

# The Role of Intention in Moral Action from the Standpoint of Islamic Hadiths

Fateme Elmi Rad\*

---

## Abstract

Despite intention's unique role in the validity of worship acts, a sufficient and comprehensive body of research has not been carried out on the place of intention in the ethical worth of actions. It is a crucial question to ask whether the standard by which Islam or Islamic hadiths considers an action moral is the features of action, intention, or both. To find an answer, further rigorous comprehensive research is needed. It is also important to see why and to what degree intention or other features of action can make an action moral. Employing a descriptive analytical library research method, the present study seeks first to explain the nature and concept of intention and then to explore its moral impact on action according to the hadiths' texts. The agent's intentions precede his cognition in one respect and result from his dispositions in another. Hadiths hold that an action is moral only if it is good in itself and the agent performs it out of goodwill. The Glorious Quran holds that to acquire divine pleasure is the best motivation to act. Some hadiths insist that intention is superior to action and comes in degrees. Furthermore, some hadiths suggest that intention is the most fundamental factor.

## Keywords

Intention, role of intention in action, moral action, action's goodness, agent's goodness.

---

\* Researcher, Department of Theology, Al-Mustafa International University, (Sisters Unit) Mashhad, Iran | [elmirad.f@gmail.com](mailto:elmirad.f@gmail.com)  
should express my gratitude to Astan Quds Razavi Scientific and Cultural Organization for its support of this research.

