

THE EFFECTS OF MARKETING MIX ON CONSUMER SATISFACTION: A LITERATURE REVIEW FROM ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVES

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Abstract

Customer satisfaction is one of the essential factors for the success of a company. To achieve the high customer satisfaction, companies must know when and how their customers are satisfied about the products and services. Nowadays, different companies follow different types of marketing strategies based on the target market demand. The majority of companies follow a conventional marketing strategy, but some companies choose to follow a religious or spiritual marketing strategy such as the Islamic marketing strategy. Conventional marketing strategies satisfy the customers based on the current needs of the customer, whereas, Islamic marketing strategies satisfy the customers based on the human values, marketing cultures, and Islamic rules and regulations (shariah laws). Apart from conventional marketing strategies, the Islamic marketing strategies more focus on religious rules and ethics which do not exist in conventional marketing. Thus, this study discusses how marketing mix (product, price, place and promotion) influences customer satisfaction from Islamic perspectives and why it is necessary for the consumers.

Keywords: Marketing mix, Customer satisfaction, Islamic marketing

1. Introduction

The concept of marketing from an Islamic perspective is different from the conventional one. The conventional marketing concept, as many authors have attempted to define, can be explained in many different ways. It was first defined in 1948 by the American Marketing Association (AMA), United States of America, as “the performance of business activities directed toward, and incident to, the flow of goods and services from producer to consumer or user” (Kotler and Armstrong, 2004). In 1985, AMA changed this definition and defined the marketing concept as “the process of planning and executing the conception, pricing, promotion, and distribution of ideas, goods, and services to create exchanges that satisfy individual and organisational objectives”

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(Kotler and Armstrong, 2004). In 2004, Philip Kotler defined modern marketing as “a social and managerial process whereby individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating and exchanging products and value with others” (Alom and Haque, 2011).

Unlike conventional marketing, the Islamic marketing concept was established based on the basic motives of the creation of mankind and purpose. In Islam, every human life must follow Islamic *shariah* rules and regulations which are commanded by Allah the Almighty. So in Islam, marketing is not confined to just buying and selling or getting profit from goods and services under any business.

According to Alom and Haque (2011), Islamic marketing is a process and strategy (*Hikmah*) of fulfilling needs through *Halal (Tayyibat)* products and services, with the mutual consent and welfare (*Falah*) of both parties (i.e. buyers and sellers) for the purpose of achieving material and spiritual wellbeing in this world and the hereafter. They also mention that Islamic marketing must never compromise with unethical practices such as charging high prices, deceptive practices, misleading information about the products and services, hoarding, poor services to the disadvantaged customers/consumers, and selling unsafe products to the customers without informing them. Islamic marketing strategy always motivates the businessmen or business organisations to avoid these unethical practices to ensure the highest level of morality with satisfaction. If the Islamic marketing concept can be established in business organisations, then all stakeholders will benefit by getting pure products and services with good conduct on the part of the marketers or businessmen. The forthcoming part of this paper is a comprehensive discussion about the impact of customer satisfaction through Islamic marketing mix (product, price, place, and promotion).

2. Islamic Marketing Ethics

Islamic ethics start with the *Tawhid* (the oneness) of Allah *swt*, which is the highest and most important concept in Islam. Brotherhood and social justice are other significant elements of the ethics of Islamic marketing that are established by prohibiting the practice of hoarding in Islam (Arham, 2010). In Islamic marketing ethics there is an amalgamation between the principle of value maximisation and that of the equity and justice for the welfare of the society (Hassan *et al.*, 2008). The analysis of Mohiuddin and Haque (2012) indicates that ethical behaviour has two dimensions: one is conventional and the other is religion-based and Islamic. Only the religion-based ethical behaviour can lead to the utmost satisfaction of the customers and all stakeholders. The interests of all parties in a transaction, such as buyers, sellers, business partners, the community and so forth, are ensured in Islamic teachings and guidelines. Businesses, from an Islamic perspective, are able to manage a balance among their responsibilities: to the company, in terms of profits; to the consumers, in terms of providing safe and quality products; and towards ensuring the welfare of society, in terms of safeguarding moral and ethical levels of those involved. Thus, there are six categories of ethical principles that could be applied to marketing activities. These are the principles of truthfulness, trust, sincerity, brotherhood, science and technology, and justice (Abdullah & Ahmad, 2010). Religion has a huge influence on consumption, particularly in the

example of Islamic marketing, through consumer choices and decisions. The link between religion and personal consumption (perishable and non-perishable goods) is not difficult to find. Ethics deal with the moral issues that embody the values of a society and address the rightness or wrongness of behaviour. Islam, on the other hand, gives directions for a Muslim on how he/she should conduct his/her life. Thus, Islam influences the ethics of Muslim employees and managers (Koku & Jusoh, 2014). In the next section, we discussed the effects of marketing mix on customer satisfaction according to the Islamic marketing ethics.

3. Islamic Marketing Mix

In 1965, Borden first established the concept of marketing mix with a set of 12 elements, namely: product planning, pricing, branding, channels of distribution, personal selling, advertising, promotions, packaging, display, servicing, physical handling, and fact finding and analysis. Later Borden regrouped these 12 elements into four elements, or 4Ps, namely product, price, place (distribution), and promotion to satisfy the target market (Goi, 2009). Customer satisfaction can be influenced by the marketing mix (4Ps) based on the Islamic *shariah* perspective.

3.1 Product

A product is what the company has to offer, whether it is something tangible, like a mobile phone, or a service, like health treatment. It is anything that can be offered to satisfy a market's want or need. Successful companies consider the product's form, functionality, features, and benefits from the consumers' point of view. Moreover, each and every product must meet the needs of a particular target market (consumers' expectation). For example, a luxury product should create just the right image for "customers which have everything" (Goi, 2009). Many researchers suggest that the basic product must be positioned for better quality and price-conscious consumers. Other important aspects of product may include: an appropriate product range, design, warranties, or a brand name. Everyone buys products for their own personal benefit, and they buy a product with some expectations. For example, consumers buy books with the expectation of enjoyment and knowledge. There are four types of products. These are as follows:

1. *Formal product*: This product refers to the physical item which is bought by the consumers for their own benefit; for example, mobile, computer, and etc.
2. *Core product*: The core benefit is associated with using the formal product; what the customer is actually buying from the companies; for example, knowledge or status.
3. *Augmented product*: The totality of benefits that the customer receives from the formal product; for example, time saved or quick access to information.
4. *System product*: This product refers to the expansion of the augmented product – the attendant add-on and extras that come with the formal product; for example, manuals, training support (Kotler *et al.*, 2009).

3.1.1. Product in Islamic Marketing

In Islamic marketing, product must be pure and permissible (*halal*). This includes the fact that there should not be any harmful ingredients in the product which can affect the consumers and the society negatively. This, in effect, means that the production of the product must be guided by the Islamic code of conduct, which is driven by the Islamic *shariah* laws. According to the Islamic *shariah* laws, the exchange of products or services, such as alcohol, gambling, prostitution, magic, etc. are not allowed to be sold, even if they reap high profits (Alom and Haque, 2011).

From an Islamic perspective, marketers should not hide anything from the buyers, even if the product has some defects, nor should they add attributes to the product that do not exist. Regarding product selling, Prophet Mohammad (SAW) said the following:

The seller and the buyer have the right to keep or return goods as long as they have not parted, or till they part; and if both the parties spoke the truth and described the defects and qualities (of the goods), then they would be blessed in their transaction, and if they told lies or hid something, then the blessings of their transaction would be lost. (Narrated Hakim bin Hizam, Arham, 2010).

Based on this, we can understand that the seller must inform the buyer about the quality and any defects of the product before making any transaction. If the seller or buyer lies or hides something from the other, then it will not be considered a *halal* (permissible) business transaction. Therefore, firms and companies must be honest and ethical in order to provide the best quality of products or services. This will therefore fulfill their customers'/consumers' expectations in accordance with Islamic rules and regulations (*shariah* laws).

Prophet Mohammad (SAW) also mentioned that if you are selling a product, then you must not mix good quality products with bad quality products. As an example, there is a *hadith* (narration) where the Prophet went to the bazaar and saw that one person was selling some dates in a basket. At the top of the basket all the dates were shining and looked to be high quality. However, once the Prophet put his hand into the basket, he found that all of the dates were wet and were of very poor quality compared to those at the top. After that Prophet said that a person should not to sell a product to anyone unless they know everything about its quality. From the above example, we can understand that businessman and marketers must be honest and provide the best quality product in order to achieve the customer's complete satisfaction, from the Islamic perspective.

3.1.2. Relationship between the Product and Customer Satisfaction

According to the Islamic perspective, products or services can influence customer satisfaction through five principles, namely lawfulness, purity, deliverability, precise determination and cleanliness. The first principle, namely that the product should be lawful, should not cause dullness of mind and lead to the customers dissatisfaction about the product or service. The second principle, where the product must be pure,

must have high quality features, therefore satisfying the customers' expectations. The third principle, the deliverability of the product, encompasses whether or not the product is deliverable. This can include promising the notion of birds in the sky, fish in the sea, etc. that the seller cannot produce, then seller must not attempt to sell it to the customer. The fourth principle, precise determination, encompasses the exact quantity and quality of the product. The seller must be able to inform the buyer about the actual portion of the product. The fifth and final principle is in regards to the product's cleanliness. Unclean products (i.e., items that include dog, pig, unclean garments etc.) must not be sold to customers. Clean products motivate customers to be loyal and satisfied of a particular product, and therefore with the company. In addition, the production process should be permissible (*Halal*) and pure (*twayyib*), in that it should ensure that the ingredients have been taken/extracted/obtained from lawful sources, to the extent that it is free from any harmful consequences (Saeed *et al.*, 2001).

In Islamic marketing, customer satisfaction can be increased through product differentiation. If the firms produce a variety of products based on customer needs, then customers can get the privilege of choosing from the many options. Moreover, if the company can improve the product quality but sell at the same price and conduct business following Islamic *shariah* laws (free from harmful and unethical practices), then the customer would be satisfied, and therefore motivated, to buy the same product or brand again and again from the one seller.

3.2. Price

Pricing is one of the important decisions that need to be made by a firm which would affect its revenue and profitability. In determining the price of a product, a company or marketing manager needs to consider not only the costs it takes to produce the item, but also the customer's perception on the value of the product (Hanna and Dodge, 1995). Moreover, companies strive to get the maximum margin by looking at a whole range of possibilities to set the right price to certain types of customer.

In economics, Adam Smith gives the notion of price as "value in exchange". Moreover, price is determined by the intersection of supply and demand in the market, or the so-called market mechanism (Stiglitz & Walsh, 2006). While from a marketing perspective, price is defined as "The amount of money charged for a product or service, or the sum of the values that consumers exchange for the benefits of having or using the product or service" (Kotler and Armstrong, 2004).

With respect to the types of market, companies face different conditions in order to set the price for its products. In a perfect competition market, companies become only a price taker, which means that it could not (freely) set its own price(s). Instead it has to follow the market price. Given many sellers and no information asymmetry, a perfect competition market would mean that there would be no room for each seller to earn abnormal amounts of profit, and instead it entitles each company to get a normal or equal profit only. Whether they like it or not, companies have to set their price equal to market price. If it is more than market price, the consumers would not buy from them and find other sellers instead. Meanwhile, if it is less than market price, the company would receive many demands and would not be able to meet this expectation as their

stocks would be limited. The other feature of perfect competition market is that there would be no product differentiation, as all sellers would supply the generic, or perfect substitutions of, goods.

According to Kotler and Armstrong (2004), price is one important element of marketing mix. In determining price, firms should consider other marketing mix elements, due to any decision made pertaining to those elements would affect the price too. Thus, firms have to think comprehensively with regards to the marketing mix strategy, especially when considering the price. In the product development stage, instead of analysing the product features first, firms can set the ideal selling price first for particular customers, then develop the product to suit that price. This technique is called 'target costing' (Kotler and Armstrong, 2004).

3.2.1. Pricing in Islamic Marketing

Islam is a complete and comprehensive way of life. It covers all aspects of human activities including society, politics, economy, education, spirituality etc. and does not tolerate any attempts to secularise human activities (Abdullah and Ahmad, 2010).

Moreover, Islam puts more emphasis on the life in the hereafter. In other words, any human activities in this current life would determine a person's status in the hereafter, and whether they would end up in paradise or hell. Given the totality of Islam, it can be applied in all areas including, but not limited to, the social sciences, physics, biology, law, and, notably, marketing (Saeed *et al.*, 2001). Moreover, Saeed *et al.* also propose using Islamic marketing ethics as an alternative to secular approaches, for three reasons which include: (1) the absoluteness of Islamic teachings, (2) the transcendental aspect of absoluteness and non-malleable nature, and (3) the emphasis on value-maximisation instead of profit-maximisation.

With regard to the value-maximisation, Saeed *et al.*, (2001) explain that it is based on the concept of justice. In the holyur'an, Allah orders the believers to do justice.

O ye who believe! Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to Allah, even as against yourselves, or your ... lusts (of your hearts), lest ye swerve, and if ye distort (justice) or decline to do justice, verily Allah is well-acquainted with all that ye do. (Annisa, 4:29)

Based on the above verse, Muslims should practice justice under any condition, even if it may be against their own self, family or group interests. Moreover, Muslims should avoid bias when judging or dealing with others. Finally, in the business and marketing context, justice relates to "fair play" and "just dealing" (Saeed *et al.*, 2001).

The application of justice can be found in many business examples. In trade, sellers must inform customers of the features of the products, including the defects if any to ensure that the price paid is equal to the quality and value perceived by customers. In the service sector, restaurants have to be transparent by informing customers the prices of foods and beverages. In Surah Annisa verse 49, Allah orders the believers to practice justice, fair play, and just dealings:

O you who believe! Eat not up your property among yourselves unjustly except it be a trade amongst you, by mutual consent. And do not kill yourselves (nor kill one another). Surely, Allah is Most Merciful to you.

To assure that just dealings and fair play exist in a trade contract, the features of the goods (subject matter) must be precisely defined by both contracting parties (seller and buyer). Prophet Muhammad SAW encourages the parties to a contract to mention all aspects of the agreement to avoid misunderstanding which can lead to legal dispute as mentioned in the hadith narrated by Ibn Abbas below:

“Allah’s Apostle came to Medina and the people used to pay in advance the price of fruits to be delivered within one or two years. (The sub-narrator is in doubt whether it was one to two years or two to three years.) The Prophet said, “Whoever pays money in advance for dates (to be delivered later) should pay it for known specified weight and measure (of the dates).” (Book #35, Hadith #441, Sahih Bukhari)

Islam does not view pricing solely from the business perspective but also from the interest of society. According to Abdullah and Ahmad (2010), all parties’ (buyers, sellers, society, etc.) interests are protected in Islam. The idea here is that any self-interest should not sacrifice the other higher objectives. In other words, business organisations have to move beyond the narrow-minded objective of profit-maximisation. Saeed *et al.* (2001) argued that too much reliance on profit-maximisation would create problems of moral hazard. Consequently, companies would create ways to maximize profits that sometimes may harm the society.

The case of the sub-prime mortgage crisis in US in 2008, for instance, was mainly driven by speculative actions of financial institutions for more profits by creating complicated financial products. They engaged in trickery to improve the products features. In financial markets, to attract more demand for securities, they should obtain a triple A rating. The conflict of interests persisted as the issuer of securities paid rating agencies huge funds for high ratings. When the crisis started, many securities buyers, mortgage borrowers and people on the street did not know what was going on. The sub-prime crisis was escalated by the financial and economic crisis with the middle and low income earners badly affected. Many of them become homeless, lost savings, jobs, and futures. The crisis spilled over to other countries and almost all the world experienced recession on different levels.

The lesson learnt from the above crisis is when greediness is blended with competition to maximize profits, it is likely to lead to adverse outcomes. The financial institutions involved sought their own benefit without considering the impact to the society, economy, and environment. Saeed *et al.* (2001, p. 130) clearly mention the impact of this pursuit of money;

Pursuit of money alone will lead a business person towards the path of treason, lying, fabrication, false testimony, standing in the way of duty and assiduous search, and the pursuit of valueless earnings. In this struggle of amassing wealth, he/she will be ready to sacrifice his/her honour and forsake the higher moral value.

Al-Qur'an addresses this issue in Surat At-Takathur:

*Competition in [worldly] increase diverts you. Until you visit the graveyards.
(102: 1- 2)*

People who blindly follow their desire to maximise profit would not realise that they are in an endless worthless race until they die. To put it back into perspective, in terms of objective, there should be something beyond short term benefits. Companies should adopt value-maximisation as their objective. This concept is somewhat similar to societal marketing, however, it differs in the afterlife dimension and the responsibility to God as the Creator and Sustainer of the universe.

The other dimensions of pricing from the Islamic perspective include Islam's prohibition of hoarding, false swearing, price control, while encouraging free trade in the market (Syed, 2008).

Narrated Tawus: Ibn 'Abbas said, "Allah's Apostle said, '*Do not go to meet the caravans on the way (for buying their goods without letting them know the market price); a town dweller should not sell the goods of a desert dweller on behalf of the latter.*' I asked Ibn 'Abbas, '*What does he mean by not selling the goods of a desert dweller by a town dweller?*' He said, '*He should not become his broker.*' "(Book #34, Hadith #367, Sahih Bukhari)

Narrated 'Abdullah bin Abu Aufa: *A man displayed some merchandise in the market and took an oath that he had been offered a certain price for it while in fact he had not, in order to cheat a man from the Muslims. So then was revealed:--"Verily! Those who purchase a small gain at the cost of Allah's Covenant and their oaths..."(3.77) (Book #60, Hadith #73, Sahih Bukhari)*

In the case of any threats that could potentially damage the market mechanism, the authority could interfere in the market by imposing penalties upon parties that deliberately harm the public interest (Saeed *et al.*, 2001). For instance, a seller or group of sellers conspire to increase the market price by hoarding products. To safeguard the public welfare, the government or market authority could impose severe punishments on the sellers involved in such a scheme. Moreover, the market authority could continue interfering in the market by increasing the supply of the goods. Once the supply of goods returns to normal, the market authority should withdraw their intervention in the market and let the market players engage in free trade.

3.2.2. Relationship between Pricing and Customer Satisfaction

According to Hallowell (1996), service management literature suggests that the customer's perception of the value received would influence customer satisfaction. Moreover, Anderson *et al.* (1994) suggest that customer satisfaction is a function of quality, price, and expectations.

It is important for a firm to satisfy their customers. After having satisfied the customers, the firm can rely on this type of customer basis to improve its profitability. Anderson *et al.* (1994) suggest that loyal customers would stabilize the cash flow of a firm. They give the example of three colleagues who frequently buy their meals in a restaurant near

their office. Let's say, the average price of a meal is \$6 and they visit the restaurant three times a week, given those conditions, the restaurant can earn \$2,700 annual revenue. If the restaurant has another one hundreds loyal customer with similar buying behaviour, the restaurant would have an annual revenue of \$90,000. With that in mind, loyal customers are the main source of revenue of a company. Hence the company needs to retain them to ensure its sustainability.

With regard to pricing a product, a company or marketing manager needs to consider not only costs of production, but also the customer's perception on value of the product (Hanna and Dodge, 1995). Before deciding to buy a product or service, customers have the expectation in mind regarding the specifications, quality, value and price of the product or service. If their expectations meet the reality of the product or service encountered, they would be satisfied. Moreover, if the trend of satisfaction among customers keeps improving, then the company would be expecting customer loyalty. Loyal customers would benefit the company in the long run. According to Anderson *et al.* (1994), customer satisfaction positively affects the profitability (return on investment) of company in future periods. Moreover, given the long run nature of customer satisfaction and quality, any funds allocated to improve them should be treated as investments instead of expenses.

Finally, customer satisfaction should be regarded as one of the main objectives of a company. Meeting this condition would provide a basis for customer loyalty which would benefit the company in the long run. With respect to pricing decisions, the customers do not solely want cheaper prices, what they want is value of the products or services equal to their expectations.

3.3. Place (Distribution)

A place or distribution channel is a way of transporting the product to the customer and the level of accessibility of the product to customers. This element of marketing mix is like the vehicle for the other elements of marketing (product, price, and promotion). Without place, the customer will not have access to products. Distribution channels can be defined as "*a path through which goods and services flow in one direction (from vendor to the consumer) and the payments generated by them that flow in the opposite direction (from consumer to the vendor)*".

There are some basic channel decisions that a marketer must make before venturing to make the products accessible to the customers. These decisions are direct or indirect, single or multiple, cumulative length of the multiple channels, types of intermediary and the number of intermediaries at each level. A channel is said to be direct when the distribution is from the company to the customer and the payment is paid directly to the company. When a channel is indirect, the company sends the products to a distribution centre and the distribution centre distributes to their major distributors and each distributor will send the products to retailers which will be made accessible to the local or global customers depending on how big the company is. The two types of distribution channels discussed above are for physical and tangible products. For services, a service channel will ensure the accessibility of the services to customers.

3.3.1. Place (Distribution) in Islamic Marketing

As mentioned earlier, Hassan *et al.* (2008) described Islamic marketing principles as a way of combining value-maximisation with the principle of justice for a broader scope of public welfare. As such, conventional marketing looks deep into value maximisation of products and services, while Islamic marketing adds the principle of justice so that the welfare of the customers are properly considered and not overtly concerned with value maximisation. ‘Marketing’ is fundamentally based on the concept of capitalism and sociological theories of the growth of consumerist culture (Alom and Haque, 2011). Marketing and the elements pertaining to it focus directly on increasing wealth and abandoning the social effect of customer’s beliefs and culture. In the case of distribution, there are different issues. Some of the unethical practices that pertain to distribution channels are listed below:

- Manipulating the availability of a product with the aim of exploiting the customers
- Coercing customers in the distribution channel
- Exerting undue pressure over the resellers’ choice to handle a product
- Using packaging designs without proper security and safety for the product
- Inappropriate packaging of the product
- Transporting dangerous and toxic products through public highways
- Distributing haram products together with halal products (Hassan *et al.*, 2008).

All of these practices are against Islamic marketing ethics for distribution channels. The ethical behaviour of an Islamic marketer should be of a fair and just person without exploiting customers or deceiving them in any manner.

3.3.2. Relationship between Place (Distribution) and Customer Satisfaction

As mentioned earlier, one shall not forget that the Islamic marketing system aims at maximizing the satisfaction of customers so as to enable adequate exercise of human values, marketing culture and Islamic rules and regulations, as Islam ideates a customer oriented marketing culture to be – for the purpose of the whole human wellbeing and consecrated life (Alom and Haque, 2011).

In conclusion, distribution channels are very important for customer satisfaction and retention as it is the vehicle that connects the products and services from the producer to the customers. However, ethically, the principles of Islamic marketing discourage anything that will bring discomfort for customers and in terms of distributing products to customers, it ought to create value and improve the standard of living of the people. All the elements of marketing mix are inter-related; thus, when the product produced is not Halal or ethically unfit for consumption or use, it must not be distributed to customers. If the product is Halal but priced too high for customers to buy, it must not be distributed for sale. In addition, if the product is full of deceit (promoted wrongly), it

does not uplift the moral standard, and as such, it should not be distributed to customers. Islamic marketers are obliged to understand and project themselves in a fair and upright manner as well as Islamic distributors.

3.4. Promotion

According to the definition of the Chartered Institute of Marketing (2004), ‘promotional mix’ is “a term used to describe the set of tools that a business can use to communicate effectively the benefits of its products or services to its customers”. Thus, promotional mix is said to include tools such as advertising, public relations, sales promotion, direct marketing, and personal selling. Businesses need to inform customers of the products and services they provide in order to facilitate the firm’s survival in the very competitive business environment. In addition, “effective communication with your customers is vital to ensure that your business generates sales and profits”. This latter part of the explanation given by the Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM) is where promotion in Islamic marketing would beg to differ, since generating sales and profits is not the main objective or goal of businesses implementing Islamic marketing. Promotional mix activities can be beneficial in terms of social and economic progression by encouraging “healthy competition”, however from the lens of an Islamic marketer, these activities should not encourage wasting or overspending of resources (Abdullah & Ahmad, 2010). Furthermore, the concept of promotion in Islamic marketing focuses more on providing customer satisfaction, rather than satisfying one’s (the firm’s) own goals alone.

3.4.1. Promotion in Islamic Marketing

Due to the lack of written literature specifically on ‘promotion’ in Islamic marketing, or ‘promotion’ from an Islamic perspective, this section looks at the various literature that is in one way or another related to this topic, such as those written on Islamic marketing in general, Islamic economics, and the like. This allows us to make inferences as the basis of Islamic perspective lies on the same two main sources, i.e. the Quran and Sunnah

Muslim marketers must ensure that all aspects of marketing activities, such as planning of goods and services, pricing and distribution strategies, as well as the promotional techniques used, are in accordance with the regulations stipulated in the Quran and the Sunnah. (Abdullah and Ahmad, 2010)

Abdullah and Ahmad (2010) outlined six categories of ethical principles (Islamic perspective) which are applicable to marketing activities i.e. truthfulness, sincerity, trust, justice, brotherhood and science and technology. On similar grounds, Ibn al-Ukhuwwah mentioned that over-praising or exaggerating of qualities and attributes that the product or service does not have, is in fact unethical, particularly under Islamic marketing ethics (Hassan *et al.*, 2008). Thus, when dealing with such marketing activity as ‘promotion’, “all aspects of communication to the consumers, whether through

advertising or personal selling, must be done in a truthful manner without any intentions of misleading them or cheating them.” (Abdullah and Ahmad, 2010).

In Islamic ethics, promotional techniques must not use sexual appeal, emotional appeal, fear appeal, false testimonies, and pseudo research appeal, or contribute to the dullness of the mind or encourage extravagance. Within the Islamic framework, these promotional techniques are unethical since these methods can be utilised purely to exploit the basic instinct of consumers worldwide with a view to gain profits and greater market share (Hassan *et al.*, 2008).

In addition, Hassan *et al.* (2008), further mentioned that “Prophet Muhammad (SWS) expressly condemned all manipulative promotional behaviour stating that, “One who cheats us is not one of us” (al-Nawawi 2: 770)”.

3.4.2. Relationship between Promotion and Customer Satisfaction

Alom and Haque (2011) stated that:

“Target of Islamic Marketing System is to maximize the satisfaction of consumers as well as that of whole mankind and to ensure proper exercise of human values, marketing culture, Islamic rules and regulations as because Islam envisages a consumer oriented marketing culture which ensures human wellbeing and sanctified life”.

From the above can be inferred that when talking about ‘promotion’ in Islamic marketing, maximisation of customer satisfaction is very important as this Islamic perspective emphasises on a “consumer-oriented” marketing approach. Thus one can say that all aspects of Islamic marketing, in terms of marketing mix, (price, product, place, and promotion) while upholding and adhering to the rules and regulations in the Quran and Sunnah must maximise and prioritise “customer satisfaction” over “profit”.

Arham (2010) mentioned that customer satisfaction is arguably the “key towards sustainable business development”. He also added that from learning how the Prophet (SWS) conducted his selling techniques, such as not concealing anything from his buyers, it can be concluded that Islam regards customer satisfaction highly (Arham, 2010). Being able to deliver promises made during promotion, whether it is through direct selling, advertising, sales promotion, or any of the methods, is very important. Not being able to deliver promises made would decrease customer satisfaction on one’s business. Providing customers with honesty, transparency, truthfulness, sincerity and all the Islamic ethical values encompassed in the promotional techniques, would definitely increase customer satisfaction, which would most likely enhance customer loyalty. Thus implementing Islamic marketing in one’s promotional activities can serve as a competitive advantage for one’s firm, as opposed to the widely practiced conventional methods of promotion where various ethical aspects are questionable.

4. Conclusions

It is indeed very true that Islam provides a complete way of life. It parcels all features and safeguards human kind for unnecessary ‘evils’ of society. A lot of the issues and problems faced in society nowadays are a result from the lack of ethics in our daily lives. People tend to be overridden by greed and self-satisfaction, i.e. *competition* and *profit maximisation* rather than looking at *cooperation* and *moderation*, which the latter pair are what forms the basis of Islamic worldview. When talking from an Islamic marketing perspective and comparing ‘competition and profit maximisation’ versus ‘cooperation and moderation’, the latter pair provides a “win-win” situation in that it facilitates ‘satisfaction’ to both the consumers (customers) and the sellers (promoters), as opposed to the former pair which serves to only satisfy the sellers. Thus, in order to avoid promoting ‘toxins’ towards society, businesses should implement Islamic marketing through all their marketing mix strategies to gain not only better ‘rewards’ in this world, but also for the hereafter.

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