



البؤنة الأولى للحفلات الطبية في الزيارة الأربعينية

Social determinants of the epidemic of communicable diseases in Arbaeen mass gathering with emphasis on Iranian pilgrims

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Introduction: The epidemic of communicable diseases is one of the most important health threats in religious communities such as the Arbaeen mass gathering. The high population density in Arbaeen mass gathering has the potential to formation and spread a variety of communicable diseases. As the event enters the summer and the specific political conditions in Iraq, and in particular the discussion of the possibility of bioterrorism, it is necessary to consider the various determinants of the epidemic of communicable diseases in order to determine ways to counter them. On the other hand, cultural and social differences among the participants in Arbaeen rituals have led to differences in pilgrims' health and self-care behaviors. Pilgrims from different countries have different attitudinal-behavioral patterns and this differentiates their exposure to the disease. This causes different types of preventive and therapeutic behaviors when infectious diseases occur. The present article seeks to identify the social determinants that influence the health and self-care behaviors of pilgrims before and after an epidemic.

Research Method: The study was conducted through a systematic review of previous studies, especially in Iran, and a semi-structured interview with Iranian pilgrims present at the Arbaeen mass gathering. A review of published articles on the prevalence of communicable diseases in Iran has identified the social factors affecting the health and self-care behaviors affecting the prevalence of communicable diseases. In addition, were investigated semi-structured interviews with 10 participants of Arbaeen mass gathering over the past few years, their health and self-care behaviors and their observations of Iranian pilgrims behaviors.



البؤنة الأولى للحذات الطبية في الزيارة الأربعينية

Social Determinants of Health (SDH): Since the 1990s, the term social determinants of health has become increasingly common (Feyzabadi et al., 2017). The concept of socio-economic determinants of health addresses socio-economic factors affecting health or illness (Graham, 2004). This concept refers to social conditions that include one's relationships with others. Thus, in addition to factors such as race, socioeconomic status, and gender, stressful life events (such as the death of loved ones, loss of employment, etc.) and it includes variables such as the quality of social support (Link & Phelan, 2001). To this end, social determinants of health identify different points and paths of social health production (Graham, 2004) and examine the social context, namely, "elements and processes that are outside the consciousness of the individual" (Burke, et al, 2009). According to the WHO (2011), The social determinants of health are the conditions in which people are born, grow, work, live, and age, and the wider set of forces and systems shaping the conditions of daily life.

Research Results: The results show that some of the social characteristics of Iranian pilgrims in consumption habits (emphasis on drinking mineral water, use of disposable containers, unwillingness to use street food, etc.) and social interactions (social support in times of trouble, Organizing in small group gatherings, small interactions, etc.) can be effective in preventing the transmission of diseases during the epidemic. These characteristics reduce the risk of contact with disease by reducing exposure to pathogens and reduce the chance of transmission if a person is infected.

On the other hand, some characteristics can act as booster factors in the spread of diseases. These social factors can be categorized and addressed within these categories: Semantic constructs of disease in pilgrimage (To endure the pain and illness of traveling as a reward, Belief in the disease as a divine experiment, etc.), Social pressure at the end of the walk (Stigma in not Getting to Karbala), Harmful Behaviors (Use Hookahs and drugs), interactive habits (Handshake and kissing each other), distrust of official government systems, inappropriate self-care behaviors (self-medication, drug overuse). These characteristics, depending on the socio-cultural context of formation of religious and social personality of Iranian pilgrims, can be effective in spreading the disease among pilgrims and transmitting the disease to their country of origin.

Key Words: Social Determinants, Arbaeen Mass Gathering, Communicable Diseases, Epidemiology



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