

Correspondence

Ethical guidelines in genetics and genomics. An Islamic perspective

To the Editor

I have read with interest the published article in Saudi Medical Journal by Al-Aqeel.¹ The review article covers various aspects of genetics and genomics including genetic counseling. The list of references surprisingly omitted a list of relevant references including some which were published in Saudi Medical Journal, as follows: 1) El-Hazmi, MAF, Medical ethics in relation. to protection of the individual, the family and progeny in Islam. The 9th Symposium on "Genetics in health and disease-Implications for the individual, family and community" 25-27 Sept. 2004: Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. 2) El-Hazmi, MAF "Cloning" and Scientists Commitment to Bioethics. Conference on "The Cloning Dilemma", 4-5 April, 1998, Dubai, United Arab Emirates. 3) El-Hazmi, MAF. (2002) Ethics of Medical Practice and Genetic counseling in Islamic Communities, Saudi Medical J 2002; 23: 233-247. 4) El-Hazmi, MAF., Ethics of Medical Practice and Genetic counseling in Islamic Communities (Arabic). Health and Life Journal Feb. 2003. Special Issue 10-16. 5) El-Hazmi, MAF, Ethics of Genetic Counseling-basic concepts and relevance to Islamic communities. Ann Saudi Med 2004; 24: 84-92. Review. 6) El-Hazmi, MAF, (ed) (2003), Ethics of Genetic Counseling in Islamic Communities (Book in Arabic). Al Obeikan Press, Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Though the author has benefited from these references directly or indirectly, they did not appear in the references. However, I am sure that the readers of the Saudi Medical Journal will be interested in the above mentioned references, particularly those related to genetic counseling in Islamic communities, as these references are more related than those appearing in the article namely, 17, 18, 19. It is for this reason, I thought this letter will be of value to the readers of the subject.

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Reply from the Author

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to Dr El-Hazmi's comments regarding the above mentioned published article. I am afraid I did not encounter any of the references Dr El-Hazmi refers to in his letter when I prepared my manuscript, as it is very clear that the ones he refers to in his letter, are abstracts of meeting presentations (Items 1, 2) and Item 6, a book written in Arabic. The other quoted references (4, 5) are not listed in PubMed or Medline. Item 3 is the only item published in the Saudi Medical Journal, which I did not find. Therefore, it would not have been possible for me to have benefited from these references as Dr El-Hazmi implies. I would ask if Dr El-Hazmi could be more specific regarding how I was able to benefit from his references, directly or indirectly, as their content could have been mentioned in any of my quoted references from other sources, without any direct or indirect reference to him. Since I am the author of my manuscript, I found the references (17, 18, 19), which were published in Nature Genetics, Lancet, & East Med Health Journal are of great relevance to my article, which does not include only genetic counseling, but all aspects of genetics and genomics, (diagnostic, management and preventative) issues and the Islamic views of it, including the Fatwa of the Islamic World league. If Saudi Medical Journal feels that Dr El-Hazmi's references would benefit its readers as further reading material, associated with my manuscript, I would have no objection to this. As you know PubMed and Medline are the usual search engines that are used for finding references, and as far as I am aware Saudi Medical Journal was not included in PubMed until 2001.

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References

1. Al-Aqeel AI. Ethical guidelines in genetics and genomics. An Islamic perspective. *Saudi Med J* 2005; 26: 1862-1870.