

Islamic Social Action

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ABSTRAK

Artikel ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis komponen tindakan sosial dalam Islam berdasarkan kepada teori tindakan sosial Smelser. Secara prinsipnya, tindakan sosial Islam mengandungi empat asas. Pertama, nilai-nilai atau penyerahan diri kepada Allah – perjuangan untuk Syurga yang perlu dipercayai dan berterusan sebagai pendekatan memelihara kestabilan tindakan. Ini semua melibatkan tahap kawalan Quran yang tinggi. Kedua, norma-norma atau keimanan dan perlakuan amalan murni atau amalan yang sesuai dengan akidah dan syariah. Syariah adalah fleksibel jika dibandingkan dengan nilai-nilai dan akidah. Walau bagaimanapun fleksibel ini tidak seharusnya bercanggah dengan nilai-nilai. Berbanding dengan nilai-nilai, norma-norma agak kurang upaya untuk mengawal tingkah laku namun mempunyai kekuatan untuk membuat perubahan meskipun kedudukannya agak rendah jika dibandingkan dengan organisasi sosial. Ketiga, organisasi sosial yang melibatkan institusi sosial dan pembinaan hubungan selari dengan kedudukan sosial, status dan peranan. Pembinaan ini perlu dikawal oleh norma-norma Islam dan nilai-nilai tindakan Islam. Ia merupakan tempat di mana orang Islam dimotivasikan untuk menjadi Muslim yang sempurna. Organisasi sosial mempunyai keupayaan untuk mengawal meskipun agak kurang jika dibandingkan dengan nilai-nilai dan norma-norma, tetapi lebih fleksibel dan lebih berkeupayaan untuk merubah tetapi agak rendah jika dibandingkan dengan asas yang keempat yang lebih merujuk kepada situasi kemudahan. Kemudahan-kemudahan di sini termasuk pengetahuan pelaku mengenai persekitaran, jangkaan terhadap urutan tindakan, alat-alat dan kemahiran dalam membantu pelaku untuk memilih cara yang sesuai bagi mencapai matlamat atau cita-citanya. Tahap motivasi yang tertinggi dan paling fleksibel adalah terletak di bawah situasi kemudahan-kemudahan ini walaupun kedudukan elemen ini terlalu lemah dari sudut tahap kawalan. Ini kerana unsur ini lebih merujuk kepada tingkahlaku, keupayaan pelaku-pelaku dan alternatif terhadap situasi-situasi tertentu.

ABSTRACT

This article aims to analyze the component of social action in Islam based on Smelser's theory of social action. Basically, Islamic social action consists of four pillars. The first pillar is value or submission to Allah – striving for the

Paradise, which should be reliable and constant so as to preserve the stability of action. They involve the highest degree of Qur'anic control. The second pillar is norm or faith and working righteousness or faith and Shari'ah. Shari'ah is flexible compared to values and faith. However this flexibility must not break down values. Norms have the ability to control but less so than values, and they have more ability to change but less so than social organization. The third pillar is social organization which involves social institutions and the construction of relationships along the lines of social positions, status and roles. This construction should be controlled by the Islamic norms and values of Islamic action. It is the place where Muslims are motivated to behave as Muslims. Social organization has the ability to control but less than values and norms, while it is flexible and able to change more than the upper components but less so than situational facilities which are the fourth pillar. These facilities include knowledge of actor on the environment, predictability of consequences of action, tools and skills that help or hinder the actor to select the suitable means to achieve his goals. The highest degree of motivation and flexibility is under situational facilities, but they are poor in terms of control. They refer to behavior itself, the abilities of the actors and alternatives in situations.

INTRODUCTION

Social action theory is an important theory in sociology. It summarizes dynamic and static perspectives and is also related to the structural and functional concepts of sociology. Social action theory deals with the cultural and social aspects of social life. Therefore, many sociologists like Durkheim, Weber, Parsons, Merton and Smelser focus on social action to analyze social and cultural systems.

Durkheim defines social action through the objective view which emphasizes that social phenomena are external to individuals and are endowed with a power of coercion over them. Weber analyzes social action in terms of the subjective view which is related to the definition of actor to the interactive situation itself. Parsons combines the subjective and objective views of action through his general theory of action. His theory refers to objective view through social and cultural systems concept while personality and behavioral organism refer to the subjective view of action. Smelser focuses on operational concept to make social action easier to analyze. Smelser depends on previous standpoints especially Parson's theory of action to determine the main components of social action. This paper focuses on Smelser's theory which is used as a guideline to analyze the components of social action in terms of Islamic instructions specially the Qur'an and teachings of the Prophet.

SMELSER'S THEORY OF SOCIAL ACTION

Smelser's theory was derived from Parsons' He used the same terms used by Parsons such as values, value system, norms, roles and organization, in addition to using the same Parsonian indicators of social action. These indicators are as follows:

1. Behavior is oriented to the attainment of ends or goals or other anticipant states of affairs
2. It takes place in situations.
3. It is normatively regulated.
4. It involves expenditure of energy or efforts in motivation, which may be more or less organized independently of its involvement in action (Smelser 1970: 24).

Smelser correlated the subjective and objective standpoints to understand social action. He combined the actor's viewpoint and the level of the system. He states that we treat individual personalities as the principle system; and then we move to the analysis of the relations among actors. At this level, the units of analysis do not need dispositions or motives but roles and organization (Smelser 1970: 24).

Social system, according to Smelser, may be constituted as a relationship between two persons or it can be based on more than two in an institutional complex, such as a mosque, a church, a market system or even in a society.

According to Smelser, the components of social action are as follows:

1. The generalized ends or values which provide the broadest guides to purposive social behavior.
2. The regularity rules governing the pursuit of these goals, rules that are to be found in norms.
3. The mobilization of individual energy to achieve the defined ends within the normative framework. If we consider the individual person as actor, the question will be how is he motivated, but if we move to the social system, the question is how individuals are motivated and organized into roles and organizations.
4. The available situational facilities which the actor utilizes as means; these include knowledge of actor on the environment, predictability of consequences of action, tools and skills. The situational facilities help or hinder the actor to select the suitable means to achieve his goals. (Smelser 1970: 26-28).

This article aims to answer the following question, namely, how can one imagine values, norms, organization, roles and situational facilities in Islam and especially in the Qur'an, in terms of Smelser's theory of action? In other

words, how can one deduce Islamic social action in terms of Smelser's theory of action?

Below the author elaborates to answer the above questions based on the following components, namely, values, norms, organization and situational facilities.

VALUES

Values are very important in social life because they organize human behavior. Values are a set of formal and informal laws and measurements which are constituted by groups or societies. These laws are guidelines used to evaluate works, behaviors, thinking and other activities material or non-material. Values have the ability to impact groups because each individual is expected to obey them. As such, if any person tries to violate a group's values, the group will penalize him. Therefore, values have a high ability to control because they are obligatory, general and external to the individual.

If values are the directors of human behavior, how can one define values of Islamic social action? Or, what are the goals of Muslims in terms of the Qur'an? How are these goals defined by the Qur'an? Moreover, what are the goals of the Qur'an in preserving social action?

In terms of the Qur'an, Muslims are expected to be absolutely obedient to Allah. Such obedience takes the forms of love of Allah, submission to Allah, realizing the omnipotence of Allah and striving for heaven.

The Qur'an states such goals in many of its verses, for example:

But those who believe and work righteousness will be admitted to Gardens beneath which rivers flow, to dwell therein for aye with the leave of their Lord. Their greeting therein will be: "Peace!" (Ibrāhīm 14: 23).

O my people! this life of the present is nothing but (temporary) convenience: it is the Hereafter that is the Home that will last (Ghāfir 40: 39).

Those who do wish for the (things of) the Hereafter, and strive therefore with all due striving, and have Faith, they are the ones whose striving is acceptable (to Allah) (al-Isrā' 17: 19).

Allah doth enlarge, or grant by (strict) measure, the Sustenance (which He giveth) to whom so He pleaseth. (The worldly) rejoice in the life of this world: but the life of this world is but little comfort in the Hereafter (al-Ra'd 13: 26).

Nor did We send before thee (as Messengers) any but men, whom We did inspire, (men) living in human habitations. Do they not travel through the earth, and see what was the end of those before them? But the home of the Hereafter is best, for those who do right. Will ye not then understand? (Yūsuf 12: 109).

What is the life of this world but play and amusement? But best is the Home in the Hereafter, for those who are righteous. Will ye not then understand? (al-An'am 8: 32).

Verily for the Righteous there will be a fulfillment of (the Heart's) desires; Gardens enclosed, and Grape-vines; Companions of Equal Age; And a Cupfull (to the Brim) (al-Nabā' 78: 31-34).

The above verses are all concerned with the otherworldly goals toward which man should strive. This raises a very important question in regard to the above verses. Why does the Qur'an put forth otherworldly goals for Muslims?

On one hand, continuity of action is a primary function of these otherworldly goals. Continuity helps to preserve the Qur'anic social system, which the Qur'an tries to achieve through the process of social interaction. On the other hand, however, the future goals are not subject to a certain time, such as, a person who runs for a political position or status who either achieves his goal or fails within the voting period. The Qur'anic goal, however, does not put forth a certain period of time in which the goal must be achieved. This makes the human life devoted to achieving this goal, in effect, timeless. Conversely, does this goal have a worldly meaning also?

From a worldly perspective, this goal preserves the Qur'anic pattern of social action in supposition that actors aim to achieve one purpose—'submission to Allah', which could be a social and ethical norm to evaluate their secular action before it could be otherworldly.

The Qur'an refers also to the relationship between worldly and otherworldly happiness. The Qur'an supports a person who strives to achieve otherworldly happiness, but in doing so, it does not exclude the worldly happiness. In the Qur'an, there is integration between both of them; however, preference is given to otherworldly as opposed to worldly happiness. Many Qur'anic verses highlight this integration between worldly and otherworldly happiness, for example:

Then, for such as had transgressed all bounds, And had preferred the life of this world, the Abode will be Hell-Fire; And for such as had entertained the fear of standing before their Lord's (tribunal) and had restrained (their) soul from lower Desires, Their Abode will be the Garden (al-Nāzi'āt 29: 37-41).

But seek, with the (wealth) which Allah has bestowed on thee, the Home of the Hereafter, nor forget thy portion in this World: but do thou good, as Allah has been good to thee, and seek not (occasions for) mischief in the land: for Allah loves not those who do mischief (al-Qisas 28: 77).

That House of the Hereafter We shall give to those who intend not high-handedness or mischief on earth: and the End is (best) for the righteous (al-Qisas 28: 83).

NORMS

In general, norms are patterns of behavior that are shared by large numbers of people. People usually follow norms because they receive punishment when

they do not obey them (Gergen & Gergen 1981: 262). Norms refer to guidelines or rules of social behavior, which help to achieve social values.

If the main values in Islam are submission to Allah and striving to achieve heaven, the question is, what are the suitable norms to achieve these values?

Faith and working righteousness are basic norms in the Qur'an through which one can achieve worldly and otherworldly integration. In other words, faith corresponds with belief and Al-Shary'ah represents working righteousness. The Qur'an illustrates this in many of its verses:

But give glad tidings to those who believe and work righteousness, that their portion is Gardens, beneath which rivers flow. Every time they are fed with fruits there from, they say: "Why, this is what we were fed with before," for they are given things in similitude; and they have therein companions pure (and holy); and they abide therein (forever) (al-Baqarah 2: 25).

As to those who believe and work righteous deeds, they have, for their entertainment, the Gardens of Paradise (al-Kahf 18: 107).

But those who believe and work righteousness – no burden do We place on any soul, but that which it can bear – they will be Companions of the Garden, therein to dwell (for ever) (al-Saffāt 38: 42).

Whoever works righteousness, man or woman, and has Faith, verily, to him will We give a new Life, a life that is good and pure, and We will bestow on such their reward according to the best of their actions (al-Nahl 16: 97).

Verily Man is in loss, except such as have Faith, and do righteous deeds, and (join together) in the mutual teaching of Truth, and of Patience and Constancy (al-'Asr 103: 2-3).

The Qur'an is not the only holy book which makes clear the relationship between faith and righteous behavior. All heavenly religions stress this relationship because their roots are based on faith in Allah, faith in reward in the hereafter and right behavior in life. But the Qur'an explains it more directly and in more detail than other holy books. Even non-Muslim thinkers acknowledge this fact. For example, Lipman divided the commitments of Islam into two parts: Firstly, spiritual and mental commitment that includes faithful opinions and attitudes to which Allah orders believers to commit. Secondly, social and lawful commitment, that includes the rules of behavior and adjustments of law. This represents spiritually suitable attitudes that are put into daily practice (Lippman 1982: 31).

In addition, Bernard Lewis also deals with the above idea in his book, *The World of Islam*, saying that Muslim scientists divide laws into two parts; the first is concerned with the hearts and minds of Muslims, which is related to individual morals and beliefs. The second part is concerned with external acts that are conducted through interaction between human beings on one hand, and Allah and alters on the other.

This could be by worship as well as through civil, criminal and constitutional law. The goal behind both of them is to determine a system of duties that will enable the Muslim to live a straight life in this world as a preparation for the hereafter (Lewis et. al 1976: 26). This supports the idea that the norms of Islamic social action are faith and right behavior, or belief and Shari'ah.

Correlating norms are the basic condition in Islamic social action; for example, faith in Islamic belief must be followed by behavior, which should be consistent with Shari'ah. Thus, one is not a real Muslim who believes but does not behave according to the Shari'ah, or vice versa.

As such, the norms of Islamic social action are faith and working righteousness or 'right behavior' These norms can be explained as follows:

FAITH (ĪMĀN)

The essential understanding of faith is its root "Amān" that means peace of mind and security from fear. Theologically, "faith" means putting one's trust in Allah, his Prophet, his message and the content of that message (Gibb & Kramers 1965: 167).

Faith in the Qur'an has a comprehensive meaning:

It is not righteousness that ye turn your faces towards East or West; but it is righteousness to believe in Allah and the Last Day, and the Angels, and the Books, and the Messengers (al-Baqarah 2: 177).

Some Islamic scholars emphasize three points to understand the meaning of faith (Iman). The three points are: monotheism, belief in the hereafter and belief in all of Allah's prophets (Abu Zahrah n.d.. 17). Some verses of the Qur'an differentiate between faith (Īmān) and Islam, for example where Allah says:

The desert Arabs say, "We believe." Say, "Ye, have no Faith, but ye (only) say, 'We have submitted our wills to Allah, (aslmna) 'for not yet has Faith entered your hearts. But if ye obey Allah and His Messenger, He will not belittle aught of your deeds: for Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful (al-Hujjurāt 49: 14).

The above verse distinguishes between faith, "We believe" and Islam, "We have submitted our wills to Allah" But in other verses, the Qur'an combines them, for example where Allah says:

Then we evacuated those of the Believers who were there, But We found not there any just (Muslim) persons except in one house (al-Dhāriyāt 51. 35-36).

Faith is very important because it correlates with all aspects of social life. It supports the human being to achieve the value of Islamic social action. Belief also should be supported by observances and worship because without such support, belief will die or be forsaken (Frezer 1971. 218).

By this connection between faith or belief, and rules of right behavior or working righteousness, the integration of religious action norms become possible.

The function of belief in Muslim society is to indoctrinate Muslims with the same feelings and thinking, which leads to integration of Muslim behavior. For example, faith in otherworldly life and heaven catalyzes people to engage in the best works, according to the Islamic view, in order to achieve success on the Day of Judgment.

Syed Qutb emphasized this correlation between faith and behavior. He stated that belief which does not have opinions about social behavior, economic relations, government, etc, as a social theory does not have opinions on belief and political organization. Belief in Islam is thus comprehensive. It implies all activities of human behavior (Qutb 1951: 9).

Finally, one can conclude that belief builds religious legitimacy, which supports the integration of Islamic society and supports Muslims' self-consciousness to behave according to Qur'anic laws.

WORKING RIGHTEOUSNESS (AL-SHARĪ'AH)

Work righteousness does not refer to behavior itself but the norms and rules of behavior's practice; i.e. the norms which are designed in terms of the Qur'anic view of action. Islamic society supports these norms in the sense that they are the right norms in order to live an Islamic life. This is because they are made according to flexible divine orders in accordance with specific situations and since they lead to otherworldly goal.

Al-Sharī'ah (الشريعة) is another name for the norms of working righteousness or right action. Al-Shar'ah is mentioned in the Qur'an as al-Shir'ah (الشرعة), al-Tarīqah (الطريقة) and al-Sharī'ah. It is mentioned in the following verses, al-Shir'a mentioned as "To each among you have We prescribed a Law and an Open Way" (al-Mā'idah 5: 48).

al-Sharī'ah mentioned as "Then We put thee on the (right) Way of Religion: so follow thou that (Way), and follow not the desires of those who know not" (al-Jāthiyah 45: 18).

al-Tarīqa mentioned as (And Allah's Message is): If they (the Pagans) had (only) remained on the (right) Way, We should certainly have bestowed on them Rain in abundance" (al-Jinn: 16).

Al-Sharī'ah is used as a technical term for the Prophet as the preacher of the Sharī'ah, but more frequently it is applied to Allah as the law giver al-Tabarī defined al-Sharī'ah as that which comprises the laws of Inheritance, Farā'id (فرائض) (Worships), Hudūd (حدود) (Punishment), the commandments and prohibitions (Gibb & Kramers 1965: 524).

Some scholars of Islam like Fazl al-Rahman, Ahmad Khalil and others, describe al-Shar'iyah as Islamic legislation or Islamic law which can be explained two ways. Firstly, it is to organize the relationship between Allah and man.

Secondly, it is to organize the relationships among individuals and groups in society (Kahlil 1966: 9; Lippman 1982: 73; Gibb & Rocsein 1983: 100-101).

Bassam Sulaiman and Waffaa Zakı defined al-Shar'iyah as the Islamic law as ordained by Allah. It refers to the legal and social modality of a people based on the revelation to their prophet (Sulaiman & Zakı 1992: 166).

As such, one can classify al-Shar'iyah into two main parts: worship (Al-'Ibādāt), or the relationship between Man and his Creator (Allah), and Al-Mu'āmalāt, or the relationship between Man and Alter an individual, a group, or society, which is controlled by Qur'anic instructions and Mohammed's teachings.

Islamic social action should be broken down analyzed into two integrated actions. These are al-'Ibādāt action and Al-Mu'āmalāt action. The first action expresses direct interaction with Allah in the forms of praying, fasting, pilgrimage, (al-Hajj) reading, listening to the Qur'an and paying alms (al-Zakāt). The second action refers to the Qur'anic guidelines for every social, political, economic, lawful and moral interactions.

It is clear that these actions are separated in terms of application but they are connected in terms of goals and faithful norms. Each one includes certain behaviors, for instance, praying is different than obedience to parents; whereas the two actions are faithfully connected in the sense that they interact with each other because there is no religiosity without them. So al-'Ibādāt affects al-Mu'āmalāt and vice versa. This can be seen in many verses in the Qur'an. The Qur'an states that complete religiosity depends on the integration of faith and behavior on the one hand, and integration between al-'Ibādāt and al-Mu'āmalāt on the other. The following verses refer to this idea clearly:

And remember We took a Covenant from the Children of Israel (to this effect): worship none but Allah; treat with kindness your parents and kindred, and orphans and those in need; speak fair to the people; be steadfast in prayer; And practise regular charity. Then did ye turn back, except a few among you, and ye backslide (even now) (al-Baqarah 2: 83).

It is not righteousness that ye turn your faces towards East or West; but it is righteousness to believe in Allah and the Last Day, and the Angels, and the Book, and the Messengers; to spend of your substance, out of love for Him, for your kin, for orphans, for the needy, for the wayfarer, for those who ask, and for the ransom of slaves; to be steadfast in prayer, and practice regular charity, to fulfill the contracts which ye have made; and to be firm and patient, in pain (or suffering) and adversity, and throughout all periods of panic. Such are the people of truth, the God-fearing (al-Baqarah 2: 177).

Serve Allah, and join not any partners with Him; and do good to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, those in need, neighbors who are near neighbors who are strangers, the companion by your side, the way-farer (ye meet) and what your right hands possess: for Allah loveth not the arrogant, the vainglorious (al-Nisā' 4: 36).

Those who remain steadfast to their prayer; And those in whose wealth is a recognised right. For the (needy) who asks and him who is prevented (for some reason from asking);

And those who hold to the truth of the Day of Judgment; And those who fear the displeasure of their Lord, For their Lord's displeasure is the opposite of Peace and Tranquillity; And those who guard their chastity, Except with their wives and the (captives) whom their right hands possess, for (then) they are not to be blamed, But those who trespass beyond this are transgressors; And those who respect their trusts and covenants; And those who stand firm in their testimonies; And those who guard (the sacredness) of their worship; Such will be the honoured ones in the Gardens (of Bliss) (al-Ma'ārij 70: 23-35).

Those who fulfil the Covenant of Allah and fail not in their plighted word; Those who join together those things which Allah hath commanded to be joined, hold their Lord in awe, and fear the terrible reckoning; Those who patiently persevere, seeking the countenance of their Lord; establish regular prayers; spend out of (the gifts) We have bestowed for their sustenance, secretly and openly; and turn off Evil with good: for such there is the final attainment of the (Eternal) Home (al-Ra'd 13: 20-22).

AL-'IBĀDĀT (ACTION)

The word 'Ibādah (عبادة) is derived from the word al-'abd (العبد) meaning, 'slave' The root of slavery al-'ubūdiyyah (العبودية) means servility, obedience and asceticism. Al-Marāghī defined al-'Ibādah (العبادة) as "submission to Allah because man can feel the greatness of his God" (al-Marāghī 1, 1985: 32). In addition, Abu al-Kassem al-Kuie referred to the meaning of al-'Ibādah in the Qur'an according to three points:

1. Obedience in general: (Did I not enjoin on you, O ye children of Adam, that ye should not worship Satan; for that he was to you an enemy avowed? (Yā-Sīn 36: 60) See also (Say: "I have been forbidden to invoke those whom ye invoke besides Allah, seeing that the clear signs have come to me from my Lord; and I have been commanded to bow (in Islam) to the Lord of the Worlds") (Ghāfir 40: 66).
2. Obedience to Allah alone: "Say: "I am commanded to worship Allah, and not to join partners with him)) (al-Ra'd 13: 36). Also, ("It would not be reasonable in me if I did not serve Him Who created me, and to Whom ye shall (all) be brought back" (Yā-Sīn 36: 22).
3. Submission and servility: They said: "Shall we believe in two men like ourselves? And their people are subject to us!" (al-Mu'minūn 23: 47) (Al-Taher 1978: 17).

The full meaning of al-'Ibādah is broad in Islam. It involves all the works of human beings, those done with the goal of achieving the acceptance and pleasure of Allah. Some scholars have defined al-'Ibādah as a comprehensive meaning, such as al-Ghazali who defined it in terms of praying, fasting, pilgrimage, Zakāt, recitation of the Qur'an, remembering Allah at all times, earning an honest livelihood, working righteousness and following the Prophet's teachings (Hussan 1979: 54).

In Islam, worship is also understood as any utterance or activity — manifest or hidden — that Allah loves and is pleased with. It also implies a high degree of love and submission. It was the call of all Messengers of Allah throughout history.

In terms of Islamic social action, al-'Ibādāt can be understood as the relationship between Allah and man. From this, one can deduce that the main forms of al-'Ibādāt are praying, fasting, pilgrimage, zakāt and reading the Qur'an. Below are some brief ideas about al-'Ibādāt in Islam.

PRAYER (AL-SALĀH)

The Qur'an describes the prayer in many verses. For example, Allah says that al-Salāh is very important for all Muslims and it must be done at specific times, Allah says:

Set up regular prayers: for such prayers are enjoined on Believers at stated times (al-Nisā' 4: 103).

Guard strictly your (habit of) prayers, especially the Middle Prayer; and stand before Allah in a devout (frame of mind) (al-Baqarah 2: 238).

Also Allah says:

And establish regular prayers at the two ends of the day and at the approaches of the night: for those things that are good remove those that are evil: be that the word of remembrance to those who remember (their Lord) (Hūd 11. 114).

Islam stresses the prayer and warns against neglecting it. Prayer is the central pillar of faith. It is also the first religious obligation brought by the Prophet after belief in Allah.

FASTING (AL-SAWM)

Allah commands all Muslims to fast during the month of Ramadan in such verses of the Qur'an as:

O ye who believe! Fasting is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those before you, that ye may (learn) self-restraint.

Al-Sawm or fasting is the second most important form of worship in Islam. It entails abstaining from food drink and sexual intercourse from dawn until sunset with the intention of attaining nearness to Allah. It is obligatory every day throughout Ramadan. It is significant because it enhances individual's ability to control his or her desires or appetites. It is also means of re-evaluating the psyche and helps one to be more patient.

Fasting was also a religious obligation for the followers of the revealed religions before Islam, though its form may have been different. Accordingly, Allah says:

O ye who believe! Fasting is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those before you that ye may “learn” self-restraint (al-Baqarah 2: 183).

The effects of fasting can be explained as follows:

1. It develops willpower and gives the individual the ability to control his or her desires.
2. Fasting reminds people of the suffering of those who are deprived, affording these who have means a glimpse of the hardships and hunger suffered by the poor.
3. Fasting provides an opportunity for complete devotion to Allah and fear of Him alone.

Fasting is also considered a special worship that is done for Allah alone, as He says in al-Hadīth al-Qudsī:

Every action of the descendants of Adam is for them except for fasting; it is for me and I will reward it (<http://Islamtoday.net>).

AL-ZAKĀH AND ALMS

Al-Zakāh, Tax is a financial worship for Muslims who have the means to pay it. It purifies the character of the wealthy individual from selfishness that, if left unchecked, can bring ruin to the social fabric by making society constricted and egoistical. It also purifies wealth by taking from it that which is the right of the poor, Allah says in the Qur’an:

Of their goods take alms, that so thou mightest purify and sanctify them; and pray on their behalf, verily thy prayers are a source of security for them: and Allah is One Who heareth and knoweth (al-Taubah 9: 12).

Al-Zakāh and Alms are very important means of providing social security by narrowing the gap between the rich and poor. The Qur’an defines the specific set of beneficiaries of Zakāh and alms, as:

Alms are for the poor and the needy, and those employed to administer the (funds); for those whose hearts have been (recently) reconciled (to the truth); for those in bondage and in debt; in the cause of Allah; and for the wayfarer: (thus is it) ordained by Allah, and Allah is full of knowledge and wisdom (al-Taubah 9: 60).

AL-HAJJ (PILGRIMAGE)

Al-Hajj is another act of worship for those who have the means and ability to do it. Allah says in the Qur’an:

For Hajj are the months well-known. If anyone undertakes that duty therein, let there be no obscenity, nor wickedness, nor wrangling in the Hajj and whatever good ye do,

(be sure) Allah knoweth it. And take a provision (with you) for the journey, but the best of provisions is right conduct. So fear Me, O ye that are wise! (al-Baqarah 2: 197).

READING OF THE QUR'AN

Allah encourages Muslims to recite the Qur'an and listen to the person who is reading it. Allah says:

When the Qur'an is read, listen to it with attention, and hold your peace: that ye may receive Mercy (al-A'rāf 7: 204).

Also Allah says:

Or a little more; and recite the Qur'an in slow, measured rhythmic tones (al-Muzzammil 73: 4).

These represent the main forms of al-'Ibādāt in Islam. The function of al-'Ibādāt in Islam can be described as follows:

1. It is a means of support for one's faith through frequent observances at definite times.
2. Al-'Ibādāt is a means for the atonement of sins which is very important for psychological support. Allah says:

And establish regular prayers at the two ends of the day and at the approaches of the night: *for those things that are good remove those that are evil*: be that the word of remembrance to those who remember (their Lord) (Hūd 11. 114).

3. It supports social unity by allowing all Muslims to worship together.
4. It is very important for building correct behavior, in that the main purpose of worship is to attain nearness to Allah, with what He loves and is blessed with. It reminds Muslims that they must obey Allah at all times. (Ismail 1980; Al-Zu'bi 1980).

AL-MU'ĀMALĀT (ACTION)

Linguistically, the singular of Mu'āmalāt in Arabic is Mu'āmalāh (معاملة) which is taken from the verb 'amil (عمل). This verb has many meanings. Ibn-Manzur refers to it as a Job or Work and Amilah or man who uses his mind to explain and understand something (Ibn-Manzūr 13: 502).

In other words, Amelah refers to physical and mental work. Besides, 'amil (عمل) linguistically means the participation of two individuals in some action. This is referred to by Al-Waseat (Kashif al-Khita' 1987: 31), and is a more suitable definition in sociology because of its closeness to the meaning of the social interaction. Kashif al-Khita concluded that the term al-Mu'āmalāh could be

understood as a collection of practical rules which organize interaction among persons, and that it represents the action itself and not only the rules (Kashif al-Khita' 1987: 32).

The actions that can be organized according to rules of Al-Mu'āmalāt, in terms of Islamic law (al-Fiqh) (الفتحة), can be stated as follows:

1. Family rules, which involve the legislation of marriage, divorce, expenditure, nurture, competence or responsibility and consanguinity. Today they are typically the laws of personal conditions.
2. Rules of selling and buying, which organize relations among people in the market place, civil law and commercial law.
3. Judicatory rules, which are currently called the laws of pleadings.
4. Rules that organize the relations between the governor (government) and the people. These rules are called constitutional laws.
5. Rules that deal with penalties or Ta'zir crimes. Currently they are called criminal laws.
6. The rules of organizing relations between Muslims and non-Muslims. This kind of law is called International Law (Encyclopedia of Fiqh, Part 1, 1984: 48-49).

Al-Fawal stated that al-Mu'āmalāt involves all kinds of law—international, constitutional, economic, family and criminal (al-Fawal 1982: 77). Al-Tabatabai showed that al-Mu'āmalāt refers to rules of social action which organize relationships between people. It is such rules of interaction that define the rights and duties (al-Tabatabai, Part 7, 1391H: 137-138). Zakī Ismaiel advocated the same understanding for al-Mu'āmalāt when he stated that it involves all legal matters. This refers to all rules governing relations between Muslims themselves on the one hand, and relations between Muslims and non-Muslims on the other (Ismaiel 1989: 59).

According to the above definitions of al-Mu'āmalāt, one can define this concept as the rules governing relationships between man and alter—individual, group or society. It implies all aspects of social daily life beginning with simple behaviors, such as greetings, to more complicated ones, such as rules governing politics, economics, ethics and legal actions.

These represent rules of behavior taken from the Qur'an and al-Sunnah of the Prophet Mohammed. As such, al-Mu'āmalāt do not represent the behaviors themselves but the rules guiding them.

Below are some examples of different kinds of al-Mu'āmalāt in terms of the definition put forth by this study.

FAMILY MU'ĀMALĀT

Family Mu'āmalāt involve rules of interaction among family members. The Qur'an describes these norms in several verses. For example, the Qur'an describes the

nature of the relationship between husband and wife by the following verse. Allah says in the Qur'an:

And among His Signs is this, that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that ye may dwell in tranquillity with them, and He has put love and mercy between your (hearts): verily in that are Signs for those who reflect (al-Rūm 30: 21).

Thus, the marriage relationship should be based on cordiality and mercy. Both husband and wife are very important for building the family and making thrive. The Qur'an also emphasizes that sons and daughters should obey their parents:

Thy Lord hath decreed that ye worship none but Him, and that ye be kind to parents. Whether one or both of them attain old age in thy life, say not to them a word of contempt, nor repel them, but address them in terms of honour (al-Isrā' 17: 23-24).

Also Allah says,

And We have enjoined on man (To be good) to his parents: in travail upon travail did his mother bear him, and in years twain was his weaning: (hear the command), Show gratitude to Me and to thy parents: to Me is (thy final) Goal (Luqmān 31. 14).

The Prophet also emphasizes this respect and obedience when he says:

Goodwill to Allah is goodwill to parents and His disaffection is their disaffection (al-Tabrani <http://www.kalemat.org>).

In addition, the Qur'an instructs parents to educate and socialize their children with ethics and Islamic values. This is stated in several verses of the Qur'an especially in Sūrah Luqmān where the Qur'an shows the best way to educate children. In it, Allah says:

Behold, Luqmān said to his son by way of instruction: O my son! Join not in worship (others) with Allah: for false worship is indeed the highest wrong-doing (Luqmān 31. 13).

Allah also says:

"O my son!" (Said Luqmān), "If there be (but) the weight of a mustard-seed and it were (hidden) in a rock, or (any where) in the heavens or on earth, Allah will bring it forth: for Allah understands the finest mysteries, (and) is well-acquainted (with them)" "O my son! Establish regular prayer, enjoin what is just, and forbid what is wrong; and bear with patient constancy whatever betide thee; for this is firmness (of purpose) in (the conduct of) affairs. "And swell not thy cheek (For pride) at men, nor walk in insolence through the earth: for Allah loveth not any arrogant boaster. And be moderate in thy pace, and lower thy voice; for the harshest of sounds without doubt is the braying of the ass" (Luqmān 31. 16-19).

ETHICAL MU'ĀMALĀT

Many verses of the Qur'an aim to encourage people to be more ethical. When somebody asked A'ishah, the Prophet's wife, about Mohammed's ethics, she

replied, “His ethics were the Qur’an” It is easy to find verses in the Qur’an as well that describe proper ethical behavior. For example, Allah says:

Heed not the type of despicable man, ready with oaths, a slanderer, going about with calumnies (al-Qalam 68: 10-11) See also (Luqmān 31. 16-19).

The Qur’an puts forth rules for ethical behavior in all aspects of social life. Therefore, this kind of al-Mu’āmalāt is not limited. It can be described as aspects of other kinds of al-Mu’āmalāt. Allah, for example, disallows lying, calumny, suspicion, drinking of wine, adultery, dishonesty and so on. All of these ethics are very important to regulate Muslims’ behavior in social life.

ECONOMIC MU’ĀMALĀT

The Qur’an also defines principles of economic behavior. For example, the Qur’an lays out the Islamic notion of rules of expenditure:

But squander not (your wealth) in the manner of a spendthrift (al-Isrā’ 17· 26). And Make not thy hand tied (like a niggard’s) to thy neck, nor stretch it forth to its utmost reach, so that thou become blameworthy and destitute (al-Isrā’ 17· 29).

Thus, Allah does not allow Muslims to hoard their wealth. Allah says in the Qur’an:

And there are those who bury gold and silver and spend it not in the Way of Allah: announce unto them a most grievous penalty (al-Tawbah 9· 34).

In addition, the Qur’an encourages Muslims to work because Islam considers a job as a form of worship. The Prophet of Allah referred to this notion when he said, “the work is worship”. Furthermore, Allah says in the Qur’an:

And say: Work (righteousness): soon will Allah observe your work, and His Messenger, and the Believers: soon will ye be brought back to the Knower of what is hidden and what is open: then will He show you the truth of all that ye did (al-Tawbah 9: 105).

It is He Who has made the earth manageable for you, so traverse ye through its tracts and enjoy of the Sustenance which He furnishes: but unto Him is the Resurrection (al-Mulk 67· 15)

Although the notion of work in the above verses is general, it refers to employment because verses imply acquiring livelihood.

In Islam, economic behavior should be regulated by al-Sharī‘ah. The Qur’an equates economic norms with legal and ethical norms so as to encourage Muslims to be fully committed to them.

POLITICAL MU'ĀMALĀT

The Qur'an explains some of the norms of political behavior, especially relations between a governor and his people. The Qur'an orders people to obey the governor if he follows the teachings of Islam. Allah says in the Qur'an:

O ye who believe! obey Allah, and obey the Messenger, and those charged with authority among you (al-Nisā' 4: 59).

But if the leader does not follow the teachings of Islam they do not have to obey Him. This is because there is a basic understanding in Islamic Fiqh that says, "there is no submission to a creature if he does not obey Allah, the Creator" ('Abdah 100).

The Qur'an also orders the governor al-Khalifah to be honest, cooperative and fair, as well as kind and compassionate with his people. Allah says to his prophet:

It is part of the Mercy of Allah that thou dost deal gently with them. Wert thou severe or harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from about thee: so pass over (their faults), and ask for (Allah's) forgiveness for them; and consult them in affairs (of moment) (al-'Imrān 3: 159) See also (al-Mā'idah 5: 47).

Al-Sunnah of the Prophet emphasizes that a governor should show equity and faithfulness to his subjects. The Prophet of Allah said:

If the leader cheated his subjects and passed away without correction to his behavior, Allah will never forgive him and he will never obtain heaven (Abo-Faris Part 2, 1989: 770).

In addition, the Prophet encourages people to advise the governor and not to fear him if he is wrong. The Prophet said:

The greatest jihad is to speak justice to an inequitable leader (Tirmidhi, Al-Tirmidhi-Sunan, Hadith number 2100 <http://hadith.a.jeeb.com>).

In general, one can say that the Qur'an and al-Sunnah outline some fundamental principles and rules for political behavior in an Islamic society.

JURAL MU'ĀMALĀT

The Qur'an defines many kinds of jural cases in several aspects of social life. For example, the Qur'an puts forth rules for personal conditions such as marriage, divorce, nurturing children, and expenditure (النفقة), or support of the wife following divorce. Also, the Holy Qur'an outlines rules of inheritance. Allah says:

Allah (thus) directs you as regards your children's (inheritance): to the male, a portion equal to that of two females: if only daughters, two or more, their share is two-thirds of

the inheritance; if only one, her share is a half. For parents, a sixth share of the inheritance to each, if the deceased left children; if no children, and the parents are the (only) heirs, the mother has a third; if the deceased left brothers (or sisters) the mother has a sixth. (The distribution in all cases is) after the payment of legacies and debts. Ye know not whether your parents or your children are nearest to you in benefit. These are settled portions ordained by Allah; and Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise (al-Nisā' 4: 11) (see also (al-Nisā' 4: 176).

The Qur'an even describes how to write a legal contract, Allah says:

O ye who believe! When ye deal with each other, in transactions involving future obligations in a fixed period of time, reduce them to writing let a scribe write down faithfully as between the parties; let not the scribe refuse to write: as Allah has taught him, so let him write. Let him who incurs the liability dictate, but let him fear his Lord Allah, and not diminish aught of what he owes... (al-Baqarah 2: 282).

Allah also describes penalties for certain types of crimes. For example, Allah says in the Qur'an,

1. Killing – “We ordained therein for them: “Life for life, eye for eye, nose for nose, ear for ear, tooth for tooth, and wounds equal for equal” (al-Ma'idah 5: 45).
2. Adultery – “The woman and the man guilty of adultery or fornication flog each of them with a hundred stripes: let not compassion move you in their case, in a matter prescribed by Allah” (al-Nūr 24: 2).

Al-Mu'āmalāt are rules guidelines for Muslims to follow that will allow them to acquire their otherworldly goals and achieving worldly goals as well. Al-Mu'āmalāt are an important component of Islamic social action because they are all encompassing of social life. If one reads the commandments at the end of Surah al-An'ām, he will find that al-Mu'āmalāt are even broader than al-'Ibādāt. Allah says in the Qur'an:

Say: “Come, I will rehearse what Allah hath (really) *prohibited you from*” *join not anything as equal with Him; be good to your parents; kill not your children on a plea of want – We provide sustenance for you and for them – come not nigh to shameful deeds, whether open or secret; take not life, which Allah hath made sacred, except by way of justice and law* thus doth He command you, that ye may learn wisdom. *And come not nigh to the orphan's property, except to improve it, until he attains the age of full strength; give measure and weight with (full) justice; no burden do We place on any soul, but that which it can bear, whenever ye speak, speak justly, even if a near relative is concerned; and fulfil the Covenant of Allah:* thus doth He command you, that ye may remember. *Verily, this is My Way leading straight: follow it; follow not (other) paths: they will scatter you about from His (great) Path; thus doth He command you, that ye may be righteous* (al-An'ām 6: 151-153).

Coming back to al-Sharī'ah, one can draw the following conclusion about the two main parts of al-Sharī'ah in Islam.

1. It helps to create fairness and equity among Muslims.
2. It aims to achieve social integration in Muslim society.
3. It attempts to enhance the spiritual ennoblement of individuals through al-'Ibādāt and to control behavior through al-Mu'āmalāt.
4. It combines ethical and legal aspects to be more effective at controlling human behavior.
5. It uses penalties and rewards for both this life and the otherworldly life as a way to regulate Muslims' behavior.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION AND SOCIAL ROLE

Smelser emphasized that social organization involves all social institutions such as, family, church, health care, government, political parties and others, as we mentioned earlier. Social organization is a very comprehensive term, it implies all the rules and regulations of social activities in a social group to achieve definite goals (Sills 1972: 297-298).

Radcliffe Brown showed that it represents a system of rights and duties that organize the relations among the individuals who constitute the society (Mudkooor 1975: 185).

Duncan Mitchell stated that social organization means:

The independence of parts which is an essential characteristics of all enduring collective entities: groups, communities and societies. Usually these parts consist of some or all of the following: tasks and other activities; relationship between rules, values, norms and beliefs; sub-groups with a large unit; and in social institution (Mitchell 1986: 172).

Actually, social organization refers to the place where the norms are mobilized to achieve the goals or values by playing roles in the organization. Everybody has a role in the social organization. For example, one is a member of the family, school, mosque and government, and he should play his role in terms of the norms and values of the organization itself.

Muslim society, like other societies, consists of groups of organizations and institutions which involve actors—individuals and groups—who have positions and roles. These roles and positions should be organized in terms of Islamic values and norms. These roles should also be correlative and integral as this is very important to achieve the goals of the social organization. For example father's role is correlated with the role of his sons and daughters, as the role of the Prophet is correlated with his followers. This integration and correlation helps to accomplish the goals of the organization on one hand, and assists in making the groups and organizations more continuous—going on without a break—on the other.

Islamic social organization is based on abolishing differences among members of Muslim society, because the Qur'an shows that all people are from the same descent. Allah says:

O mankind! reverence your Guardian-Lord, who created you from a single Person, created, of like nature, his mate, and from them twain scattered (like seeds) countless men and women; fear Allah, through Whom ye demand your mutual (rights), and (reverence) the wombs (that bore you): for Allah ever watches over you (al-Nisā' 4: 1).

In the Qur'an Allah also declares the equity among peoples in the same Surah when He says:

If any do deeds of righteousness, be they male or female -and have faith, they will enter Heaven, and not the least injustice will be done to them (al-Nisā' 4: 124).

Mohammed al-Madani concluded from the above verses that they refer to the following:

1. Abolishment of differences between people in terms of descent.
2. Abolishment of religious and racial differences.
3. Abolishment of the differences in social status between man and woman.

It is better to state that these roles are not correspondent, that equality exists but that there are some roles arranged by human nature and social necessity to facilitate the integration of social roles. For example, a woman's role is different from a man's role and a father's role is different from a son's role, and so on. These differences are very important to achieve integration among roles. Allah mentions these differences when He says:

And in no wise covet those things in which Allah hath bestowed His gifts more freely on some of you than on others: to men is allotted what they earn, and to women what they earn: but ask Allah of His bounty. For Allah hath full knowledge of all things (al-Nisā' 4: 32).

Each human being has a special role; the Qur'an explains this when it states the differences between the roles of men and women such as in the first part of verse 34 of Surah al-Nisā'. This part of the verse refers to the differences in these roles according to authority. Allah says:

Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because Allah has given the more (strength) than the other, and because they support them from their means (al-Nisā' 4: 34).

The Prophet of Allah elaborated on the responsibilities of some social positions when he said:

Verily, each one of you is a guardian (shepherd), and each guardian (shepherd) is responsible for his subjects (flock); the emir who is in charge of people is a guardian for them and he is responsible for them; the husband is likewise a guardian of his household and he is responsible for it; similarly, the wife is a guardian of her husband's home and children and she is responsible for them; the servant is a guardian of his master's wealth and he is responsible for it; therefore, each one of you is a guardian, and each one of you is responsible for his subject (Al-Jarzi 4, 1970: 50).

(See also <http://www.habous.gov.ma/dorrou/eng/1996/er.dars07.htm>).

The criterion for validity of a Muslim's role is the commitment to Islamic norms and values, which have been stated in the Qur'an and al-Sunnah. In this way, Muslims compete with one another to achieve the goals of Islamic social action according to their positions and roles in the social organization. Allah says:

Truly the Righteous will be in Bliss: On Thrones (of Dignity) will they command a sight (of all things): Thou wilt recognize in their Faces the beaming brightness of Bliss. Their thirst will be slaked with Pure Wine sealed: The seal thereof will be musk: and for this let those aspire, who have aspirations (al-Mutaffifin 83: 22-26).

Islamic society consists of institutions such as the family, political, economic and educational institutions. Each institution has a special role and function, which is very important to integrate the functions of the institutions themselves.

The Holy Qur'an focuses on the family as the foundation for social organization in Muslim society. The Qur'an gives many details on Islamic family life to support it as an institution. For example, the Qur'an details appropriate relations between a husband and his wife, which should be strong and harmonious in order to construct a healthy family. This also helps to create a unified society. The Qur'an describes the family as a means for the continuity of social life. Allah says:

O mankind! reverence your Guardian-Lord, who created you from a single Person, created, of like nature, his mate, and from them twain scattered (like seeds) countless men and women; fear Allah, through Whom ye demand your mutual (rights), and (reverence) the wombs (that bore you): for Allah ever watches over you (al-Nisā' 4: 1).

The Qur'an also shows that a strong family is a prerequisite for social and psychological stability, stressing that social relations between a husband and his wife should be based on love and mercy. Allah says:

And among His Signs is this, that He created for your mates from among yourselves, that ye may dwell in tranquillity with them, and He has put love and mercy between your (hearts): verily in that are Signs for those who reflect (al-Rūm 30: 21).

The Qur'an does not provide details on other institutions but gives general principles and rules of interaction among the actors in such institutions like those in the political, educational, economical institutions as well as the Mosque, as was previously mentioned in relation of the norms of Islamic social action.

The Qur'an puts forth cooperation and competition as a means to attain social integration and social solidarity. Allah says concerning cooperation:

Help ye one another in righteousness and piety, but help ye not one another in sin and rancour: fear Allah: for Allah is strict in punishment (al-Mā'idah 5: 2).

And He says concerning competition,

The goal of you all is to Allah; it is He that will show you the truth of the matters in which ye dispute (al-Mā'idah 5: 48).

Also, Allah says,

It is these who hasten in every good work, and these who are foremost in them (al-Mu'minūn 23: 61).

In addition, "To each is a goal to which Allah turns him; then strive together (as in a race) towards all that is good. Wheresoever ye are, Allah will bring you together. For Allah hath power over all things" (al-Baqarah 2: 148).

The Prophet of Allah also stated that Islamic society should be based on cooperation and integration because this is the best way to construct a strong society. The Prophet said:

A faithful believer to a faithful believer is like the bricks of a wall, enforcing each others (Abdul Baqi 1991, 3: 314-315).

The Prophet also advocated functional mutual affection in the Islamic society when he advised Muslims to be united and integrated. The Prophet said:

You see the believers as regard their being merciful among themselves, showing love among themselves and being kind among themselves, resembling one body, so that, if any part of the body is not well, then the whole body shares the sleeplessness (insomnia) suffering and fever with it (Abdul Baqi 1991, 3: 315).

The Qur'an also advises Muslims not to engage in conflict because it destroys the social organization and creates social disunion. Allah says:

And obey Allah and His Messenger; and fall into no disputes, lest ye lose heart and your power depart; and be patient and persevering: for Allah is with those who patiently persevere (al-Anfāl 8: 46).

The norm that differentiates between people in Islamic social organization, according to the Qur'an, is piety or religiosity. Accordingly, Allah says:

Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And Allah has full Knowledge and is well-acquainted (with all things) (al-Hujurāt 49: 13).

In addition, says:

...but the best of provisions is right conduct (piety). So fear Me, O ye that are wise! (al-Baqarah 2: 197).

(See al-Zamakshari, n.d. 2: 43; al-Tabatabai 1931H, 7: 214).

SITUATIONAL FACILITIES

Situational facilities, as this study mentioned previously, refer to the means and obstacles which facilitate or hinder the attainment of the concerted goals of the social organization.

Muslim society educates Muslims using the techniques of al-'Ibādāt and al-Mu'āmalāt through socialization. In addition, Muslims receive Islamic teachings through daily social interactions.

In certain situations, a Muslim may behave according to the norms and values of Islamic social action, but yet another time he may not. This is the meaning of situational facilities. This concept is very comprehensive because it contains the components of a situation and the alternatives to the situation as well as the varying abilities of the actor himself.

So does the situation help the actor to achieve his goals in terms of Islamic norms or not? Actually, that depends on the situation. For example, if a Muslim has been summoned to court to testify as a witness of a crime, what are the kinds of expectations that one can imagine in terms of this situation and the actor? One can expect the following: Firstly, if the accused is not related to the witness, the witness will be able to carry out his role easily. Thus this situation facilitates the role of the witness as long as he is not influenced by something else. Secondly, if the accused is a relative to the witness, for example, his nephew or cousin, he may not be able to play his role easily. The witness will find it difficult to say the truth because he has a double role, the role of nephew and the role of witness. Although he should be truthful because he is a Muslim, the situation will not allow this person to play out his role easily.

The Qur'an describes some facilities for Muslims in their daily lives. Through these facilities, the Qur'an helps human beings cope with adverse conditions and situations. For example, Allah provides some situations like:

1. The ability to make ablution *Wudū* (وضوء). Allah allows Muslims to use clean sand for ablution if they cannot find water. Allah says:

If ye are ill, or on a Journey, or one of you cometh from offices of nature, or ye have been in contact with women, and ye find no water, then take for yourselves clean sand or earth, and rub therewith you're your faces and hands (al-Nisā' 4: 43).
2. Shortening of prayer. Allah allows Muslims to shorten their prayer in some cases:

When ye travel through the earth there is no blame on you if ye shorten your prayers, for fear the Unbelievers may attack you (al-Nisā' 4: 101).

Also, Allah says,

If ye fear (an enemy), pray on foot or riding (al-Baqarah 2: 239).
3. The ability to make pilgrimage only if possible:

Pilgrimage thereto is a duty men owe to God, — those who can afford the journey (Āli-'Imrān 3: 97).
4. The ability to delay the fast: Allah gives permission for Muslims to delay their fasting if they are sick or on a journey:

(Fasting) for a fixed number of days; but if any of you is ill, or on a journey, the prescribed number (should be made up) from days later. For those who can do it (with hardship), is a ransom, the feeding of one that is indigent. But he that will give more, of his own free will, -it is better for him (al-Baqarah 2: 184).

5. Permission to avoid some al-Mu'āmalāt In order to mitigate the difficulties of some situations. Allah says:

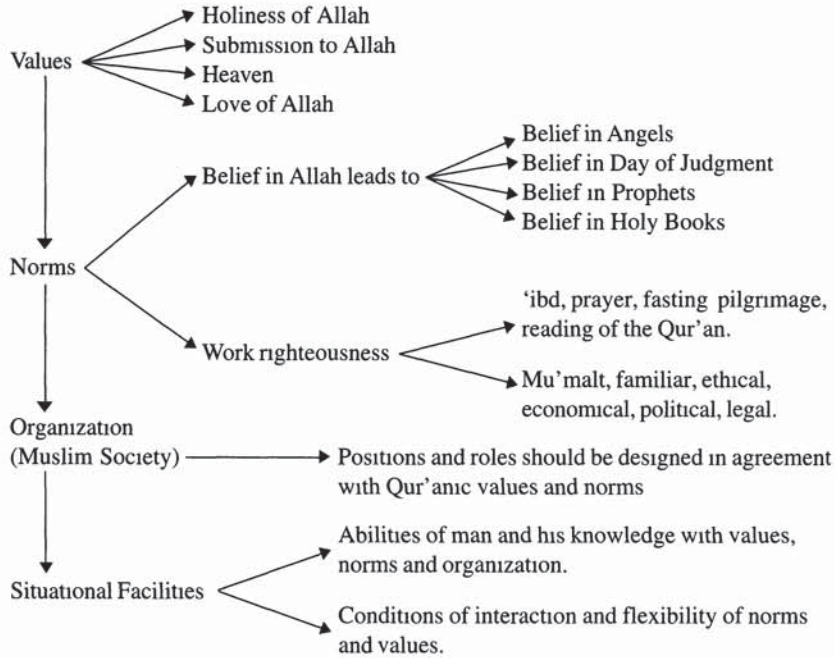
On no soul doth God place a burden greater than it can bear (al-Baqarah 2: 286).

But if one is forced by necessity without willful disobedience, nor transgressing due limits, — then is he guiltless. (al-Baqarah 2: 173) (Also see al-Talāq 65: 7; al-Mā'idah 5: 6 and al-Nahl 16: 115)


Thus, in the above verses Allah gives some alternatives, or permission for Muslims in special situations to help them when they do not have the ability to carry out the instructions. The Qur'an allows such permissions or facilities in al-'Ibādāt more than al-Mu'āmalāt.

As such Islamic social action consists of four pillars. First are values, or submission to Allah – striving for heaven, which should be reliable and constant so as to preserve the stability of Islamic social action. They involve the highest degree of Qur'anic control. Second are norms, or faith and working righteousness or 'aqīdah and shari'ah. Shari'ah is flexible compared to values and Aqīdah. However this flexibility must not break down values. Norms have the ability to control but less so than values, and they have more ability to change but less so than social organization. Third is social organization, which involves social institutions and the construction of relationships along the lines of social positions, status and roles. This construction should be controlled by the Islamic norms and values of Islamic social action. It is the place where a Muslim is motivated to behave as a Muslim. Social organization has the ability to control but less than values and norms, while it is flexible and able to change more than the upper components but less so than situational facilities. The highest degree of motivation and flexibility is under situational facilities, but they are poor in terms of control. They refer to behavior itself, the abilities of the actors and alternatives in situations.

Islamic social action can be conceptualized as follows:



The hierarchical relationships of these components can be stated according to the following diagram:

Submission to Allah and Heaven	Highest ability to control. Control from up to down  Highest ability to change Movement from down to up.
Faith and Work righteousness	
Islamic Social Organization	
Situational Facilities	

INTENTIONALITY AND RESPONSIBILITY IN ISLAMIC SOCIAL ACTION

The above components are important to understand social action but there are two additional factors behind such action from religious and philosophical viewpoints. These are intentionality and responsibility.

Action always depends on intentionality, and most sociologists consider the intention as something basic to understanding human behavior. Shotter, for example, believes that intentionality is the key and basic factor of social action

(Brenner, Michael, 1980: 5-6). Knowledge of the actor and the circumstances of the interaction are what affect the intention.

The Qur'an is interested in intention because it defines the responsibility of the actor for his action. In regard to this Allah says:

If any do desire a reward in this life, We shall give it to him; and if any do desire a reward in the Hereafter, We shall give it to him. And swiftly shall We reward those that (serve us with) gratitude (Āli-'Imrān 3: 145).

In addition, the Prophet explained the importance of intention when he stated that the action depends on the intention. He said:

Actions are but by intention and every man shall have but that which he intended. (al-Murāgī 1985, 4: 90) see also (al-Nawawī 1982: 26).

That is to say, what an individual intends and what follows the intention is through the behavior or the action. Meaning, the action consists of intention and practice. Allah says:

That man can have nothing but what he strives for; That (the fruit of) his striving will soon come in sight; Then will he be rewarded with a reward complete (al-Najm 53: 39-41).

The above verses summarize the intention and the action. The former request is intention and the latter is action. Then, reward comes as mentioned in the following verse:

Those who do wish for the (things of) the Hereafter, and strive therefore with all due striving, and have Faith, they are the ones whose striving is acceptable (to Allah) (al-Isrā' 17: 19).

The Qur'an also highlights the importance of the responsibility. This is because man is responsible for his behavior. The following verses illustrate this notion:

Every man's fate We have fastened on his own neck: on the Day of Judgment We shall bring out for him a scroll, which he will see spread open. (It will be said to him:) "Read thine (own) record; sufficient is thy soul this day to make out an account against thee." Who receiveth guidance, receiveth it for his own benefit: who goeth astray doth so to his own loss: no bearer of burdens can bear the burden of another: nor would We visit with Our Wrath until We had sent a Messenger (to give warning) (al-Isrā' 17: 115).

Then guard yourselves against a day when one soul shall not avail another nor shall intercession be accepted for her, nor shall compensation be taken from her, nor shall anyone be helped (from outside) (al-Baqarah 2: 48).

In order to be responsible for actions, there must be an intention. As such the responsibility decreases as far as the individual has no intention, as shown in the following verse:

Allah accepts the repentance of those who do evil in ignorance and repent soon afterwards; to them will Allah turn in mercy: for Allah is Full of Knowledge and Wisdom (al-Nisā' 4: 17).

There is another condition of responsibility that includes freedom in the sense that the human might be compelled to do an action as mentioned in the following verses from the Qur'an:

He hath only forbidden you dead meat, and blood, and the flesh of swine, and that on which any other name hath been invoked besides that of Allah. *But if one is forced by necessity, without wilful disobedience, nor transgressing due limits, then is he guiltless. For Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful* (al-Baqarah 2: 173).

...when He hath explained to you in detail what is forbidden to you, *except under compulsion of necessity* (al-An'ām 6: 119).

These verses illustrate the doctrine, which says that necessity justifies forbidden matters. Islamic scholars discussed the above Islamic viewpoint about responsibility and concluded that free will is a very important condition for responsibility. For example, Diraz points out that man is not responsible unless he is free. (Diraz 1989: 59)

The stages of responsibility are two. The first is prior to the action, which is considered a gift from Allah to man and refers to responsibility of imposition, and the second is following the action, or during the state of examination. This might be an accusation ending either in innocence or conviction (Diraz 1989: 58-59).

Generally, responsibility can be divided into social, moral and religious responsibility. In fact, it is often difficult to distinguish between these responsibilities in the Qur'an because all of them refer to the religious responsibilities of man in regard to his actions. Diraz referred to the interplay between responsibilities and to the influence on each other because together, they equal one responsibility, either the responsibility of man in front of his Creator, the responsibility of man to himself, or his responsibility to others (Diraz 1974: 143).

In certain situations, the individual in Islam is not only accountable for his actions but can also be accountable for those of others. Diraz referred to three cases that man is rewarded to another's behavior:

1. When an individual influenced another's behavior, by advice or gesture, he will receive either punishment or reward for it.
2. If he is a representative for others who legislate a good matter, he will get the reward of all those who act on the matter; for he who legislates a bad matter, he will get its sin and the sin of all those who act on the matter until the life hereafter.
3. If one is passive about another's bad behavior, the first person will receive the sin of the doer (Diraz 1974: 60-61).

As such, responsibility is connected with the intention and free will. A Muslim is therefore responsible for his actions if he has the intention and free will to do them, but if others compel him to do them, he might not be responsible.

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