

What is Islamic Bioethics?

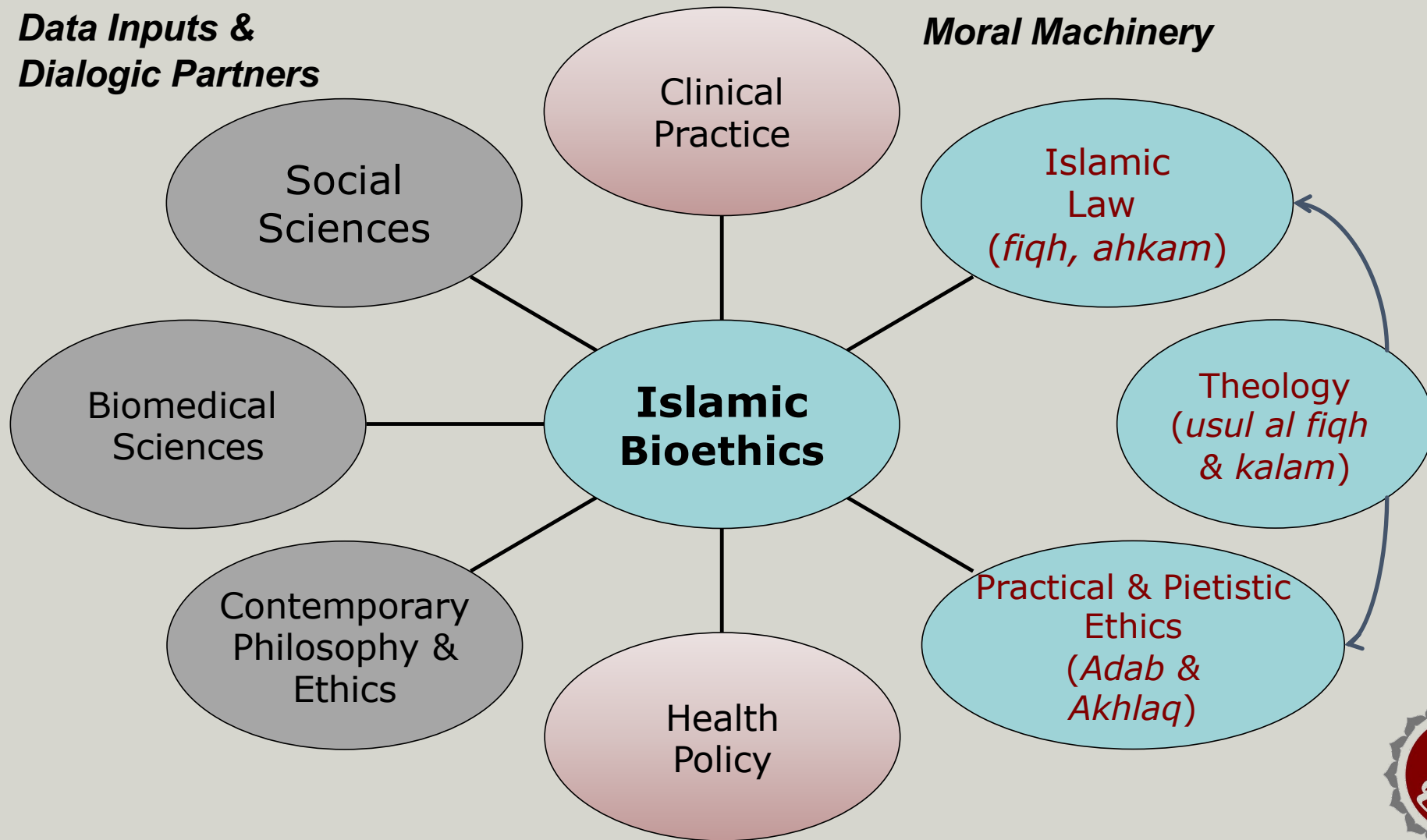
- Defⁿ: a discourse that uses the Islamic tradition to address moral questions and ethical issues arising out of the biomedical sciences and allied health practice.



Other Scholars

**Data Inputs &
Dialogic Partners**

Moral Machinery



- Quran & Sunnah
- Islamicate
- Muslim
- Not contrary to Q&S

- Health
- Medical
- Societal
- Political

- Law
- Virtues & Morals
- Professional Standards

“Islam-ic” “Bio” “ethics”

Islamic Spin on Contemporary Bioethics?

Islamic Ethics applied to Biomedicine?



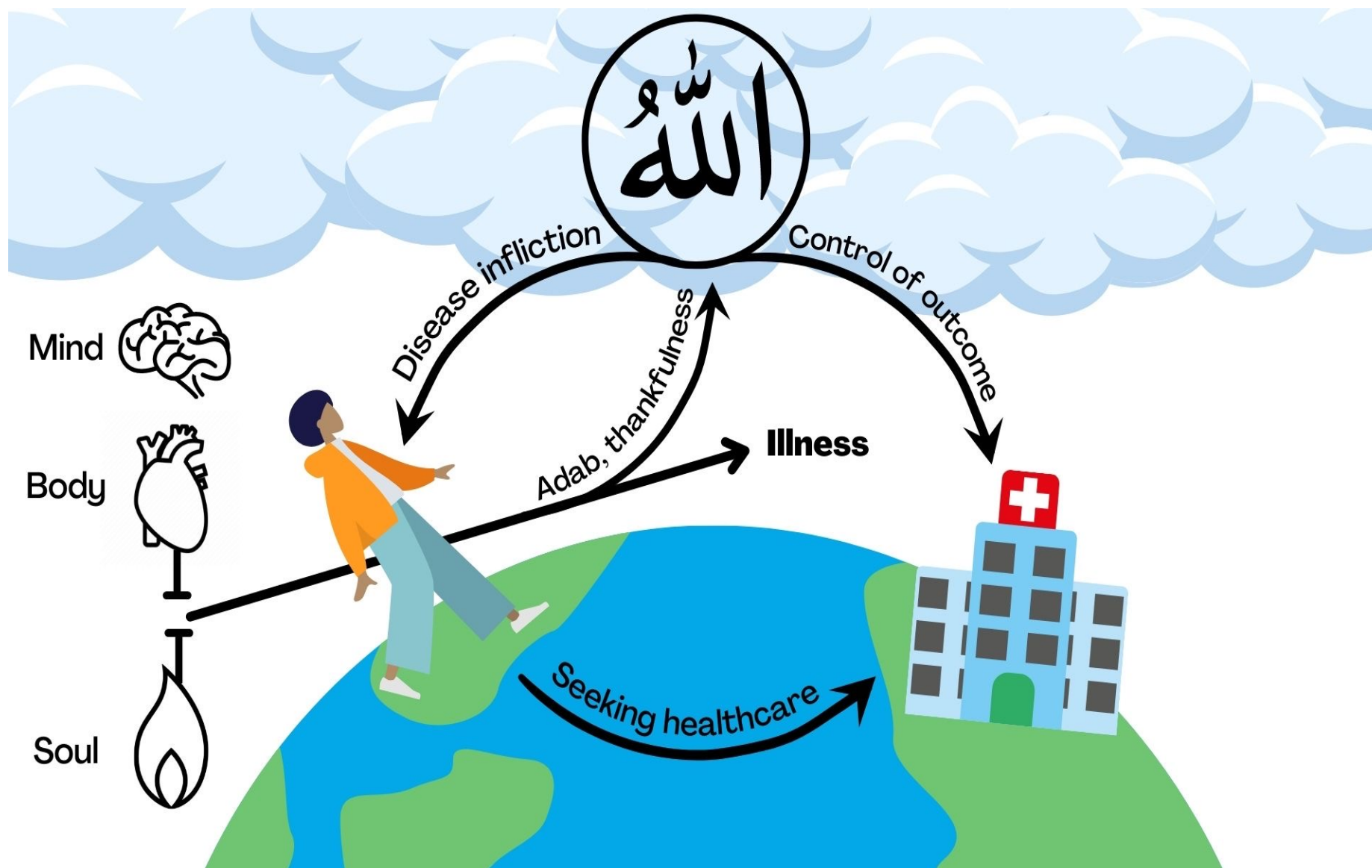
ISLAMIC BIOETHICS

- Tied to scriptural sources & bearers of tradition
 - *Theology/Philosophy* - Theological (*Usuli/Kalami/Maqasidi*) Concepts = Production/End-goal
 - *Legal Ethics* - *Fihi* Literature = Moral Status of Action
 - *Practical (Virtue) Ethics* - *Adabi* Literature = Agent-focused
- Multidisciplinary Deliberation
 - Empirical + Sociological + Normative
- Multi-tier Analysis
 - Theoretical → Practical → Applied
- Not Muslim Bioethics
 - The sociological study of how Muslims respond to ethical challenges



End-goals for an Islamic Bioethics Practice

- What can I do → What should I do?
 - Islam permissibility (legal minimum) → *`ihsān* (perfected optimum)
- Connect the production of “good” to being “good”
 - The action, agent and intention must be in sync
 - God-centric *adab*



Theological Deliberation

قَالَ قَالَتِ الْأَعْرَابُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَلَا نَتَدَاوَى قَالَ " نَعَمْ يَا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ تَدَاوَوْا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَمْ يَضَعْ دَاءً إِلَّا وَضَعَ لَهُ شِفَاءً أَوْ قَالَ دَوَاءً إِلَّا دَاءً وَاحِدًا " . قَالُوا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَمَا هُوَ قَالَ " الْهَرَمُ " .

Jami` at-Tirmidhi 2038

فَخَرَجَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالَ " هُمُ الَّذِينَ لَا يَكْتُمُونَ وَلَا يَسْتَرْفُونَ وَلَا يَنْطَيَّرُونَ وَعَلَى رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ " .

Jami` at-Tirmidhi 2446

- Reconcile the Prophetic “directive” to seek care and a reward for abstaining
- Acknowledge zones of certainty
 - God brings about cure
 - Medicine is probabilistic

Moral Status of Seeking Care

Within the Four Sunni Schools of Thought

	HANAFI	MALIKI	SHAF'I	HANBALI
GENERAL RULING	Permissible	Permissible	Recommended	Permissible
EVER OBLIGATED	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
VIOLATE TRUST (TAWAKKUL)	No	No	No*	No
OTHER DETAILS	Obligation if the effectiveness of treatment (to remove illness-related harms or cure) is highly probable or certain			

*Seeking treatment is an act of trust. God created the sickness and its cure.

More Information on the Moral Status of Seeking Care

The **moral status** elevation from a **permitted** or **recommended** act to a moral obligation appears to hinge on the **certainty** regarding a fatal outcome without treatment and/or certainty about the clinical efficacy of treatment in removing harm associated with the illness. Seeking a specific treatment is **only obligatory** when it is **life saving** and not merely life-sustaining. While treatments might save a life, there may be no clinical certainty that they will. As a result, it is **generally permissible** to **forgo life-sustaining** treatments such as ventilators. Such **decisions should be made in consultation** with the **medical team, family members, and religious authorities**.



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INITIATIVE ON ISLAM AND MEDICINE

WHEN MUST A PATIENT SEEK HEALTHCARE?
BRINGING THE PERSPECTIVES OF ISLAMIC JURISTS
AND CLINICIANS INTO DIALOGUE

by Omar Qureshi and Aasim I. Padela

The moral status of healthcare seeking

A restricted zone of moral obligation:

- Provides variability within Islamically permissible courses of action
- Leaves room for personal values to influence choices

Perception “religious individuals tend to seek greater amounts of clinical intervention” but:

- For Muslims the “obligation” is narrowly circumscribed

