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Key Lectures

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Sharing beliefs-triangle of sexuality, religion, and infertility: Argumentative review

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The influences of culture are present in different areas of sexual and reproductive behaviours as well as help-seeking behaviours in the case of infertility. The conflict between religious teachings, sexuality, and infertility related interventions is of increasing importance in traditional societies today. In other words, the clash between religious tradition, sexuality, and infertility can be a controversial scientific issue in clinical settings. This article explores these issues and draws insights from Iranian's religiosity, where this challenging

triangle is considerable in the context of competing sexuality and infertility related help-seeking behaviours. It raises far-reaching issues concerning the distinction between belief and practice, as well as the role of religious teaching in the sexual and reproductive sphere.

In this article, we have attempted to find a way forward which not only recognizes cultural limitations in terms of the religiosity and sexuality dichotomy but also its strengths in terms of the need for acknowledgement and civility in the assisted reproduction technology (ART) sphere. The authors also advocate that Muslim countries with advanced ART should adopt a fact-specific approach that is sensitive to the sexuality issues in the contexts with specific religious interpretation (Tafsir), and which focuses upon the values of religiosity, tolerance and mutual respect to one's sexuality.

In sum, we argue that ART policies in Iran may lend themselves to a model of accommodation and compromise which avoids stubbornness and instead seeks out common ground in "religious teachings, sexuality educations, and infertility management. Although the task may be challenging, the consequences of failure, to our mind, justify the effort.