

Understanding

How Islamic Faith Underlies All Aspects of Somali Health

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“Everything good that happens to you (O Man) is from God, everything bad that happens to you is from your own actions”. (Quran 4:79).”

Contextual Background

Greater Somalia (b4 1884)

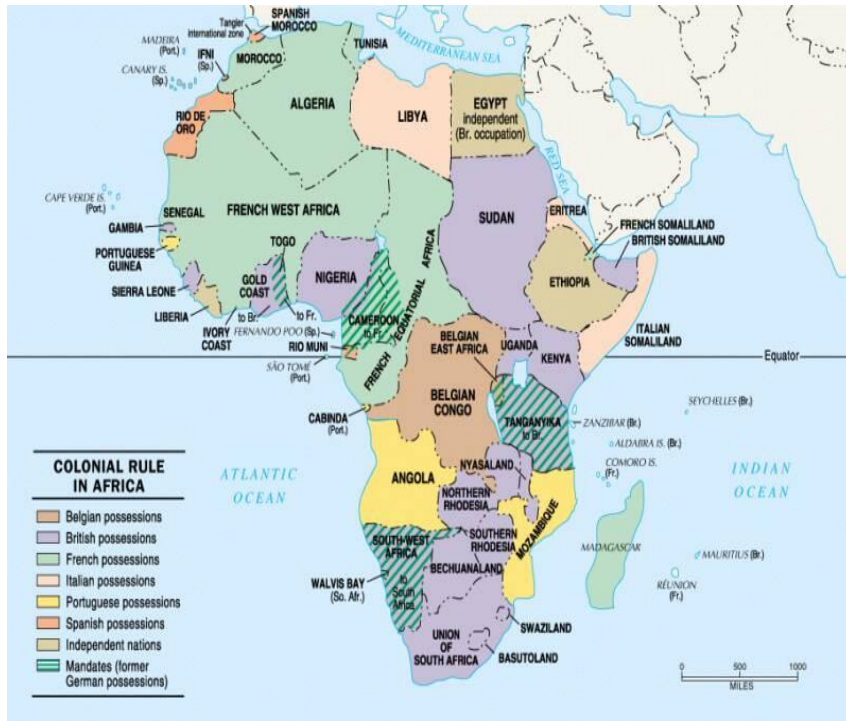


Geography and People

- Horn of Africa (Africans)
- Culture: indigenous African culture
- Pastoralist Nomadic/Farmers
- Arab and Asiatic influences
- Islamic transformation 7th AD
 - Kingdoms and Sultanates fiefdoms

Historical Background

European Colonization



Languages/enriched Somali cultures

Islamic Civilization


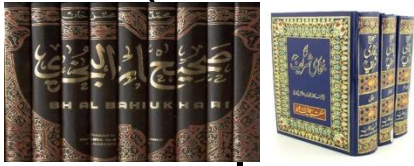
- Education: from credible to grave
- Constitution: lifestyle, commerce to family matters
- In 2000, the literacy rate in Somalia was 24%
- Urban population: 37% of total population (2010)
 - Due to nomadic/rural pops
 - 1960 -1969/1969 -1990
 - 1991 to date

Islamization Process

- Islam: "submission" - submission to the will of God

| Five Pillars of Islam | Articles of Islamic Faith |
|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Declaration of Faith: Shahada2. Performing Prayers: 5 times/day3. Giving Zakat (Support of the needy)4. Fasting Ramadan: 9th month5. The Pilgrimage to Makkah: Once in a lifetime | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Believe in One God2. Believe in all messengers of God3. Believe in all the scriptures and revelations of God4. Believe in the angels of God5. Believe in the last day of judgment6. Believe in Qadar: fate; divine foreordainment/predestination |

Islamic Culture

1. Quran : Allah (God's) word 
2. Prophet Muhammad's actions (Sunnah: 610 – 633 AD)
 1. Ijma', the consensus of opinion; and
 2. Qiyas, reasoning by analogy.
3. Islamic Calender (Hijra) began 622 AD
 1. Weekdays Sat- Thur/ Friday weekend
 2. Today (May 22nd. 13) is 12th Jamadu Thani 1434

Health Beliefs



- Health is seen as one of the greatest blessing of God
- Purpose of Life: Worship Allah (God) Alone
- Good health is something for which we are accountable to Allah (God).
- Prevention : Cleanliness/Purity, Haram and Halal guidelines
- Curative care “There is no ailment but there is cure except aging and death”

Four Tier Model

Spiritual healing:

- “O Mankind: There has come to you a direction from your Lord and a healing for the (disease) in your hearts - and for those who believe a guidance and mercy!" (Quran 10:57)
- "And We sent down in the Quran that which is healing and a mercy to those who believe..." (Quran 17:82).
- Quran recitation, honey, black seeds, herbal medicine
 - To ward off evil/ prevention/cure
 - Magic and folk healing forbidden

Primary Medical Care

Nutrition:

- "O mankind: Eat of what is lawful and good on earth" (Quran 2: 168).
- **Moderation/Wise Spending and Avoidance of Extravagance and Extremes**
 - "O you who believe! Make not unlawful the good things which God has made lawful for you, but commit no excess: for God loves not those given to excess." (Qur'an [5:87](#))
 - Eat and drink, but waste not by excess, for Allah loves not the wasters" (Quran 7:31).

Sexual Health

- Conservative in nature
 - Fornication/adultery/homosexuality punishments
 - Do not support sex education in schools
 - Early marriage encouraged (polygamy in culture)
 - Natural contraception recorded,
 - Abortions: *“Kill not your children for fear of want: We shall provide sustenance for them as well as for you: verily the killing of them is a great sin”. (Qur'an 17:31)*

Family Planning

Procreation

- "And indeed We sent messengers before you and made for them wives and offspring" [Quran 13:38]
- "Wealth and children are the adornment of the life of this world."
 - [Quran 18:46]
- "When a person dies all his deeds come to an end except for three things:— a charity of endowment, beneficial knowledge that is left behind and *a pious child who prays for him.* *Hadith*

Value of Breast Feeding

- Quran 2:233

- (The mothers should suckle their children for two whole years, (that is) for those (parents) who desire to complete the term of suckling, but the father of the child shall bear the cost of the mother's food and clothing on a reasonable basis. No person shall have a burden laid on him greater than he can bear. No mother shall be treated unfairly on account of her child, nor father on account of his child.
.....If they both decide on weaning, by mutual consent, and after due consultation, there is no sin on them. And if you decide on a foster suckling-mother for your children, there is no sin on you, provided you pay (the mother) what you agreed (to give her) on a reasonable basis. And fear Allah and know that Allah is All-Seer of what you do.)
- «إِنَّ ابْنِي مَاتَ فِي النَّدْيِ، إِنَّ لَهُ مُرْضِعًا فِي الْجَنَّةِ» (My son has died on the breast and he has someone to suckle him in Paradise.)

Child Health

- Childhood Immunizations

- Hesitant due to porcine gelatin ingredients

- “Somalis are generally conservative about these Halal and pork issues. And when it comes to Halal food and Halal issues, they are extremely sensitive”.*

- Fear of uncertainty/fate and destiny

- “ a huge level of the Somali community have a concern the side effect of immunization for the children. And they believe, some of them, that immunization cause autism for the children”.*

- “Somalis believe that their life can only be taken by Allah; they may die from a disease but it is because their time has ended.”*

What should a Somali do diagnoses confirmed?

- Accept it as a will of God as Kaffara for his sin, and ask him to remove the affliction.
- “And if God touches thee with affliction, none can remove it but He: if He touches thee with happiness He has power over all things”
 - (Quran 6:17).

Traditional Treatments

- Quran recitations, Dhikrs and Ruqiyah
 - About Fatiha“ What made you know it was a ruqya spiritual cure” Bukhari # 264, # 476
 - Mental Health and Wellbeing: Jinn and human sickness concept (Somali Mental Health Conference, life practitioners perform practice)
 - Are you interested attending?

Mental Health in Somalis

- Exposure to Violence and PTSD Symptoms Among Somalis
- Continue to encounter traumatic events in new home
- Thinking too much: “Everything hurts us, this is why we can’t learn things, we are physically in class but the mind is elsewhere” (personal com.)

Mental Health in Somalis

- Resilient coping strategies: ignoring, denial, enduring pain, prayers, and sleeping.
- Positive relationship exist between both social support and religiosity with health
- Underutilization of Islam methods/parner Muslim providers
- What is the solution?

Thank You!

Comparison of traditional & religious dress

