

Islamic Lifestyles As Predictor Of Depression Therapy

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Abstract:

Depression is ranked as one of the most prevalent psychiatric disorders globally, and its prevalence has increased in recent decades. Prevailing research divulges that innumerable factors not only responsible for the onset and prevalence of depression but also contribute a lot in managing depression. A review of various databases such as Academic Search Complete, Academic Search Ultimate, CHINAL Complete, PSYarticles, PsycEXTRA, PsycINFO focusing the keyword “Islamic Lifestyles”, “Exercise”, and “Depression” were reviewed. Out of 288 articles screened, 12 research articles met the inclusion criteria. Findings from this study revealed that Islamic practices and physical education instruction (exercise, physical activity) are of utmost important to manage depression. Both Islamic rituals and physical education work for the betterment and promotion of human life by providing various means of depression management. These means have been extracted from the teaching of Islam including verses of the Holy Quran and Hadiths. Together, these results indicate that Islamic practices and exercise will contribute to more total and sustained recovery for chronically depressed patients.

Key Words: Islam, Exercise, Diet, Social Support, Depression

Introduction:

Depression is estimated as one of the largest health challenges throughout the globe (García-Toro et al., 2012). By 2020, more than three hundred and fifty (350) million people are

projected to endure with depression around the world. Depression would have been the second most common element of disability and mortality (Parisi et al., 2014). Two prominent treatment strategies such as pharmaceutical therapy and cognitive therapy are used to combat depression, however; no satisfactory results have been achieved (Gorwood et al., 2010). Therefore, health care practitioners should also consider a lucrative treatment approach to help tackle this issue.

It is commonly believed that the psychiatric disorder of depression is just a crippling illness. However, nearly 10% suicide are recorded as a result of depression and more than one million people have lost their lives each year due to depression. Research reveal that physiological changes in the body can occur due to depression. It destabilizes the chorionic medical condition of individuals. Additionally, it is suggested by the researchers that depression reduces the adherence and compliance of a depressive person (DiMatteo et al., 2000).

Research on religiosity and mental wellness has increased in recent years. Some research studies are conducted to explore the conservative connections between miscellaneous religious commitment and psychological stress and health (Abu-Raiya et al., 2015) and to explore the association between religious participation, private worship, and depression (Aranda et al., 2008). Others have a spotlight on religious engagement, stress, and mental health (Ellison et al., 2001).

Religious values and rituals have their origins in human culture and are common across the world. Religious involvement is one of the widespread and useful healing methods used among people with chronic and psychiatric disorders. Indeed, religious values and traditions are helpful for individuals to maintain their physical as well as mental health. As a result, they can reduce their risk of being astonished by situations circumstances (Ellison et al., 2001; Koenig and Harold, 2001).

Various techniques are being adopted in the treatment of trauma or any other psychological problems. The most common coping strategies include peer group, hobbies, and religious involvement (Mir et al., 2015). Out of 414, 253 (61%) of systematic review have described significant inverse relationships between religions and depression (Koenig and Harold, 2001). Likewise, 39 out of 70 (58%) cohort studies reported that people with religious involvement were less likely to suffer from depression. Additionally, these studies reported that people with religious involvement were better able to manage the problem of depression. Additionally, 19 (63%) experimental studies found a better outcome of religious involvement compared with those received solely standard of care.

Work on religion and psychology shows that adopting religious (Islamic) psychological care methods has proved helpful as Islamic methods evolve and increase the effectiveness of such therapy (Mir et al., 2015; Husain et al., 2016). Upon this notion, Studies have shown that the integration of religious practices and principles into depression psychiatric therapies are correlated with positive results in treatment (Mir et al., 2015). Hence, it can be interpreted that involvement in religious practices among Muslims patient is better helpful for prior exoneration of depressive systems correlate with secular mediation (Mir et al., 2015; Hook et al., 2010). While the religion of Islam is believed the second-largest religion with 1.8 billion

believers and it overlooks the role of Islamic practices in the treatment of psychiatric disorders (Hodge et al., 2015).

The present study aims to seek out the relationship of religious (Islamic) lifestyle with depression management. Mortada and Hashim (2003) described the Islamic lifestyle as a collection of tasks and behaviors derived from Islamic principles prescribed in accordance with religious teachings (Quran and teachings of Ahl Al-Bayt) in accordance with the four domains of oneself, culture, God and the structure of creation. Therefore, the application of these assurances achieves pure human and social life (Mortada and Hashim, 2003). Islamic lifestyles consist of religious norms, standards, values, faith, beliefs, principles grounded on the teaching of Quran, Hadith, life practices of imams, and narratives (Mazaheri, 2015).

Methods

A review of various databases such as Academic Search Complete, Academic Search Ultimate, CHINAL Complete, PSYarticles, PsycEXTRA, PsycINFO focusing the keyword “Islamic Lifestyles”, “Exercise”, and “Depression” were reviewed. Out of 288 articles screened, 12 research articles met the inclusion criteria. The abstracts of all the articles were thoroughly screened to determine the eligibility benchmark.

Inclusion Criteria

The following eligibility criteria were used to include the article.

1. The articles are written in the English language.
2. The article should have been published in full-text.
3. The articles published from 2005 to April 2020.

Exclusion Criteria

The following exclusion criteria were fixed to consider the articles ineligible.

1. The articles failed to meet the aforementioned inclusion benchmark.
2. The patients who were experiencing psychiatric diseases apart from depression.
3. Those articles conducted on participants of the special population such as hospitalized of mentally retarded.

Out of 288 identified articles, 12 papers completely meet the requirement for inclusion and the protocol shown in Figure 1. The factors mentioned in each article have been elicited and the most related data have been put accordingly. Finally, we thoroughly reviewed the abstracts of all the articles in order to ensure the inclusion criteria. Each article was carefully read to extract the relevant data concerning the effect of Islamic lifestyles on depression management.

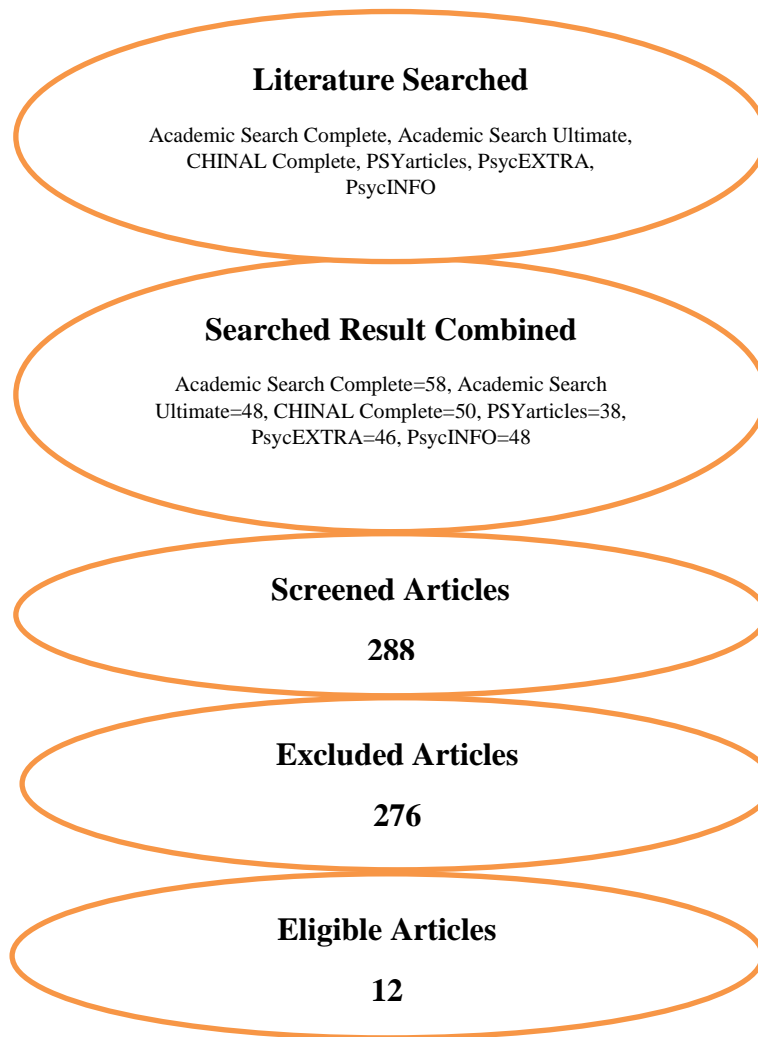


Figure No.1 showing the inclusion criteria and the procedure

S. No	Year of Publication
1.	Abu-Raiya H, Pargament KI, Krause N, Ironson G. Robust links between religious/spiritual struggles, psychological distress, and well-being in a national sample of American adults. <i>American Journal of Orthopsychiatry</i> . 2015 Nov;85(6):565.
2.	Aranda MP. Relationship between religious involvement and psychological well-being: A social justice perspective. <i>Health & Social Work</i> . 2008 Feb 1;33(1):9-21.
3.	Ellison CG, Boardman JD, Williams DR, Jackson JS. Religious involvement, stress, and mental health: Findings from the 1995 Detroit Area Study. <i>Social forces</i> . 2001 Sep 1;80(1):215-49.
4.	Koenig HG. Religion and medicine II: Religion, mental health, and related behaviors. <i>The International Journal of Psychiatry in Medicine</i> . 2001 Mar;31(1):97-109.
5.	Mir G, Meer S, Cottrell D, McMillan D, House A, Kanter JW. Adapted behavioral activation for the treatment of depression in Muslims. <i>Journal of Affective Disorders</i> . 2015 Jul 15; 180:190-9.
6.	Hodge DR, Zidan T, Husain A. Depression among Muslims in the United States: Examining the role of discrimination and spirituality as risk and protective factors. <i>Social work</i> . 2015 Nov 19;61(1):45-52.
7.	Meyer JD, Koltun KF, Stegner AJ, Kim JS, Cook DB. Influence of exercise intensity for improving depressed mood in depression: a dose-response study. <i>Behavior therapy</i> . 2016 Jul 1;47(4):527-37.
8.	Poole L, Hamer M, Wawrzyniak AJ, Steptoe A. The effects of exercise withdrawal on mood and inflammatory cytokine responses in humans. <i>Stress</i> . 2011 Jul 1;14(4):439-47.
9.	Jacka FN, O'Neil A, Opie R, Itsiopoulos C, Cotton S, Mohebbi M, Castle D, Dash S, Mihalopoulos C, Chatterton ML, Brazionis L. A randomized controlled trial of dietary improvement for adults with major depression (the 'SMILES' trial). <i>BMC medicine</i> . 2017 Dec;15(1):1-3.
10.	Toghyani M, Kaibaf MB, Ghamarani A. What Does Islamic Lifestyle Say about Depression Management? <i>Zahedan Journal of Research in Medical Sciences</i> . 2018 Jul;20(7).
11.	Koenig HG, Berk LS, Daher NS, Pearce MJ, Bellinger DL, Robins CJ, Nelson B, Shaw SF, Cohen HJ, King MB. Religious involvement is associated with greater purpose, optimism, generosity, and gratitude in persons with major depression and chronic medical illness. <i>Journal of psychosomatic research</i> . 2014 Aug 1;77(2):135-43.
12.	Paine DR, Sandage SJ. Religious involvement and depression: The mediating effect of relational spirituality. <i>Journal of religion and health</i> . 2017 Feb 1;56(1):269-83.

Table 1 Summary of the Articles included

While religious involvement seems to be an important factor in lifestyle which can support the development and perseverance of depression.¹⁷ The following factors will prove the function of Islamic ways of life in the management of depression.

Results and Discussion

Physical Exercise

Exercise plays a well significant role in improving mood state and helps in decreasing the feeling of stress, anxiety, and depression (Ensari et al., 2016). Participating in any exercise improves mental response for important hormones such as serotonin and norepinephrine, which reduces depression. Apart from these, exercise helps in the reduction of anxiety symptoms among anxious people (Anderson et al., 2013). In fact, a study of 24 females detected with depression found that exercising any strength significantly reduced depressed feelings (Meyer et al., 2016). One study asked 26 active participants who usually participate in any exercise for the period of 02 weeks or to avoid exercising. Those that had quit exercising reported negative mood increases (Poole et al., 2011).

Islam has framed those concepts for the near synchronization of body and spirit. The Islamic principle preserves one's wellbeing from deterioration. Poor and ailing health person often displays inefficiency in performing their duties. His organs remain incompetent, his thinking disturbed, his behaviour negative, his mood off and his pessimistic approach. Such a person can do no good either to himself or to his fellows. Weak and depressed person considers himself incapable of yielding to his lustful impulses, and often he goes beyond moral standards. In the same way, beyond best etiquette, Islam appreciates physical health. Islamic way of living is also the code of a peaceful and prosperous life. Islam also strongly advocates for physical fitness. Islam encourages us to remain safe and fit against the non-Muslims. Islam maintains, 'Your body has right over you.' The theme of the said saying is that by following all fair Islamic ways and means, we should promote our health.

1. The religion of Islam gives stress on the significance of one's health and encourages exercises that improve personal wellbeing. There are many references in the Quranic verses and hadiths to the health promotion activities. Allah the almighty states that "And make not your own hands contribute to (your) own destruction (harm)" (Quran, 2:195).
2. On one place, Hazrat Muhammad (SAW) said that: "There are two blessings which many people do not appreciate: Health and leisure." On another place, The holy prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said, "If anyone suppresses anger when he is in a position to give vent to it, Allah, the exalted, will call him on the Day of Resurrection over the heads of all creatures, and ask him to choose any of the bright and large-eyed maidens he wishes" (Abu Dawood, 4759). Islam persuades his followers to take part in exercise such as walking, wrestling, swimming, riding, and horseback (Sabry et al., 2013). According to the view of Hazrat Muhammad (SAW), the exercise of walking is a natural antibiotic. He further demonstrates that "The best thing you can cure yourself with, is walking", (Marwat et al., 2014). Keeping into consideration the above discussion, it can be said that physical health has great importance in Islam.

Dietary Measures

A person's dietary habits may contribute to depression. Research has shown that nutritional counseling and a balanced diet for 12 weeks contribute to moderate-to-severe depression improved. The study further revealed that a balanced diet composed of fresh foods and drinks having high nutrients values. Consequently, the study concluded that a proper diet could help manage or improve their symptoms of depression (Marwat et al., 2014). Research has shown that taking high caloric diets such as fried food, folic acid, fatty food and high intake of fish leads to the symptoms of depression (Short et al., 2015).

3. Maintenance and preservation of physical health is imperative to maintain one's soul and spirit. In addition, maintained physical and mental health are considered as predictors to sustain our material and spiritual achievement. For this regard nutrition plan will play a vital part. Because of its harmful effects on our bodies, Islam has forbidden certain foods and allowed all other natural, healthy, and clean foods. In the

Holy Quran Allah (SWT) says “O’Believers! Eat the good and pure (lawful) things that We have provided you and be grateful to Allah if you truly worship Him” (Al-Quran, 2:172). On another occasion, Allah Almighty says “He (Allah) has only forbidden you (from eating) dead animals, blood, the flesh of swine, and that (animal) over which the name of other than Allah has been invoked” (Al-Quran, 2:173, 16:115). Allah (WAT) emphasized on reasonable eating. Allah the Almighty says: “**Eat and drink but avoid excess**” (Al-Quran, 20:81). Likewise, Hazrat Muhammad (SAW) stated that “**No human being has ever filled a container worse than his own stomach. The son of Adam needs no more than a few morsels of food to keep up his strength, doing so he should consider that a third of his stomach is for food, a third for drink and a third for breathing**” (Ibn Maja). The Prophet (SAW) persuaded his followers to stop eating until our stomachs in the abdominal region are full. This means we will stop eating while there is already a desire to eat more. In this regard, Hazrat Muhammad (SAW) said: “The food for two persons is sufficient for three, and the food for three persons is sufficient for four persons”(Bukhari).

Social Support

Social support means welfare, which refers to the mental and material resources provided by a public group to help people deal with stress. Social help is also recognized as a necessary element of stable ties and good intellectual wellbeing. Studies have also shown the associations between social relationships and several areas of physical and mental health (Kim et al., 2019). One analysis of middle-aged men's relationships over a span of seven years indicates that good social and emotional support was less likely to die than those without such a relationship (Graham et al., 2006).

Social interaction and social support are considered as important elements of Islam. Islam stresses upon the upkeep and maintenance of social interaction with family, neighbors and community. In this regard, Hazrat Muhammad (SAW) says, "The hand of Allah [i.e. divine help] is with the congregation, and whenever a straying person turns away, Satan snatches him up like a wolf snatches a sheep straying from the herd " (Toghyani et al., 2018). In one occasion, Hazrat Muhammad (SAW) demonstrates that "If you want to be happy the whole year, reconcile with your kinsmen" (Koenig et al., 2014). On another occasion, Hazrat Muhammad (SAWW) says, "If a close relative treats you indifferently and ignores your relationship, do not turn your back on him but keep on doing, on your part, the obligations of relationship towards him" (Koenig et al., 2017).

Religious Involvement

Religious involvement in coping with depression is one of the important determinants in life (Koenig et al., 2014). Research has reported a clear negative association between depression and religious engagement (Paine et al., 2017). Religious services include ways to deal with depressive symptoms (Koenig et al., 2007). Participation in religious (Islamic) practices can also help in regulating the connotation of physical functioning with depression symptoms (Chatters et al., 2000).

Research suggests that worships offered in a position of direct person-to-person is helpful for the treatment of psychological problems like depression and anxiety (Boelens et al.2009). The religious practice of offering Nemaz (SWALAT) is one of the pillars of Islam. All mature Muslims man and woman are bound to offer five time Nemaz. Basic requirement of Nemaz include purity of mind, body, cleanliness of clothes and other belongingness. An organized prayer gives perfect relaxation and satisfaction. A spiritual easiness and mental satisfaction also gain from the prayers. Evidence has shown a substantial impact of fasting on lowering depression rates and anxiety and a significant increase in cognitive function (Amin et al., 2016). Available literature suggest that religious music produces positive effect of psychological well-being and mental rehabilitation of individuals. The Quran is the divine book of Muslims; it contains every component of human life (Bradshaw et al., 2015). Holy Qur'an recitation is a form of spiritual music that activates alpha-brain waves to release endorphins (Almerud et al., 2003). Consequently, it raises the stress level, eliminates negative feelings and induces a deep relaxation (Chang et al., 2008).

Participation in Recreation

Technological advancement has made the individual luxurious by providing countless facilities in all important domains of life. As a results and unbearable loss is threatened to the physical, mental and social development of individuals. The advanced facilities have reduced dependency, created socio-psychological problems. Moreover, working on machines for a longer duration creates psychological problems (Gulam and Aafid, 2016). Depression is one of the more serious consequences for mental health (Howe et al., 2012). In this regard, recreation occupies its remarkable role in the maintenance and physical and mental health. Literature shows that people with depression are conscious of the beneficial adaptation of leisure time activities in coping with the psychiatric problem of depression and also understand the various advantages of the use of recreational activities in leisure time (Nimrod et al., 2012).

The teaching of Islam regarding the maintenance of health and psychological well-being is quite apparent. Under Islam, sport and physical activities undertaken for the sake of leisure or relief from exhaustion, which do not violate Islamic jurisprudence, are considered permitted. Islam not only support but encourages sport not contradicting the Islamic principles such as proper clothing, mix-gender participation, proper timing and avoiding gambling (Short et al., 2015).

Health and fit body is one of the pre-requisites for Muslims to perform their daily activities. Different activities such as walking, running, sport and other recreational activities help in maintaining healthy body. Therefore, taking part in recreational and sport activities for obtaining physical health and psychological wellbeing following the due principles of Quran and Hadiths is not banned (Abd Rahim et al., 2019).

Conclusion

It has been concluded from the reviewed articles that religious involvement is one of the widespread and useful healing methods used among people with chronic and psychiatric disorders. A review of the studies indicated that adopting religious (Islamic) psychological care

methods has proved helpful as Islamic methods evolve and increase the effectiveness of such therapy. It has been shown that the integration of religious practices and principles into depression psychiatric therapies are correlated with positive results in treatment. Bases on the reviewed articles, it has also been concluded that a balanced diet, taking part in exercise, social support, and social integration contribute to the management of depression. Additionally, the reviewed papers substantiated that involvement in religious practices, such as prayers, fasting, helping others, and recitation of the verses of the Holy Quran helps in the reduction of various psychological problems of stress, anxiety and depression. The eminent Muslims scholar have shown agreement that it is very much permissible for Muslims to relax their minds and bodies, which not only contributes to their well-being but also energizes them to worship Allah more earnestly and with greater devotion.

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