

5th World Congress on

Control and Prevention of

HIV/AIDS, STDs & STIs

June 19-20, 2017 London, UK

Religions and marriage for the prevention and control of sexually transmitted diseases

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Religion may be defined as a cultural system of behaviors and practices, based on beliefs about supernatural beings and sacred texts that help humanity to live peacefully in a community. About 84% of world's population is linked to one of five major religions: Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism and Buddhism. Besides others, one thing common in these religions is marriage, which is a life-long cultural and spiritual union between man and women, and serves important objectives: propagation of human race and provision of a companion of life for love and enjoyment. Religions give great emphasis to marriage and discourage immorality and adultery. In Holy Bible, it is narrated, "Then the Lord God said, it is not good that the man (Adam) should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him" (Genesis: 2, 18). Moreover, it is mentioned, "Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous" (Hebrews 13:4). Holy Quran describes marriage as a divine favor from God Almighty, "Among his signs is that he created for you spouses from among yourselves, that you may live in peace with them, and spread love and compassion between you and them; surely, there are signs in that for those who reflect" (30; 21). In Judaism marriage is an important event and avoiding from it is considered as unnatural. In Vedic Hindu traditions and Buddhism also marriage is a sacred ceremony and lifelong commitment between wife and husband. Present article is aimed to project religions and marriage as significant factors in the prevention and control of sexually transmitted diseases, particularly Human Immune-deficiency Virus (HIV) infection, which is becoming epidemic worldwide and there is no effective vaccine or treatment for that so far.

Biography

Mohammad Akram Randhawa graduated from King Edward Medical College, Lahore, in 1973 and completed his Masters from the University of Punjab in 1977. He did his Post-graduate training in Clinical Pharmacology at St Bartholomew's Hospital, London, UK. Later he obtained PhD degree from the Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad. Currently, he is working as Professor and Head of the Department of Pharmacology, College of Medicine, Northern Border University. He has around 50 publications in the international scientific journals, which include his original contributions related to the transport of drugs across body membranes, gastro-esophageal reflux disease and *Nigella sativa* (Black seed).

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