Instead

people go for the extremes during this procedure which surely is wrong.

even if we consider this hadith to be a stronger one, Prophet Muhammad did not allow the cutting of clitoris which is an important part female genitals. If a person neglects this hadith and continue to the set cultural practice, s/he does this against sunnah and against Islam. They do it to fulfill their own desires and likeness instead what Islam teaches them. They do this with their girls as their dominants not as their parents and this I find closer to femicide and honor killing which is also performed to serve in observing the honor of men. On the other hand, this hadith doesn't come from a very strong source. Prophet Muhammad, if would have liked this tradition must have said more in this regard, but he did not which means that he did not like it, it seems that he only did bear it. If it was a desirable thing by Prophet Muhammad, there would have been girls and women, his own relatives to undergo this procedure. Secondly, Islamic preaching have medical values which are always supporting or uplifting spiritual or physical capabilities and skills. This is then beyond imagining that Islam could preach something which is harmful for the health of young girls, women or any living being. This is not the teaching which comes from Islam but it is a custom long set in the



roots of these Arab societies irrespective of many fatal aspects of this traditional practice that bring harm to the girls and women. The hadith which opines that circumcision is obligatory for men while honorable women, is the one which does not come from the strong and reliable sources of Hadith. The most reliable and important sources of hadith books are, Al Bukhari, Sahi Muslim and Mu'atta of Imam Malik do not contain this hadith. There are lesser reliable sources as well, such as, *Musnad of Ahmed*, *Mu'jam Al-kabir*, *Sunan al-Kubra* and *Musnaf of Ib-ne-Abi Shayban*. Even these "hadith books" do not contain this hadith with a trustable chain of narrators. While Bahqi speaks of this hadith, which refers circumcision obligatory for men and honorable for women<sup>16</sup>. This very important to note that this hadith directly addresses the *masla* of female circumcision but religious scholars have some reservations about the authenticity of this Hadith. It is further debated that for the reliability of this hadith reports that this hadith according to the Islamic scholars (Rijjal) is weak due to the presence of Hujjaj Ib-ne-Artat because according to Yaqub Ibney Sheba Hujjaj is believed to make the hadiths by his own. He further, speaks of another hadith which means that when the circumcised (part in a male) meets the circumcised (part in a female) then ghusl (ritual bath) will become obligatory. Behqi in his book of hadith, *Sunan-Al-Kubra* narrates another Hadith that Hazrat which means that circumcision must not be over do for it is pleasure giving for both man and wife. And again, Abu Dawud proclaims that this is weak hadith for the person among the narrators is Muhammad bin Hassan, who is not a trust worthy and reliable narrator of hadith<sup>17</sup>.<sup>18</sup> "Yahya related to me from Malik from ibn al-Musayyab that Umar ibn al-Khattab and Uthman ibn Affan and A'isha, the wife of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, used to say, 'when the circumcised part touches the circumcised part, ghusl in obligatory.'"<sup>19</sup> Yahya related to me from Malik Abu'n Nadr, the mawla of Umar ibn Abdullah that Abu Salama ibn Addar-Rahman ibn Awf related that he had asked A'isha, the wife of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grants him peace, what made ghusl obligatory. She said, 'do you know what you are like, Abu Salama? You are like a chick when it hears the cocks crowing and so crows with them. When the circumcised pat passes the circumcised part. Ghusl is obligatory." Imam Malik further explained this hadith that Harzat Ayesha angrily answered because Abi Sallahmah did not reach the age of maturity at that time and he enquired about this *masla* (issue) out of curiosity for he heard few other men speaking on the same topic. This example of rooster is explained by Imam Malik as well as he told the readers about the distaste Hazrat Ayesha felt after listening a mature issue from the minor. This hadith doesn't not imply the meaning that female circumcision is Sunnah. This only refers to female circumcised part. Arabic language does the method of *mujansia*, where two different things /objects/items are spoken of as one, for the reason they are easier to be refereed so. They would say, *Qmarayn*, which means two moons for a moon and sun and *abawayan*, which for both, mother and father. Such as they would have used this word of circumcised male and female parts. Furthermore, this hadith contains instructions about the ritual of the bath which is obligatory on

man and wife. This hadith is not about female circumcision and so this is not appropriate to use this hadith to support the practice of the procedure of female circumcision as sunnah.

**Fatwas:** According to Sheikh Talib, Dean of the Faculty of Shariah of Al-Azhar among many scholars believed that all practices of female circumcision or the mutilation is a criminal act and they bear no relation to Islam, as It has been demonstrated by putting a hadith for the reference. It predates Islam and could never purifies a woman instead it only deforms her body. This is an inhuman way of controlling the female modesty, which involves mutilation of their bodies, and they are left to fight for the rest of their lives with the phantoms this FGM creates. This is beyond imagination that this practice has been suggested by any of the religion.<sup>20</sup> Scholars further, provided the documented sayings that negate Female Genital Mutilation which are as follows. Ibn Elmonzer said that FGM is not an evidence to support and it is not even a sunnah to be followed. Elshiekh Saied Sabek held in Fekh ElSunnah with the following words that the hadiths which are presented in favour to allow FGM are not authentic, so they cannot stand a proof for the sustenance of this ritual. Some of the other scholars who spoke against FGM were, Elshiekh Mahmoud Shaltout, Elshiekh Mohamed Rasheed Reda, Dr Salim ElAwa, Grand Sheikh Mohamed Said Tantawi, and others. As it has already been discussed that there are hadiths but not from highly authentic sources, and there is no verse in Al-Quran in support, means that these hadiths are weak indeed. No purification but severe complications, physical, mental and sexual and in extreme cases death comes looking for these girls/women who become the victims of FGM. Not Allah or His messenger but it is the cultural practice that makes the victims of genital mutilation suffer from all kinds of illnesses and complications.

**Shariah:** There are some religious scholars against this ritual and some support female circumcision in the light of the weak hadith. The later opine that women also have prepuce (foreskin) like men and if it is slightly removed observing the restriction of extreme cutting of the foreskin which leads to injure the female organ. circumcision with restrictions allows husband to gain his desired happiness from his wife (though it is also a weak Hadith as already have discussed earlier). It is further explained that this kind of female circumcision where female's genitals remains intact guarantees peaceful and satisfied married life for husband and wife both. Furthermore, this argument doesn't support FGM and thus cannot be called Islamic in anyway, as It is clear that female circumcision and FGM are two different procedures and must not be confused with one another. It is now clear that Islam forbids FGM and Muslims are strongly restricted to practice this, though in few of the muslim countries this is still in practice. Moreover, female circumcision is not obligatory. Sunnah is something which, if you do will be rewarded from Allah and if you do not you will not be punished by Him. So, according to the people who favor this ritual, it depends on the will that if a person wants to undergo the procedure or not, as well as it depends on the country or region where this custom still prevails. It must also



advise to be examined that if the circumcision is needed or not. The final and the most important point is that it must not exceeds the limit in cutting as suggested by Prophet Muhammad. And if some people do not like this, they can simply avoid this procedure, for it is suggested that this is not mandatory for muslim women. Even there is no obligation put by the Prophet Muhammad that it is an essential duty for women to be performed. If it is decided to be performed, Prophet Muhammad prevents the extreme cuttings of genitals. It is only prepuce that is recommended to be removed. However, the hadith for the female circumcision are not very strong ones and unfortunately people have crossed the limits of circumcision and turned into FGM or they have continued to practice it in its most horrible form as it existed prior to the spread of Islam. Among Muslim scholar this concept is very clear that there is huge difference between FGM and female circumcision that according to hadith, the clitoris glan remains undamaged and no other mutilation occurs and so the harmony and happiness both husband and wife, remain intact. Islam does not push women into any dangerous or harmful procedures.

Similarly, as it has been discussed in the light of hadith that circumcision for muslim men is mandatory and it must be done with all our submission to Allah. It is also agreeable that this is part of natural process a person undergoes just as clipping the nails, shaving mustache or removing the pubic hair. It is further explained that there are 6 schools of thought in Islam which are named after their scholars & can also be referred as sect, that are, jafarite, hanafite, Hanbalite, Malikite, Shafiite and Zaidite. Only Shafiite considers the male circumcision obligatory but they rest take it as mandatory and religious duty<sup>21</sup>. On the other hand, there are scholars who do not support the practice of female circumcision or FGM. They have their opinion to the argument to eradicate this ritual for having no religious authentication. The important most point which nails the argument here is that it was banned in Egyptian Supreme Court in the year 1997. The decision was declared by the court that female circumcision is not an individual right under shariah and Quran is devoid of a verse which authorizes it<sup>22</sup>. I like to quote Ali Goma at this point who says, "While FGM was previously practiced as a social custom (and not a religious matter), the state of today's knowledge makes clear the serious negative effects of such practices on women. As such, it becomes a religious obligation to say unequivocally that the practice of FGM is today forbidden in Islam<sup>23</sup>." Islamic Shariyah follows Quran, Sunnah/Hadith, Ijma and Qiyas (juridical consensus) and these are the cardinal part of Islamic jurisprudence. There is no verse for the reference, no Ijma, and no Qiyas that could be acceptable. indeed! there are Hadiths on circumcision but their authenticity is doubtful<sup>24</sup>.

### **FGM: harmful for physical and mental health of Women:**

According to a research<sup>25</sup>, when a victim is circumcised, and losses her clitoris, she loses the tendency of being happy and peaceful during the exchange of conjugal rights with her husband. This may lead to anorgasmia and in some of the cases frigidity. This causes infibulation and it may take several weeks for the couple to consummate

the marriage. This hinderance sometimes leads the activity towards the sphincter ani, which has not only been is an illness itself and considered a sinful act. According to Islamic teachings, such an act dissolves “*nikah*” (marriage). On the other hand, if in consummation of the marriage is successfully achieved, their wives find themselves consulting the gynecologists to recover their fertility. Being barren or infertile means her value as a wife drops, which will result in divorce. This is ironic for this act is performed to control women’s modesty to preserve their virginity till the marriage as the bride might be killed by the hand of her husband or father (in extreme cases) or else will be divorced, the morning next to wedding night, if proven otherwise. The irony is, that this FGM procedure may lead to divorce finally with a different reason.

There are many other severe consequences of procedures such as FGM practiced on girls. They suffer from acute infections and trauma, immediately after they are mutilated. There are even, no benefits regarding health of female circumcision, instead there are a lots of harmful side effects which can cause severe problems to women. These side effects are of two types, immediate and future effects. First ones are related to the effect caused on the spot at the time the victim undergoes the method of FGM and later many more they suffer from which are the aftermath of this cruel procedure. These are such cruel procedures that eradicate the victims from their physical essentials which make them feminine. These harmful side effects are acute pain, infection, infections in bladder, infertility, complications during childbirth, surgeries, frigidity and psychological and emotional injuries leaving scars on the body and the mind of the sufferer. The most intense is that this may lead to the death of the victim. This is not religious but cultural for this is not practiced in all parts of the world where majority of Muslims, Christians or Jews live. This custom needs to be stopped for the safety of the girls and their children. This would lead Muslim world towards a healthy society and bright future. A mother indeed is the backbone of a family and she needs to be healthy for the whole family to live a normal life.

### **Prohibiting FGM on medical ground:**

Due to the harmful long-lasting effect on women, many of the countries have taken considerable steps towards the wellbeing of the women. Leaving women with physical and metal scars has been declared illegal and criminal, in industria-lized nation worldwide including, Canada, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Italy, New Zealand, Norway, Span, Switzerland, UK, USA and in African nations Egypt, central African Republic, Benin, Burkina, Djibouti, Burkina Faso, Chad, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Mauritania, Nigeria,, Niger, South Africa, Senegal, Tanzania, Togo and Cote d’Ivoire. this practice is prohibited by law and comes under criminal act in both the countries<sup>26</sup>. This needs to be prohibited in other parts of the world as well where this practice still prevails. And much better then prohibiting this practice is to bring awareness to the people so that they can prevent their own children going through such horrible experience which leave having long lasting effect on their lives. if the awareness spread widely then parents will prevent their daughters to undergo this process and this would help in developing a healthy society. All these countries

have prohibited FGM on medical and on human-rights ground. They know after research and survey what is in the best of the health for women.

There is no medical value of female circumcision and the victims who undergo this procedure suffer from mental, physical and psychological trauma. Male circumcision has been medically proven to be entirely healthy which benefits men in several ways. Muslims and Jews practice the custom of male circumcision since centuries. Female circumcision is also practiced since more than several centuries and this brings harm to the females. Something which brings health to men and ill health to women cannot be suggested by the religion. There is no religious or logical explanation which could support this ritual to be performed on women. There is not a single verse from Al-Quran which speaks of female circumcision. There are several examples that depict the harmful after effects of this procedure on its victims. Hundreds of researches during last few decades demonstrate the ill it spreads in women's body. Thus, for the safety of the women's health, this practice should be banded in the countries where it is still prevailing on legal grounds. And the countries where it is prohibited must make additional laws against the evil practitioners and this would prevent these people from doing harm to women/girls. If they continue to do so then these people should be punished on legal ground. If a woman is found guilty of some wrong doing in Arab, their fathers are given right to punish them. In these cases, fathers should be questioned and given punishment if their daughters are found circumcised specially in the countries where there is an Act or Law in regards of FGM.

Women physical body is designed to give birth to children. This is a lengthy process which involves the woman getting closer with her husband till she conceives and later she carries and nourishes her child inside herself for at least nine months. She needs her body without cut but in complete. Any procedure which brings any kind of hindrance in this process of conceiving, carrying the baby inside her and finally delivering the child, is harmful for women. Female body has this basic purpose of child labor and birth and Female genital mutilation (circumcision may also) becomes a barrier for this divine process and women's bodies suffer for not fulfilling its basic function. Their bodies are designed for this purpose by Allah/God in perfect mold and so, this mutilation has never been meant for the women. This cultural custom should to be eradicated from muslim and other Christian or Jew societies as well. This step needs to be taken for the good of humanity. Furthermore, Healthy women are the foundation of healthy societies. Muslims scholars have said that the idea of mutilating or altering a part or many parts of the human body or any living-beings, is against the teachings of the Quran; this has been specifically mentioned in Al-Quran<sup>27</sup>. Medically, its harmful immediate and after effects have been proven fatal that clearly support the suggestion that it should not be practiced. Still, I would say that bringing awareness is very much important to bring an end to this ritual which is not religious but only cultural indeed. UNFDP and UNCEF are conducting lectures to the residents of African tribes to bring awareness regarding FGM. They conducted successful

sessions in Afar; bringing awareness is needed in all the places in the world where FGM is practiced to the people<sup>28</sup>. If there was awareness about the harms of FGM, Little Somalian girl Deeqa Dahir Nurr would have been alive, living, laughing, playing dolls with her friends and attending school. Same as Ayesha would not have bled to death and would have been living a happy life with her husband Fawad. Malika would have been looking after her baby by her own. She would have doing all her work by her own and she would not have been preferring death over life. The novel *Princess* is a biographical novel and the women who suffered from this horrible ritual are real life people. Princess Nura, her sister and Ilhan would have not suffered the whole life if this ritual was prohibited in their country legally. All the physical and psychological trauma which their bodies and mind endures was the catastrophe resulted from the forced FGM. All this could have happened differently, and lives of these women would have been different, only if there had been proper guidance and awareness about FGM.

Another researcher scholar Hamid Rushwan<sup>29</sup> explains that, to eradicate the FGM practice, a lot of actions are required, such as support from law and politics, training sessions, trained health providers, and good circulation of funding and law enforcement, monitoring the evaluation and checking the accountability characteristics, involving political and religious leaders. The most important step would be an effort to involve women and youth in the campaigns, bringing the awareness to the harmful effects of the FGM which is traditionally practiced. This can be the part of the community service to educate people about the health of the women and girls of the community. It is analyzed that female circumcision is not prescribed in Islam and cannot be reported as Sunnah. This is an outcome of confusing a cultural ritual to be as religious practice. This is an oppression towards women which put them on serious life risks. He continues to say that people who are indulged in this practice are committing two sins. One of them is oppressing the human-beings and the other one is disfiguring the face of Islam. The grand Egyptian Mufti Ali Goma, is also in favor of prohibiting female circumcision. He explains that: “the last prophet Muhammad said that do not harm others nor do accept any harm to yourself and so circumcising females is bringing harm to them. He further says that as such, it becomes a religious obligation to say unequivocally that the practice of FGM is today forbidden in Islam”<sup>30</sup>. In West FGM is used for all kinds of cuttings, including the type two which is Islamic female circumcision with some restrictions, while muslim scholars count them as two different procedures. As it has already been discussed that hadiths in support of female circumcision are weak and this is not mandatory for women to undergo the procedure and FGM is strongly forbidden by Islamic Sharia, so this practice needs not to prevail any further and FGM should be prohibited and considered a crime. Female circumcision has already been not in practice by majority of muslims and for female circumcision hadiths do not come from very authentic sources. So, in this case, women’s safety and security must be prioritized and they must not suffer from any mental, physical or psychological issues. Furthermore, not a

single verse /Ayat can be found in Al-Quran which supports female circumcision. Perhaps this makes it already not a suggestable preference for female muslim women to undergo this procedure as healthy women (mentally and physically both) creates paradise of their homes. A discussion among muslim scholars and religionists from all the sects, on a platform may bring a conclusive advice about female circumcision. This is still an unresolved issue amongst the religious scholars who do not settle on a point whether it is right to do or should be prohibited. The whole discussion of this paper reveals the fact that this is not proven by Quran and the Hadiths are weak. The strongest point which suggest the prohibition of the ritual comes from Ali Goma , who says that brining injury to oneself or to someone else is strongly forbidden in Islam and in relation to this we must follow the Sunna of Prophet Muhammad, the merciful of all human-being, who set an example by never subjecting any of his daughters to this procedure<sup>31</sup>. Another Similar argument is, The Sunna of Prophet Muhammad does not specify any type of FGM/female circumcision. Furthermore, the Prophet's biography, which demonstrates all the details of his life and household has no evidence or a reference that there was even a single incident when Prophet circumcised his wives, daughters, or any female member within his family<sup>32</sup>.

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