

Daily Activities for Women with Vaginal Bleedings from the Islamic Perspectives

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Abstract: The objective of this study is to discuss about the Islamic viewson daily activities which are not included acts of specific worship among women who are experiencing vaginal bleedings, This to understand what are the kinds of daily activities that are permitted and not. Hence, it acts as a simple guideline for them in managing daily tasks including those that involve social interactions. The method used in this research is qualitative. Data are collected from literature research which involved references on tafseer books, reviews of al-Sunnah, fiqhmuhtabar books, comparative fiqh books and other related short brochures. The findings have shown that women with vaginal bleeding such as menstruation (haidh) or post-natal bleeding (nifas) may perform daily activities such as interacting and serving their husbands, cutting hair and nails, fondling that does not bring to intercourse, allowing a husband to have intercourse with his wife in order to prevent sexual misconduct (zina), eating and drinking during Ramadhan daytime and visiting dying people. For women with vaginal bleeding other than mensus and post-natal (istihaadah), they may perform all daily activities mentioned above because they are considered as ritually pure,except in having intercourse with husband, if advised by medical experts for it may cause harm and certain diseases to the husbands.

Key words: Daily activities, fiqhmuqaran, haidh, nifas istihaadah, zina

INTRODUCTION

Daily activities other than intrinsic ibadah for women with vaginal bleedings have different positions in Islam, similar to the case regarding the daily ibadah for these women. Vaginal bleedings occur in many forms. The ones being focused in this research are hayd istihaadah and nifas. Hayd (menses ormonorhea) is the most common type of blood associated to women. Hayd is also known as the monthly menstrual period and it temporarily absent during pregnancy or with the presence of nifas. Sometimes it stops temporarily and sometimes permanently due to certain illnesses. There are also cases where women do not get their menses for their whole life due to geneticalreasons or certain illnesses.

On the other hand istihaadah is the blood discharge from women's genitals that occur at irregular times. It is not hayd which occur on monthly basis for women. It is also not nifas which is the post-natal blood discharge. Sometimes istihaadah is the continuance of hayd and sometimes it is not. Istihaadah is different than hayd based on several criteria.

Nifas is the blood flow after childbirth, according to scholars of Hanafi and al-Syafi'i sects. The blood that comes out during or before childbirth is not nifas but istihaadah. Women involved in this situation (blood flow during or before childbirth) must do wudhu and offer salah, if capable (Zuhaili, 1985).

Based on the survey performed on teachers at the Institusi Perguruan Kampus Datok Razali (Educators Institute, Datok Razali Campus) and teachers from some schools near the University of Sultan Zainal Abidin which also involved explanations on the rulings related to hayd istihaadah and nifas to over 100 teachers in 2015, it was found that some of them were still confused about the differences between those three types of blood in terms of their status in performing daily activities. Some still assumed that activities for women having hayd istihaadah and nifas that do not involve intrinsic ibadah are limited. The issue is is that really so? This is among the main reasons for the researchers to produce this study; to clarify on the rulings regarding daily activities for women having the three types of blood, so women are aware what daily activities are allowed and what are not.

Publications on the topic of daily activities for women having vaginal bleedings are scarce and rarely discussed in terms of specific and complete subject by far. On the contrary, publications in terms of assessing the elements that are considered as bodily fluids such as hayd, nifas istihaadah, mani (semen or liquid released when one reached climax), blood and others are numerous in fiqh books in the forms of subtopic and sometimes a complete topic in a complete book. The researcher himself produced two books titled “Soal Jawab Mudah Berkaitan Haid, Nifas dan Istihadah (Simple Q and A Related to Hayd, Nifas and Istihadah)” and “Soal Jawab Mudah Berkaitan Junub (Simple Q and A Related to Junub)”, nevertheless these publications only involve certain types of blood discharges for women which are normal for human beings and the discussions were focused merely on the debates regarding the rulings and the types of ibadah that may and may not be offered by women having vaginal bleedings. Besides that, there are also journal articles publications in English such as Cavernous Hemangioma of Anterior Urethra: an unusual cause of vagina bleeding (Ahuja *et al.*, 2016), effect of mifepristone treating abnormal vagina bleeding after norplant implant (Xu *et al.*, 2015) and medical device for reducing bleeding but these papers only focused on the discussions with relate to treatments and surgical procedures related to womens’ vaginas while having vaginal bleeding.

Other than that, the book al-Fiqh al-Islami Wa Adillatuh (Zuhaili, 1985) touched on the discussions about certain bodily fluids such as hayd istihaadah and nifas while discussing about things that are categorized as najis (impurity) that invalid atessalah but it did not specifically focus on the daily activities that may be performed by women having hayd istihaadah and nifas. Similar reviews and analysis was featured in the book al-Fiqh al-Muyassar, al-Mu’tamad Fi al-Fiqh al-Syafi’i (Zuhaili, 2007) and al-Fiqh al-Manhaji ‘Ala al-Madhib al-Syafi’i (Bugha *et al.*, 2013). Besides that, the discussions in the book Fiqh al-Taharah was lengthier than the books mentioned above. So does the discussion in the book Jami’ Ahkam al-Nisa’, in fact the book Jami’ Ahkam al-Nisa’ discussed issues related to some bodily fluids especially those related to hayd, nifas istihaadah, mani and others in a more comprehensive way by including the daleel (evidences) from the Quran and al-Sunnah (teachings, sayings, deeds, actions and silent approvals of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) as well as analysis on those daleel even though it is more leaned towards the concept of fiqhmuqaran (comparative fiqh). The researches, even though analyzed and elaborated in certain aspects and not comprehensive in nature have helped the researchers to obtain the needed information

up to some extent, even though it does not fulfil the needs in the topic daily interactions for women with vaginal bleedings according to the Islamic perspectives itself.

Writing method used in this study is based on qualitative research. Data were taken and collected from literature research by referring to the al-Mukhtar library, the University of Sultan Zainal Abidin. References were focused on fiqhmuqtabar books (Islamic laws adopted by scholars of the four sects), hadith (a collection of traditions containing sayings of the Prophet Muhammad SAW), syarah hadith (the explanations about the validity and flaws of hadith’s chain of narrators and texts, explanation of its meaning and extraction of rulings and lessons from it), fiqh of medicines books and fiqh of medicine encyclopedias. All data and information obtained was analyzed and made complete with supporting nas (verses from the Quran or tradition of the Holy Prophet used as a foundation for Islamic law) from al-Kitab and al-Sunnah in order to get a more accurate answer on the status of bodily fluids from the perspectives of Islam.

Authoritative data obtained from primary and secondary sources were gathered and categorized based on priority. Then, the sources of the data were carefully studied and objectively analyzed so as to maintain the quality and validity of this study.

DAILY INTERACTIONS FOR WOMEN WITH VAGINAL BLEEDINGS

Women having vaginal bleedings in terms of hayd istihaadah and nifas are not prevented from carrying out daily activities and interactions like going to the markets to buy groceries, interacting with their husbands, neighbors and friends, presenting papers in seminars or workshops, travelling for good purposes be it inside or outside the country and others because there are no clear nas from the Quran, al-Sunnah or even consensus of scholars that prohibit them from doing so. Moreover, in the above situations, the women involved are not impure women that may not be interacted with at all. Rasulullah.s.w.a said in a hadith by Bukhari and Muslim narrated through Abu Hurairah (RA): the mu’min are not najis (al-Bukhari, no: 276; Muslim, no: 556).

Women with menses: There are a few issues being discussed by the scholars regarding daily activities that may be carried out by menstruating women and Muslims should be aware of them.

Duty towards the husband: Menstruating women may perform their duties towards their husbands as usual in

the aspect of providing meals and drinks. They may also serve family members who come to visit or the husbands' guests who come from far. This is due the reason stated before; women with menses are not najis be it to their husbands or to others. In fact they are allowed to eat, drink and interact with their husbands as they normally would. This is based on the sayings of Rasulullah SAW in a hadith by Muslim narrated through Anas: do all things (with women with menses) except intercourse.

Because of that, women with menses may comb their hair and prepare meals for their husbands. Meals prepared by women with menses are not makruh (Islamically disliked or offensive act) to be eaten, so do the ingredients that they touched such as water, flour and such.

This is also based on a hadith by Muslim narrated through A'isyah RA: Rasulullah SAW once said to her:

"Bring me sajadah (prayer mat)". I said "I am having my hayd". He answered "Hayd is not on your hands"

Cutting hair and nails: Women having their menses are allowed to cut their hair, nails, go to the market and et cetera, even without wudhu (Jasim, 1992). Preferably, the cut hair and nails were kept and washed during the ritual purification bath.

Fondling with the husband: It is not haram (forbidden by the Islamic law) for the wives to fondle with their husbands while having their menses, according to the hadith stated by Muslim. It is only haram to use her body parts in between her navel down to her knees even on her husband's body parts other than in between his navel down to his knees. Women's knees are under the same rulings as their thighs and genitals. A wife is not forbidden to use her hands to fondle her husband, even on the genital areas such as putting her hands on his genitals as long as her husband does not prevent his wife from doing so.

Fondling that brings to intercourse: The wives are permitted to fondle with their husbands using their whole body except the genitals area. This permission, however, only applicable to the husbands that can practice self control from their sexual desires. On the contrary, if the husbands have strong sexual desires and fondling their wives normally lead to intercourse, then fondling during the time of menses is haram, based on scholars' consensus. In a hadith by Bukhari and Muslim narrated through A'isyah (RA), A'isyah once explained:

"Whenever Allah's Apostle wanted to fondle anyone of us during her periods (menses), he used to order her to put on an Izar (a type of clothes worn during menses) and start fondling her." A'isyah added, "None of you could control his sexual desires as the Prophet could" (Bukhari, 2002)

This verdict is befitting to the fiqh method: Anything that leads to haram is considered haram (Qardawi, 1980).

Allowing the husband to have sexual intercourse with his wife to avoid zina: Before this it is understood that having intercourse with menstruating wives is haram based on the verse 222 from surah al-Baqarah. However, in the event that the husband is feared to commit zina if he does not have sexual intercourse with his wife, then he is allowed to have intercourse with his wife. The reason is weighing two types of prohibitions; the prohibition from having sexual intercourse with the menstruating women and the prohibition from committing zina. In weighing those two prohibitions, clearly the prohibitions from committing zina is superior to the prohibitions from having sexual intercourse with the menstruating wife. A smaller harm can be prescribed in order to avoid the bigger harm. This is befitting to the fiqh method which explains:

When two harms collide, the larger harm must be prevented by prescribing the smaller harm

Such cases are not normal hence it cannot be associated to the customary prohibitions for husbands to have sexual intercourse with their menstruating wives. Nevertheless, if the husband's intense sexual desire may be appeased with masturbation using his wife's hands, then the husband must do so because the harm of performing masturbation is lesser than the harm of having sexual intercourse with the menstruating wife. If the husbands may refrain their sexual desires by fasting, then it is better for them to do so as suggested by a hadith by Bukhari and Muslim narrated through Abdullah bin Mas'ud RA: The Prophet SAW said:

O young people! Whoever among you can marry, should marry because it helps him lower his gaze and guard his modesty (i.e., his private parts from committing illegal sexual intercourse, etc.) and whoever is not able to marry, should fast as fasting diminishes his sexual power (Bukhari, 2002)

Eating and drinking during Ramadhan daytime: Women having their menses may eat and drink during daytime of Ramadhan because they are prohibited from observing fast. However, it is preferred not to eat in public or in front

of children to prevent confusions among them and also to respect the Holy month of Ramadhan itself.

Visiting sick people who are dying: Women having their menses are not prohibited from visiting sick people who are dying. The opinion that suggested that women with menses may not visit sick people nearing the end of their lives because it thwarts the attendance of the angel of rahmah (mercy) is rejected because the people with junub (ritually impure due to sexual intercourse or seminal discharge) may also visit sick people who are dying.

WOMEN WITH ISTIHAADAH

All activities discussed above such as serving and teasing the husbands, eating and drinking, going to the market to get daily foodstuffs, cutting nails or even having sexual intercourse with the husbands are allowed for women with istihadah because they are under the same rulings with the ritually clean women. But husbands are urged not to have intercourse with their wives during their menses, to avoid harm on their health.

In terms of performing jamak (cumulative) salah, according to the final verdict in the Syafi'i sect, women with istihadah must not combine two salah due to illnesses, flood or dark surroundings but scholars from Hanbali and later scholars of al-Syafi'i sects such as al-Qadi Husain, al-Mutawalli, al-Rauyanior al-Khattabi, suggested that women with istihadah may combine salah due to illnesses.

Such act was once performed by ibn Abbas. When his action was questioned by a man from Tamim tribe, ibn Abbas answered: "Are you trying to teach the Sunnah of Rasulullah SAW to me?" He then continued, "Rasulullah SAW himself performed it". Ibn Syaqiq said "The matter bothered me, so I went to see Abu Hurairah RA and enquire about the matter. Abu Hurairah approved ibn Abbas's statements. Imam Muslim narrated through ibn Abbas:

The Prophet SAW prayed zuhr and 'asr together in Medina when there was neither fear, nor [was he] travelling. "Abu al-Zubir said: "I asked Sa'id: Why did he do that?" He replied: "I asked Ibn Abbas just as you have asked me. He said: 'He did not wish to impose any difficulty on anyone in his community'"

According to Imam al-Nawawi, the opinion that suggested that it is permissible to combine two salah due to illnesses is the nominated opinion in the al-Syafi'i sect. The above hadith Muslim explained that the Prophet SAW combined salah in Medina neither due to fear nor

rain. Al-Isma'ili stated that what was chosen by Imam al-Nawawi was actually mentioned by al-Syafi'i in Mukhtasar al-Muzani and it was supported by the implicit comprehension which is the illnesses that allow for breaking fast as in the case for a musafir. For those reasons, combining two salah due to sickness is domineeringly permitted. In fact some scholars allow combining two salah for people not under the state of musafir but rather under certain intentions with a stipulation that they must not make it a habit. This is also the view of Abu Ishaq al-Marwazi excerpted from al-Qaffal. This opinion was also reported by al-Khattabi from some members of al-Kitab and it is also the opinions of ibn Sirin and Asyhab from amongst the proteges of Imam Malik.

Based on the above explanations, it is permissible for women with istihadah to combine two salah with one wudhu as suggested by scholars from Hanbali sect and later scholars from al-Syafi'i's sect because the Prophet SAW instructed Hamnah binti Jahsyito combine two salah with one bath and similar instruction was given to Sahlah binti Suhail.

Scholars agreed on the permissibility to have sexual intercourse with women having istihadah, if the husbands afraid they might commit forbidden acts. They only disagree when husbands have sexual intercourse with their wives who are under istihadah for reasons other than the fear from committing forbidden acts such as zina (adultery) and such. The majority of scholars suggested that women may be intercoured at times other than their menstruation periods or under clean state, even though blood traces are present it is not makruh to have intercourse at that time. Allah (SWT) commanded:

And they ask you about menstruation. Say: "It is a state of impurity and harmfulness; so keep away from women in the state of menstruation and do not approach (have sex with) them until they are cleansed. And when they are cleansed, then come to them as Allah has commanded you. Truly, Allah loves those who repent and keep themselves pure

The above verse is a clear evidence of the prohibition to approach women with menses. This means women who are not under their menses are allowed to be approached and have sex with. Ikrimah narrated from Hamnah binti Jahsyi RA, she (Hamnah) was having istihadah and her husband had intercourse with her. Ikrimah also narrated that Ummu Habibah was having istihadah and her husband had intercourse with her.

Hamnah was the wife of Talhah while Ummu Habibah was the wife of Abd al-Rahman bin Auf. They both asked Rasulullah SAW about the rulings on istihadah. If

having intercourse with women under istihaadah is haram, Rasulullah.s.a.w would have explained that to both of them (Nurudin, 2000).

Even though in the above discussions, the majority of scholars allow husbands to have intercourse with their wives, in terms of medical view having intercourse with women under istihaadah is not favourable and it may bring harm similar to having intercourse with women with menses. Indeed, in certain situations it is more harmful because istihaadah is normally caused by certain illnesses such as inflammation, tumor or others. Sexual intercourse during this time may cause disease transfer to the husband, if it is some kind of infectious disease or it may worsen the disease for the wife herself. For these reasons, husbands are advised to avoid having intercourse with their wives during istihaadah.

WOMEN WITH NIFAS

There are several issues being debated by the scholars with relate to the topic of women with nifas in terms of their daily activities.

Fondling with the husband: The majority of scholars suggested that it is haram to fondle with women under nifas in between their navel down to their knees as in the case for women with menses. Fondling using body parts in between navel and knees may lead to intercourse. Therefore, it is ruled as haram based on a hadith by Bukharidan Muslim narrated from an-Nu'man bin Basyir:

Whoever indulges in suspicious things, he is likely get in it (Bukhari, 2002)

Using body parts other than in between navel and knees are allowed. Therefore, it is allowed to kiss, cuddle, touch and et cetera. Husbands may fondle with their wives who are having nifas as long as it does not involve sexual relations in or outside the forbidden body areas. This is based on a hadith by Muslim narrated through Anas bin Malik (RA), who explained that Rasulullah SAW instructed: do all things except intercourse.

Other activities: Other daily activities such as in terms of serving their husbands, women with nifas fall under the same ruling with women with menses. They may serve their husbands as usual in the matter of providing meals. So does in serving food and drinks for family members who come to visit or for the husband's faraway guests. This is as stated before; women with hayd are not najis be it to their husbands or others. In fact, they are allowed to eat, drink and interact with their husbands as they normally would.

Women with nifas also fall under the same rulings with women with hayd on the issues such as cutting hair and nails, fondling that leads to intercourse, allowing husbands to have intercourse with their wives in order to avoid zina, eating and drinking during the daytime of Ramadhan and visiting sick people who are dying which have been discussed above based on similar reasonings.

CONCLUSION

Based on the above discussions, it is clear that women with vaginal bleeding in terms of hayd and nifas fall under the same rulings in issues that involve interactions and duties towards the husbands, cutting hair and nails, fondling that leads to intercourse, allowing the husbands to have intercourse with their wives in the desperate attempts to avoid zina, eating and drinking during Ramadhan daytime and visiting sick people who are dying which have been presented above based on similar reasonings. Women with hayd and nifas may entertain their husbands and interact with them as long as it does not involve the private body parts have intercourse during Ramadhan daytime in order to avoid zina for the husbands, cut nails and hair, eat and drink during Ramadhan daytime but may not interact with the husbands if such interactions lead to intercourse without the desperate attempt of avoiding zina. Obviously, daily activities that may be carried out by women with hayd and nifas are a lot more than activities that may not be carried out.

Meanwhile, for women with istihaadah, they may perform all daily activities as mentioned above because they fall under the same rulings as ritually clean women except in the issue of having intercourse with their husbands, whereby medical experts discourage it for fear it may harm and infect certain diseases to the husbands themselves. In Islam, it is forbidden to do harmful things and to harm others.

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