



# البوئنة الأولى للحجاء الطبية في الزيارة الأربعينية

## The Problems of Arbaeen Walk; the Health and Hygiene of Pilgrims

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### المناقشة / Discussion

#### findings & Conclusion

The findings showed that pilgrims did not receive proper hygiene and health information before or during the walk both in Iran and Iraq. Most pilgrims, especially the educated ones, have brought along essentials such as masks, painkillers, cold pills, burnt ointments, and so on. Most interviewees have pointed out the experience of colds, blisters, and so on in themselves or in travel companions. High satisfaction with the quantity of food and water has been reported, but most often consider the quality of these substances to be poor. Also, more than half of the interviewees reported the experience of dealing with drivers who did not consider the driving rules, fraud and abuse and fear of terrorist attacks that endanger the physical and mental health of pilgrims.

Moreover, most people prefer to participate in family and friends groups. Besides some of the issues mentioned, most interviewees were eager to repeat this experience and strongly recommend that to others. Like previous studies (Imani Khoshkhoo & Bod ,2017. Pouyafar,2017 and Bod,2019) it was obvious, despite the problems and troubles they faced, pilgrims were less likely to highlight them because of their spiritual and religious motivations.

Our review showed that unfortunately there aren't enough academic and scientific studies about this huge ceremony and doing these researches are an urgent need.

Based on our findings, it is necessary to inform Mawkibs about food and beverage hygiene, providing proper bathroom, restrooms, and adequate sleeping facilities, and monitoring the drivers. Using different notification methods such as installing health and medical banners along the way, using SMS and social networking tools to increase health information for pilgrims, proper health patrols will increase the satisfaction of pilgrims and make better use of this valuable journey. providing professional and controlled transportation companies are an urgent need.

**Keywords:** Arbaeen Walk, Pilgrims, Health Issues, Iran, Iraq

### الملخص / Abstract

The Arbaeen walking is one the biggest ritual between Muslims especially between Shia Muslims. This ceremony has a lot of different functions and for that, it must be investigated in different aspects. This study focuses on health problems that pilgrims experience in during walking. For this reason, we used the interview tool for gathering data. The results showed that pilgrims did not receive proper health information. Most interviewees have pointed out the experience of colds, blisters, and so on in themselves or in travel companions. In general, giving enough and suitable health information before and during the Arbaeen walking in different ways is necessary.

### المقدمة / Introduction

Pilgrimage is a substantial part of religious rituals in different cultures. Especially, in Shia denomination of Islam, this issue has a particular importance, and the considerable population of pilgrims in Arbaeen walk during recent years illustrates it. A remarkable number of Iranian Shias participate in this event each year as well, and it is quite popular among them. Besides religious aspects, this international event is important in sociocultural, political, economic, and health sense. So, it is necessary to study the Arbaeen walk because of different dimensions as well as a large number of involved actors.

Present experiences show that the intensity of pilgrims in a short period has caused many problems for pilgrims and authorities in Iraq and Iran including currency problems and Visa process, terrorist threats, the increment of the road accident danger, the lack of hygiene and health problems. This article concentrates on the health issues of pilgrims to provide solutions to reduce these problems.

#### Research Method

For gathering data We use the qualitative method in this study using semi-structured in-depth interviews. The interview method is one the best way for this kind of researches (Blaikie, 2009 and Uwe, 2009). Eighteen interviews were conducted with ten male and eight female interviewees. Theoretical sampling was used in the process of data gathering and the interview conducting was finished considering the theoretical saturation.

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