

Sound Pollution as Great Hazard for human health and its solution in the light of Prophetic Guidance

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Abstract

In modern world, noise pollution is one of the current major environmental crises faced by humans on daily basis. The purpose of this paper is to highlight current sound pollution as an environmental issue and its major impacts on human's health. The paper aims to investigate health issues in the context of sound pollution. Noise pollution is determined and discussed in the existing literature of environmental studies. The study examines the human behaviours regarding sound in the light of Islamic teachings. The paper followed an analytical interpretivist method which examined Hadith literature and conducted content analysis. The study elaborates the religious guidance about sound which determines human behaviours and practices. This paper finds that Special emphasis was laid down by Islam on appropriate use of tongue, lower down the volume of sound and motivation to produce pleasant sound. Particularly, it developed moral awareness for humans to distinguish appropriate use of sound and its negative impacts. It further leads one to realize the need to abide all prophetic teachings regarding a sustainable environment.

Keywords: Sound Pollution, human health, Prophetic guidance, Islam.

Introduction

Sound is a vibration that typically propagates an audible wave of pressure through a transmission media such as gas, liquid or solid. Sounds are divided into two main categories due to their expression or impact; pleasant or unpleasant sounds. As pleasant sound beautify our environment and relax or satisfy human being aesthetically, on the other side unpleasant sounds disturb the balance and harmony of natural order of environment as well as human health seriously.

Sound pollution is one of current environmental crises faced by humans on daily basis, but unfortunately it is not mentioned in the national conservation strategy report. Similarly, unlike water or air, it is local or domestic pollutant of environment, and its effects cannot be spread out from country to country. The potential health effects of sound pollution are numerous and significant morally, medically, and socially. It represents some important health problem leading to sleep disruption, social handicaps, negative social behaviours, hearing loss, cardiovascular disease reduced productivity, annoyance reactions. It further will demolish the future generations by disturbing their social, residential, and learning environment. Islam put some responsibilities on individuals in ethical perspective regarding sustainable environment. Unfortunately, due to materialistic approach and greed modern man has failed to pay such

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environmental concern. Here, Prophetic teachings provide comprehensive guidelines for human behaviours and practices regarding sound issues and solutions for its related crises being environment friendly.

Research Questions

1. How Islam compatible with sound pollution in the viewpoint of Prophetic teachings?
2. What salient features of sounds have illustrated by Ḥadīth literature?
3. What measures and strategies do the texts of Ḥadīth pose to reduce the sound pollution?

Research methodology

The paper has descriptive and an analytical approach. The study reveals out prophetic guiding principles regarding most of sound issues through textual study of Ḥadīth literature. That will be more useful for human health protection being environment friendly.

Sound Pollution as Great Hazard for human health and its solution in the light of Prophetic Guidance

Sound is an essential part of our lives. As the sound: surrounding us in our homes and social environment, make our “audio” lives. According to American National standard Acoustical terminology, sound is;

“Oscillation in pressure, stress, practice displacement particle velocity. Etc propagated in a medium with internal forces(e.g, elastic or viscous) or the superposition of such propagated ascillation.”¹

It refers to a wave movement in any elastic media or air. By exciting the hearing mechanism, it results in the perception of sound. That’s why it can also be considered as a sensation. In physics, the sound is an audible wave of pressure which comes through vibration in any medium such as gas, solid or liquid. In human physiology and psychology, sound is the reception of vibrant waves and their perception by the brain.² Sound can be measured by “phone” (unit of sound pitch) and “decibel (unit of its pressure or impact). The decibel is the minimum of difference between two sounds detectable by the human ear. At Zero; the sound is very low and if it rises up to 130 db, may cause pain and distress. Prof. karem s Ghoneim presented different values of some sounds in nature as determined by scientists. Their measurement in dBs is following.

- Natural breathing_ 10dB
- Rush of tree leaves in Breeze _50dB
- Traffic in a craeded street_70 dB
- large water fall _90dB

- A nearby machinegun_ 130 dB
- Aircraft taking off_ 140 dB

A Rocket in lift off_175dB

However, sounds are labelled as very quiet, quiet, audible, medium, high, and noisy. The painful type is at 130 dB.

Similarly, sound waves can be heard by humans from different pitches within a specific level of frequency between 20 HZ and 20 k HZ. When it is below 20 HZ , it cannot be heard easily and is called infra sound while crossing the level from 20kHz called, it is known as ultra sound.

There are many sources of sound production. Some are natural like thunder storm, clashing waves, dog barking, wind, waterfalls, avalanches, fire etc while some other are manmade like household equipment (home appliances), transportation, industrial machinery and agricultural activities.

Rather than above mentioned classification of sound based on frequency level, Allah almighty describes sound in following manner;

"وَاقْصِدْ فِي مَشْيِكَ وَاعْضُضْ مِنْ صَوْتِكَ إِنَّ أَنْكَرَ الْأَصْوَاتِ لَصَوْتُ الْحَمِيرِ"³

“Be modest in thy bearing and subdue thy voice. Lo! the harshest of all voices is the voice of the ass.”

Here, Qurān categorizes the sound on the basis of its pressure or impact and expression is used as disliked or unpleasant sound. It means the sound is unpleasant due to its high frequently and pitch. The ideal situation is moderate (medium) sound. Neither louder nor too timid or half hearted.

Anyhow sounds are divided into two main categories due to their expression or impact; pleasant or unpleasant sounds. As pleasant sounds beautify our environment and relax or satisfy human being aesthetically, on the other side unpleasant sounds disturb the balance and harmony of natural order of environment. This later on called as sound pollution. Humans are facing such environmental abuse on daily basis but unfortunately ignored by the experts even not mentioned in the report of National Conservative Strategy.⁴

Sound pollution is also called as noise pollution at broader level. As according to A. Wilson committee of noise affairs, any undesirable sound to the receiver is called Noise.⁵ The word noise is derived from the Latin word nauseas that refer to disgust or discomfort. Actually it is an inconsistent/ erroneous sound that is practiced in a wrong place at wrong time in a wrong way.⁶

According to Encyclopedia Britannica: Noise pollution is; “unwanted or excessive sound that can have deleterious effects on human health and environmental quality.”⁷ It may also defined as; annoying or harmful noise (as

of automobiles or Jet airplanes in an environment).⁸ However, encyclopaedia Britannica elaborates Noise pollution in an explicit manner. It is noted that population in urban areas is suffering a lot of psycho somatic disorder and pain humming in the ears leading to feelings of tiredness. It may also cause many physical and mental fatigue and lack of concentration.⁹ Prof Karen S. Ghoneim, discussed in detailed the dangerous effects of noise e.g. the auditory damage, harmful imbalance of fetus, heart attack due to blockage of blood vessels and triglyceride I blood, disorder of nervous system, irritability, dizziness, headaches, moodiness and anxiety and frustration into children etc.¹⁰

Impact of Sound Pollution on Human Health

The noise problems of the past pale in significance when compared with those experienced by modern city dwellers; noise pollution continues to grow in extent, frequency, and severity as a result of population growth, urbanization, and technological developments. Due to exposure of noise people are suffering from difference kinds of diseases like Hearing Impairment, Interference with spoken communication, Sleep disturbances, cardiovascular disturbances, Annoyance etc. The WHO has documented seven categories of adverse health effects of noise pollution on humans. Much of the following comes from the WHO Guideline on Community Noise and follows its format.

Hearing Impairment

There is also general agreement that exposure for more than 8 hours to sound levels in excess of 85 dB is potentially hazardous; to place this in context, 85 dB is roughly equivalent to the noise of heavy truck traffic on a busy road. With sound levels above 85 dB, damage is related to sound pressure (measured in dB) and to time of exposure. Noise induced hearing impairment may be accompanied by abnormal loudness perception (loudness recruitment), distortion (paracusis), and tinnitus. Tinnitus may be temporary or may become permanent after prolonged exposure.

Negative Social Behaviour and Annoyance

The term annoyance to cover the wide range of negative reactions associated with noise pollution; these include anger, disappointment, dissatisfaction, withdrawal, helplessness, depression, anxiety, distraction, agitation, or exhaustion. Social and behavioral effects of noise exposure are complex, subtle, and indirect. These effects include changes in everyday behaviour (e.g. closing windows and doors to eliminate outside noises; avoiding the use of balconies, patios and yards; and turning up the volume of radios and television sets); changes in social behaviour (e.g. aggressiveness, unfriendliness, nonparticipation, or disengagement); and changes in social indicators (e.g. residential mobility, hospital admissions, drug consumption, and accident rates); and changes in mood (increased reports of depression).¹¹

Interference with Spoken Communication

Noise pollution interferes with the ability to comprehend normal speech and may lead to a number of personal disabilities, handicaps, and behavioural changes. These include problems with concentration, fatigue, uncertainty, lack of self-

confidence, irritation, misunderstandings, decreased working capacity, disturbed interpersonal relationships, and stress reactions.

Sleep Disturbances

Environmental noise is one of the major causes of disturbed sleep. When sleep disruption becomes chronic, the results are mood changes, decrements in performance, and other long-term effects on health and well-being.

Cardiovascular Disturbance

Most of the evidences confirm that sound pollution has impacted on human minds temporally and permanently through endocrine and autonomic nervous system. It further affects the cardiovascular system and becomes high risk for cardiovascular diseases. These all above diseases may happen due to constant daily exposure to sound levels above 65dB or above 80 dB and children are also victimising the same risk by living in noisy environments.¹²

Mental Health Disturbance

Sound pollution may also result to the adverse effects e.g. stress, nausea, headache, anxiety, emotional instability, sexual impotence, increase in social conflicts, argumentativeness, change in mood and hysteria.¹³ Sound level above 80 dB may also reason for aggressive behaviours of human.

Recently it is indicated that usage of amplifiers and loud speakers in music may cause so noise pollution and bad effect on one's emotions, physiology and nervous system. According to modern medical science, due to vibrations created by Music our heart beats become irregular that leads to high blood pressure and may cause heart attacks. Further, constant listener of music may become dumb and have many mental diseases. Hence, in America people demanded to ban on music legally.¹⁴

It is important to minimize all above means because they harmfully impact on human as well as all other living elements of the environment. Such harm of noise can be reduced in the light of Islamic guidelines.

Low volume of Sound

As in holy Qurān it is instructed to its believers;

" يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَرْفَعُوا أَصْوَاتَكُمْ فَوْقَ صَوْتِ النَّبِيِّ... " ¹⁵

“O ye who believe! Lift not up your voices above the voice of the Prophet Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم)....

Here Muslim are advised to lower their voices in the presence of Prophet Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and the same rule will be applicable in front of all respectful gatherings or in front of honourable person. It is not allowed to praise Allah loudly in the mosques. Because other people may get disturbed by it and it is also against the sanctity of mosque.¹⁶

Prohibition of harsh & Thrilling Sounds

Islam always dislikes harsh and thrilling sounds. It is mentioned;

17 " وَاقْصِدْ فِي مَشْيِكَ وَاعْضُضْ مِنْ صَوْتِكَ إِنَّ أَنْكَرَ الْأَصْوَاتِ لَصَوْتُ الْحَمِيرِ "

“Be modest in thy bearing and subdue thy voice. Lo! the harshest of all voices is the voice of the ass.”

Luqmān advised his son to lower his voice and to avoid shouting harsh voices. Here Qurān explicit the concept of harsh or thrilling sounds by using the metaphor of the braying of the ass. It means that any type of sound that discomforts people is known as unpleasant sound or pollutant of noise pollution. Moreover, Islam never permits its believer’s to raise their voices even for rituals that may cause disturbance for other people. The Qurān instructed basic rule of sound regarding prayers as following;

" وَلَا تَجْهَرْ بِصَلَاتِكَ وَلَا تُخَافِتْ بِهَا وَابْتَغِ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ سَبِيلًا "18

“And thou (Muḥammad), be not loud-voiced in thy worship nor yet silent therein, but follow a way between.”

Islam always teaches its followers a caring attitude for other people and demands then to refrain from harming them, even in a loud voice. The above verse clarifies that Muslims are ordered not to raise their voices in prayer and also avoid an inaudible voice. The middle course, “Jāhriyah” (as to be heard) in prayer is suggested because, sound become undesired when it disturbs the normal activities of man like sleep or conversation and especially when it may affect one’s quality of life. Prophet Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) himself guided regarding this as a precautionary measure. It can be noticed that in case of religious rituals; even prayer and recitation should be performed in slow pace if someone is sleeping nearby. Ibn ‘bbās reported regarding the explanation of above mentioned verse, that during secret preaching period of Islam in Makkah, Prophet Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) suggested to be moderate in sound because with louder voice pagans would abuse Qurān as well as to whom who revealed it while in slower voice companions could not listen it properly;

" فَكَانَ إِذَا صَلَّى بِأَصْحَابِهِ رَفَعَ صَوْتَهُ بِالْقُرْآنِ فَإِذَا سَمِعَهُ الْمُشْرِكُونَ سَبُّوا الْقُرْآنَ وَمَنْ أَنْزَلَهُ وَمَنْ جَاءَ بِهِ فَقَالَ اللَّهُ لِنَبِيِّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَلَا تَجْهَرْ بِصَلَاتِكَ... "19

“ At that time, when he led his companions in prayer, he used to raise his voice while reciting the Qur'an; and if the pagans heard him, they would abuse the Qur'an, its Revealer, and the one who brought it. So Allah said to His Prophet Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم): ‘Neither say your prayer aloud’...”

Here in above mentioned Ḥadīth the level of sound is mentioned that it should not be as loud as sound induces hearing loss by prolonging exposure to noise level above 8-A weighted decibels.²⁰

It is reported by Abū M‘umar that we asked to Khubāb that;

“Did Allah's Apostle (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) used to recite in Zuhr and 'Asr prayers?” He replied in the affirmative. We said, ‘How did you come to know about it?’ He said: By the movement of his beard.”²¹

Qirāt (recitation of holy Qurān after Fātiḥa) is obligatory in prayer. According to Imām Zufar and Ḥasan it is obligatory in every rakah of Zuhr and ‘Asr prayer. While Ḥanafīes made it obligatory in first two rakah and Mālikies considered it in three rakah. While Shāf‘ī made it obligatory in four rakah and if it is missed by any reason, it must be compensated by Sajda e Sahaw.²² Infected Prophet Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) recited it which was known by the movement of the beard of Prophet Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم). However Muḥaddithīn did not elaborate these phenomena in detail by their commentaries because it is difficult to prove by the beards movement.²³ It can be noticed that at the timings of Day or night (Zuhr and ‘Asr) Prophet Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) guided to recite in slow voices while all ‘ulemā are agreed upon the recitation in loud (Qir bil Jahr) voice is at Calm timings (Mughrib and ‘Isha).²⁴ It is reported by Mūsa Ash‘arī that once companions of holy Prophet Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) started saying Allah o Akbar, Allah o Akbar loudly at reaching one valley towards Khybar, Prophet Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) advised to them as ;

“Lower your voices, for you are not calling a deaf or an absent one, but you are calling a Hearer Who is near and is with you...”²⁵

Prophet Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) logically instructed them that you are not calling any dumb and deaf but Allah is closest to you and all listening all hearing. Similarly, at the beginning, when companion were suggesting different ways to call for prayer” by blowing a horn, drumming or ringing of bells. Prophet

Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) rejected all of them due to their harshness and thrilling sound. That's why all musical instruments with heavy metal are forbidden in Islam.

In modern times, loudspeakers are used with amplifiers for Adhān that sometimes causes mental, physical and spiritual discomfort. Infect most of the mosque are used as mode of business. Moreover people are disturbed by so many announcements from that loudspeaker of the mosques. For instance, people announce for their lost things that may cause bad effects on human health and mind. Here Prophetic teachings guide us to avoid such type of sound pollution even at the holy places. As reported by Al-Saīb bin Yazīd (RA) that once two people created some disturbance in the mosque and 'Umar called them up and said to them;

“Who are you? (Or) where do you come from? They replied, We are from Ta'if. 'Umar said, 'Were you from this city (Medina) I would have punished you for raising your voices in the mosque of Allah's Apostle.”²⁶

Here it is said that 'Umar b. al khatāb intended to give punishment to those who were making noise in the mosque.²⁷ It is clearly prohibited that mosque and their loudspeakers are not built for that purpose especially when its noise disturbs human peace of mind.

Once Prophet Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) noticed companions clapping during salat, he forbade them and suggested an environment friendly act as reported by Sahal b. Sa'd that;

“If some problem arises during prayers, then the men should say, Subhan Allah!; and the women should clap.”²⁸

Women are also suggested to strike her fingers on one hand or on the back of other hand as clapping.²⁹ Clapping is another form of noise pollution that must be avoided. Furthermore, the personal characteristics of Prophet Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) in Bible are reported by 'Atā b. yāsār from 'Adullah b. 'Umar As following;

" يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ شَاهِدًا وَمُبَشِّرًا
وَحِزْرًا لِلْأُمِّيِّينَ أَنْتَ عَبْدِي وَرَسُولِي سَمِيْتُكَ الْمُتَوَكَّلُ
لَيْسَ بَقَطْ وَلَا غَلِيظٌ وَلَا سَخَابٌ بِالْأَسْوَاقِ " ³⁰

“...You are neither hard-hearted nor of fierce character, nor one who shouts in the markets...”

Prophet Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) never, shouted throughout his life he forbade his believers from roaring laughter and in case of expression of happiness, he suggested to simile as ‘Āisha reported that;

“I never saw the Prophet Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) laughing to an extent that one could see his palate, but he always used to smile only.”³¹

Prophet Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) always had a pleasant smile. It is also narrated by Abū Huraira that;

“When the Messenger of Allah (صلى الله عليه وسلم) sneezed, he placed his hand or a garment on his mouth, and lessened the noise...”)”³²

The word ‘khafdh’ or ‘Ghadh’ means lower or to slowdown. It is one of the meeting etiquettes that we should try our level best to slow down the sound of sneezing so that it may not cause any disturbance to people.³³

Appropriate Use of Tongue

Tongue is one of the natural sources of producing sound, which is further used into many electronically devices. Sometimes the same tongue may satisfy our aesthetic sense and relax our soul. But it may also cause depression when used for taunt, irony, abuse and noise etc.

According to Islamic teachings, proper and positive use of tongue is considered as an important of a noble and exemplary Muslim. Prophet Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) defines Muslim as;

“A Muslim is the one who avoids harming Muslims with his tongue or his hands. And a Mumin is the one who gives up (abandons) all what Allah has forbidden.”³⁴

It means Muslim is the one who never disturbs any other Muslim mentally or physically. He never causes any verbal discomfort or harm to other people by his tongue. Iman is the supreme and excellent form of Islam so perfection of a

muslim can be referred to Iman. As stated by Prophet Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم);

" عَنْ أَبِي مُوسَى قَالَ قَالُوا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَيُّ الْإِسْلَامِ
أَفْضَلُ قَالَ مَنْ سَلِمَ الْمُسْلِمُونَ مِنْ لِسَانِهِ وَيَدِهِ " ³⁵

"A Muslim is the one who avoids harming Muslims with his tongue and hands. "

Prophet Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) declared the best form of Iman, to protect the others from the abuse and misuse of tongue. Here the word safe or safety refers to any type of security from noise, disappointment, abusing etc and sometimes "by hands" we are converting our sounds into buffer or other instrumental devices that may also cause disturbance to the natural balance of our environment. For motivation Prophet Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said;

"Whoever can guarantee (the chastity of) what is between his two jaw-bones and what is between his two legs (i.e. his tongue and his private parts), I guarantee Paradise for him."³⁶

Endorsing the importance of tongue, here he also said that punishment can sometimes be given due to the inappropriate use of tongue. For instance it is reported that once Prophet Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) visited Sa'd b. 'Ubādah when he was sick and told to his family members that;

"Allah does not punish for shedding tears, nor for the grief of the heart but he punishes or bestows His Mercy because of this." He pointed to his tongue and added, "The deceased is punished for the wailing of his."³⁷

Furthermore lot of supplications provided by Prophet Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) are meant for just refreshing the mind and soul of a Muslim and it is the tongue which is used. As Prophet Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) suggested the following supplication to be recited consistently as reported by Shaykl (RA) ibn Humayd;

"O Allah, I seek refuge in Thee from the evil of what I hear, from the evil of what I see, from the evil of what I speak, from the evil of what I think, and from the evil of my semen" (i.e. sexual passion)³⁸

Above mentioned supplication and its wording signifies the importance of the use of tongue and its careful use for a Muslim on daily basis. It creates a sense of responsibility in humans.

It is cleared that the guiding principles of Prophet Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) are very helpful for every aspect of life. For example he pointed out some hazards of tongue in his tradition;

“There will be civil strife which wipes out the Arabs, and their slain will go to Hell. During it the tongue will be more severe than blows of the sword.”³⁹

Here Prophet Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) predicted about one *fitna* that can be declared as crisis this crisis will be the crisis of tongue; it exactly, refers to the sound pollution.

Therefore, in the light of above mentioned Prophetic guidance it is necessary for a Muslim to be careful regarding usage of tongue.

Motivation to Produce Pleasant Sound

Sense of hearing is the basic element of the definition of aesthetically remarkable along with sense of sight. “Sound Harmony” is one basic characteristic of “Beauty” that is famous type of aesthetically remarkable. For instance, the music of the wind in the pines or harmonious sound or combination of sounds is aesthetic pleasure.⁴⁰ Hence, Pleasant sounds are part of aesthetic element of our environment that increases its beauty and harmony. Infect a pleasing sound or reciting something in a pleasant way is not called Gina.⁴¹ It can only be permissible when instruments are not uses with human voice without any vulgerness.⁴²

Recitation is one of the pleasant and harmonious sounds, having positive effects on human heart and may cause peace and tranquillity. Imām Bukhārī has mentioned a special chapter on the pleasant sound of Qurānic recitation. According to Imām Nawawī it is Mustahab to recite Qurān beautifully according to Tajwīd rules.⁴³ That is why Prophet Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said;

“Whoever does not recite Qur'an in a nice voice is not from us...”⁴⁴

Nawawī graded the Ḥadīth as “Jayyid”(very good)⁴⁵, The Qurān literally means “the recitation”, as it is heard and listened too much. Allah likes to listen the pleasant sound of Qurānic recitation. As narrated by Abū Huraira that;

“Allah does not listen to anything as He listens to the recitation of the Qur'an by a Prophet Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) who recites”⁴⁶

Prophet Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) also liked to listen Qurān in pleasant recitation as reported by ‘Adullah b. Masūd that ‘Amr b. Mara said that Prophet said to recite Qurān for him;

“Recite (of the Qur'an) for me," I said, "Shall I recite it to you although it had been revealed to you?" He said, "I like to hear (the Qur'an) from others...”⁴⁷

Recitation in pleasant sound directly impacts the sprit. Prophet Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) himself recited Qurān pleasantly; as reported by Barah that;

“I heard the Prophet Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) reciting Surat at-Tin waz Zaitun in the 'Isha' prayer and I have never heard anybody with a better voice or recitation than his.”⁴⁸

Recitation of Qurān impacts the emotions of humans. Most of the studies (by Ilder, Seleh, and Mazlum (2003) Recitation of Qurān reduces stress on pulse, respiration and blood pressure. Further, it also reduces the anxiety of athletes.⁴⁹

The call for Prayer (Azan)

Another example of pleasant sounds in Islam is the “Adhān”: the invitation call to prayer that is heard frequently on daily basis. The literal meaning of Adhān is to inform or to intimate. There is also intimation about prayer that’s why it is called as Adhān. After migration to Madīnah when the number of Muslims increased and on the suggestion of ‘Umar Farūq, people were informed about Salat through Adhān. It is Sunnat e Muw’kida for congregational prayer.⁵⁰ It is a series of sacred verses in beautiful, melodious voice, calling the Muslims toward prayer. According to Abū Ḥanīfa and Aḥamd these verses are fifteen in number while according to Imām Sha‘fi these are nineteen repeating the verse of Shahādah twice and slowly once and loudly again. It is called as Tarjīh. It is said that Adhān should be given loudly and clearly. Ḥafīz ibn Ḥajr and ‘Allāma ‘ynī has quoted many Aḥadīth for its significance.⁵¹ Basically, the purpose of such multiple loud pronouncements is to spread out the summary of whole spiritual ideology of Islam in the mind of every Muslim and non Muslim.⁵² However they are not synchronized that’s why they can be heard frequently many times from any point in a city and they keep on echoing and re-echoing

on the multiple minarets through loud speakers. It begins with “Shahadah” one of the pillar of Islam. As

“I testify that there is no god but Allah, I testify that Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) is the Prophet) of Allah.”

Prophet Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) selected Bilal to be the “first Mawḍhin” due to his beautiful and pleasant sound. However according to Islamic traditions the selection criteria of Mawḍhin is based upon talent as well as beautiful, loud and melodious sound for reciting Adhān, that has to be listened repeatedly by each and every Muslim.⁵³

Further, such “Mawḍhin” holds significant character in front of Allah, as it is stated in holy Qurān;

“And who is better in speech than him who prayeth unto his Lord and doeth right, and saith: Lo! I am of those who are muslims.”⁵⁴

Here, those people are glorified, who have pleasant sound and call toward Allah. Islamic jurisprudence elaborates characteristic that must be present is the righteous actions such as he should not be blind(able to distinguish purity and impurity), must be qāri (reciting Qurān with perfection).⁵⁵

By following above mentioned Prophetic guiding principles it transpires that we must lower our voices as personal characteristics and to wait for few seconds being a little sympathetic for the person in front of us during driving to make him or her move instead of blowing horns constantly. We must avoid musical instruments and should be moderate in our worship and rituals and avoid all unpleasant sounds that may disturb human and natural beauty of our environment.

Results & Conclusion:

Islam always stimulates the concept of moderation as well as encourages its followers to be moderate in their all practices including in their ecological spheres of life especially in the scenario of sound pollution. According to prophetic guidance the ideal situation is moderate (medium) sound. Neither louder nor too timid or half hearted. However, recitation is one of the pleasant and harmonious sounds, having positive effects on human heart and may cause relaxation. Due to hazardous nature of sound pollution for human health, we must be very careful regarding usage of tongue or producing sounds for others as well as the natural harmony and balance of our environment.

Suggestions

- We should give some time to the communities for informing and updating them about the initiatives and endeavours of sound pollution control. Volunteer from NGOs, depending on their ability, education and flexibility can be utilized for these activities.
- Need of employing Prophetic approach in environmental protection with special reference to sound pollution.
- Formation of scientific committee with emphasis on textual studies of Qurān, Ḥadīth, and Fiqh along with environmental sciences.
- Formation of a global Islamic Association with worldwide environmental societies for the collaborated rules and regulation for better understanding and implementing.
- Government should control this issue to protect citizens from such adverse effects created by sound.
- According to Islamic traditions, the criteria for the selection of Mawdhin should be talent, melodious, beautiful and loud sound because Adhān has to be listened by all Muslim frequently.
- It is indicated that usage of amplifiers and loud speakers in music may cause noise pollution and bad effect on one's emotions, physiology and nervous system.
- It is important to minimize all means of creating loud sounds because they have harmful impact on human as well as all other living elements of the environment.
- We must lower our voices as personal characteristics.
- We must try to wait for few seconds being a little sympathetic for the person in front of us to make him or her move instead of blowing horns constantly.
- We must avoid musical instruments and should be moderate in our worship and rituals and avoid all unpleasant sounds that may disturb human and natural beauty of our environmental being environment friendly.
- Human should individually prevent exposure of loud sounds in working environment to secure our health and sustainability.

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¹⁰ See, Ghoneim, “Qurān and the Environment”

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¹⁵ Qurān, 49:2-3

¹⁶ Kashmīrī, Anwār al Bārī ,vol.14, 80-81.

¹⁷ Qurān, 31:19

¹⁸ Qurān,

¹⁹ Al Bukhārī, Muhammad Ibn Isma‘īl. *Ṣaḥīḥ Al Bukhārī*, Cairo: Dar al-Shab, 1987. Kitāb al Tuheed, h.2419

²⁰ “Noise Induced Hearing Loss” *National Institute of Health, NLDCCD*. Published Feb7, 2017. retrieved June 29,2018.

²¹ " عَنْ أَبِي مَعْمَرٍ قُلْتُ لِحَبَابِ أَكَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَفْرَأُ فِي الظُّهْرِ وَالْعَصْرِ قَالَ نَعَمْ قُلْنَا مِنْ أَيْنَ عَلِمْتَ قَالَ " *باضطراب لِحبيته*

Al Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Al Bukhārī*, Kitāb al azan, h.748

²² Ghanghohī, *Lāmi‘ al Darrārī*, vol.1, 296.

²³ Kashmīrī, Anwār al Bārī, vol.16, 424.

²⁴ Kashmīrī, Anwār al Bārī,, vol.16,430. Extract from Al ‘Asqalānī, *Fath Al Bārī*, and Al ‘Aynī, *‘Umdat ul Qāri*.

²⁵ " فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ارْبِعُوا عَلَى أَنْفُسِكُمْ إِنَّكُمْ لَا تَدْعُونَ أَصَمَّ وَلَا غَائِبًا إِنَّكُمْ تَدْعُونَ سَمِيعًا قَرِيبًا وَهُوَ " *مَعَكُمْ ...*

Al Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Al Bukhārī*, Kitāb al maghazi, h.1417

²⁶ " فَإِذَا عَمَرَ بَنُ الْخَطَّابِ فَقَالَ أَذْهَبَ فَأَتَيْتِي بِهِدِينِ فَجِئْتُهُ بِهِمَا قَالَ مَنْ أَنْتُمْ أَوْ مِنْ أَيْنَ أَنْتُمْ قَالَا مِنْ أَهْلِ الطَّائِفِ قَالَ لَوْ كُنْتُمْ " *مِنْ أَهْلِ*

الْبَلَدِ لَأَوْجَعْتُكُمْ تَرْفَعَانِ أَصْوَاتَكُمْ فِي مَسْجِدِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ " *وَسَلَّمَ*

²⁷ Kashmīrī, Anwār al Bārī, vol.14,80-81.

²⁸ " ... إِذَا رَابَكُمْ أَمْرٌ فَلْيَسْتَبِخِ الرِّجَالُ وَلْيُصَفِّحِ النِّسَاءُ " Al Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Al Bukhārī*, Kitāb al Azan, h.2100

²⁹ See Kashmīrī, *Anwār al Bārī*,

³⁰ Al Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Al Bukhārī*, Kitāb al Biyuh, h.2047

³¹ "عَنْ عَائِشَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا قَالَتْ مَا رَأَيْتُ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مُسْتَجْمِعًا قَطُّ صَاحِبًا حَتَّى أَرَى مِنْهُ لَهَوَاتِهِ إِنَّمَا كَانَ يَتَبَسَّمُ"

Al Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Al Bukhārī*, Kitāb al adab, h.

³² حَدَّثَنَا مُسَدَّدٌ حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ عَنْ أَبِي صَالِحٍ عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا

عَطَسَ وَضَعَ يَدَهُ أَوْ ثَوْبَهُ عَلَى فِيهِ وَخَفَضَ أَوْ غَضَّ بِهَا صَوْتَهُ شَكَتْ يَحْيَى 1621, *Kitāb Al Sunan*, h.

³³ See, Ashiq Iahi, Roza tul Salihin, vol.3, p.420

³⁴ " سَمِعْتُ عَبْدَ اللَّهِ بْنَ عَمْرٍو يَقُولُ قَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ الْمُسْلِمُ مَنْ سَلِمَ الْمُسْلِمُونَ مِنْ لِسَانِهِ وَيَدِهِ وَالْمُهَاجِرُ مَنْ هَجَرَ مَا نَهَى اللَّهُ

عَنْهُ" Al Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Al Bukhārī*, h.1431

³⁵ Al Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Al Bukhārī*, h.10

³⁶ "عَنْ سَهْلِ بْنِ سَعْدٍ عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ مَنْ يَضْمَنْ لِي مَا بَيْنَ لَحْيَيْهِ وَمَا بَيْنَ رِجْلَيْهِ اضْمَنْ لَهُ الْجَنَّةَ"

Al Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Al Bukhārī*, h.1421

³⁷ " إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُعَذِّبُ بِدَمْعِ الْعَيْنِ وَلَا بِحُزْنِ الْقَلْبِ وَلَكِنْ يُعَذِّبُ بِهَذَا وَأَشَارَ إِلَى لِسَانِهِ أَوْ بِرَحْمٍ وَإِنَّ الْمَيِّتَ يُعَذِّبُ بِكَيْفِ أَهْلِهِ رَضِيَ عَلَيْهِ"

Al Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Al Bukhārī*, 1247

³⁸ "أَبِي أَحْمَدَ شَكَلَ بْنِ حُمَيْدٍ قَالَ قُلْتُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ عَلِمَنِي دُعَاءٌ قَالَ فُلَا اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ شَرِّ سَمْعِي وَمِنْ شَرِّ بَصَرِي وَ

مِنْ شَرِّ لِسَانِي وَمِنْ شَرِّ قَلْبِي وَمِنْ شَرِّ مَنِي" Abū Da'ūd, *Kitāb Al Sunan*, h.1547

³⁹ "حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ عَبْدِ حَدَّثَنَا حَمَادُ بْنُ زَيْدٍ حَدَّثَنَا لَيْثٌ عَنْ طَاوُسٍ عَنْ رَجُلٍ يُقَالُ لَهُ زِيَادٌ عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عَمْرٍو قَالَ قَالَ

رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِنَّهَا سَتَكُونُ فِتْنَةٌ تَسْتَنْظِفُ الْعَرَبَ قَتْلَاهَا فِي النَّارِ اللِّسَانُ فِيهَا أَشَدُّ مِنْ وَقْعِ السِّيفِ قَالَ أَبُو دَاوُدَ رَوَاهُ

Abū Da'ūd, *Kitāb Al Sunan*, h.34.

التَّوْرِيُّ عَنْ لَيْثٍ عَنْ طَاوُسٍ عَنْ الْأَعْمَجِ".

⁴⁰ Saleem Bhimgi, "The Status of Music in Islam by Shaykh", Al Islam.org, accessed at July 20, 2019. Al.Islam.org/article/status-music-islam-shykh.saleem-bhimiji.

⁴¹ While Gina is the prolonging of sound along with a change in the pitch in especially in vain and futile gathering and assembling of sining. (such as nightclub, discos, dance-halls etc)

⁴² Sound scapes of Islam, p.1

⁴³ Al Nawawi, *Sharah al Nawawi*, vol.1, 268.

⁴⁴ " عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لَيْسَ مَثًا مَنْ لَمْ يَتَعَنَّ بِالْقُرْآنِ وَزَادَ غَيْرُهُ يَجْهَرُ بِهِ"

Al Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Al Bukhārī*, Kitāb al Tuheed, h.2421

⁴⁵ Yahya b. Sharf al Dīn Al Nawawī, *Riyād Al Ṣaliḥīn* (Karachi: Qadīmī Kutub Khāna, nd), 364.

⁴⁶ " عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ أَنَّهُ سَمِعَ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ مَا أَدْنَى اللَّهُ لِشَيْءٍ مَا أَدْنَى لِنَبِيِّ حَسَنَ الصَّوْتِ بِالْقُرْآنِ يَجْهَرُ بِهِ"

Al Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Al Bukhārī*, Kitāb al Tuheed, h.2437

⁴⁷ "قَالَ لِي النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَقْرَأُ عَلَى فُلْتُ أَقْرَأُ عَلَيْكَ وَعَلَيْكَ أَنْزَلَ قَالَ فَإِنِّي أُحِبُّ أَنْ أَسْمَعَهُ مِنْ غَيْرِي فَفَرَأْتُ عَلَيْهِ سُورَةَ النَّسَاءِ حَتَّى بَلَغْتُ فَكَيْفَ إِذَا جِئْنَا مِنْ كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ بِشَهِيدٍ وَجِئْنَا بِكَ عَلَى هَوْلٍ شَهِيدًا قَالَ أُمْسِكْ فَإِذَا عَيْنَاهُ تَذَرَفَانِ"

Al Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Al Bukhārī*, h.1762

⁴⁸ "حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو نُعَيْمٍ حَدَّثَنَا مَسْعُورٌ عَنْ عَدِيِّ بْنِ ثَابِتٍ أَرَاهُ قَالَ قَالَ سَمِعْتُ الْبَرَاءَ قَالَ سَمِعْتُ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقْرَأُ فِي

الْعِشَاءِ وَالنَّبِينَ

وَالرَّيْثُونَ فَمَا سَمِعْتُ أَحَدًا أَحْسَنَ صَوْتًا أَوْ قِرَاءَةً 2439, *Kitāb al Tuheed*, h.

منه "

⁴⁹ See, mothaghi, Esmali and Rohani, 2011, Qurān, Rahmah Rizqi Zaidah and Muḥammad immaduddin, listening to the Qurān recitation:

Does it Affect Psycho physiological measure of measures of emotions, Advance in social sciences, education and humanities research research, volume 133, p.299

⁵⁰ Kashmīrī, Anwār al Bārī, vol.15, p.204

⁵¹ Al ‘Asqalānī, *Fath Al Bārī*, vol.2, p.8 and Al ‘Aynī, *Umdat ul Qāri*, vol.2, p.63

⁵² Farhat Naseem Alvi, and Afshan Noureen, “Understanding Ecology Issue and Finding their Islamic Solutions”, *Al Adwa* 40, no.28:50

⁵³ Ibid

⁵⁴ "وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ قَوْلًا مِّمَّنْ دَعَا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا وَقَالَ إِنَّنِي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ" Qurān 41:33

⁵⁵ Yusaf Ludhyānī, *Jawahir al Ḥadīth*, Karāchi, vol.2 (Pakistan: Maktaba Karachi, 2001), 81. However it is debated in Anwār ul Bari that Imām Nawawī wrongly associated with Abū Hanifa that Azan by blind person is Makruh. See also Anwār ul Bārī, vol.15, 219.