

# The Views of Hamadan University of Medical Sciences Professors about Health and its Role in Realizing Islamic Lifestyle

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## Abstract

**Background and Objective:** Lifestyle is the hallmark of any society's cultural and social identity. Islam and its concepts and doctrines constitute the best lifestyle. Although Islamic lifestyle produces health in different aspects, health or lack thereof can also be a facilitator of or obstacle to the realization of Islamic lifestyle. Therefore, the present study was conducted to investigate the views of Hamadan University of Medical Sciences professors regarding health and its role in the realization of Islamic lifestyle.

**Methods:** This qualitative study was conducted using content analysis approach. Data were collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews with 11 professors of Hamadan University of Medical Sciences selected through purposeful sampling with maximum variation in age and faculty status (Sciences). All the interviews were transcribed and finally analyzed using the conventional content analysis. The robustness and accuracy of the data were confirmed by the researchers and the researchers. In this study, all ethical considerations were observed and no conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

**Results:** Data analysis led to the extraction of the main concepts including the poor effect of physical health on the realization of Islamic lifestyle (with sub-themes of various definitions of physical health and the contradictory effects of physical health), the positive impact of mental health on the realization of Islamic lifestyle (with sub-themes of the strong relationship with mental health and the direct impact of mental health on the realization of the Islamic lifestyle), the mutual relationship between social health and the realization of Islamic lifestyle (with sub-themes of different definitions of social health, the two-way impact of social health, and governmental supervision and control over the dimension of social health) and the exponential impact of spiritual health on the realization of the Islamic way of life (with sub-themes of impossibility of the Islamic lifestyle without spiritual health), respectively.

**Conclusion:** Based on the findings, mental health is more important than physical health and mental illnesses are more serious than physical ones. Therefore, mental and spiritual health can well explain the realization of the Islamic lifestyle, although there is also a need to eliminate physical ailments to help individuals achieve a better Islamic lifestyle.



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## Summary

### Background and Objective

Lifestyle is the hallmark of the cultural and social identity of any society. The function of different social elements in any society is based on the lifestyle of that society. Islam and its concepts and teachings are the foundation of the best lifestyle. The concept of Islamic lifestyle is similar to the concept of lifestyle expressed by Adler. Some of these similarities include attention to value, holism, teleology, individual orientation, and self-creativity (1). Adopting an efficient lifestyle that harmonizes the cultural and social process in the Islamic society with the goals and ideals of Islam raised the need for the design and realization of the Islamic lifestyle by the elite. Although the Islamic lifestyle leads to health in different aspects, health or lack thereof can be a factor that facilitates or hinders the realization of an Islamic lifestyle (2-6).

Since no study was found on the relationship between health and its impact on the Islamic lifestyle in university professors, the present study was conducted to explain the views of professors of Hamadan University of Medical Sciences regarding health and its role in the realization of Islamic lifestyle.

### Methods

**Compliance with ethical guidelines:** In this study, participants were brief on how to carry out the plan as well as the purpose of this plan and were ensured about the confidentiality of information. If they wished to participate in the study, written informed consent was obtained from them. Interviews were conducted with the professors willing to be interviewed in their private room at the university.

This is a qualitative study conducted through content analysis (5). The statistical population of the study included the professors working at Hamadan University of Medical Sciences from March 2019 to April 2019, out of whom 11 professors were selected and interviewed through purposive sampling.

Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data. All the interviews were conducted face to face by one member of the research team. Each interview lasted for approximately 30 to 40 minutes. In order to analyze the responses, the qualitative content analysis method was used based on the 5 steps suggested by Landman and Granheim. Data analysis was also done manually.

The researchers analyzed the relevant information,

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(i.e., Research on Religion & Health)

categories and subgroups, and the research team finally reached a consensus.

### Results

The main theme of the weak impact of physical health on the realization of the Islamic lifestyle included two sub-themes: various definitions of physical health and a contradictory view of physical health.

- Professor No. 1 stated: "A physically healthy person can have a good Islamic lifestyle".

The main theme of the positive effect of mental health on the realization of Islamic lifestyle had two sub-themes including its strong relationship with mental health and the direct effect of mental health.

- Professor No. 7 stated: "Mental health has a much greater impact on the realization of the Islamic lifestyle than physical health, and this effect is positive and high".

The main theme of the correlation between social health and the realization of Islamic lifestyle includes 3 sub-themes of different definitions of social health and its relationship with the realization of Islamic lifestyle, the mutual and interactional relationship between social health and the realization of Islamic lifestyle and governantal supervision over social health.

- Professor No. 9 stated: "Social health belongs to the whole society and the whole population should be healthy".

- Professor No. 2 stated: "This is an area that should be in the hands of the government to be able to control and manage it well". The main theme of the exponential effect of spiritual health on the realization of Islamic lifestyle had 1 sub-theme, which was the impossibility of Islamic lifestyle without spiritual health.

- Professor No. 9 stated: "Spiritual health is the Islamic way of life".

Finally, all the professors stated that in order to realize the Islamic way of life, there must be four dimensions of health.

### Conclusion

A healthy human being and its criteria are important topics in the field of various religious, human and experimental scientific fields. However, when it comes to a healthy person, at first glance, his physical health is assumed, but physical health is a well-known concept on which there is consensus. Other dimensions of health, such as mental health, may even have a greater impact on human perfection and happiness (3).

The results of this study showed that the dimensions of health are related to the realization of the Islamic lifestyle. In explanation for this finding, it can be stated that different dimensions of spiritual, mental, social and physical health have a significant, though not equal, impact on the Islamic lifestyle. Existence of religious teachings that refer to health and hygiene and are referred to under such titles as the medicine of the Prophet and the medicine of the Imams, is an indication of the value and respect for the sciences that deal with the body and this means the importance of health in the minds of these religious leaders.

Since health and its various dimensions can be effective in preventing or facilitating the realization of the Islamic way of life, it is necessary to protect it. Although religion and health and spirituality and health seem to be new concepts, they are, in fact, topics that are not only rooted in religious texts, but are also intertwined with the history of medicine and health (7). As pointed out by experts, because many of man's actions and behaviors are a function of his temperament and mental condition, therefore, mental health or lack thereof can act as an obstacle to or facilitator of the realization of the behaviors defined in the framework of Islamic lifestyle.

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#### Ethical considerations

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#### Conflict of interest

The authors of the article did not report any conflicts of interest in this study.

#### Authors' contribution

Writing the introduction and discussion sections: First author; Writing the discussion and method sections: Second author; and writing the introduction and method and statistical analysis: Third author.

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