



Criticism of different approaches to Islamic medicine in Iran

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ABSTRACT

Background: Subject and objectives: Using the capabilities of Islamic civilization is one of the topics that has attracted the attention of contemporary Islamic thinkers. In this context, various opinions have been presented about whether medicine is Islamic or not among Iranian thinkers. In this article, we seek to examine the negative and positive opinions about the nature of Islamic medicine. The purpose of this article is to find a precise definition of Islamic medicine and provide a correct solution in using this treatment model.

Result: This research deals with the study of Islamic medicine through descriptive-analytical and documentary methods. In this research, a complete search of electronic banks, related books, and internet sites was conducted and all acceptable articles were reviewed completely and systematically. There are different views on the nature of Islamic medicine, each of which has looked at the issue from its own angle, some agree with it and some oppose it.

Conclusion: Islamic medicine has very good capacities, although there are serious criticisms against it. Islamic medicine is a specialized science, and a common opinion should be reached about its limits and conditions, and a system should be designed and drawn for it. The revival of Islamic medicine will contribute to the development of the modern Islamic civilization.

Introduction

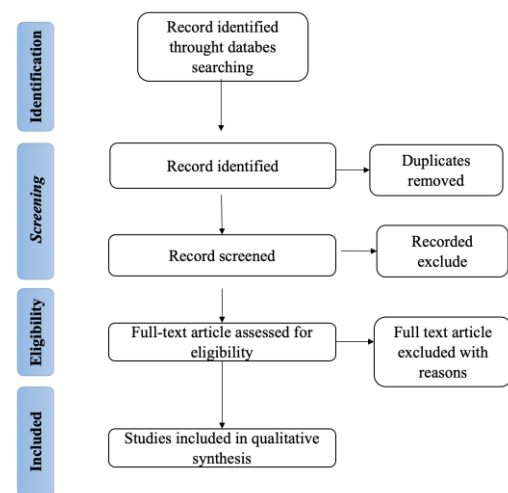
Islam generally encourages Muslims to science and scientific progress. Medical science is no exception to this rule. The relationship between Islam and medicine has always been described as intimate (Ebrahimnejad, 2011). Muslims are also eager to use the latest medical advances. Muslims consider medical advancements as God's creation and physicians as the enabler

of God's handiwork (Inhorn & Serour, 2011). The dominant and respected paradigm in the contemporary Muslim world is still the western biomedical model (Adib, 2004). However, shortcomings of new medicine, failure to treat some diseases and problems caused by chemical drugs caused some people to pay attention to traditional medicine. In Iran, modern medicine is generally used for treatment,

however, people have a special affection for traditional medicine. There are limited clinics for traditional medicine. Some of them have an official license from the Iranian Ministry of Health, while others treat patients without a license. There are many shops in different parts of the cities that sell medicinal plants, which are known as Attari. Many people go to them to buy medicinal plants, and sometimes even to consult them for the treatment of diseases. Iranian thinkers consider Islamic medicine to have a high capacity to treat diseases and encourage Muslims to use Islamic medicine methods, and they introduce it as a contributing capacity in the revival of Islamic civilization. Considering the development of the debate on the possibility of Islamization of medicine in Islamic countries, in this article, we seek to explain the nature of Islamic medicine and explore the positive and negative opinions in this field.

In order to investigate the researches about supporters or opponents of Islamic medicine or traditional medicine, an internet search was conducted with keywords including Islamic medicine, Arabic medicine, and Islamic civilization. A complete and comprehensive search was conducted in online electronic databases in Farsi and English languages. The reviewed databases are: Scopus, ISI, ISC, EBM reviews, PubMed, Google scholar, Iran

medex, SID, Noormax, and google. Also, existing conferences in the field of Islamic medicine and Islamic civilization were searched and used. In this search, finally more than 70 articles were found, the full text of relevant articles including original articles, review articles, and congress articles were prepared and studied and scanned. After reviewing the articles, those that were closer to the subject of the research were selected and used.



Results

The nature of Islamic medicine

For a better understanding of scientific topics, first of all, it is necessary to have a single understanding of the topic. Many definitions have been used for Islamic medicine and different terms have been proposed by scholars related to this field, although some of these definitions overlap, such as Arabic medicine, Prophetic medicine, Imam's medicine, traditional

medicine. For this purpose, we first state the definitions proposed in this field.

Arabic medicine

Islamic civilization founded a new medical system by using the medical traditions of Greece, Iran and India, which western thinkers mostly call it Arabic medicine (Mohammadi, 2018). This naming is because a large amount of works of Islamic medicine are written in Arabic, and they have called the doctors who write Arabic as Arabs. Of course, this is not limited to medicine, they have also used this method in the fields of science, philosophy, industry, and art. Since most of the Islamic writers in the fields of medicine, philosophy and other sciences were non-Arab, and even non-Muslim who were engaged in activities in the Islamic culture and civilization. While many famous doctors in this field, such as Ibn Sina, Razi and Majosi, were Iranians, not Arabs, although they mostly wrote in Arabic. Other doctors like Hunayn ibn Ishaq was Christian, and Ibn Maymun was Jew, but they lived within the Islamic culture and civilization. So, it is better to call them Islamic sciences, not Arabic sciences (Ullmann, 2010, p. 8).

Pre-Islamic Arabs were familiar with some experimental cases in the treatment of diseases, and they mainly used methods such as medicinal treatment and prayers. Jafariyan believes that the method of prayer among the ignorant Arabs was rooted in

Jewish teachings, but gradually after the rise of Islam, Muslims replaced the Quranic verses with Jewish prayers (Jafariyan, 2017, p. 224). It should be noted that what is called Arab medicine does not mean pre-Islamic Arab medicine.

Islamic medicine

In this definition, Islamic medicine refers to a science that comprehensively deals with health and the treatment of diseases and does not need other knowledge like modern medicine from the East and the West. This approach is proposed in the discussion of Islamization of sciences, and on this basis, as Islamic economics or Islamic management is defined as a science, Islamic medicine can also be defined in this format. This giving identity to medicine is based on Islamic worldview and values. Based on this definition, an independent system is introduced for health and treatment which has a different method and attitude from other modern human sciences, and it considers all aspects of human existence, from before birth to death (Ayazi, 2018).

Of course, the criticism that has been made to this view is that, so far, no claimed unified system of this science has been presented, and it is only emphasized on scattered and in some cases coherent religious propositions. The question is, how and by what criteria do you want to consider

these scattered religious propositions as a systematic science?

A group of historians use the term Islamic medicine for the medicine of the golden period of Islamic civilization, namely the era of Razi and Bu Ali. In fact, these people consider medicine at the golden period of Islamic civilization as Islamic medicine (Noormohammadi, 2009).

In short, Today, what has been common among Islamic societies, especially in Iran after Islam, and has been taken from the culture of these regions and has been believed in, is called Islamic medicine, and some books by Ibn Sina and Razi are examples of that (Ayazi, 2018).

Prophetic medicine (al-Tibb al-Nabawi)

Prophetic medicine is the medical school derived from prophetic traditions. In other words, a collection of teachings related to health and treatment of diseases, which are derived from the Qur'an and the traditions of the Prophet. A question arises that from what date concepts such as prophetic medicine or Islamic medicine were introduced in Islamic literature?

About the Islamic hadiths, it should be said that among the hadiths that were available to the hadith scholars in the third century, there are also some traditions about the benefits of certain foods and their medicinal properties, as well as the rulings related to them in terms of halal and haram. Since hadiths have been classified by topic,

a section has been dedicated to medical traditions, and hadiths were compiled under the title Bab al-Tab (chapter of medicine) or Kitab al-Tab (book of medicine). This method gradually progressed until in the fourth century, works were written under the title of prophetic medicine. As Book of Medicine in Sahih Bukhari, in the third century, and Al- Tibb al-nabawi by Abu Bakr Ibn al-Sunni al-Dinawari (364H/974AD). (Jafariyan, 2017, p. 225)

Traditional medicine

A group of scholars considers Islamic medicine as equivalent to traditional medicine, and they defend the views of Muslim doctors, which are based on the four temperaments of Greeks and Romans, as Islamic medicine (Noormohammadi, 2009). Some define traditional medicine as a collection of ancient medical traditions mixed with folk beliefs (Mohammadi, 2018).

Traditional medicine is a concept that is often used against modern and new medicine, and it does not necessarily mean what the claimants of Islamic medicine say. In traditional medicine, a specific interpretation of the physiology of the body has been presented, the basis of which is based on temper and four humours (akhlate arba'a) and herbal medicine (Ayazi, 2018).

One of the characteristics of traditional medicine is that it is universal, so that, makes it possible for people to access public

health care (AlRawi, et al., 2017). According to this definition, traditional medicine cannot be used in the same sense as Islamic medicine, because Islamic medicine is derived from the revelation and words of the infallibles and has sanctity, while in traditional medicine, some methods and medical treatments are given that may not have such sanctity. On the other hand, traditional medicine was common before Islam and even among non-Muslim nations, such as China and India.

However, some argues that these categorization of medicine to traditional and modern is only useful in depicting of the historical development of this science, not the meaning and nature of that (Aramesh, 2018).

Muslims medicine

Pirouzmand has called it as Muslim medicine. In fact, Islamic medicine is any method and experience of medicine founded by Muslims. Therefore, it cannot be attributed to Islam and called Islamic medicine, but it is Muslims medicine, not Islamic medicine (Noormohammadi, 2009).

The criticism that has been made to this view is that, the claimants of Islamic medicine ascribe the methods and propositions of this science to religion, not to Muslim scholars, also, they give special sanctity and godliness to these propositions (Ayazi, 2018).

Tibb al-Aimma (Imam's medicine)

This term is taken from one of the oldest medical books that has a Shiite approach. In the name of Tibb al-Aimma (Medicine of the Imams), which Abu Attab and Hussain, the sons of Bastam, narrated it. This book is an example of a combined approach of prayer plus medicine (Jafariyan, 2017, p. 222).

Eastern medicine

Ali Akbar Velayati suggests the title of Eastern medicine as an alternative to traditional medicine. Because he believes that in the past, it was not customary to use the term traditional medicine in contrast to modern medicine. As we do not have traditional mathematics and physics, it is better not to use traditional medicine and use oriental medicine instead. Because this reduced the value of traditional medicine in front of modern medicine. (Velayati, 2018)

Medicine in Islamic civilization

Some scholars use the term "medicine in Islamic civilization" as a more appropriate term. This definition refers to the medicine that expresses the services of Muslim doctors and their innovations in the medical knowledge of the world. The problem with this term is that with this concept, Islamic medicine will find more library and historical use (Noormohammadi, 2009).

Others believe that the meaning of the term Islamic in Islamic medicine is a

cultural force arising from the Islamic civilization, which brought together many cultural currents in one place and pushed them forward (Mohammadi, 2018).

Does Islam have an independent medicine?

The first debate that is raised about the Islamic nature of medicine is whether medicine is basically in the realm of religion. Was the purpose of the prophet's mission such things? In response to this question, it has been said that what is certain is that there are verses and traditions related to health and hygiene. As in the Qur'an, it is forbidden to eat wine or corpse, or man is ordered to eat good and clean foods, and avoid overeating.

But the point is whether the teachings of the Qur'an have recommended the health of the body and the prevention of diseases in the direction of human guidance, or that the Qur'an wants to express a specific medical system. From Islamic point of view, because the body is introduced as a tool for upgrading of the soul, the role of a healthy body becomes very important in moral and spiritual perfection of man (Majlisi, 1983, p. 40). This is a minimum perception of Islamic medicine. According to this view, Islamic medicine is not like modern medicine as a systematic science, rather, it is a set of statements that are recommended in the field of health. This is a general

attitude to health, even the detailed instructions and examples that are stated in the religion are to emphasize this general attitude, for example, recommending the use of arak wood to maintain oral and dental hygiene does not mean the only desirable method, but other methods can also be used (Ayazi, 2018, p. 488).

Islamic teachings regarding health

There is no doubt that Islam has provided many teachings in the field of medical issues. On the other hand, it is not possible to consider all these teachings to be applicable to all times, places and moods. Considering that the title of medicine is a title that has a special meaning. Therefore, Islamic medicine needs to be an independent medicine. So, in order to prevent possible abuses and misrepresentations, it is better to use "Islamic teachings regarding health" instead of Islamic medicine. By doing this, both abuses will be prevented and the glory of this group of teachings will be preserved. (Nemati & Khairi, 2019)

The humanistic theory of medicine

Another theory is the humanistic theory of medicine. According to this theory, medicine is a human science, not a divine one. This group limits the scope of religion's involvement in ethics, rulings and beliefs. Because they consider the nature of human

sciences to be different from natural sciences (Ibn-Hindu, 1989, p. 33). The Qur'an and the revealed teachings are the only guides for mankind, not the explainers of sciences such as chemistry, medicine or physics. If traditions and matters related to medicine were narrated by the Prophet or imams, it was because of their experiences and transfer of the knowledge that had a history even before Islam.

Among the supporters of this theory are Ibn al-Matran (d. 1191), Ibn Hindu (d.1032). Contemporary Muslim thinkers such as Imam Khomeini (Khomeini, 2010, p. 434) and Ayatollah Misbah (MisbaheYazdi, 2013, p. 210) also deny the medical nature of Islamic teachings. This discussion has been discussed before Islam. Ibn Abi Usaybi'ah has mentioned the opinions of some of those who derived medicine from experience in the book of Uyun al-Anba fi Tabagat al-Atebba (Ibn-Abi-Usaybi'ah, 1980, p. 155).

The problem with this theory is that there is a group of verses and traditions that express the general principles of health and they cannot be denied. For instance, there are many rulings about purity and impurity, and there is no doubt that they are revealed. These rulings also have health aspects such as impurity of blood and urine, and avoiding all forbidden meat animals etc. (Ayazi, 2018, p. 509).

Ancient Greek medicine and Islamic medicine

Another theory is the transfer of Greek, Indian and Iranian medical knowledge to the Islamic world. Manfred Ullmann is a supporter of this theory. He does not consider the advent of Islam to be effective in changing the state of medicine, and he believes that there is no mention of medicine in the Quran. Of course, he accepts the medical orders attributed to the Prophet, and he refers to collections of hadith in Sahih Muslim and Sahih Bukhari in this regard, but finally, he is concluded that these teachings and recommendations only complete the image of the Jahili period about the medicine. According to Ullmann, the folk medicine of the Arab Jahili era became importance in Islam, and because Muslims thought that these were the teachings of Muhammad, they collected them and mixed them with later hadiths and then interpreted them using the concepts Greek medicine. The final result of the integration of these methods was Prophetic Medicine, and this new Islamic medicine had to stand in opposition to the Hellenistic medicine, which fanatical Muslims were suspicious of it as a science of pagan (Ullmann, 2010, pp. 18-19).

Some Muslim thinkers also believe that many principles and methods of prominent Muslim doctors such as Ibn Sina and Razi were taken from Greek medicine

(MisbaheYazdi, 2013, p. 210). Ibn Khaldun also considers Islamic medicine to be the same as primitive Arab medicine, and he believes that these sciences have nothing to do with Divine Revelation, and they are based upon individual experiences of Civilized Bedouins (Ibn-Khaldun, 1967, p. 150).

Islamic medicine: medicine based on reason, revelation and experience

According to this definition, the explanation of the human health system is based on reason, revelation and experience. In other words, a set of laws and orders related to human health that originates from revealed sources and human experience, history and information, insights and natural tendencies (Ayazi, 2018, p. 493). According to this definition, if doctors adopt a treatment method that is not in the verses and traditions, it is still referred to as Islamic medicine, because it is accepted by religion.

The divinity of Islamic medicine

In contrast to the above view, there is the view of the divinity of medical science. Belief in the divinity of medical science is one of the key points of traditional medicine supporters. This view, not only has many fans in the contemporary era, but also in the past, some of well-known scholars raised this view and defended it, like Mohammad

Ghazali Toosi (Badawi, 1977, p. 27), Ibn Kathir (Ibn-Kathir, 2001, p. 503), Fayz Kashani (FaizeKashani, 1994, p. 57).

Tabrizian, one of the supporters of this theory draws five stages for treatment in terms of Islamic medicine; the first stage of it is the belief that treatment is only in the hands of God and that the doctor or medicine is a medium, the second step is to acknowledge the existence of the Prophet of Islam as the best doctor for mankind, the third stage is acceptance and belief in the prescribed medicine, the fourth step is to choose a doctor and finally the fifth step is to start the treatment (Tabrizian, 2006, p. 24).

According to this point of view, it is possible to realize the medical system with an Islamic approach (Falavarjani & Pajuhandeh, 2022). Proponents of this view must show that Islamic medicine has answers and methods for all medical problems, and Islamic medicine does not need new medical sciences, and it has favorable results in practice and scientific experience (Ayazi, 2018, p. 507).

Some consider Islamic medicine to be a medicine in which God's halal and haram are respected and Islamic dos and don'ts must be taken into consideration. In this view, special attention is paid to the human soul and the spiritual dimension of man in his excellence and health. In this definition, a comprehensive view of human being is

taken and human health is considered in different physical and mental dimensions

The criticism that has been made on this approach of Islamic medicine is that by adding ethics to a knowledge, it cannot be considered Islamic. Rather, to define a science, the foundations, and methods must be clear (Ayazi, 2018, p. 492).

Narrative medicine

In narrative medicine, the science of medicine is a divine science, the basis of which is hadiths, and its source of knowledge is the revelation and knowledge of the Prophet. Sheikh Mufid believes that due to the multitude of medical traditions the existence of narrative and Islamic medicine is possible (Mufid, 1993, p. 144). By extracting the basics of Islamic medicine from verses and traditions, Tabrizian has tried to provide medicine based on Islamic teachings (Tabrizian, 2006, p. 23).

Some opponents of narrative medicine believe that quantity and quality of existing medicine narratives are not to the extent that it can be possible to present a comprehensive medical system with it. In addition, various motivations for falsifying medical hadiths, along with the weak citation of a large number of these hadiths, have distorted their validity (Karbasizadeh, 2012). Sheikh Sadouq also believed in such an approach (Sadouq, 1993, p. 115).

Jafariyan believes that the sources of narrations in narrative medicine are sometimes personal experiences and sometimes beliefs left over from before Islam. Methodologically, narrative medicine relies on hadith-based and non-rational insight, and the attribution of medical traditions to the Prophet has also created a kind of holiness for them. Another important point is that the jurists have never defined what is obligatory and what is forbidden, based on these hadiths. Even they have mentioned the medical traditions in the ethics section (Jafariyan, 2017, p. 242).

Adverse consequences of prayer therapy

Some belief in spatial Quranic healing effect (Elkadi, 1985), and in general in positive effect of prayers and supplications on the psyche of the patient especially when it is combined with conventional remedies (Nagamia, 2010). Proponents of this view believe that there are many prayers in Islamic traditions for the treatment of diseases. There are also many cases of intercession with the Qur'an, remembrance and charity in hadiths (Tabrizian, 2006, p. 98).

On the other hand, empirical research shows that some Islamic medical activities that take place in the form of prayer and Quranic faith-healing activities have the

potential for adverse consequences (Adib, 2004).

However, some believe that according to Islam's emphasis on rationality, the definition of Islamic medicine is far beyond such common notions (Zarvandi, 2022).

Conclusion

A few points about the conclusion of the discussion can be mentioned:

1. In this article, different definitions and approaches about Islamic medicine were mentioned along with criticisms.
2. The definition of Islamic medicine can certainly vary depending on the perspective, which may be historical, religious, scientific, geopolitical, etc.
3. Islamic medicine as a science including specialized knowledge, professional abilities, moral, religious and spiritual insights and values, new technologies with an emphasis on the inherent human dignity.
4. If someone says that there is no attention to medicine in Islam, he does not have correct information about Islam.
5. Islamic medicine has very good capacities, although there are serious criticisms against it. Attention should be paid to the

existing criticisms and the shortcomings of the Islamic medicine should be removed. For example, Islamic medicine requires acceptable scientific methods and indicators.

6. Modern and ancient medicine both have advantages and disadvantages that cannot be rejected in general or both cannot be fully approved. Criticism in the method of treatment or the effectiveness of drugs is raised in traditional medicine as well as in modern medicine. At least some of the problems or gaps in modern medicine can be corrected by using traditional medicine.
7. There is no doubt that Islamic doctors have benefited from the writings of Greek doctors, but it must be accepted that they have added many information and findings to the previous collections. These findings either had a religious them, which had reached them through hadiths, or were the personal experiences and findings of Muslim doctors.
8. Today, herbal medicine is accepted in most countries. Considering the disadvantages of chemical drugs, it can be a suitable alternative in the treatment of many common diseases. This can be under the full

supervision of the country's pharmaceutical system.

9. Islamic medicine should be considered separate from the prescription of herbal medicine in traditional drugstores. A person who works in traditional medicine pharmacies and has a little familiarity with the properties of medicinal plants is not necessarily an expert in Islamic medicine.
10. Islamic medicine is a specialized science and it should be removed from the general and customary state. It is suggested that instead of rejecting this science in general, proper organization should be done in teaching it and how to practice medicine, and a system should be designed and drawn for it.
11. The elements that should be used in the design of the comprehensive system of Islamic medicine are:
 - a. Philosophical and Islamic attitude in the design of Islamic medicine
 - b. Dynamic structural design for traditional medicine
 - c. Presenting a suitable and up-to-date operational and executive model
 - d. Targeting according to the current situation in dealing with modern medicine.

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