

Analysis of Auditory Narcotics and Their Criminal Adaptation in Imamiyyah Jurisprudence

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the phenomenon of auditory narcotics, evaluate their legal status under Iranian criminal law, and examine their compatibility with the principles of Imamiyyah jurisprudence, while also exploring criminological causes and prevention strategies. The research employs a qualitative and analytical approach, relying on doctrinal interpretation of statutory provisions, jurisprudential reasoning based on classical and contemporary fiqh principles, and criminological perspectives on behavioral dependency. Comparative analysis was used to identify convergences and divergences between criminal law and Imamiyyah jurisprudence. The study demonstrates that auditory narcotics, as immaterial digital phenomena, differ fundamentally from traditional narcotics due to their lack of physical substance, ease of access, and dependence on auditory stimulation to influence brainwave activity. Iranian criminal law, grounded in the principle of legality, lacks explicit recognition of auditory narcotics, creating challenges for enforcement and prosecution. Imamiyyah jurisprudence, through principles such as “no harm,” prohibition of extravagance, and prohibition of means to the unlawful, provides normative grounds for prohibition but lacks explicit textual precedent. Criminological analysis reveals that curiosity, thrill-seeking, and psychological vulnerability at the individual level, combined with weak family supervision and the influence of media and virtual spaces, drive inclination toward auditory narcotics. The absence of stigma, cross-border digital dissemination, and weak preventive strategies further complicate control. The comparative evaluation shows that while criminal law emphasizes statutory clarity and empirical evidence, fiqh emphasizes precaution and moral reasoning. Harmonization is feasible through an integrated model that combines preventive education, statutory recognition of digital intoxicants, and coordinated enforcement between legal and religious institutions. Auditory narcotics highlight the need for adaptive, interdisciplinary responses that integrate law, fiqh, and criminology to safeguard intellect, ensure legal certainty, and protect social order in the face of technological novelty.

Keywords: Auditory narcotics; Imamiyyah jurisprudence; criminal law; digital drugs; criminology; prevention strategies; legal adaptation; fiqh principles.

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1. Introduction

The history of narcotics reflects a continual evolution in both form and societal perception, beginning with the use of natural psychoactive substances and extending to highly engineered chemical derivatives. Traditional narcotics such as opium, cannabis, and alcohol were rooted in natural resources and their regulation was often tied to cultural and religious practices. With the rise of industrial chemistry in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, new synthetic drugs were created, leading to profound legal, medical, and social challenges. In recent years, technological progress and the pervasive spread of digital environments have introduced a novel and unconventional phenomenon: so-called “auditory narcotics,” also referred to as “digital drugs.” Unlike substances that enter the body physically, these are sound-based stimuli that act on brainwave patterns, using binaural beats and rhythmic auditory signals to create altered states of consciousness (Zhang & Zhou, 2016).

The emergence of auditory narcotics is closely linked to the increasing accessibility of digital technologies, personal audio devices, and the psychology of music therapy. Scholars of technological catch-up argue that new industries often emerge from disruptive innovations that exploit windows of opportunity not available to traditional sectors (Li et al., 2025). In this case, the immateriality of auditory narcotics means they are not constrained by the same logistical and physical limits as chemical substances. Their rapid spread across virtual platforms illustrates how technologies can leapfrog existing regulatory structures, reflecting what researchers describe as the dynamics of latecomer innovation in contexts where institutions are not prepared (Wei et al., 2020).

The distinction between auditory narcotics and traditional or industrial drugs lies in their form, method of consumption, and legal implications. Whereas physical narcotics are tangible materials requiring cultivation, synthesis, or distribution, auditory narcotics are intangible sound files disseminated through digital channels. This shift transforms the concept of “drug” from a physical commodity into a virtual experience, challenging the applicability of existing legal frameworks (Sharifeh & Bonyadi Naeini, 2016). The consequences of this immateriality are profound. Traditional laws were drafted to regulate substances that can be seized, weighed, and chemically tested, but auditory narcotics evade such evidentiary methods. Legal scholars emphasize that this immaterial nature complicates criminalization because the principle of legality demands precise definitions of the prohibited object (Habiba & Kalantari, 2017). The case of auditory narcotics illustrates how law lags behind technology, echoing broader findings in the literature on catch-up cycles where latecomer challenges often expose institutional gaps (Lee & Malerba, 2014).

In Imamiyyah jurisprudence, the significance of narcotics has historically been assessed through their effects on reason, morality, and social order. Classical jurisprudential discussions focused on intoxicants, primarily wine, but later scholars extended prohibitions to other substances causing loss of consciousness or rational impairment. The essential principle has been the preservation of intellect (‘aql) and protection of society from harm, known as the principle of la darar (no harm). However, auditory narcotics complicate these classical categories, as they do not involve ingestion of a material substance yet may still alter consciousness and behavior (Nouri Zadeh & Maleki, 2021). This raises questions about whether they should be analogized to intoxicants or considered a novel category requiring fresh *ijtihad*. Modern scholars of Islamic law note that such technological phenomena demand reinterpretation of *fiqh* principles, similar to how earlier jurists debated tobacco, coffee, and opium when they first appeared (Saqafi et al., 2020).

The importance of studying auditory narcotics in the context of criminal law lies in the broader obligation of states to protect public health and maintain social order. Legal scholars highlight that regulatory systems must address both the material and symbolic dimensions of narcotics, since the perception of risk influences social acceptance and state legitimacy (Ponomarev & Gareev, 2025). Criminal law is tasked with drawing boundaries around permissible and impermissible behaviors, but auditory narcotics present new uncertainties. They cannot be classified easily under existing statutory definitions of narcotics, nor do they fit comfortably within the categories of intoxicants in *fiqh*. This creates a gray zone where the law risks either overextending by criminalizing without clear textual basis, or under-regulating and leaving potential harms unchecked (Su et al., 2025).

In Imamiyyah jurisprudence, the issue is equally significant because *fiqh* traditionally emphasizes the safeguarding of intellect as one of the higher objectives of *shari’a*. Scholars in the field of technology policy note that when societies confront

novel threats, institutional adaptation requires both conceptual redefinition and policy innovation (Liu et al., 2025). For auditory narcotics, this adaptation involves not only understanding the scientific nature of the phenomenon but also reinterpreting legal and fiqh categories to address immaterial harms. Such challenges are well documented in comparative studies of technological transitions, where governance systems struggle to accommodate radical novelties (Matsuo et al., 2024).

Despite the rising global attention, research on auditory narcotics remains sparse, particularly in the Iranian and Islamic jurisprudential contexts. Much of the current literature on technological catch-up deals with tangible industries such as petrochemicals, steel, and energy systems (Jafari Tuyeh & Norouzi, 2024; Soltanzadeh et al., 2024). By contrast, the immaterial domain of digital drugs has not been systematically explored. Scholars investigating technology and law have emphasized that when innovations do not fit into pre-existing taxonomies, regulatory uncertainty can persist for years (Yao et al., 2024). This uncertainty is compounded in Islamic legal contexts, where analogy to past categories is not straightforward due to the non-material character of auditory narcotics. Thus, the research gap is both legal and jurisprudential: no clear framework currently exists for conceptualizing, regulating, or prohibiting auditory narcotics under either Iranian criminal law or Imamiyyah fiqh (Rahmani et al., 2020).

The justification for addressing this gap stems from the societal and legal stakes involved. Auditory narcotics are increasingly marketed online to youth populations, raising concerns about psychological dependency and social disruption (Lima & Lee, 2023). Yet, without legal recognition, law enforcement agencies lack a firm basis for intervention. Similarly, without fiqh elaboration, religious guidance remains vague, leaving individuals without clear moral direction. Studies in technological governance emphasize that such gaps erode both policy effectiveness and public trust (Fakhimi & Saqafi, 2022). In contexts where religious jurisprudence and state law interact closely, unresolved ambiguity on matters of public morality can generate broader legitimacy crises (Wang et al., 2024).

This study therefore seeks to fill the gap by systematically analyzing the nature of auditory narcotics, their legal implications, and their compatibility with the principles of Imamiyyah jurisprudence. The main research questions are: how should auditory narcotics be classified in criminal law; to what extent can existing fiqh principles apply; and what regulatory approach can reconcile technological novelty with established doctrinal boundaries? By exploring these questions, the study aims to contribute both to the academic understanding of technological catch-up in the domain of narcotics and to practical policymaking. The objective is to offer an integrated framework that respects the principles of legality in criminal law, aligns with the normative commitments of Imamiyyah fiqh, and responds effectively to the emerging social realities posed by auditory narcotics.

2. Theoretical Foundations and Nature of Auditory Narcotics

The historical relationship between music and human psychology reveals that sound has always been recognized as a powerful influence on emotion and cognition. Ancient civilizations used rhythm and melody in rituals to induce trance-like states or to provide therapeutic relief, showing an early awareness of how auditory stimuli could alter consciousness. Modern neuropsychological research has demonstrated that auditory stimulation affects brain activity by engaging neural circuits responsible for mood, memory, and perception. This reflects a broader understanding of how intangible technologies can generate tangible effects on human behavior, a pattern consistent with studies of technological innovations that transcend material boundaries (Wei et al., 2018). Within this context, music is not only entertainment but also a stimulus capable of producing physiological and psychological changes, which becomes the foundation for understanding the emergence of auditory narcotics.

The rise of digital technologies has amplified the potential of sound-based experiences to act as substitutes for chemical substances. The concept of “digital drugs” emerged in the early twenty-first century as binaural beats and similar auditory tools became widely available on online platforms. These sound files are designed to alter brainwave frequencies, creating sensations similar to those induced by psychoactive drugs. The rapid diffusion of these auditory products exemplifies what scholars describe as catch-up opportunities in emerging industries, where disruptive ideas spread globally before regulatory institutions

adapt (Su et al., 2025). Unlike traditional narcotics, which require physical distribution networks, auditory narcotics are disseminated almost instantly across digital ecosystems. Their growth parallels broader transitions in technological development where immaterial innovations, such as software and digital platforms, create entirely new domains of risk and regulation (Ponomarev & Gareev, 2025).

Scientific accounts of binaural beats explain that when two slightly different frequencies are played into each ear, the brain perceives a third frequency, known as a beat frequency, which can entrain brainwaves into specific states. For example, frequencies in the alpha range are linked with relaxation, theta waves with meditation and creativity, and delta waves with deep sleep. By manipulating these frequencies, auditory narcotics aim to mimic the effects of sedatives, stimulants, or hallucinogens without introducing a chemical substance into the body (Zhang & Zhou, 2016). The simplicity of access, combined with the promise of altered consciousness, has encouraged experimentation among young users. The spread of these practices aligns with broader findings in technology adoption, where the immaterial nature of digital tools accelerates their acceptance across cultural and geographic boundaries (Liu et al., 2025).

The inherent features of auditory narcotics differentiate them sharply from traditional and industrial drugs. Their immateriality means they cannot be seized or destroyed in the same way physical substances can be. They exist as files, streams, or even applications, making them as easy to reproduce as any other digital content (Lee & Malerba, 2014). Ease of use further enhances their spread, since no specialized equipment is required beyond headphones and a playback device. Accessibility is virtually unlimited due to the global reach of digital networks, a feature that mirrors patterns in technological globalization where immaterial goods can bypass national restrictions (Matsuo et al., 2024). Together, these features reveal why auditory narcotics represent not only a scientific curiosity but also a regulatory challenge.

Consumption of auditory narcotics is typically achieved by listening to soundtracks of specific frequencies, often marketed online with labels corresponding to conventional drugs such as “digital marijuana” or “digital cocaine.” These tracks claim to simulate the sensations of relaxation, euphoria, or heightened awareness. Research indicates that the auditory stimulation interacts with brainwave patterns, particularly within the cortical regions associated with sensory integration and emotional regulation (Rahmani et al., 2020). The effects are not uniform, however, and vary depending on the individual’s psychological state, listening environment, and susceptibility to suggestion. This variability complicates assessments of risk and harm, just as in other emerging technologies where effects are context-dependent (Nouri Zadeh & Maleki, 2021).

The comparison between auditory narcotics and traditional narcotics reveals both similarities and significant differences. Both categories aim to alter consciousness, reduce stress, or produce pleasure, yet one operates through chemical interaction with the central nervous system and the other through neuroelectrical entrainment. Traditional narcotics often create measurable physiological dependencies, while auditory narcotics remain controversial in terms of their addictive potential. Nonetheless, parallels can be drawn with other non-chemical addictions such as gaming or internet use, which rely on psychological reinforcement mechanisms rather than biochemical dependency (Sharifeh & Bonyadi Naeini, 2016). The immateriality of auditory narcotics also challenges the concept of possession and trafficking, central elements in criminal law, because what is being consumed is a digital experience rather than a tangible object (Habiba & Kalantari, 2017).

The neuropsychological consequences of auditory narcotics are subject to ongoing debate. Advocates of binaural beats highlight their potential therapeutic applications, such as reducing anxiety, enhancing concentration, or supporting sleep. These claims align with broader research into music therapy, which shows that controlled auditory stimuli can have beneficial effects on patients with stress-related disorders (Wang et al., 2024). In some contexts, auditory stimulation has even been integrated into clinical practice, particularly in wellness programs targeting relaxation and mindfulness. However, the therapeutic narrative coexists with concerns about abuse and dependency. Critics argue that overreliance on auditory narcotics can foster avoidance behaviors, where individuals use digital experiences to escape from social or psychological challenges rather than confronting them (Saqafi et al., 2020).

The possibility of addictive potential remains controversial. Some studies suggest that users may develop psychological dependency, repeatedly seeking the altered states offered by auditory narcotics as a coping mechanism. This mirrors findings in the field of behavioral addictions, where immaterial rewards such as digital games or social media likes create reinforcement loops that resemble substance-based dependencies (Lee et al., 2021). On the other hand, other researchers argue that the

intensity of effects is not sufficient to classify auditory narcotics as inherently addictive, emphasizing that much of their perceived power derives from expectation and suggestion rather than measurable neurochemical change (Wei et al., 2020). The divergence in scholarly opinion highlights the broader challenge of regulating innovations when scientific consensus has not yet been established (Fakhimi & Saqafi, 2022).

Critical reviews of the literature reveal both supporting and opposing views regarding the harmfulness of auditory narcotics. Some scholars argue that their influence is exaggerated, noting that empirical evidence for strong hallucinogenic effects remains weak (Yao et al., 2024). They point out that much of the discourse surrounding digital drugs is fueled by media sensationalism rather than scientific validation. Others maintain that even if the effects are partly psychosomatic, the risks should not be dismissed, particularly because of the vulnerable populations drawn to these experiences, such as adolescents seeking novel thrills (Maleki Karam Abad et al., 2019). The debate mirrors larger controversies in technological transitions, where public perception and institutional responses often precede scientific consensus (Lima & Lee, 2023).

The theoretical foundation for understanding auditory narcotics thus lies at the intersection of neuroscience, digital technology, and sociolegal analysis. Their existence challenges conventional categories of narcotics, requiring rethinking of what constitutes intoxication, dependency, and harm. In legal and jurisprudential contexts, the difficulty arises from their intangibility, which renders them resistant to traditional methods of regulation. Yet, their rapid spread demonstrates that immaterial technologies can have material consequences, both at the individual level through psychological effects and at the societal level through legal ambiguity (Ghosh et al., 2025). The combination of therapeutic potential and risk of misuse situates auditory narcotics in a contested space, demanding scholarly and regulatory attention.

Understanding auditory narcotics requires more than scientific measurement of brainwave activity. It also involves situating them within the global trajectory of technological catch-up and institutional adaptation. Emerging economies often face the dual challenge of integrating new technologies while safeguarding against their risks, a tension well documented in the literature on innovation systems (Li et al., 2022). In the case of auditory narcotics, this tension is heightened by their immaterial nature, which transcends borders and defies conventional enforcement. The phenomenon illustrates the broader need for interdisciplinary frameworks that can accommodate both the promises and perils of technological novelty (Soltanzadeh et al., 2024).

3. Jurisprudential Analysis in Imamiyyah Fiqh

The jurisprudential approach of Imamiyyah fiqh toward novel phenomena such as auditory narcotics begins with foundational legal principles that have guided Islamic rulings for centuries. One of the most significant is the rule of “no harm” (la darar), which asserts that harm should neither be inflicted nor reciprocated in the realm of human interaction. This principle has been repeatedly invoked in cases where new practices threaten public health or individual well-being. Scholars in the field of technological catch-up have highlighted how institutional responses to innovation often rely on broad normative frameworks to compensate for the absence of specific precedents (Liu et al., 2025). In the case of auditory narcotics, the la darar principle provides a clear normative ground for prohibition if the phenomenon is shown to cause psychological or social harm, even though no explicit textual reference to digital sound stimulation exists.

Another important principle is the prohibition of extravagance (israf), which is not limited to financial waste but extends to behaviors that squander human faculties or resources. Excessive reliance on artificial means to alter consciousness can be interpreted as a form of extravagance because it undermines the natural use of intellect and emotion. The role of extravagance in jurisprudence parallels broader concerns in technological development where excessive dependence on untested innovations is seen as socially wasteful (Matsuo et al., 2024). If auditory narcotics divert youth from productive activities and cultivate dependency, fiqh can regard them as instances of israf that merit prohibition.

The principle of assisting in sin (‘awn ‘ala al-ithm) is also directly relevant, as it prohibits not only engaging in sinful activities but also facilitating them. Providers and distributors of auditory narcotics, whether by designing applications or disseminating files online, could be implicated under this principle if the act of sharing contributes to the moral corruption of others. This resonates with contemporary legal debates about complicity and indirect participation in harmful technological

practices (Saqafi et al., 2020). The immateriality of auditory narcotics does not exempt those who propagate them from responsibility, since fiqh traditionally considers facilitation of vice as culpable as direct participation.

The rule of “no domination” (nafy al-sabil) emphasizes the protection of Muslim communities from forms of subjugation, including economic or cultural domination. While originally applied in contexts of political sovereignty, scholars have extended it to modern challenges such as technological dependency. The reliance on imported digital platforms to access auditory narcotics could be seen as a subtle form of cultural domination, where foreign industries introduce addictive practices that undermine local moral frameworks. Research on global value chains similarly underscores how emerging economies risk subordination when they consume innovations without developing governance capacities (Lima & Lee, 2023). Within this logic, prohibiting auditory narcotics could be justified as a measure to prevent external domination over the community’s moral and psychological stability.

The final principle to consider is the prohibition of means to the unlawful (sadd al-dhara’i), which argues that actions leading predictably to haram outcomes should themselves be restricted. Although this principle is more commonly emphasized in Sunni jurisprudence, Imamiyyah fiqh applies similar reasoning under the concept of muqaddima al-haram. If auditory narcotics are likely to induce harmful dependencies, diminish rational faculties, or encourage escapism, then access to them could be prohibited even if the harm is not immediate. Scholars of law and technology have drawn parallels between this preventative logic and the precautionary principle in regulatory regimes (Ghosh et al., 2025). By this reasoning, fiqh can act proactively in the face of uncertain risks, limiting exposure before full scientific consensus is achieved.

Fiqh perspectives on auditory narcotics vary because of the novelty of the issue. One line of reasoning suggests that they can be analogized to intoxicants, since the essential attribute of intoxicants is their capacity to impair rational judgment. Studies in comparative jurisprudence note that intoxicants in Islamic law were not limited to wine but extended to any substance that clouded reason (Nouri Zadeh & Maleki, 2021). By this analogy, auditory narcotics that create altered states of consciousness may fall under the same prohibition. This approach treats the form of intoxication as secondary to its effect, consistent with the jurisprudential objective of protecting intellect.

However, not all scholars agree that analogy is straightforward. Some argue that auditory narcotics lack the physiological impact of traditional intoxicants and therefore should not be classified within the same legal category. This perspective draws on the principle of legality, which requires clear textual or rational grounds for criminalization (Habiba & Kalantari, 2017). Contemporary fiqh debates echo broader discussions in technology policy where experts disagree on whether novel digital risks should be subsumed under old regulatory categories or treated as unprecedented challenges (Wei et al., 2020). The divergent positions among scholars illustrate the interpretive flexibility of fiqh but also highlight the need for collective ijtihad to establish consensus.

When considering jurisprudential reasoning in cases of harm or social corruption, the focus often shifts to the potential societal consequences of widespread use. Even if auditory narcotics do not produce physical dependency, their potential to distract youth, reduce productivity, and encourage escapist behavior could justify prohibition under the principle of maslaha (public interest). Researchers of technological governance emphasize that societies often regulate new practices not only for measurable harms but also for their perceived disruption of social norms (Lee & Malerba, 2014). Fiqh reasoning, which historically prohibited coffee or tobacco in certain contexts, demonstrates that moral and social corruption can be grounds for restriction even when physical harm is uncertain.

The absence of explicit textual reference to auditory narcotics in classical fiqh sources poses a comparative challenge. Traditional discussions centered on tangible substances like wine and opium, leaving no direct guidance on immaterial digital phenomena. This gap mirrors the broader challenge of legal systems confronting technologies that transcend historical categories (Li et al., 2022). Jurists must rely on analogy (qiyas) or rationale extraction (tanqih al-manat) to extend principles to new cases. While qiyas involves drawing parallels based on shared effective causes, tanqih al-manat refines the underlying rationale from earlier rulings to apply it in new contexts. Both methods are legitimate in Imamiyyah jurisprudence, though their application requires careful reasoning to avoid arbitrary extensions.

Disagreements among scholars stem not only from interpretive methods but also from differing assessments of empirical evidence. Some jurists consider auditory narcotics too weak in effect to merit prohibition, likening them more to forms of entertainment than intoxicants. Others highlight cases of psychological dependency and argue that even immaterial practices

can erode rational capacity and social responsibility (Maleki Karam Abad et al., 2019). This divergence resembles debates in technology adoption where stakeholders disagree on whether risks are substantive or exaggerated by media narratives (Yao et al., 2024). In fiqh, however, the stakes are higher because rulings must provide clear moral guidance to the community.

The potential use of qiyas and tanqih al-manat offers a pathway for reconciling these disagreements. By focusing on the rationale of preserving intellect and preventing harm, jurists can argue that the prohibition of intoxicants applies broadly to any practice with comparable effects, regardless of material form. This approach is consistent with recent jurisprudential efforts to address complex technological challenges, such as biotechnology and digital privacy, where underlying rationales were extended to new domains (Fakhimi & Saqafi, 2022). Nevertheless, the immaterial nature of auditory narcotics complicates the identification of effective causes, since their impact is mediated by subjective perception rather than chemical alteration of the body.

The comparative challenges underscore the need for fiqh to engage systematically with technological modernity. Scholars of catch-up dynamics have observed that when new technologies emerge, institutional frameworks must evolve through both conceptual and procedural innovation (Soltanzadeh et al., 2024). Imamiyyah jurisprudence faces a similar imperative in addressing auditory narcotics: it must refine its principles, resolve disagreements, and offer coherent guidance. The integration of scientific insights into jurisprudential reasoning may assist in clarifying whether auditory narcotics genuinely impair intellect or whether their risks lie more in social and moral corruption. Either way, the legitimacy of fiqh requires that such questions be addressed directly rather than ignored.

In summary, the jurisprudential analysis of auditory narcotics in Imamiyyah fiqh reveals both the resources available within traditional principles and the challenges posed by technological novelty. The rules of no harm, prohibition of extravagance, assisting in sin, no domination, and prohibition of means to the unlawful provide strong normative grounds for prohibition if evidence of harm or corruption is established. Jurists remain divided over whether analogy with intoxicants is sufficient or whether new categories must be articulated. The lack of explicit textual references and the immaterial nature of auditory narcotics complicate consensus, but tools such as qiyas and tanqih al-manat offer possible solutions. Ultimately, the debate illustrates the adaptive capacity of Imamiyyah fiqh to address innovations, provided that scholars are willing to engage with empirical evidence and reinterpret traditional principles for contemporary realities.

4. Criminological Analysis of Auditory Narcotics

Understanding auditory narcotics requires not only legal and jurisprudential analysis but also criminological insight into why individuals are attracted to them, what challenges arise in addressing their spread, and what strategies might mitigate their impact. Criminology highlights the interplay of individual, familial, and social factors that make certain populations more vulnerable to new forms of dependency. It also examines how institutional responses succeed or fail in addressing emergent risks. In the case of auditory narcotics, the novelty of the phenomenon means that criminological reflection is particularly important, since social norms and legal frameworks are still under development.

At the individual level, curiosity plays a central role in explaining initial engagement with auditory narcotics. Adolescents and young adults, who are often at a developmental stage marked by experimentation, may be particularly prone to exploring unconventional experiences. Curiosity has long been associated with the early phases of substance use, and in digital contexts it functions as a powerful motivator. Studies of technological adoption have emphasized that when novel tools promise unique sensations, they are particularly attractive to individuals seeking novelty and distinction (Li et al., 2025). Thrill-seeking is another factor, as individuals who pursue intense experiences may regard auditory narcotics as a safer or more accessible alternative to chemical drugs. Criminological theories of risk behavior suggest that thrill-seeking is amplified in environments where conventional drug use is stigmatized or heavily penalized, making immaterial alternatives appealing (Sharifeh & Bonyadi Naeini, 2016). Psychological vulnerabilities such as anxiety, depression, or social withdrawal may further heighten susceptibility, as individuals use auditory narcotics as a coping mechanism. Research on behavioral dependencies shows that immaterial addictions often take root in populations with unmet psychological needs, offering temporary relief while deepening long-term dependency (Wei et al., 2018).

Family dynamics also play a crucial role in shaping susceptibility to auditory narcotics. Weak supervision, whether due to parental absence or disengagement, creates opportunities for youth to explore digital environments without guidance. Criminologists studying family risk factors emphasize that a lack of monitoring increases exposure to deviant subcultures and risky behaviors (Rahmani et al., 2020). Family breakdown, whether through divorce, conflict, or neglect, compounds this risk by depriving individuals of support structures that would otherwise provide stability. Research on technological risks in transitional societies indicates that fragmented family systems correlate with higher adoption of risky innovations, since youth turn to peer groups or online communities for validation (Saqafi et al., 2020). In this context, auditory narcotics function not merely as entertainment but as a substitute for emotional connection, reinforcing the cycle of detachment.

At the social level, the influence of media and virtual spaces is decisive. Platforms that market or sensationalize auditory narcotics create environments where experimentation is normalized. Some online communities present digital drugs as harmless self-experiments, while others exaggerate their effects to attract attention. Both narratives increase exposure and encourage trial use, particularly among adolescents. Research on media representation of technological innovations demonstrates that exaggerated claims, whether of benefits or harms, can accelerate adoption by increasing visibility (Yao et al., 2024). Furthermore, the availability of auditory narcotics in virtual spaces undermines traditional mechanisms of control, since consumption occurs privately with headphones, leaving few external markers of use. This invisibility contributes to anomie, a state of weakened social norms, where individuals engage in behaviors without strong reference to community approval or disapproval (Lee & Malerba, 2014). In societies already grappling with rapid technological change, auditory narcotics can exacerbate feelings of disorientation, embedding themselves in a landscape of broader norm erosion.

These causes of inclination are compounded by criminological challenges that make prevention and control difficult. One of the most significant is the lack of social stigma. Unlike traditional narcotics, auditory narcotics do not carry the same visible associations of criminality or deviance. Their immaterial form and absence of physical paraphernalia make them less conspicuous, and without strong societal condemnation, users may not experience shame or deterrence. Scholars emphasize that stigma functions as a form of informal social control, discouraging behaviors before formal legal intervention is necessary (Habiba & Kalantari, 2017). The absence of stigma around auditory narcotics therefore creates a permissive environment, allowing experimentation to flourish unchecked.

Cross-border availability and virtual spread present another major challenge. Since auditory narcotics exist as digital files, they transcend national boundaries with ease. Criminological research on transnational crime shows that digital forms of deviance often resist national enforcement strategies because they are hosted, shared, and consumed across jurisdictions (Ponomarev & Gareev, 2025). Even if one country criminalizes their distribution, individuals can access them from platforms based abroad. This borderless nature reflects the broader dynamics of globalization where immaterial innovations circulate faster than institutional responses can adapt (Lima & Lee, 2023). For law enforcement agencies, this raises the dilemma of whether to prioritize monitoring domestic users or to pursue cross-border cooperation, both of which present resource and legitimacy constraints.

A further criminological challenge is the weakness of official and participatory prevention strategies. In many cases, authorities lack awareness or expertise regarding auditory narcotics, focusing instead on traditional drugs that have established health consequences. This institutional lag mirrors findings in studies of technological transitions, where governance systems prioritize familiar risks and neglect novel ones until they become widespread (Soltanzadeh et al., 2024). Participatory strategies, such as community education and youth involvement, also remain underdeveloped because auditory narcotics are not yet widely recognized as a public concern. Without social mobilization, prevention remains reactive, leaving vulnerable populations without guidance. The absence of preventive infrastructure reinforces the invisibility of the phenomenon, allowing it to spread quietly until it attracts attention through anecdotal cases or media coverage.

Given these criminological challenges, prevention strategies must be considered in light of both theoretical insights and practical feasibility. Situational prevention provides one avenue by focusing on reducing opportunities for access. This might involve monitoring digital platforms, regulating content, or filtering applications that promote auditory narcotics. Studies of situational crime prevention highlight the importance of target hardening and access control in reducing opportunities for deviant behavior (Fakhimi & Saqafi, 2022). In the digital context, this translates into proactive engagement with online

platforms to remove or restrict harmful content. While enforcement is complex due to jurisdictional limits, collaborative efforts between regulators and technology companies could mitigate exposure.

Social prevention emphasizes the role of education and awareness campaigns in shaping cultural attitudes. Criminologists have long argued that knowledge dissemination and value formation are crucial in preventing risky behaviors before they become entrenched (Li et al., 2022). By framing auditory narcotics as a potential risk rather than an innocuous curiosity, educational campaigns can create a sense of caution among youth and parents. This aligns with broader strategies in technological governance where public awareness serves as a soft form of regulation (Ghosh et al., 2025). Schools, religious institutions, and media outlets could play a role in reinforcing messages that highlight the psychological risks and social consequences of excessive reliance on auditory narcotics.

Developmental prevention offers a complementary approach by targeting risk factors in early life stages. Programs that strengthen resilience, enhance coping mechanisms, and provide alternatives for thrill-seeking behaviors can reduce vulnerability. Scholars examining technological catch-up in social systems emphasize that developmental interventions are crucial for managing transitions where youth are disproportionately affected by new innovations (Maleki Karam Abad et al., 2019). By equipping adolescents with critical thinking skills and healthy recreational alternatives, developmental prevention can address the underlying motivations that drive curiosity and dependency. This approach also recognizes the importance of family dynamics, promoting parental involvement and communication to mitigate risks.

The criminological analysis of auditory narcotics therefore reveals a complex interplay between individual vulnerabilities, family structures, and social dynamics. Curiosity, thrill-seeking, and psychological problems create fertile ground for experimentation, especially in contexts of weak supervision and fragmented families. Media and virtual spaces amplify exposure, while the lack of stigma and borderless availability make regulation difficult. Weak prevention infrastructures compound the challenge, leaving educational and developmental strategies underutilized. Yet, opportunities for intervention exist. Situational prevention can limit access, social prevention can reshape norms, and developmental prevention can address root causes.

The novelty of auditory narcotics mirrors broader patterns in technological evolution where immaterial innovations challenge existing criminological frameworks. As scholars of technology and law observe, the speed of digital change often outpaces the capacity of institutions to respond (Wei et al., 2020). Criminology, by focusing on causes, challenges, and prevention, provides essential tools for bridging this gap. It offers a way to interpret not only the immediate risks but also the long-term social consequences of immaterial dependencies. Ultimately, addressing auditory narcotics requires integrating criminological insight with legal and jurisprudential reasoning, ensuring that responses are both preventive and principled.

5. Comparative Criminal and Jurisprudential Evaluation

The phenomenon of auditory narcotics raises complex questions when viewed through the dual lenses of criminal law and Imamiyyah jurisprudence. Both frameworks aim to protect individuals and society from harm, but they rely on different sources of legitimacy and employ distinct methods of reasoning. A comparative study demonstrates that while there are areas of convergence that could support integrated regulation, there are also divergences that complicate efforts to create a unified approach. The feasibility of harmonization depends on the ability to reconcile doctrinal precision in criminal law with the interpretive flexibility of fiqh.

Criminal law in Iran, grounded in statutory authority, prioritizes the principle of legality, which requires that prohibitions be clearly defined and foreseeable. This reflects broader legal traditions where individual liberty is protected by limiting the scope of penal intervention to conduct explicitly designated as criminal (Habiba & Kalantari, 2017). Imamiyyah jurisprudence, by contrast, does not rely on codified definitions but instead draws on Qur'an, hadith, consensus, and rational reasoning to address new issues. Its orientation is toward the preservation of higher objectives such as intellect and morality. Comparative studies on legal adaptation show that statutory systems tend to be more rigid but clearer, while religious legal frameworks emphasize normative coherence even in the absence of textual specificity (Wei et al., 2018). Auditory narcotics expose these differences acutely, since they lack material substance and therefore do not easily fit statutory categories, but they raise normative concerns about harm that resonate strongly in fiqh.

Areas of convergence can nonetheless be identified. Both criminal law and Imamiyyah jurisprudence are oriented toward protecting intellect (*‘aql*), a value recognized both as a social good and as an individual faculty essential for responsibility. Criminal law expresses this concern through provisions against intoxication, impaired driving, and distribution of harmful substances. Imamiyyah fiqh articulates it through rules such as *la darar* (no harm) and prohibitions against intoxicants. Scholars analyzing technological risks emphasize that despite differences in form, legal systems often converge in substantive goals when faced with emerging harms (Liu et al., 2025). In the case of auditory narcotics, both frameworks could agree that if psychological dependency or cognitive impairment is demonstrated, prohibition is justified.

Another point of convergence lies in the symbolic function of law and fiqh. Criminal law uses prohibition to signal social disapproval, while fiqh articulates moral guidance to prevent corruption. Both traditions recognize that even uncertain harms can justify intervention when public welfare is at stake. This alignment echoes broader principles of precaution in technological governance, where authorities act in advance of definitive scientific consensus (Ghosh et al., 2025). Thus, criminal law and fiqh could jointly support a restrictive stance toward auditory narcotics, emphasizing caution and deterrence.

Yet divergences also emerge, particularly in their interpretive methods. Criminal law cannot easily extend existing narcotics provisions to auditory phenomena without violating the principle of legality. Attempts to broaden statutory definitions risk undermining legal certainty, as individuals could be punished for behavior not clearly designated as criminal (Sharifeh & Bonyadi Naeni, 2016). Imamiyyah jurisprudence, however, can invoke analogy (*qiyas*) or rationale extraction (*tanqih al-manat*) to extend principles to new phenomena. While this flexibility allows fiqh to prohibit auditory narcotics under the general rationale of preserving intellect, it may create a discrepancy between what fiqh regards as haram and what statutory law recognizes as criminal (Nouri Zadeh & Maleki, 2021). Such discrepancies can undermine coherence in societies where law and fiqh are expected to align closely.

Another divergence relates to evidence and epistemology. Criminal law relies on measurable, often scientific evidence to establish harm, whereas fiqh can rely on moral reasoning and precautionary principles even in the absence of empirical proof. For example, criminalization in statutory law would typically require studies demonstrating that auditory narcotics cause significant impairment. Fiqh, however, could prohibit them on grounds of *israf* (extravagance) or social corruption, regardless of empirical uncertainty (Saqafi et al., 2020). Comparative legal studies note that these epistemological differences often produce friction when legal systems attempt to integrate religious and secular frameworks (Lee & Malerba, 2014). In the context of auditory narcotics, such friction is likely to arise in debates about whether prohibition should be immediate or contingent upon further research.

The feasibility of harmonizing criminal law and fiqh on auditory narcotics depends on how these divergences are addressed. One possible path is to treat fiqh rulings as interpretive guidance for legislators, who then translate normative concerns into statutory definitions. This process mirrors how technological catch-up is managed in other sectors, where normative principles are codified into institutional rules (Soltanzadeh et al., 2024). Legislators could, for instance, create a category of “digital intoxicants” defined broadly enough to include auditory narcotics but specific enough to meet the principle of legality. Such codification would allow fiqh-based prohibitions to be enforced through statutory mechanisms while maintaining doctrinal clarity.

Another pathway is to rely on non-criminal regulatory tools until stronger evidence emerges. This approach aligns with criminological arguments that not all deviant behaviors require immediate criminalization (Rahmani et al., 2020). Awareness campaigns, educational initiatives, and parental guidance could be promoted in line with fiqh principles, while criminal law refrains from punitive measures until harm is demonstrated. This dual system would maintain coherence by ensuring that both fiqh and law are responsive, but proportionate, to the phenomenon. Studies on governance in emerging technologies suggest that hybrid strategies combining soft and hard law are most effective in contexts of uncertainty (Li et al., 2022).

A proposed model for integrated criminalization must therefore balance the demands of legality with the moral imperatives of fiqh. One option is to construct a tiered framework. At the preventive level, fiqh principles could guide awareness campaigns and moral education, emphasizing the risks of auditory narcotics as forms of *israf* or potential harm. At the statutory level, legislators could introduce conditional provisions that classify auditory narcotics as prohibited if their effects are demonstrated to impair cognition, thereby respecting both legality and precaution. At the enforcement level, collaboration between legal

authorities and religious institutions could ensure consistent messaging and coordinated strategies. This model draws on comparative insights showing that effective catch-up governance requires multi-layered approaches that combine normative, regulatory, and educational tools (Lima & Lee, 2023).

Such a framework would also account for the symbolic and legitimizing role of both systems. In societies where fiqh and law are expected to reinforce each other, dissonance between religious rulings and statutory provisions can erode public trust. By designing criminalization that explicitly acknowledges fiqh rationales while adhering to statutory clarity, policymakers can ensure coherence. Research on technological and institutional transitions indicates that legitimacy is as crucial as enforcement capacity in securing compliance (Ponomarev & Gareev, 2025). Integrated criminalization of auditory narcotics, therefore, would not only protect public health but also reinforce the legitimacy of both legal and religious institutions.

In conclusion, the comparative evaluation of criminal law and Imamiyyah jurisprudence on auditory narcotics reveals both opportunities and obstacles. Convergences in their goals of protecting intellect and preventing harm provide a foundation for integration, while divergences in method and evidence create challenges. The feasibility of harmonization lies in codifying fiqh principles into statutory law with sufficient clarity to satisfy legality while leveraging the flexibility of fiqh to address novel risks. A tiered model that combines preventive education, conditional statutory prohibition, and coordinated enforcement offers one way to achieve integrated criminalization. Such an approach respects the distinctiveness of each framework while ensuring they converge on the shared objective of safeguarding society against the emerging challenges posed by auditory narcotics.

6. Conclusion

The study of auditory narcotics, their legal status, and their evaluation in the framework of Imamiyyah jurisprudence highlights the complex challenges that emerge when new technological and social phenomena intersect with established systems of law and morality. Throughout this analysis, it has become clear that the intangible nature of auditory narcotics disrupts traditional definitions of narcotics that rely on material possession and chemical properties. Unlike substances that can be cultivated, synthesized, or physically distributed, auditory narcotics consist of digital sound patterns that influence brainwave activity. This immateriality makes them elusive to traditional enforcement mechanisms while raising genuine questions about their psychological and social effects.

The criminal law perspective emphasizes the principle of legality, which requires clarity and precision in defining criminal acts. Auditory narcotics, because of their novelty, remain outside explicit statutory recognition, creating a gap between potential harm and enforceable prohibition. Attempts to apply existing narcotics laws through broad interpretation risk undermining the certainty of law, as individuals cannot be punished for conduct not clearly proscribed. Yet, the possibility of dependency, impairment, or social disruption associated with auditory narcotics provides strong justification for intervention. The challenge, therefore, is to design legal frameworks that acknowledge the risks while adhering to the principles of legality, proportionality, and fairness.

From the perspective of Imamiyyah jurisprudence, the issue is equally pressing but approached through different reasoning. Fiqh principles such as the rule of no harm, the prohibition of extravagance, the avoidance of assisting in sin, the rule of no domination, and the prohibition of means to the unlawful provide normative grounds for restricting practices that impair intellect or foster moral corruption. Jurisprudence is not confined by statutory definitions but rather guided by higher objectives of preserving intellect and protecting society. While classical sources did not envision digital forms of narcotics, the tools of analogy and rationale extraction allow jurists to extend existing principles to new phenomena. The diversity of scholarly opinions shows both the flexibility and the contested nature of such reasoning.

The criminological perspective enriches the analysis by focusing on why individuals are drawn to auditory narcotics and what social conditions allow their spread. Curiosity, thrill-seeking, and psychological vulnerability at the individual level combine with weak supervision or family breakdown to create environments where youth are more susceptible. Social factors such as the influence of media, the accessibility of virtual spaces, and the erosion of traditional norms contribute further to experimentation and adoption. Criminological challenges arise from the lack of stigma, the cross-border nature of digital dissemination, and the weakness of official prevention strategies. These insights underscore that the issue is not only one of law or fiqh but also of social environment and cultural adaptation.

When comparing criminal law and Imamiyyah jurisprudence, convergence can be seen in their shared objective of protecting intellect and preventing harm. Both frameworks emphasize the necessity of safeguarding individuals and communities from practices that diminish rational capacity or destabilize moral order. However, divergences remain in their methods. Criminal law relies on statutory clarity and scientific evidence, whereas jurisprudence operates through normative reasoning and precaution. Harmonization requires careful integration of these approaches, ensuring that statutory law is informed by fiqh principles without undermining legal certainty.

The feasibility of integrated criminalization lies in developing a tiered approach. At the preventive level, moral guidance and educational campaigns rooted in fiqh principles can raise awareness and discourage experimentation. At the statutory level, legislators can create categories that explicitly recognize digital intoxicants, ensuring compliance with legality. At the enforcement level, coordinated action between state authorities and religious institutions can reinforce legitimacy and consistency. Such a multi-layered model acknowledges the novelty of auditory narcotics while ensuring that society is protected both legally and morally.

Ultimately, the study demonstrates that auditory narcotics represent more than a technological curiosity; they expose the limits of existing legal definitions, the adaptability of jurisprudence, and the vulnerabilities within contemporary social structures. Addressing them requires a holistic approach that integrates law, fiqh, and criminology. Law must ensure clarity and fairness, fiqh must provide moral and normative direction, and criminology must explain causes and design preventive strategies. Only through this integrated framework can society respond effectively to the emerging challenges of immaterial forms of narcotics.

The broader lesson from this analysis is that rapid technological change continually generates new forms of behavior that test the boundaries of law and morality. Auditory narcotics are one example, but similar challenges are likely to arise in the future as digital technologies evolve. The ability of criminal law and fiqh to adapt while maintaining their foundational principles will determine their relevance and legitimacy in guiding communities through these changes. By engaging proactively with novel risks and fostering collaboration across disciplines, societies can strike a balance between innovation and protection, ensuring that technological novelty does not erode human dignity, social cohesion, or legal certainty.

In conclusion, auditory narcotics demand careful evaluation not only for their immediate psychological effects but also for their broader social and legal implications. They remind us that harm can be immaterial yet significant, that law must evolve without abandoning its principles, and that jurisprudence must reinterpret its traditions to meet contemporary realities. Through a combined approach rooted in precaution, clarity, and moral responsibility, it is possible to develop responses that safeguard intellect, uphold justice, and preserve the integrity of both law and fiqh in the face of new and unprecedented challenges.

Ethical Considerations

All procedures performed in this study were under the ethical standards.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors report no conflict of interest.

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