

DEVELOPMENT OF HALAL NUTRITION FRAMEWORK

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Introduction

The preservation of life is one of the elements of "Maqasid Shariah" (Primary objectives of Islamic Law), which should be given emphasis in view of the increasing concern on public health and negative behaviors existing in societies at large. Records from the World Health Organization showed that of the 56.4 million deaths worldwide in 2015, more than half (54%) were due to the top 10 causes. Ischaemic heart disease and stroke are the world's biggest killers, accounting for a combined 15 million deaths in 2015. These diseases have remained the leading causes of death globally in the last 15 years (WHO, 2017).

The lives of every Muslims, including their dietary requirements are guided by the Shariah Law or Islamic Law. In Islam, the only guidance for halal nutrition is the Qur'an and Sunnah, which is manifested through the diet of the Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. and his eating practices, which will affect any individual in the areas of mind, spirit, intellect, physiology and health. Pregnant mothers, children, teenagers and adults should be educated on eating halal food in moderation, in ensuring the future generation of healthy and good individuals. All foods are considered halal except those mentioned in the Quran as follows:

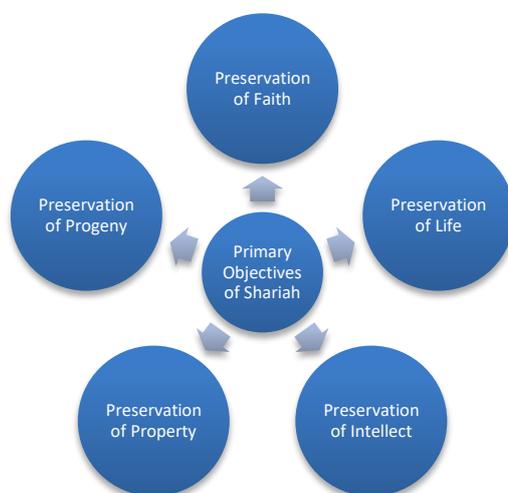
"Forbidden to you (as food) are: dead meat, blood, the flesh of swine, and that on which hath been invoked the name of other than God. That which hath been killed by strangling, or by violent blow, or by headlong fall, or being gored to death; that which hath been (partly) eaten by a wild animal; unless ye are able to slaughter it (in due form); that which is sacrificed on stone (altars); (forbidden) also is the division (of meat) by raffling with arrows; that is impiety." The Quran (5:3)

The Maqasid Shariah (Primary Objectives of Shariah)

The Maqasid Sha'riah or the Objectives of Islamic Law is a general philosophy translated from the Quran and Sunnah, which benefits everyone on earth and eliminate prejudice and hardship to establish justice. The laws of the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah* promotes co-operation and support within the family and the society at large. The Maqasid is classified into three categories, namely: the *daruriyyah* (the essential), the *hajiyyah* (the complementary) and the *tahsiniyyah* (the desirable). The *daruriyyah* or the essential Maqasid is further divided into five elements: life, intellect, faith, lineage and property. The preservation of these elements are seen as absolute requirements to the survival and spiritual well-being of individuals, which otherwise will result in destruction or collapse of family and society. The *Shari'ah* basically protects and promotes these essential values, and validates all measures necessary for their preservation. (Kamali, H. 2009).

In order to preserve the five elements and to ensure the continuity of healthy individuals in the future, a Muslim should oblige by adopting the Islamic way of life (ad-deen); the food you eat, the way you dress, the way you interact with people, the way you live and etceteras. This paper will only focus on the food, as it is the basics in developing a human body, which comprises of the physical body as well as the spiritual body.

**Figure 1: The importance of preservation of life (Maqasid Shariah)
(Shariah: Islamic Laws & Ways of Life prescribed by Allah s.w.t.)**



Health, for example, is an important part of our lives. Anyone who is ill cannot enjoy his life fully. Thus, Islam has made health through preservation of life, a maqasid syariah, that is, an objective of the Syari'ah that must be observed. Therefore, we cannot do harmful things that will affect our health. This is made clear by Allah SWT in Surah Al-Baqarah Verse 195:

Which means: Spend your wealth for the cause of Allah, and do not cast yourself to harm by your own hands; and do good. Indeed Allah loves the beneficent. It is our duty to take care of our health and not to do anything that will be detrimental to it. We have to ensure that we make good lifestyle choices, take care of our diet and weight, eat only that is halal and beneficial, exercise and also not to smoke.

Definition on Halal Nutrition

The word Halal is an Arabic term, which derives from the verb Halla "to be or become lawful, legal, licit, legitimate, permissible, permitted, allowable, allowed, admissible, un-prohibited, un- forbidden." It also means, "to untie, unfasten, unbind, undo, unravel, loosen, unloose, unfix, unwind, unscrew, untangle, disentangle, disengage, free." (Baalbaki, 1993: 484).

Halal food usually refers to food that is allowed to be consumed by Muslims, as outlined in the Islamic law. In perspective, every aspect of a Muslim's life including his dietary requirements is regulated by the Islamic law, which is based on the Quran, Hadith, Ijma and Qiyas'. Basically, the basic principle of a Muslim diet is the food should be halal (permissible) and Tayyiban (wholesome) as clearly stated in the Quran, 2:168.

"O ye people! Eat of what is on earth, Halal and tayyiban; and do not follow the footsteps of the Evil One, for he is to you an avowed enemy."

In this context, halal means that the food complies to syariah requirements and tayyiban means the food is of good quality, safe, clean, nutritious and authentic. Halal and Tayyiban themselves, portray the symbol of integrity in line with best international hygiene practices. Clearly, Halal food is for everyone in the world, required by all Muslims but it has no problems with non-Muslims, so Halal food can also be considered as universal food, which is excellent news for any food producers to supply their Halal food products to over 7 billion people in this world. For Muslims, eating Halal and tayyiban food is an obligation. They should therefore make sure that the food is not only Halal, meaning does not contain any haram or najis components, but it should also be tayyiban or wholesome.

The Malaysian Halal standard, MS1500:2009 entitled the "Malaysian Standard on Halal Food – Production, Preparation, Handling and Storage – General Guidelines (Second Revision)" defines halal food as food and drink and/or their ingredients permitted under the Shariah law and fulfil the following conditions:

- a. does not contain any parts or products of animals that are non-Halal by Shariah law or any parts or products of animals which are not slaughtered according to Shariah law;
- b. does not contain any *Najs* according to Shariah law;
- c. safe for consumption, non-poisonous, non-intoxicating or non-hazardous to health;
- d. not prepared, processed or manufactured using equipment contaminated with *Najs* according to Shariah law;
- e. does not contain any human parts or its derivatives that are not permitted by Shariah law; and
- h. during its preparation, processing, handling, packaging, storage and distribution, the food must meet the requirements stated in items a, b, c, d or e, and/or is physically separated from any other food and any other things that have been decreed as *Najs* by Shariah law.

And *Najs* is defined as:

- a. dogs and pigs and their descendants;
- b. halal food that is contaminated with things that are non-Halal;
- c. halal food that comes into direct contact with things that are non-Halal;
- d. any liquid and objects discharged from the orifices of human beings or animals such as urine, blood, vomit, pus, placenta and excrement, sperm and ova of pigs and dogs except sperm and ova of other animals;
- e. carrion or Halal animals that are not slaughtered according to Shariah law; and
- f. khamar and food or drink which contain or mixed with khamar.

In general, halal nutrition is a process of consuming halal food and drinks that are necessary for the body to function normally for people to live and grow. It focuses on food, which provides nutrients and energy for human growth and development. Both nutrition and lifestyle of an individual normally determines one's health. Generally, good food results in fit and healthy body and bad food will results in food poisoning and the person will end up with diseases. The analogy is "every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit" or "you are what you eat".

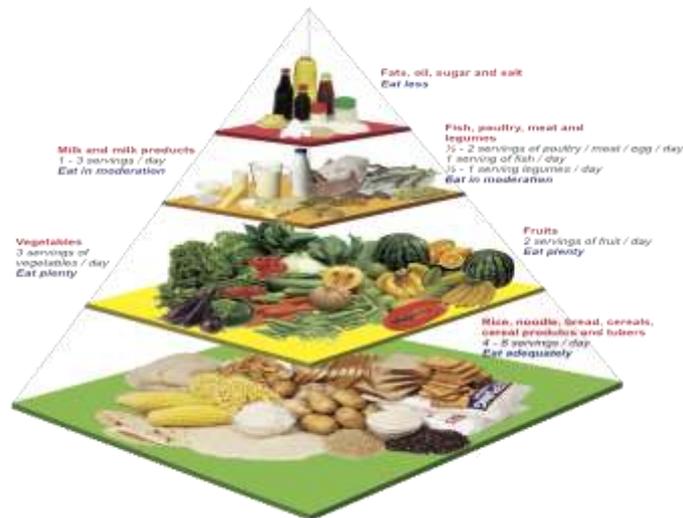
The Framework of Halal Nutrition

Halal nutrition covers the Prophet's diet and his eating practices. Muslims eat to live and not live to eat. As basics in life itself, food is the center of our lifestyle and it makes up who we are from the inside out, reiterating the quip "You are what you eat".

Proper halal nutrition means getting all the essential nutrients from the halal diet that will keep the body functioning normally. This is crucial because there are some important molecules that your body utilizes to live, which it cannot make on its own. The

essential nutrients must be obtained in the diet, or your body will have a shortage of them. This is critical because your body needs the right amount of all the required molecules to function properly.

Malaysian Food Pyramid



The food one eats has a dramatic effect on how the body functions.

- i. Immune system. With sufficient nutrients, food boosts body immunity, which is important in preventing chronic diseases such as malnutrition, HIV, TB and other infectious diseases.
- ii. Mind. Halal food will result in a healthy body and a healthy mind, and in turn will apply to how one thinks and reacts.
- iii. Skin, hair and nails. Food is essential in developing the body surface, which gives impact on the skin, hair and nails.
- iv. Nervous system. A healthy diet is crucial in the maintenance of the brain and nervous system.
- v. Digestive health. Selecting the correct food will allow smooth digestion and absorption of nutrients required for the body and the overall well being of health.

The Prophet's Diet

Islam highlighted the importance of having a balance diet that can supply sufficient nutrients such as protein, carbohydrates, fats, vitamins and minerals to the body. Verses related to food in the Quran recommend foods with variety and high nutrient density. Selecting the right halal food is equally important. The food should not only be halal and safe but also to be taken in certain amount as required by the body. This fits very well with the practice of the Prophet Muhammad s.a.w, who only eats when he is hungry and stops eating before he is full. The diets of the Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. are milk, fruits (dates, grapes, and fig), and honey, which are all very nutritious and healthy. In his book entitled "Eat to Live", Fuhrman, J. (2011) discussed about the importance of nutrient dense food as nutritional medicine in treating many of his obese patients, which is in line with the practices of the Prophet Muhammad s.a.w.

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines health as the "state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease".

Lifestyle has a significant impact on an individual's immediate well being, as well as long-term functioning. A healthy lifestyle is therefore the key to getting the most out of life. It helps an individual look good, feel good and stay well.

The principles of a healthy balanced diet shall aim to include a wide range of different foods from the four main food groups (bread, other cereals and potatoes, fruits and vegetables, milk and dairy foods, meat, fish and alternatives). Foods and drinks containing fat and/or sugar add enjoyment to our diet but should be eaten sparingly.

Milk

"And verily in cattle (too) will ye find an instructive Sign. From what is within their bodies between excretions and blood, We produce, for your drink, milk, pure and agreeable to those who drink it". (Surah An-Nahl 16:66)

Milk is a complete food, rich in protein, calcium, vitamin A and vitamin B. It is the favorite food and drink of the Prophet Muhammad s.a.w.

In a span of human life, breastfeeding is the first, complete, practical, economic food for babies in meeting its nutrient and body-immunity needs. Islam encourages breastfeeding for two years, as stated in the Qur'an (2:233).

“Mothers may breastfeed their children two complete years for whoever wishes to complete the nursing [period]. Upon the father is the mothers' provision and their clothing according to what is acceptable. No person is charged with more than his capacity. No mother should be harmed through her child, and no father through his child. And upon the [father's] heir is [a duty] like that [of the father]. And if they both desire weaning through mutual consent from both of them and consultation, there is no blame upon either of them. And if you wish to have your children nursed by a substitute, there is no blame upon you as long as you give payment according to what is acceptable. And fear Allah and know that Allah is Seeing of what you do.”

Breast milk is proven to contain more than 70% of whey protein compared to cow's milk, which is biologically crucial for the baby's physiological growth. In line with the Qur'an, the WHO has set the policy on 15 January 2011, that mothers should breastfeed their babies for 4-6 months (possibly up to two years) exclusively to prevent infantile diarrhea. In contrary to the current trend of bottle-feeding using cow's powdered milk, promotion of wet nursing and education on the importance of breast milk should be implemented globally. In addition, breastfeeding benefits mothers in regaining her uterine health, child spacing and prevent breast cancer besides establishing bonding and psychosocial effect between her and her baby.

TOTAL PROTEIN CONTENT	
Human Milk	Cow's Milk
1.0%	3.5%
WHEY PROTEIN CONTENT (Biologically very important)	
Human Milk	Cow's Milk
>70%	<20%

WHO Manual for the Treatment of Acute Diarrhoea of the Programme for the Control of Diarrhoea Diseases states that: “Exclusive breast feeding for 4-6 months - - - offered as often and as freely as the infant desires it and continued breast feeding up to at least two years of age are most important in the prevention of infantile diarrhoea. Breast milk is the best food for infants and has immunological properties which help prevent infection including diarrhoea.”

Honey

“And thy Lord taught the Bee to build its cells in hill, on trees, and in (men’s) habitations; Then to eat of all the produce (of the earth), and to find with skill the spacious paths of its Lord: there issues from within their bodies a drink of varying colours, wherein is healing for men: verily in this is a Sign for those who give thought.” The Quran 16:68-69.

Honey is composed of sugars like glucose and fructose and minerals like magnesium, potassium, calcium, sodium chloride, sulphur, iron and phosphate. It contains vitamins B1, B2, C, B6, B5 and B3 all of which change according to the qualities of the nectar and pollen. Besides the above, copper, iodine, and zinc exist in it in small quantities. Several kinds of hormones are also present in it.

If you have a sore throat, take some honey. Due to its natural anti-inflammatory effect, it will help to heal the wounds more quickly. It also has different phytochemicals--chemicals found in plants and different foods--that kill viruses, bacteria, and fungus making it a good substitute for wound dressings. The taste may also take your mind off the pain.

Honey is a natural antiseptic. Medical journals cite more than 600 cases in which honey was employed to treat wounds. By applying honey to your wounds, you prevent infections. Honey contains antimicrobial agents, which prevents infections by killing the bacteria in and around your wounds. When using honey it may help to heat it up before putting it on your wound. Many types of bacteria cannot survive in honey, so wounds heal, swelling eases, and tissue can grow back.

In 2008, Simon, A. et al. highlighted there were many evidence confirming the antibacterial properties and additional beneficial effects of medical honey on wound healing should encourage other wound care professionals to use CE-certified honey dressings with standardized antibacterial activity. This is in tandem with the findings of Al-Waili, N.S. in 2006 whereby they concluded that a mixture of honey, olive oil, and beeswax is safe and clinically effective in the treatment of hemorrhoids and anal fissure, which paves the way for further randomized double blind studies.

Burns, too, heal better with honey, studies show. The advantage of honey is that it not only prevents infections from occurring, it actually accelerates skin healing. Since the sugar in honey absorbs water it helps to trap some of the moisture so that the bacteria and other microbes cannot grow as easily as in other food.

Aggad, H. et al confirmed honey antibacterial activity in their laboratory work in 2013, whereby honey is linked with osmolarity, its high sugar contents, creates a high osmotic pressure unfavourable to bacterial growth and proliferation. The acidic pH between 4.31 and 6.02 plays a role in microbial control. Other honey components such as aromatic acids or phenolic compounds, may also contribute to the overall antibacterial activity.

Dates

” It is He, Who produce gardens, with trellises and without, and dates, and tilth with produce of all kinds, and olives and pomegranates, similar (in kind) and different (in variety): eat of their fruit in their season, but render the dues that are proper on the day that the harvest is gathered. But waste not by excess: for Allah loveth not the wasters.” Surah Al-An’Aam 6:141

The Prophet used to break his fast by eating some dates before offering Maghrib prayer, and if ripe dates were not available, he used to substitute them with some dried grapes. When they too were not available, he used to have a few sips of water, according to some reports. (Hadith Bukhari).

The Prophet s.a.w. likes eating dates, grapes, olive, pomegranate and fig (Sahih Bukhari & Muslim). Fruits contain high natural fibre (important to avoid constipation), vitamin A (important for vision), sugar, vitamins, minerals and water important for healthy body.

"O you people! Eat of what is on earth lawful and good!" (2:168)

And He, it is who causes gardens to grow, [both] trellised and untrellised, and palm trees and crops of different [kinds of] food and olives and pomegranates, similar and dissimilar. Eat of [each of] its fruit when it yields and give its due [zakah] on the day of its harvest. And be not excessive. Indeed, He does not like those who commit excess. 6:141

Then eat of what Allah has provided for you [which is] lawful and good. And be grateful for the favor of Allah, if it is [indeed] Him that you worship. 16:114

He has only forbidden to you dead animals, blood, the flesh of swine, and that which has been dedicated to other than Allah. But whoever is forced [by necessity], neither desiring [it] nor transgressing [its limit] - then indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful. 16:115

These recommended foods mentioned in the Holy Qur'an, will certainly fulfill daily protein, carbohydrates, fat and vitamins requirements.

It is recommended to conduct more technical research on the medical and nutritional aspects of dates for the benefit of humankind.

Meat

"So eat of (meats), on which Allah's name hath been pronounced if ye have faith in his signs." (6:118). The instruction to eat meat is clear as long as the animal is slaughtered properly upon which the name of Allah is mentioned.

Halal meat is prepared by invoking God's name in a one-line blessing called the Tasmiyah, said before any slaughter. Malaysian slaughtermen use the most common version, "Bismillahi-Allahu Akbar" (In the name of Allah the greatest). Reciting a short blessing beginning with "bismillah" (in the name of Allah) is a prerequisite for Muslims before embarking on any significant task. After reciting the blessing, the slaughterman uses a surgically sharp instrument to cut the animal's throat, windpipe and the blood vessels around its neck. The blood is then allowed to drain from the body. Only one animal can be ritually slaughtered at a time and the other animals must not witness any death. The religious law also says the animals must also be provided with enough space to roam, clean water, food and fresh air before their slaughter.

The Prophet's habitual diet actually consisted of favorite foods like dates, water, honey, yogurt, barley bread, and grapes but meat was available only occasionally, and when it was he favored sheep's shoulder/foreleg. "So traditionally Muslims were semi-vegetarians. The Prophet was not a meat-eater.

Larrison, S.C. et al in 2006 found that results of their meta-analysis support the hypothesis that high consumption of red meat and processed meat may increase the risk of colon and rectal cancer. In 2013, An Pan. et al. reported that red meat consumption is associated with an increased risk of total, CVD and cancer mortality.

Eating Etiquette

Halal nutrition is about the prophet's diet and the way he eats his food. Muslims ought to eat for survival and to maintain good health, they should not live to eat, or make food the sole focus of their existence. Moderation in dietary habits can help people to lead healthy and balanced lives. Modern research has proven that excessive eating and improper diet can increase the chance of diseases such as obesity, high cholesterol, heart diseases and diabetes. As with many other subjects in Islam, prevention is considered better than cure. Therefore, overeating has been strongly discouraged in the Qur'an and *Sunnah* (Prophetic tradition).

Islamic eating practices or manners consuming food in Islam are referred as *Sunnah* to ensure the good health of a Muslim is maintained. A Muslim should emulate eating habits or dining etiquette of the Prophet Muhammad s.a.w as Muslims eat and drink to be healthy so that they can worship Allah s.b.t. This actually means that Muslims do not eat if they are full and do not drink if they are not thirsty. Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. said "We are a people who do not eat until we are hungry. And when we eat, we do not eat to our fill."

The general practise before eating and drinking is to wash one's hands. Next is to recite the *basmalah* and kneel before the food. In this regard, the Prophet Muhammad s.a.w said "the devil considers food lawful for him when Allah's name is not mentioned over it." Similarly, it is undesirable to eat with the left hand. Only the right hand should be used for eating and drinking purposes.

This is because the left is reserved for unclean duties. It is reported on the authority of Ibn 'Umar r.a that the Holy Prophet s.a.w said: "None of you must ever eat or drink with his left hand because the devil (*shaytan*) does so." In addition to this, the Prophet s.a.w also advised Muslims to take food when they feel hungry. This is to ensure easy digestion. Similarly, Muslims should not delay eating if food is already being served. Our Prophet s.a.w said: "It is not right to eat your food quickly, besides, one should eat from what lies nearest to one." (Bukhari, 1979).

In addition, the Prophet Muhammad s.a.w recommended that one should stop eating while there is extra room for the stomach in order that food will be digested more easily. The Prophet s.a.w said: "If you must eat more, be sure that only one third of your stomach is filled with food, one third is left for water and the remaining one third for air." (Nurdeng, 2009). Muslims are discouraged to blow air on food to prevent transmission of bacteria via one's breath. After finishing his meals, the Prophet s.a.w always thank Allah for the food.

The eating practices are divided into three sections, which are before, during and after eating.

Etiquette before eating:-

- i. A Muslim should consume only halal food and prepares his food from halal sources and free from any haram contamination. If he is eating outside his home, he should make sure that the food he is eating is halal. In this modern world now, one should look for halal logo on halal certified products and premises.

It is an obligation to all Muslims to look for halal food as instructed by Allah SWT in the Qur'an. In this modern world, food is packaged and displayed on shelves in the supermarket. The only way to select which food to be purchased is to look for the halal logo.

Likewise, when we want to eat food outside our homes, look for food premises with the halal logo or an evident that it has been halal certified by the competent authority. We must not be misguided by a scanty claim "No Pork, No Alcohol" which does not prove that its chickens, cattle or lamb are halal slaughtered or not. We must take extra precaution by asking directly the owner of the food premise of the halal status of their food resources. Otherwise, it is better to buy halal sources and then cook and eat at home.

- ii. The intention of eating should be to strengthen oneself and be healthy to worship Allah. The intention of eating is not "live to eat" but "eat to live". One eats like the Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. who eats very little, just enough to survive and worship the Almighty, Allah SWT.
- iii. The person should wash his hands before eating to clean any dirt or harmful microorganism from his hands.

This is in line with the first key messages of WHO for food handlers on food safety as "keep clean" is a priority in everything they do during food handling.

The first message of the key messages is "Keep Clean" where it explained that:

- a) Wash your hands before handling food and often during food preparation
- b) Wash your hands after going to the toilet
- c) Wash and sanitize all surfaces and equipment used for food preparation
- d) Protect kitchen areas and food from insects, pests and other animals.

While most microorganisms do not cause diseases, dangerous microorganisms are widely found in soil, water, animals and people. These microorganisms are carried on hands, wiping cloths and utensils, especially cutting boards, and the slightest contact can transfer them to food and cause foodborne diseases (WHO 2017a).

- iv. The food should be served in proper containers on clean spread (cloth or mat) on the floor. Bukhari reported that Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. did not eat on a table or from a platter.

All items that come into contact with food must be effectively cleaned and sanitized to ensure there is no more microbes on them. When washing dishes by hand, the following procedures should be followed:

- Clean and sanitize the sink.
- Scrape leftover food into the garbage.
- Wash dishes in hot, soapy water in the first sink.
- Rinse dishes with clean, hot water in the second sink.
- Sanitize by soaking the dishes in the third sink filled with warm water and an approved sanitizer.
- Air dry all dishes and utensils instead of using a towel.

- v. The person should sit in a modest way by putting his right leg straight and sit upon his left leg. Bukhari reported that Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. said that "I do not eat while reclining. Instead, I am a servant (of Allah), so I eat like a servant eats and I sit like a servant sits."

Recent research has shown that our posture while eating greatly affects how well the food digests. Just as you do not expect the flow of water from the top of a hose down to be the same with its flow from one end to another. Research

also shows that sitting while eating, as opposed to lying down, makes us subconsciously eat slower, and be more focused on the meal, which helps our food digest properly.

One of the risks associated with lying down while eating is slow motility and delay in digestion unlike if you are sitting. Eating while lying down is also a known risk factor of reflux esophagitis. It can also result in heart burn or Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease (GERD), a syndrome where the lower esophagus does not close off properly after swallowing. This usually allows the stomach and food acid to move up from the stomach into the esophagus. Heartburn is a burning sensation around the chest area where the esophagus is located and the best way to prevent this is to sit while eating. A lot of people have suggested many things as the disadvantage of eating while lying down but most of these side effects are mere assumptions and speculations. No research has proved these assertions to be true. Apart from the above listed effects like heart burn and slow digestion and in rare cases cancer it affects have never been worse. More research should be conducted for this purpose.

- vi. The person should be satisfied with the food being served, if not, he should not eat it or just leave it nor comment about it. Bukhari reported that Abu Hurairah stated that "Allah's Messenger s.a.w. never found fault with any food. If he desired it, he would eat it. If he disliked it, he would leave it." (Muslim: 1334).
- vii. Dining should be with a group of people or "jemaah", for example with guests, family members or friends. This is based on Hadith from Ahmad, which said, "Eat your food together, for you will thereby be blessed in it."

Higgs, S. in 2014 reported that normative social influence on eating is potent and pervasive. The presence of other people at an eating occasion or when choices are made about food has a powerful effect on behaviour. This may be because humans have a highly developed capacity to learn from the behaviour of others and find the approval of others rewarding and disapproval aversive. It is proposed that eating norms are followed because they provide information about safe foods and facilitate food sharing. They are a powerful influence on behaviour because following (or not following) norms is associated with social judgements. Norm following is more likely when there is uncertainty about what constitutes correct behaviour and when there is greater shared identity with the norm referent group. Social norms may affect food choice and intake by altering self-perceptions and the sensory/hedonic evaluation of foods. The same neural systems that mediate the rewarding effects of food itself are likely to reinforce the following of eating norms.

Larsen, J.K. et al. in 2015 highlighted that parents may function as gatekeepers to his children and support them in attending to internal signals of satiety while simultaneously controlling healthy dietary behavior. They may do so by covertly avoiding (consumption of) 'junk-food', avoiding food for reward or emotional regulation, providing clear and healthy rules about when and what can be eaten, providing larger portions with a variety of healthy foods (and vice versa lower portions with less variety of unhealthy foods), and stimulating healthy intake by repeated exposure, rewarding the child for trying new and healthy foods, and active healthy food modeling (e.g., smiling when eating healthy food themselves). Nevertheless, as child's appetitive traits have high genetic origin (Carnell, Haworth, Plomin, & Wardle, 2008), and it is the environment that drives up obesity rates (Hill, Wyatt, Reed, & Peters, 2003; Swinburn et al., 2011), we suggest that the most important food parenting practices underlying the obesity epidemic are those (e.g., rules, monitoring, structure, modeling practices) that directly influence the home food environment (i.e., food availability and modeling) compared to those food parenting practices (e.g., restriction, pressure, rewarding, encouragement) that act more directly on child appetitive traits.

Etiquette during eating:-

- i. A Muslim should start his dining by saying, "In the name of Allah" or "Bismillah". (Muslim: 1305)
- ii. In case a Muslim forgets to say Bismillah, Abu Dawud reported that Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. stated that "If any of you is about to eat, he should mention the name of Allah. If he forgets to mention the name of Allah at the beginning, he should say, "In the name of Allah over the beginning and the ending."
- iii. The person should praise Allah at the end of every meal. Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. said "If a person eats any food and then says "Praise be to Allah who fed me this and provided for me without any strength or power on my part," all of his previous sins will be forgiven." (Al-Tirmidhi).
- iv. The person should eat with his right hand using three fingers, taking small portions and chew them well. He should eat the food that is closest to him and do not take any food from the middle of the plate. Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. told Umar bin Salamah "O young man, mention the name of Allah, eat with your right hand and eat from what is close to you." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim 1301).

Shah, M. et al. in 2014 reported that eating slowly significantly lowered meal energy intake in the normal-weight but not in the overweight/obese group. It lowered eating rate and energy density in both groups. Eating slowly led to lower hunger ratings in both groups and increased fullness ratings in the normal-weight group at 60 minutes from when the meal began. The same applies to a study by Andrade, A.M. et al in 2008 who reported that eating slowly may help to maximize satiation and reduce energy intake within meals.

It was reported by Angelopoulos, T. et al in 2017, that slow spaced eating increased fullness and decreased hunger ratings in overweight and obese participants with Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus (T2DM), without the improvement in gut hormone responses found in normal-weight participants. Slow spaced eating may be a useful prevention strategy, but might also help curb food intake in those already suffering from obesity and diabetes.

- v. Al-Tirmidhi reported that Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. said “The blessings descend from the middle of the food. So eat from the edges and do not eat from the middle.”
- vi. A Muslim should chew his food well and should lick his fingers after eating. Al-Bukhari and Muslim reported that Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. said that “When one of you eats, he should not wipe his fingers until he licks them or has them licked.” (Muslim 1302).

Zhu, Y. and Hollis, J.H. in 2014 highlighted that eating slowly contributes to a lower risk of obesity, probably because it could aid appetite control. Chewing thoroughly is an effective strategy to reduce eating rate and increasing the number of chews before swallowing might be a behavioral strategy to reduce food intake and potentially aid body-weight management. This study concurs with Li, J. et al. in 2011, who reported that interventions aimed at improving chewing activity could become a useful tool for combating obesity.

Shah, M. et al. in 2014 also reported that chewing may also help you feel fuller longer, leading to less eating overall. The study published in the *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics* showed that 70 normal and overweight or obese men and women eat a test meal two times: once eating slowly, and the second, eating quickly. When they ate slowly and chewed their food thoroughly, the participants reported feeling less hungry one hour after the meal compared to when they ate quickly.

- vii. If any food is dropped, it should be cleaned and eaten. Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. said that “If a morsel of food from any of you, he should take it and wipe it clean of any dirt and then eat it. He should not leave it for the Satan (Evil).” (Muslim 1304).
- viii. A Muslim should not blow over hot food. Instead he should wait until the food cools down. He also should not blow into a glass of water while drinking from it. Instead he should breathe three times outside the glass. More research should be conducted on this problem.
- ix. A Muslim should not overeat. Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. said that “A human does not fill any container worse than his stomach. It is enough for a human to have some morsels to strengthen his back (keep his back straight). If he must eat more, then it should be one third of his stomach for food, one third for drink and one third for breathing”. (Ahmad Tirmizi: 2380).

It is very important that an individual ensures getting appropriate foods and incorporates the principle of good nutrition such as variety, a balanced intake of nutrients and moderation. Different foods provide different combinations of energy and nutrients. The best way to meet the daily requirements is to eat a varied diet that combines cereals, fruits and vegetables, meat, fish, poultry, legumes and dairy products. More research should be conducted on this topic.

- x. Food and drinks should be served to the eldest in the gathering and then to those on the right. Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. said that “(Begin with) the eldest. (Begin with) those on the right, and those on the further right.” (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

Etiquette after eating:-

- i. Muslims should stop eating before he becomes full as showed by the Prophet Muhammad s.a.w.
- ii. A person should lick his fingers, brush his teeth and rinse his mouth after eating to maintain oral health.

Muslims must praise Allah for all the food he had eaten to show his gratitude.

Summary

The preservation of life is one of the elements of “Maqasid Syariah” which should be given emphasis in view of the incremental negative behaviours existing in societies at large. It is important to go back to basics of life itself whereby every human needs food to survive and how does this affect his behaviour. The best model for halal nutrition is the diet of the Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. and his eating practices which will affect any individual in the areas of mind, spirit, intellect, physiology and health. Halal nutrition in itself is food as well as medicine for the whole body, spiritually and physically.

Nutrition is a matter of life-long eating habits which become set with age. Dietary patterns also vary from one person to another according to the difference of cultural and geographic environment to another. To ensure a proper supply of the essential nutrients, we must combine food sources of these nutrients in the right amounts. Babies should be breastfed at birth until 6 months of age or to continue until two years of age. Milk, dates, honey, fruits and vegetables are very much encouraged to be consumed whilst meat should be sparingly eaten. This results in a healthy well-balanced diet.

The research concluded by recognizing the *Halal* Nutrition framework is in parallel with the food pyramid whereby it is actually a moderate and a healthy balanced diet, relevant and befitting the halal nutrition but the whole regime has to be without the haram elements which are blood, pork, carrion and liquor to provide proper nutrition guidelines for quality and better consumption of *halal* food for the future generation. This is in line with the Maqasid Shariah.

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