



Covid-19 Pandemic and prevention according to teachings of Islam: A Review

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Abstract:

Through qualitative analysis of Holy Qur'an verses and the Hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), it is credible to arise the Quranic teachings and hadith of Prophet Muhammad (SAW). The present study give some significant preventions which are just same as recommended by WHO. Advantage administrators and decision makers as a model, in regard to COVID-19 pandemic. It can offer them Quranic strategies that could assist them to manage this crisis successfully. The present study can also help to remove the dreadful consequences that may result from COVID-19 pandemic, on the other hand it would increase their awareness about the crisis management regarding to the Islamic approach. These results may be valuable through a qualitative study of pandemic and crisis management in evolving programs to train leaders. Therefore, the results of this study may create a basis for upcoming

research as a set of basic data, and as an initial point to train leaders and public in management of pandemic and outbreaks like COVID-19.

Key Words: COVID-19, pandemic, crisis, outbreaks

Introduction:

A novel transmittable virus COVID-19 was known in city of China named Wuhan in the end of last year and spread worldwide as a global pandemic. Presently there is no appropriate treatment for this novel disease, it is so important that people have sound knowledge of standard procedures like maintaining physical distancing, proper hand washing, face covering and coughing and sneezing etiquettes. All these measures will supportive to combat against this disease. World Health Organization representor declared on the March 11, 2020 COVID-19 as a Pandemic [1].

It is now well understood that a tiny microscopic virus was able to create bedlam in this world hence force everyone to redefine the lifestyle according to preventive measurements. This deadly pandemic, which crossed the epidemic level, has warning signals for world to give consideration on many things. The COVID-19 pandemic caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) is still threatening global health. According to the latest data, the number of diagnosed cases has exceeded 100 million. Comfortingly, experiences have been accumulated in preventing and treating COVID-19 through biological, immunological, epidemiological, and clinical investigations of this disease. Besides, the continuous advancement of different vaccines brings the dawn to defeat the epidemic. However, the emergence of fast-spreading SARS-CoV-2 mutant strains (B.1.1.7, B.1.351, and B.1.1.28.1) was reported at the end of 2020, causing concern to prevention and treatment of COVID-19. It is speculated that the emergence of the SARS-CoV-2 variants may portend a new phase of the pandemic [2].

Due to seriousness of the COVID-19 impact, all countries around the world had to intensify their efforts to resist and set strategies and plans to face this pandemic outbreak and deal with suffering economy, health facilities, educational losses, and social consequences. The present world situation indicates the sensitivity and seriousness of pandemic as everyone is panic and in state of uncertainty and emergency so, we must manage wisely and efficiently this crisis to lessen the adverse effects on the humanity. At a global discussion meeting organized by the WHO R&D Blueprint initiative in January 2021, members of the global research community discussed the threat posed by SARS-CoV-2 variants and the research response required to control them. The COVID-19 Treatment Guidelines Panel (the Panel) recommends that

health care providers follow recommendations and preventions from the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices when using SARS-CoV-2 vaccines [3].

Holy Quran is essentially more than Magna-Carta for all humans in every era. It covers each and every aspect of life as there are science-based queries and most important issues. No one can challenge the Quranic verses if read as a composed scientific argument. Now explore the guiding principle that Islam provides to its followers in outbreak of any pandemic. Incredibly, what presently immunologists, healthcare workers and WHO are recommended was exactly suggested by Holy Prophet Hazarat Muhammad (SAW) if we go 1400 years back in history. To stay protected from pandemics Hazarat Muhammad (SAW) advice Muslims years back, the adaptation of good hygiene, social distancing, quarantining and keep hoping without being panic. All these guidelines by Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) has gone viral in 2020, as the world copes with the COVID-19 epidemic. The present paper designates the qualitative analysis of the Quranic verses and the Hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Through the study presented in this paper it is possible to derive the Quranic approach in light of Holy Quran and the Noble Prophet Muhammad (SAW)'s Hadith to cope with COVID-19 pandemic [4].

Research Methodology:

To accomplish the goal of present study, qualitative research method has been used as this study emphasizes on descriptive research. Moreover, the data used through Sunnah.com, Quran.com, Islamic literature, world wide web and official website of World Health Organization.

Results and discussions:

Pandemic outbreak:

Narrated by Prophet Muhammad (SAW)

"If you hear of an outbreak of plague in a land, do not enter it; but if the plague breaks out in a place while you are in it, do not leave that place."

These guiding principle are based on famous hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) which has been broadly viral at social media networks in current outbreak of corona pandemic. Almost all Administrations across the world have come under fire for showing late response to COVID-19 outbreak. The instructions right now given to decrease the graph of COVID-19 appears to copy the advice of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and it is applicable also for this modern era [5].

As China closed Wuhan city on January 23, 2020 in stop further spread of COVID-19. People live in Wuhan were not allowed to leave their city without permission of Government of China. Evacuated of people from different parts of China could increase COVID-19 cases, warned by WHO. In case of carrier and asymptomatic passengers, such evacuations were also questionable and risky and could cause virus spread inside the aircraft. Furthermore, evacuations have many medical hazards and social difficulties. Most importantly, by evacuating process helps in transmission of virus from one place to another. As reported, one of the staff members who was supervising such evacuation process affirmed that at that time before flights, they were not have proper guidelines and equipment were also not available. He stated that he thought they are COVID-19 positive but when they were back home, they were not tested for virus [6].

Pakistani Government has decided to not evacuated his people from Wuhan and other parts of china⁷ Government faces criticism regarding to decision but later on it is proved that was a correct decision as this decision was according to Hadith of Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Pakistani Government spokesman also give proper reference of Hadith in press release.

Non- Muslim counties across world also confessed about the noble teachings of Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) as a billboard noticed across highway of United States of America high paying attention to Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) hadith of not leaving from diseased spread area during any pandemic [7].

Hand washing and hygiene:

WHO says, clean hands regularly to avoid spread of COVID-19. SARS and COVID-19 outbreak show that hand cleanliness is most important to shield health workers from infection. As COVID-19 is transmitted from one person to another by direct interaction with infection carrier and indirectly by contact with virus contaminated surfaces or with objects used by infected person. Hence the best prevention measurement is minimize exposure to COVID-19 is frequent hand washing. Hand and environmental cleaning helps to eliminate virus and intensely decrease their presence on contaminated surfaces it is a first vital step in any disinfection procedure. COVID-19 presence on different surfaces is extremely variable it can survive from 2 hours to 9 days according to type of surfaces, depending on factors like temperature of environment, moisture and humidity etc. [8].

Cleanliness is important part of Islamic teachings as it is taken as a part of faith. Islam give great preference to cleanliness and purification. There are a lot of Quranic verses about cleanliness as Allah says in Holy Quran:

“Allah loves those who are constantly repentant and loves those who purify themselves.”

Allah loves those who purify themselves.

Allah says,

Just as We have sent among you a messenger from yourselves reciting to you Our verses and purifying you and teaching you the Book and wisdom and teaching you that which you did not know. Hygiene practices recommended by Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) were documented greatly by history writers, according to experts all these teachings are functional in disease prevention and to remove impurities. Currently, the deadly virus COVID-19 challenges humanity from almost all religions, classes and cultural backgrounds regarding to current circumstances, some medical recommendations for example frequent and proper handwashing and good maintenance of personal as well as public hygiene are accepted globally.

As wave of Covid-19 is hitting worldwide, people are advised again and again to maintain social distancing, avoid touching their face and keep washing hands after small gaps. The current Netflix docuseries “Pandemic: How to Prevent an outbreak” demonstrates how the Islamic familiar washing called as wudu may help in prevention of COVID-19. Recently reported by Professor Richard Webber from Newcastle University and former Labour Party politician Trevor Phillips that Muslim community in the United Kingdom might have less chances of getting infected by Covid-19 due to the reason that they clean themselves five times daily [18]. Islamic teachings strictly highlight importance of environmental cleanliness. It is always good practice to regularly clean surfaces to avoid spread of COVID-19 [9].

Sneezing and coughing etiquettes:

According to WHO, to good respiratory hygiene is mandatory for everyone to minimize spread of pandemic. Good respiratory hygiene is covering your face specially nose and mouth with your bent elbow or tissue in case of coughing and sneezing. If someone is carrier of COVID-19 virus or asymptomatic then coughing, sneezing, or speaking cause spray of small liquid droplets from nose or mouth cause transmission of virus.

Respiratory etiquettes are described in following Hadith as,

Narrated Abu Hurairah that when the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) would sneeze, he would cover his face with his hand or with his garment, and muffle the sound with it.

Narrated Abu Hurairah that the Messenger of Allah Muhammad (SAW) said when any one of you yawns let him cover his mouth with his hand.

According Islamic mandate, the same rule will be applied on original and similar case or subject. Thus, the above hadith did not mention coughing, but jurisprudence principle say that, coughing rules will be same as sneezing as the purpose for the ruling is the similar in both cases [10].

Social distancing:

Allah's Messenger Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said, the cattle including sheep, camels, cows etc. have and disease should not be mixed up with healthy cattle. Likewise, do not keep a person having any disease with a healthy person (as a precaution). Further described that one should run away from the leper as one runs away from a lion. Once there was a leper among the delegation of Tha'if. So the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said to him "Go back, for we have accepted your oath of allegiance". Once Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab, (may Allah be pleased with him) was travelling towards Syria when he reached at Sargh he got to know by his companions that the plague epidemic had emerged at Syria. Caliph Umar consulted his crew members and decided to go back. One of his companions asked, are you escaping from decree of Allah. He superbly answered, Yes, I am escaping from the decree of Allah to the decree of Allah. If you had camels entering into a valley which has one side and other barren then would you graze the camel in the fertile land by the decree of Allah or you would graze in the barren land by the decree of Allah? Caliph Umar statement launches an excellent illustration of how to show stability between trusting on Allah and taking adequate precautionary measurements.

According to WHO physical distancing plays a key role to minimize COVID-19 transmission. There should be at least 1m distance between two persons and avoid to go at crowded places in close groups. Hence social distancing is one of the most operative method to decrease the virus transmission takes place through smaller air droplets.

Quarantine and self-isolation:

On many times, the Prophet Muhammed (SAW) guided his followers to value their lives in Hadith. According to Professor Cafer Karadas, faculty of divinity at Uludag University, About 1400 years ago Prophet Muhammad (SAW) gave the concept of quarantine. He referred to one of the well familiar hadith that,

When you get that a disease (plague) is in a place then do not go to it and if you are already present at that place, then do not leave it or escaping from it. This hadith accurately mentions modern quarantine principles. Professor Karadas further told that in case of current outbreak of COVID-19 similar principle has been followed as the guidance of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) in above hadith.

Allah's Messenger Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said, do not keep together a sick and a healthy person. Quarantine principles are beneficial in a many ways to restrict the movements of infected people furthermore isolation of people who are carrier of virus, had been operative in preventing disease transmission.

Immunity:

A COVID-19 pandemic is spreading day by day several people are in search of one magical nutrient that might help to combat them by deadly effects of virus by boosting up body's immune system. Obviously, only one food ingredient, herb, mineral or vitamin cannot provide protection against virus. Muslims take guidance from Holy Quran and Sunnah in all of life aspects, whether its health or medical issues or anything other. Honey can be helpful for COVID-19 infected people as it instantaneously boosts up the host immunity. Honey combat with Cytokine syndrome of COVID-19 patient through its antioxidant property as well as by increasing level of IFN- γ . Honey have numerous essential micronutrients which are functionally immune competence. Plant derived bioactive components among these micronutrients like polyphenols are very beneficial in decreasing inflammatory cytokines release. It has been detected in a case study that increased polyphenol concentration in a body can competently trigger tissue repair system and immunity [10].

Following Hadith emphasizes on importance of honey.

Narrated Ibn `Abbas:

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said, "Healing is in three things: A gulp of honey, cupping, and branding with fire (cauterizing)." But I forbid my followers to use (cauterization) branding with fire." [9].

Narrated `Aisha:

The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) used to like sweet eatable things and honey.

Narrated Abu Said Al-Khudri: A man came to the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and told that his brother has some abdominal problem. The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said that "Let him drink honey." he came again and the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) again said to him, 'Let him drink honey.'" That man came third time again for same problem and the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) again said, "Let him drink honey." He came back again and told that he had done that The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) further said, "Allah has said the truth, but your brother's `Abdomen has told a lie. Let him drink honey." So that man made him drink honey and his brother got relief [8].

Numerous random precise experiments, trial reports, case studies and in vitro as well as vivo studies stated that N.sativa (black cumin) has anti-inflammatory, immunomodulatory,

bronchodilator, antioxidant, antihistaminic, antiviral, properties associated to common signs and symptoms related to corona virus [7].

The following Hadith describes the importance of cumin seeds

Narrated Khalid bin Said that we were on a journey to Medina and Ghalib bin Abjar was also with us. He get sick during travelling and he was not recovered even we reached at Medina. Ibn Abi 'Atiq came and said that patient should treat with black cumin he advised to consume five or seven crushed cumin seeds mixed with little oil and apply the mixture into both nostrils to cure. ` Hazarat Aisha has narrated that she heard the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) saying, 'This black cumin is healing for all diseases except As-Sam.' Aisha said, 'What is As-Sam?' He said, 'Death.'

Further Narrated Ibn `Umar the Prophet (SAW) said among the trees, a tree present which is same as Muslim (in goodness), and that is palm tree.

Hazrat Abu Darda narrates that someone presented the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) a plate full of figs, he said, Eat figs if I would say a special fruit was sent down to us from the heavens I would say it is fig as it is without seeds. It is cure of piles and is beneficial for rheumatism” [11].

Conclusion:

The current work aimed to study Islamic method in pandemics for example the outbreak of the COVID-19. Through qualitative analysis of Holy Qur'an verses and the Hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), it is credible to arise the Quranic teachings and hadith of Prophet Muhammad (SAW). The present study give some significant preventions which are just same as recommended by WHO. Advantage administrators and decision makers as a model, in regard to COVID-19 pandemic. It can offer them Quranic strategies that could assist them to manage this crisis successfully. The present study can also help to remove the dreadful consequences that may result from COVID-19 pandemic, on the other hand it would increase their awareness about the crisis management regarding to the Islamic approach. These results may be valuable through a qualitative study of pandemic and crisis management in evolving programs to train leaders. Therefore, the results of this study may create a basis for upcoming research as a set of basic data, and as an initial point to train leaders and public in management of pandemic and outbreaks like COVID-19.

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