

THE IMPACT OF MORALS ON FATWAS: AN APPLIED STUDY OF THE FATWAS ISSUED BY EGYPT'S DAR AL IFTAA

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ABSTRACT

Morals constitute an important part of the components of the Islamic religion. Therefore, this paper aims to shed light on the importance of morals and their impact on the contemporary jurisprudential fatwas through the applied study of the fatwas issued by Egypt's Dar Al Iftaa. This paper adopts the approach of content analysis and the objective examination of fatwas. The researcher concluded that there is an impact of morals in these fatwas, whether in terms of analysis of fatwa topics; Egypt's Dar Al-Iftaa invested in noble morals to infer many modern matters that did not exist in the Islamic jurisprudential heritage, in addition to the type of jurisprudential rulings (obligatory, desirable, permissible, disliked, forbidden). This paper highlights the fact that morals are considered among the origins of rulings and fatwas in Islamic jurisprudence, and they can be relied upon to reach jurisprudential rulings and fatwas for emerging events such as modern economic and medical issues that need a definitive statement of jurisprudence. This study may be the first of its kind in terms of linking the impact of morals on contemporary fatwas through the applied study of the fatwas issued by Egypt's Dar Al Iftaa. Thus, it opens the door for researchers to study the impact of morals on contemporary fatwas issued by the various fatwa houses.

Keywords: *Morals, influence, jurisprudence, Dar Al-Iftaa, Egypt.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Through the researcher's jurisprudential review of many texts from past scholars, it was found that most of the jurisprudential rulings are justified by moral reasons and purposes, aiming to bring benefits and ward off evils. Moreover, among the most important benefits is to show good morals and leave corrupt virtues, as the message of Islam came to complete noble morals.

As the Prophet (Peace and Prayers be Upon Him) said: "I was sent to perfect noble morals." (Al-Bayhaqi, 2003; Ibn Hanbal, 2001). The Hadith made the goal of Islam a moral objective, as the jurisprudential rulings are inspired by morals, then the jurisprudential system, including its orders and prohibitions in its entirety, is not only a binding law, but rather rules aimed at shaping good behavior. Commands call for adherence to good morals, and prohibitions call for avoiding corrupt virtues. However, it is noticeable that contemporary jurisprudence scholars did not grant a lot of attention to the rooting of morals in the jurisprudential system, rather the focus was on extracting jurisprudential rulings on issues raised by Muslims. (Siya, 2019)

Furthermore, the researcher made an analytical reading of some texts of the Noble Quran, which is the first source of Islamic jurisprudence. He found that the verses of the Noble Quran include many moral values in dealing with people, such as the virtue of forgiveness, and the prohibition of omitting graciousness. The Almighty said: "Graciousness is closer to righteousness. And do not forget kindness among yourselves" (Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 237). The virtues of Justice and benevolence, Allah said: "Indeed, Allah commands justice, grace" (Surah An-Nahl, verse 90). The scholars in their interpretation of this verse last verse deemed that it is the most comprehensive verse of righteousness, virtue, and honorable morals, (Al-Khatib, 2017), and it emphasizes the value of certainty from news and not to follow rumors, verification, certainty, and the search for the truth. (Hossain, 2023)

The Almighty said: "O believers, if an evildoer brings you any news, verify 'it' so you do not harm people unknowingly, becoming regretful for what you have done." (Surat Al-Hujurat, Verse 6).

In addition to the fact that the Sunnah of the Prophet, which is the second source of jurisprudential rulings, refuses to differentiate between religion and morality. As this distinction is considered a jurisprudential and religious imbalance, and examples of this are as follows:

In the provisions of marriage: Islamic jurisprudence called for a good choice of the husband, by emphasizing that he is characterized by good morals and religiosity. Pursuant to the words of the Prophet (PBUH): "If someone with whom you are pleased with his character and religion comes to you, then marry him." (Ibn Majah, 2009) The call here is clear not to devoid the jurisprudential rulings of their moral content.

It is possible to reconsider Islamic jurisprudence in terms of its foundation on moral virtues, including morals based on chastity, which in turn includes jurisprudential rulings related to food, drink and marriage, then morals based

on justice and avoidance of oppression. Also, it includes jurisprudential rulings related to punishments, retaliation and punitive limitations, as well as morals based on generosity and avoidance of parsimony, further to the ones related to zakat, alms, and courage. In addition, it includes jurisprudential rulings related to love, cooperation, enjoining good and forbidding evil, so it can be said that most of what the jurists mention falls under one of these virtues: the virtue of chastity, the virtue of justice, and the virtue of Courage, and the virtue of generosity. As for the acts of worship, which are based on the relationship between a Muslim and God Almighty, such as prayer; They are to establish these moral virtues. (Ibn Rushd, 2004)

As for the impact of morals on the sciences related to jurisprudence, the researcher found the great influence of ethics on some of those sciences. Including: the science of Maqasid purposes: there is a close link between the purposes of Sharia and moral values. As the purposes are divided into necessities, needs, and improvements, and the latter means taking what is appropriate to the virtues of habits and avoiding the defilements that the most correct minds disdain, and all this pours into noble morals (Wardat, 2021; Al-Shatby, 1997; Al-Qarafi, 1995). Thus, when scholars interpreted the Hadith about the improvements, they presented examples as follows:

In acts of worship: such as removing impurity, covering the private parts, taking adornments, and approaching with excess of good deeds such as alms and acts of worship, and in habits, such as the etiquette of eating and drinking, avoiding impure foods and impure drinks, and extravagance and gluttony in dealings, such as preventing the sale of impurities, and the removing of the slave of the position of martyrdom and leadership, and preventing the woman of the position of the imamate, and self-marriage, and the demand for manumission and its ensuing consequences (Shawkani, 1999; Al-Zarkashi, 1998; Al-Shatby, 1997; Al-Sobky, 1995; Al-Zarkashi, 1994; Amir Badshah, 1932).

Among the sciences related to jurisprudence: the science of the origins/principles of jurisprudence. The researcher found the great influence of morals in this science. The scholars of this science held that the origins of morals and virtues, such as justice, trustworthiness, truthfulness, and loyalty, do not accept abrogation. Because the wisdom of God in its law and the interest of people in adopting it is an apparent matter that is not affected by the passage of time, and it does not differ according to different nations nor by alteration and change (Al-Mardawi, 2000; Al-Namla, 2000; Al-Namla, 1999). Among the sciences related to jurisprudence is also the science of jurisprudential rules. Since noble morals were delineated by jurisprudential rules of their own, especially among the scholars of the Maliki legal school. They stipulated the rule of observing the noble morals that Muhammad, may God's prayers and

peace be upon him, was sent to complete (Al-Manjoor, 2003).

2. METHODOLOGY

The nature, problems, and objectives of this research require the use of qualitative research methodology and rigorous data analysis. This includes content analysis and objective examination of the scientific material related to the study (Elo, et al. 2014).

Content analysis is a research method that provides a systematic and objective means of making conclusions from verbal, visual, or written data to describe a specific phenomenon. It is an approach based on analyzing what is said, written, or recorded, and interpreting the meaning of the content of textual data (Herijanto, 2022; Bengtsson, 2016).

In terms of application, using the methodology of content analysis by using search engines, the search is in the traditional jurisprudential sources by extrapolating the term “morals,” (and/or) noble morals, (and/or) virtues of morality, and then listing the fatwas in which this term was mentioned. This is followed by analyzing these fatwas to find out the impact of morals in them, as well as using the search engine located in Egypt’s Dar Al Iftaa website to search for the previous terms, then limiting the fatwas in which this term was mentioned and then analyzing these fatwas to know the impact of morals in their issuance.

3. DISCUSSION

3.1 *The Impact of Morals in The Fatwas Issued by Egypt’s Dar Al Iftaa*

The researcher believes that it is of the utmost importance to introduce Egypt’s Dar Al Iftaa, as this house is considered one of the first houses of fatwa in the Islamic world. It was established in 1895 G by the decree issued by the Khedive of Egypt, Abbas Helmy, directed to the *Haqqaniya* Office on November 21, 1895, AD under No. (10), and it was notified to the directorate on the 7th of Jumada II 1313 H under No. (55). The house/Dar Al Iftaa had started as a department of the Egyptian Ministry of Justice, where death sentences and other rulings were referred to the Grand Mufti of Egypt to know the opinion of Dar Al-Iftaa on the imposition of the death penalty and the rest of the judicial rulings. However, its role wasn’t constrained to this nor limited to the regional borders of the Arab Republic of Egypt, rather it extended its pioneering role to the Islamic world. This pioneering role can be identified by reviewing the fatwa records from the inception of the house until now. It receives fatwas from all parts of the Islamic world, and missions from students of Sharia colleges from

all countries of the Islamic world who come to it to train them in issuing fatwas and its skills to qualify them to work in issuing fatwas in their respective countries. (Egypt's Dar Al-Ifta, 2025)

As for the most prominent religious tasks of Egypt's Dar Al Iftaa, it is represented in answering questions and fatwas in different languages, in the following ways:

Verbal answer: it requires the questioner to come in person to the headquarters of Egypt's Dar Al Iftaa, and the questioner sits with one of the fatwa trustees in his office, and the fatwa trustee records the questioner's data and question, then answers, and records the question and answer of the questioner in a system designed to save fatwas for later use through a dedicated database.

In addition to the written answer, and obtaining it has various methods and means, namely: submitting the question directly: by attending the questioner, submitting his request, and completing information about the question, if necessary, then the question is transferred to the Fatwa Secretariat, which edits the answer to it, and the questioner takes a time to receive the fatwa after it has been answered.

Or send the question by mail: The questioner writes his question and sends it in a letter by regular, registered or express mail to the address of the Egyptian Dar Al Iftaa headquarters, then the question is presented to one of the specialized fatwa secretaries, and after answering the question, the response is sent to the questioner at his address that the questioner mentions at the end of his message.

Or send the question by fax: where the questioner sends his question by fax to the number designated for receiving questions at Egypt's Dar Al Iftaa, then the question is presented to one of the specialized fatwa secretaries, and after answering the question, the response is sent to the questioner, by means of a special fax phone number. It is what the questioner mentions in the fax sent, or at the postal address to which he wants the answer to be sent.

Or sending the question via e-mail: where the questioner enters the website of Egypt's Dar Al Iftaa on the international information network (the Internet), then goes to the fatwa request section, and writes the title of the subject of his question (Prayer - Hajj ... etc.). Then he writes his e-mail, then writes his question and sends it, and after sending his question, the website gives him a secret number for the question, and the questioner must keep it until he enters and sees his answer, then one of the specialized fatwa trustees responds to the electronic fatwas by answering the question and sending it to the questioner's

email, and after A short period of time after sending the question, the questioner enters again to the Dar website, the fatwa inquiry section, and puts the number of his question until he sees the answer, or enters his e-mail address to find that the answer has been sent to him.

Another method is the answer via telephone.

Egypt's Dar Al-Iftaa has established a telephone service for inquiries by calling a short number that is easy for the fatwa requester to use, whether the caller is from inside or outside the country. Afterwards, the question is transferred automatically to one of the fatwa secretaries specialized in responding to telephone questions to answer it within an hour, if the questioner enters the telephone service after about an hour, and follows the automated voice instructions - where the program asks him for the password for his question - he will be able to hear the answer to his question. (Egypt's Dar Al-Ifta, 2025)

And if the researcher wants to focus on the number of fatwas issued by Egypt's Dar Al Iftaa for the year 2024, then the Dar issued the Fatwas statistical data for the year 2024, in the figure below:



Figure 1. The annual harvest of the Egyptian Dar Al-Ifta for 2024

In 2024 a total of 1,422,921 Fatwas:

67% Family & Society

25% Worship Practices, Transactional Matters.

The number of Dar Al-Iftaa fatwas, during the year 2024, reached (1,422,921) fatwas that were answered by the various Dar Al-Iftaa departments for the audience of respondents. The first percentage (67%) came for family issues, as

it is considered the building block for the stability of society. Therefore, the fatwas associated with it came out on a great deal of diversity and coverage of all emerging issues that concern all members of the Egyptian family, especially issues related to various women's affairs, such as: domestic violence, or the rights of working women, or the rights and duties of the wife, as well as fatwas on marriage and divorce, and fatwas concerning technological issues, especially electronic games and mobile applications, and confronting some negative phenomena that are alien to society, such as electronic extortion, and the misuse of modern technology. Then came in second place (25%), fatwas of worship such as prayer, Hajj, Zakat and fasting, as well as fatwas for financial transactions such as buying and selling and bank transactions. (Egypt's Dar Al-Ifta, 2025)

The researcher chose Egypt's Dar Al-Iftaa for the purpose of the applied study of the fatwas issued by it, given the great importance that this institution represents in the Islamic world. As for the impact of morals on rulings and fatwas issued by Egypt's Dar Al Iftaa, the researcher conducted an analytical study through the search engines available on the website of Dar Al Iftaa, and he concluded that the impact of morals on the fatwas and rulings issued by this institution, through the following fatwas and jurisprudential rulings:

Attending the funeral of a non-Muslim relative:

Dar Al Iftaa permitted attending the funerals of non-Muslim relatives or friends, because this act is part of the ties of kinship that are enjoined by the Sharia, good treatment, kindness, noble morals, loyalty, and remembering good deeds. (Fatwa No.: 4054).

Warning Against Ridicule and Mockery of Patients - Patients with Autism:

Egypt's Dar Al Iftaa deliberately forbade bullying and mocking people with mental disorders such as autistic patients. They considered this act reprehensible in Islam, because of the abuse and damage it involves, in addition to its danger to societal security in terms of being a crime. Sharia came to urge people to exude noble morals and to avoid obscene words and bad deeds. (Fatwa No.: 6836).

Ruling on Listening to Songs and Music:

Egypt's Dar of Iftaa held that listening to songs and music is not permissible at all. If the singing is with good words and has noble meanings and goals, and it is performed in a way that does not contradict morals and does not preoccupy a person from performing the obligations and duties assigned to him by God Almighty; then it is permissible. (Fatwa No.: 6568).

Acting Rule:

Egypt's Dar Al Iftaa held that any acting or artistic work, if it offends modesty, destroys morals, and teaches young people not to bear hardships and responsibility, then it is forbidden, and it is not permissible to listen to it or watch it. (Fatwa No.: 5504)

Chewing Food Loudly:

Egypt's Dar of Iftaa held that it is not permeating to chew food loudly, and it relied in this fatwa that this behavior is not appropriate for public morals and good taste, and that among the etiquette of eating and the virtues of taste require closing the lips while chewing, and avoiding making a sound when chewing and drinking, and avoid talking when the mouth is full of food; thereby preserving the feelings of others. A Muslim must show in his/her behavior and actions the virtues of etiquette and noble qualities that make him an uplifting image of his religion and his nation, and he/she must observe the general etiquette of taste that is approved by societal customs and norms as long as they do not contradict Islamic law, and he/she must avoid in his actions and behavior what may cause discomfort or distress to those around him/her. (Fatwa No.: 3183).

Gloating in Death and Explaining its Consequences:

Egypt's Dar Al-Iftaa held that it is not permissible for a person to gloat when calamities descend on someone, whether in death or other calamities. This act has been considered a reprehensible quality, which upright souls disapprove of. Rather, it is part of the perfection of Islamic morals not to show gloating when death descends on an opponent or whoever has enmity between them. (Fatwa No.: 6861).

Cheating in Exams:

Egypt's Dar Al Iftaa held that cheating in exams is forbidden by Sharia, and it is one of the most serious problems facing the educational process. Since it includes many moral and social corruptions, and what it contains of sin and aggression and deviating from the requirements of the virtues and honors that a Muslim must exhibit, and Islamic law has urged trustworthiness, honesty, seeking knowledge, mastery of good deeds, and giving beneficial advice to others in order to prevail justice and kindness among people. This is in accordance with the noble morals that God Almighty sent His Prophet (PBUH) to perfect. (Fatwa No.: 3964).

Standing in Mourning for the Souls of Figures who were Respected by Society:

Dar Al Iftaa permitted standing in silence for a minute, for example, to mourn

and honor the souls of figures who were respected by society. such as divine scholars and fighters for the truth, and martyrs and leaders or reformers, and this fatwa was based on morals. Islam took care of consolidating virtuous morals and noble values, spreading them in society and encouraging them by all available means. These include preaching, education, culture and permissible arts, and among the morals that Islam called for: thanking people for their good deeds, as well as from the morals of Islam: treating them with what they deserve, honoring people of virtue and sovereignty, and expressing respect towards them. (Fatwa No.: 3296)

The Phenomenon of Bullying:

Egypt's Dar Al-Iftaa considered that bullying in all its forms is reprehensible according to Sharia. It is a reprehensible action and bad virtues. The Islamic Sharia explicitly forbids it in the Noble Quran where the Almighty said: *"O believers! Do not let some 'men' ridicule others, they may be better than them, nor let 'some' women ridicule other women, they may be better than them. Do not defame one another, nor call each other by offensive nicknames. How evil it is to act rebelliously after having faith! And whoever does not repent, it is they who are the 'true' wrongdoers."* (Surat Al-Hujurat, Verse 11). The Hadith texts prohibit contempt. The Prophet (PBUH) said: *"Do not envy one another, and do not inflate prices for one another, and do not hate one another, and do not turn away from one another, and do not undercut one another in trade, but [rather] be slaves of Allah and brothers [amongst yourselves]. A Muslim is the brother of a Muslim: he does not oppress him, nor does he fail him, nor does he lie to him, nor does he hold him in contempt. Taqwa (piety) is right here [and he pointed to his chest three times]. It is evil enough for a man to hold his brother Muslim in contempt. The whole of a Muslim is inviolable for another Muslim: his blood, his property, and his honor."* (Muslim, 1991). In this hadith, the Prophet, (PBUH), stressed the prohibition of contempt, in addition to the fact that bullying may include insults and foul language, which is prohibited by Sharia. Because it was a morally reprehensible creation, and the researcher believes that Dar Al Iftaa prohibited bullying because it includes many bad morals. (Fatwa No.: 5078).

What the suitor sees from the fiancée:

Egypt's Dar Al-Iftaa held that the suitor may look at the face and hands of the one who wants to propose to her. Every suitor has the right to ask the woman to see her undressed or to ask him to do so, as this is totally inconsistent with the heavenly laws, social norms, and noble morals. (Fatwa No.: 260).

Ruling on Making a Ceremony to Prove Virginity:

Egypt's Dar Al-Iftaa held that celebrations of the wife's virginity on the wedding night; showing the piece of clothing that carries the blood of virginity, and the wife's family chanting her honor, is an act that is contrary to decent

morals, as the hymen may break due to the rush of menstrual blood or riding on something sharp or the like. Among the moral values is to think well of believing men and women and to keep their private affairs confidential. (Fatwa No.: 7258).

Congratulating non-Muslims during Holidays and Occasions:

Egypt's Dar Al Iftaa went to allow congratulating non-Muslims during holidays and occasions, and through the researcher's analysis of the fatwa. It was found that Dar Al Iftaa relied on evidence including noble morals. Islam is a religion that revolves around peace, mercy, righteousness, and connection. It commands its followers to do good to all people, and it does not forbid them to be kind to non-Muslims, to connect with them, to give them gifts, to accept gifts from them, and other forms of being kind to them. Rather, it commands all of this as long as the other does not show hostility, and the Prophet (PBUH), setting a good example in practice. He used to accept gifts from non-Muslims as proven in the hadith of the Prophet, and hence the understanding of Islamic scholars that accepting a gift from non-Muslims is desirable because it is a matter of compassion. (Fatwa No.: 3644)

Legitimacy Controls in Permissible Entertainment Electronic Games:

Dar Al-Iftaa has authorized entertainment electronic games, and it has restricted this permissibility with a set of controls, and among these controls are moral ones that the game should not be associated with prohibited suggestions that call for immorality and moral decay, because Islam calls for the virtues of morals, and forbids the bad ones. (Fatwa No.: 7082).

Donating Blood Plasma:

During the Corona virus crisis, the Egyptian Ministry of Health announced the success of treating people infected with the Corona virus by injecting them with plasma extracted from the blood of those who recovered from it, as the promising results appeared by increasing the recovery rates for patients and reducing their need for ventilators. Egypt's Dar Al-Iftaa approved this act, as it relied on the legalization of this act on noble morals, the virtues of deeds, and noble qualities, which include cooperation and giving and generosity, and synergy and brotherhood, in times of hardship and prosperity, and made support for the weak and support for those in need a great status with God Almighty. (Fatwa No.: 5220).

The Rule of Occupations Placed on the Public Road:

Egypt's Dar Al-Iftaa considered prohibiting the occupation of people's streets, their facilities, their places of transportation, and what they accompany with any kind of occupations. It deemed this as an attack on the right of way, and restrictions on the public. Dar Al-Iftaa relied in this ruling on a number of

evidence including noble morals. The Prophet (PBUH) disciplined the behavior of individuals in the aspects of their daily life, and one of the manifestations of this was that he set rules and guidelines for the etiquette of the road and the places of people's passage that transcends its owner to the meanings of humanity and the greatness of Islam, which were indicated by the honorable Sunnah of the Prophet, and the hadiths included in the collections of the Sunnah under the chapters: "The Ethos of sitting on the streets" (Fatwa No.: 4726).

The researcher can discuss the impact of ethics on Egyptian fatwas from more than one perspective: in terms of analysis of fatwa topics. Egypt's Dar Al-Iftaa invested in noble morals to infer many modern matters that did not exist in the Islamic jurisprudential heritage. These include the rule of ridicule and mockery of autistic patients, the rule of acting, the rule of cheating in school and university exams, the rule of standing in mourning for the lives of respected figures in society, the rule of bullying, the rule of making a ceremony to prove virginity, the rule of entertainment through electronic games, and the rule of donating blood plasma. Moreover, Dar Al Iftaa used morals to infer existing actions in the past and present such as: the ruling on a Muslim attending the funeral of a non-Muslim, the ruling on chewing food with an audible voice, the ruling on gloating over death and explaining its consequences, explaining what the suitor sees from the fiancée, and the ruling on occupancy placed on the public road.

In terms of the scientific addition to these fatwas, the Egyptian fatwa on disease considered morals to be the decisive criterion in permitting or prohibiting an act, as the house went to the fact that the ruling on listening to songs, music, acting and artistic works depends on morals, if singing or acting with good words has honorable meanings and goals, further to being performed in a way that does not contradict good morals, then it is permissible, and if it is not, then it is forbidden.

As for the quality of jurisprudential rulings (obligatory, desirable, permissible, disliked, forbidden), Egypt's Dar Al-Iftaa has permitted some issues based on morals. These are as follows: attending the funerals of non-Muslim relatives or friends, standing in silence for a minute, for mourning and honoring the lives of figures who are respected by society, congratulating non-Muslims on holidays and occasions, donating blood plasma, and entertainment through electronic games have been permitted, and this permissibility has been restricted by a set of controls, including ethical controls. Dar Al Iftaa relied on morals to prohibit several issues. These are as follows: ridicule and mockery of people with mental disorders and problems such as (autistic patients), chewing food audibly, gloating about death or other misfortunes, cheating in exams,

holding celebrations of the wife's virginity on the wedding night, occupying people's streets, facilities and places of movement. In addition, Dar Al Iftaa relied on morals in responding to the opinion that it is permissible to look at the entire body of the fiancée, and in its response, it relied on morals as guiding principles for issuing the fatwas.

4. CONCLUSION

The issue of the influence of morals in contemporary judgments and fatwas was not discussed, and the researcher did not find any study that had previously dealt with this subject, and this shows the shortcomings in contemporary jurisprudential research in the aspect of the practical impact of morals in fatwas. The researcher believes here that it is important to work on new studies to extrapolate the effect of morals in the fatwas issued by the houses of fatwas and Islamic centers in the world, as well as the inductive study of the impact of a specific character such as modesty or justice, for example, in fatwas and jurisprudential rulings.

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