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UNDERSTANDING ANGER- SCIENTIFIC AND RELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

Anger just like other Psychological problems can affects the individual and social life of people. With the new insights from psychology and from the religion perspective, it is now possible to attempt to present a renewed understanding of anger and how it should be managed in our daily lives. Anger itself cannot be a mental disorder but cause the other problems in human behavior such as depression anxiety, stress, and disappointment. The need is to avoid anger in order to prevent the other psychological issues. The recent article deals with the identifying some of the partial factors that cause anger, its effect and the different ways of controlling it from religious and scientific perspective. Anger leads to various problems which may affect a person's own self as well as affecting one's relation with others. Anger can be caused by negative emotions which produces worry and irritation. The need is of controlling one's anger which is so wide prevalent in society. Finally, we found that there is a consensus between religious and scientific view point on counteracting anger. Islam as religion of peace and logic provides effective meditations and prescriptions in this regard.

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INTRODUCTION

With the new insights from psychology and from the religion perspective, it is now possible to attempt to present a renewed understanding of anger and how it should be managed in our daily lives. Anger has been taken as the act of trouble by something or someone that causes anxiety or it can be emotion which produces worry or irritation (White and Turner, 2014). Psychologists described anger as an emotion or passion against the reason (Ibid). The word emotion indicates as a feeling that moves for action (Whitehead and Whitehead, 1996). Emotions are powerful forces within human body in providing psychic energy for action. It affects human behavior in both the negative and positive response (Ibid). If a man wants to know himself he should observe his emotions as the real man lies under his emotions (Denson et al., 2011).

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From this perspective, it is understood that a man in anger does not act rationally rather anger blocks all the empiricism, humanism and rationalism (Ibid). According to Cosgrave (2007), anger is the most commonly and poorly handled emotion in daily life both personally and socially (Cosgrave, 2001). Emotions can be understood through two aspects: a pleasure-displeasure aspects and an activation-deactivation dimension. Anger and anxiety can both be described as unpleasant, negative states with an activating effect on behavior (Kashani et al., 1990). Thus the anger may be interpreted as offensive or retaliate behavior caused by any real or expected injury. When anyone gets angry, he reacts emotionally evensometimes physically (Cosgrave, 2001). Anger is negative emotion which leads to serious consequences such as aggression (Ibid) and finally committing crimes (Mathews, 2011). Anger stands for loss of control, irritation, rage, stress or displeasure which can be a response to real or expected loss, failure insult or violence. As human being, getting angry is common to all, but everyone expresses anger differently.

Research found that men usually express anger publicly and women express through tears (Wilkowski and Robinson, 2008). Other than the gender based expression of anger, it is important to note that expression of anger can be according to the mind and eye of beholder. Situation does not always cause to anger sometimes, it is how one perceives the situation as well. So it is one's belief about oneself and others to response to the anger (Sofield *et al.*, 1990).

Anger in Religious Perspective

Within the religious domain the anger has been taken as negative expression of human beings which should be controlled or used in a productive way. Anger is referred with many words in Islam. Some of these are: Ghaiz, Sakhat, and Ghazab and Harad representing various states of anger (Kailain, 2007) Ghaiz refers to a condition that speeds up blood circulation in human body and this anger is directed towards oneself when one is angry with oneself. Ghaiz is thus found in the behaviour of people and the Holy Quran stresses on overcoming this type of anger. The second state is Sakhat, which is the anger of a higher authority on lower ones such as anger of master over his servant due to 'going against expectations of the master' (Ibid). The third state is Ghadhab which is similar to sakhat but represents a higher degree of anger intensity than sakhat. refers to offending the lower by the higher authority and vice versa (Ibid).

Reasons for Getting Angry

There are various stimuli that may cause anger. Some of them are frustration due to missing a need, suffering due to some mal-treatment of injustice, threat to self-esteem or being physically assaulted (Douglas *et al.*, 2009). The cause of aggression in young children is developed due to improper training of children by their parents, teachers and the social institutions (Agnew, 2001). Socially human beings are depended upon one other to full fill their individual and collective needs. These needs create expectations from each other. Sometimes when these expectations are not fulfilled, it creates strain and negative responses in behavior. People usually get angry when they feel that they are or someone they are concerned are offended (Agnew *et al.*, 2002) which may even result in committing crime (Agnew, 2006). Sometimes people get angry when they feel that they are or someone they are concerned are offended, disrespected, and violated by others. For example if our car is damaged by the other car or driver, we feel angry. But if that is done by any situational force or by our own mistake, we will feel sad or guilt instead of angry (Agnew *et al.*, 1992). Similarly, when people are facing some expected or realistic threats to their own self or to people they care concerned, or may be when they are verbally or physically being tortured by the others, when one's self esteem is at the stake, when they are facing financial, social, moral loss caused by others, when they are treated unfairly and feeling powerless, or facing strong opposition (De Wall *et al.*, 2007). But it does not mean that anger is the only solution to such types of issues or problems. Sometimes these issues or problems can be solved peacefully with the negotiation or positive response from either side (Ellis *et al.*, 2004). Once when we experienced the anger caused by the others, we start thinking wrongly about them on the basis of our self-

assumptions. Then every situation is labeled or perceived accordingly. Sometimes the effect of anger lasts for years because it was not dealt sufficiently on the spot, or was left unresolved (Baron, 2009). When people get angry no matter for any reason it can cause many problems both at individual and social level. Anger may lead to aggression which finally degenerates into sadness or depressed mode (Peled and Moretti, 2010).

Effects of Anger

Anger may cause multidimensional psychological responses in people (Hilmert *et al.*, 2013). Anger can be considered as one of seven major or capital Sins in Christianity as it give rise to many other sins (New testament). Long term anger causes many mental disorders; such as depression, anxiety, self-pity and even self-harm (Card and Little, 2006). People having long term anger cannot make effective or productive decisions, they used to take more risks than others. Anger may affect self-regulation capacity of a person (Ibid) and has a negative activating effect on behavior (Kashani *et al.*, 1990). Negative emotions like stress, anxiety and anger increase the blood pressure of the patient (Shapiro *et al.*, 2001). People with anger complaints experience major function disorders such as switching attention and inhibiting irrelevant long-term memories. Anger may also impede spiritual nourishment and growth (Ibid). Angry people cannot have long term relations with others in society. Anger may also instigate one to take revenge and commit crime (Baron, 2009). According to Mathew (2011), people are more likely to take drugs to alleviate their anger. Anger can affect family and social relations, work performance and abilities which may ultimately lead to personal and social isolation (Mathews, 2011). Many problems arise due to unresolved and badly managed anger. Some of these are depression, anxiety, ulcer, strokes, brain *hemorrhage*, high blood pressure and even cancer (Ibid).

Counteracting Anger

Anger can be controlled by religious meditation. Islam as practical religion of peace and harmony provides practical meditations and benefits in controlling anger. There are various instances in Islam that stresses on anger management. Once, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) asked his companions about what makes a stronger person. One of them replied that the one who defeats others in wrestling. The Prophet (SAW) replied 'No'; the stronger person is the one who controls himself at the time of anger (Bukhari, 1986). At another instance, the Holy Prophet (SAW) said that anger is like fire, which destroys the good deeds and leads on to hell (Ibid. Hadith). Once a person asked Prophet Muhammad (SAW) how one can save himself from the wrath of Allah. The Prophet (saw) replied not to express your anger. At another instance, the Prophet (saw) said that avoiding anger is a good deed (Ibid. Hadith). Religions also offer reward and bounties for those who control themselves in anger. "There is no sip greater in reward near Allah than the sip of anger" (Mojtabai, 2006). The Prophet (saw) never expressed his anger even at the time of visit to Taif when people of Taif treated prophet (SAW) with disrespect (Tabri Tarekh-e-Tabri. Matab, 1987).

During the conquest of Mecca in 630 AD, the Prophet (saw) announced a general amnesty to all his adversaries and proclaimed the day as 'Day of Mercy', though the adversaries would punish the Muslim often during the early years of Islam (Ibid) Keeping in mind the above practices and teachings of Prophet Muhammad (saw), it is emphasized that one should avoid anger due to its negative consequences. With reference to scientific perspective, anger can be controlled through various practices and actions. These include taking deep breaths during the time of anger, repetition of the word 'relax' and 'take it easy', and physical exercises like yoga (Sigfusdottir *et al.*, 2004).

RESULTS

The research findings comprises of following discussions.

- Emotions are powerful forces within human body in providing psychic energy for action. Anger as an emotional problem is negative and against the reason because it blinds from logical and reasonable decisions and behavior.
- Anger may cause multidimensional psychological responses in people. It can be considered as one of seven major or capital Sins in Christianity as it give rise to many other sins. According to the teachings of Christianity anger should be avoided.
- There are various stimuli that may cause anger. Some of them are frustration due to missing a need, suffering due to some mal-treatment of injustice, threat to self-esteem or being physically assaulted, strain and stress due to over burdened, disappointment due to neglected responses.
- Anger can be controlled by religious meditation. Islam provides practical meditations and benefits in controlling anger. There are various instances in Islamic history especially in life of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) that stresses on anger management.
- Anger management can affect positively on both individual and society.
- Anger can be controlled by religious meditation .Islam as practical religion of peace and harmony provides practical meditations and benefits in controlling anger. There are various instances in Islam that stresses on anger management.
- With reference to scientific perspective, anger can be controlled through various practices and actions. These include taking deep breaths during the time of anger, repetition of the word 'relax' and 'take it easy', and physical exercises like yoga.
- Keeping in mind the above practices and teachings of Prophet Muhammad (saw), it is emphasized that one should avoid anger due to its negative consequences.

Conclusion

Anger just like other Psychological problems can affects the individual and social life of people. With the new insights from psychology and from the religion perspective, it is now possible to attempt to present a renewed understanding of anger and how it should be managed in our daily lives.

Anger itself cannot be a mental disorder but cause the other problems in human behavior such as depression anxiety, stress, and disappointment. The need is to avoid anger in order to prevent the other psychological issues. The recent article deals with the identifying some of the partial factors that cause anger, its effect and the different ways of controlling it from religious and scientific perspective. Anger leads to various problems which may affect a person's own self as well as affecting one's relation with others. Anger can be caused by negative emotions which produces worry and irritation. The need is of controlling one's anger which is so wide prevalent in society. Finally, we found that there is a consensus between religious and scientific view point on counteracting anger. Islam as religion of peace and logic provides effective meditations and prescriptions in this regard. Getting angry is common to human beings however, there people differ in counteracting it. Its negative consequences are loss of control, abusing, threatening, blaming others, aggression, physical and mental torture and even committing crime (Tittle *et al.*, 2008). The need is of properly controlling anger .Psychiatrists suggest different methods to control the harmful effects of anger. Islam has already given these practical methods through Quranic teachings and practices of Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Which include changing ones posture, (Winstok, 2011) self-suggestion for relaxation and diverting ones attention (Kollei and Martin, 2013). However, the religious tenets and precepts can better help in overcoming anger. Islam as practical religion provides meditations and prescriptions to resolve the psychological problems. Both approaches refer to avoid anger.

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