

Marketing strategies from the Islamic Perspective: Reviewing the relevance of elements of the marketing mix

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ABSTRACT

This conceptual paper addresses the relevance of the marketing mix elements in the context of the Islamic business framework. Using the product, price, place of distribution, promotion and people as the bases of discussion, this article relates the implications of *riba* (interest), *gharar* (excessive uncertainty), and *maisir* (gambling) in the context of business. Additionally, the issues of *halal* and *haram* are given credence in addressing the implementations of the marketing mix elements. With the Al-Quran and Sunnah as sources of reference, this paper addresses the everyday actions of marketers in establishing and executing their marketing strategies.

1. Introduction

Islam is one of the major religions in the world. The meaning of Islam is derived from the Arabic term “*surrender*” which denotes the submission to God. As a Muslim, one should follow the primary source of Islamic doctrine: the Al-Quran and Sunnah or exemplary teachings of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). According to Ishak and Abdullah (2012), one-fifth of the population in this world are Muslims, and it is anticipated that in 2060, the Muslim population will increase by seventy per cent or 1.8 billion in 2015 to nearly 3 billion in 2060 (Hackett & Lipka, 2018). This is a clear indicator that Muslims have massive purchasing power potential, and therefore their consumption will significantly impact the global market. On this note, the global halal market is estimated to be worth at USD2.3 trillion, and this figure is expected to grow (Hamid, Shahwahid, Othman, & Saidpuddin, 2017). The halal market is set to become the most profitable and influential business due to the growing number of Muslims globally (Ruslan, Kamarulzaman, & Sanny, 2018). As the global halal market is expanding, marketers must understand

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how to fulfil the demands of Muslims. In a study by Nasir, Roslin, and Chui (2020) the importance of marketing strategies in improving products and branding plans is highlighted, and this would be relevant even in the context of the Muslim market. Islam encourages Muslims to participate in business and financial transactions, but there are specific considerations based on prohibitions, ethics, and norms (Ayub, 2013) that must be adhered. Selling and buying are permitted in Islam, as long as it does not contain the element of *riba* (usury and interest). It is clearly stated in the Al-Quran that,

"But Allah has permitted trade but has forbidden interest."

(Surah Al-Baqarah, 2: 275)

In considering the growth of the global Muslim market, business organisations must familiarise themselves with marketing executions and strategies permissible within the Islamic business framework as well as firm ethical considerations when executing various business transactions. This encompasses marketing activities, and strategies developed specifically for this purpose must still abide by the principles permissible within the Islamic pillars. Islam emphasises the principle of justice. Thus the distribution of profits with a proportion that is just and agreeable by all concerned parties in the contract is acceptable and deemed lawful (Nasuka, 2020; Rahim, 2003). On this note, marketing implementations that are set to attain profitable undertakings must be executed accordingly. It is a common understanding that the elements of the marketing mix are the embodiment of the marketing strategies by which strategists based their initiatives on firm principles of the marketing concepts (Thabit & Raewf, 2018). The premise of such understanding is the concept of satisfying the wants and needs of target consumers and as such, the need to balance the Islamic principles and profitable business implementations whilst upholding the understanding of satisfying customers become more apparent for those inclined to meet Islamic marketing needs.

The main objectives of this conceptual paper are to focus on elements of the marketing mix (i.e. product, price, place, promotion and people) and address their relevance within the context of the Islamic principles. Additionally, the paper hopes to clarify what constitutes Islamic marketing and relate those elements that are prohibited and are deemed wrongful for business transactions and in commerce. This conceptual paper hopes to add to the existing body of knowledge in the literature regarding the marketing mix and strategies from the Islamic perspective.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Marketing from the Islamic Perspective

Marketing is defined as the social and managerial process by which individuals and groups obtain their wants and needs through the creation and exchange of products and services that are of value to others (Kotler, Armstrong, Wong & Saunders, 2005). On this note, those wishing to carry out relevant marketing activities within the Islamic boundaries must do so by realising how much value creation process are carried out based on the Al-Quran and the Sunnah. Following the Islamic *Shariah* principles, business transactions must strictly adhere to those spelt out in the Al-Quran and Sunnah. Specifically, *Shariah* compliance covers all areas of human living, including ritual worships and business transactions, whilst following the Islamic principles closely (Johan & Hussain, 2019). Islamic guidelines in business transactions focus on avoiding injustice and prevent any form of exploitations that may disadvantage any parties involved in the transaction.

In comparing conventional business transaction with those that are guided by Islamic rulings, there are several elements in conventional businesses transactions that contradict with *Shariah* compliance executions. These elements are *riba* (interest), *gharar* (excessive uncertainty), and *maisir* (gambling). Out of these elements, *riba* (interest) and *maisir* (gambling) are both prohibited under *Shariah* ruling as their harm outweighs any benefits. At the same time, *gharar* (excessive uncertainty) is allowed only in certain circumstances where benefits outweigh the harm (Chowdhury, 2015). The main business element that is prohibited in Islamic business execution is *Riba* (interest). *Riba* is excessive growth increment and additions to business gains (Muhamad et al., 2013). *Riba* takes place in business activities where the investor generates money as the principal of service. There are two classifications of *riba*, namely *riba al-fadl* and *riba al-nasi'ah*. *Riba al-Fadl* refers to the excessive payment by the debtor to the creditor in the exchange of similar commodities. While *riba al-nasi'ah* refers to interest on a loan. These are clarified in the Al-Quran in terms of the prohibition of *riba* as indicated in the following,

"Whatever Riba (increased amount) you give, so that it may increase in the wealth of the people, it does not increase with Allah; and whatever zakat you give, seeking Allah's pleasure with it, (it is multiplied by Allah, and) it is such people who multiply (their wealth in real terms)"

(Surah Al-Rum, 30:39)

"And for their taking Riba although it was forbidden for them, and their wrongful appropriation of other people's property. We have prepared for those among them who reject faith a grievous punishment."

(Surah Al-Nisa, 4:161)

*"O believers, take note doubled and redoubled *riba*, and fear Allah so that you may prosper. Fear the fire which has been prepared for those who reject faith, and obey Allah and the Prophet so that you may get mercy."*

(Surah Al-Imran, 3:130)

Another critical element prohibited in business transactions is what is termed as *gharar*. The word *gharar* indicates danger, perils, the hazard of risk, and jeopardy (Ahmad, 2002). *Gharar* refers to the uncertainty like the business contract due to the lack of description of the products. There are two classifications of *gharar*, namely *gharar fahish* (major *gharar*) and *gharar Yasir* (minor *gharar*). *Gharar fahish* refers to significant uncertainties that affect the contract. An example of *gharar fahish* is the sale of fruits before ripening. The existence of *gharar fahish* is prohibited in Islam while *gharar yasir* is the small number of uncertainties that are stipulated in the contract. This existence of *gharar Yasir* is tolerated in Islam. The example of *gharar yasir* is when the menu in a restaurant does not state the prices of the offerings, which is still permissible in Islam. The evidence from the Quran and Hadith regarding *gharar* is stated as follows,

*"Squander not your property amongst yourself unjustly (*batil*) except it is a trade among you by mutual consent."*

(Surah An-Nisa, 4:29)

The third element that contradicts with the Islamic principle is *Maisir* (gambling). *Maisir* (gambling) occurs in the situation of people expecting to gain something in the future.

"They ask you about wine and gambling. Say: 'In both of them there are a great sin and (some) means of benefits for mankind, but the sin of them is greater than their benefit'. Furthermore, they ask you what they ought to spend (for the sake of Allah)? Say: 'That which is beyond your needs'. Thus Allah explains to you the Verses, so that you may ponder (over the wisdom contained in them)".

(Surah Al-Baqarah, 2: 219)

These concepts in Islam govern business transactions and as such, should be given due consideration by those involved in the business, whether for Muslims or non-Muslims. Specifically, in the conduct of marketing, the elements of the marketing mix are deemed necessary when strategising and therefore should be aligned with the Islamic demands as well.

2.2 The Elements of the Marketing Mix from the Islamic Perspective

In marketing, strategies are developed based on the elements of the marketing mix. It is these elements that are thought of carefully to parallel the marketing objectives set out. Initially, it is the single element of the price that was used as the basis of strategising based on microeconomic theory (Chong, 2003). This is in line with the transactional perspective of economics or the understanding of Transactional Cost Analysis (TCA) (Rindfleisch, 2019). Over the years, marketing experts around the world developed and formulated other marketing mix elements to ensure the successful implementations of marketing strategies in business. The sustainability of the business in the market is very much dependent on how effective the organisations are in managing their marketing mix elements. Marketing experts formulated the combination of various elements in the marketing mix as inputs for strategic development. In essence, all the elements in the marketing mix are necessary to ensure that the company hone its competitive advantage to face the threats of competitors. Marketing mix elements have always been considered as the backbone of strategic implementation. Through compelling marketing mix strategic implementations, the performance of the company is likely to improve if used effectively (Bahador, 2019). The elements of the marketing mix are commonly denoted as product, price, place, and promotion, but now this has extended to include other elements, including people. There have been numerous debates on how the Islamic implementation perspectives would perceive these elements. The importance of the marketing mix from the Islamic perspective is best seen through the development of strategies that not only ensure success in the hyper-competitive market but are well aligned with the demands of Islamic principles (Nordin & Isa, 2018).

As such, the needs and wants of consumers could be better fulfilled by creating, offering, and exchanging products and services that are *Shariah*-compliant (Hidayat & Hermawan, 2017). Essentially, the fundamentals of Islam should be aligned effectively where the conduct of business and the demands of consumers are in tandem with one another (Alserhan, Althawadi, & Boulanouar, 2016). Hashim and Hamzah (2014) also asserted that marketing mix strategies developed can be acceptable for the strategic implementation for Muslim and non-Muslim consumers alike. There is no need for specific differentiation as principles adhered to are essentially noble and express good deeds. The application of the Islamic marketing mix is therefore in need of further clarification in order to better comprehend and bond consumers strategically (Abdullah, Hamali, & Abdullah, 2015; Saeed & Baig, 2013). As such, the next subsection will discuss each of the elements of the marketing mix that is more in line with the Islamic *Shariah* principle.

2.2.1 Product

Product is the main element of the marketing mix as this is the core offering of the marketers as they strategise to attract target consumers. Products can be either tangible or intangible offerings, and in strategising the marketing of either of these products, the need to comply and abide by the *Shariah* principle is demanded of marketers. It is imperative that the offerings meet the demand of customers in the market and it is accepted that the essential role of marketers is to produce different varieties of products to fulfil the demand of customers from various market segments (Ali, 2011). According to Dar (2003), Islamic products are growing fast in the marketplace. The satisfaction of customers is necessary to ensure that marketers can fulfil their diverse demands. Thus, there is always a need to balance between understanding customer demands whilst providing market offerings that are in line with the *Shariah* requirements. In essence, discussion of product from the Islamic perspectives is always related to the concepts of *Halal* and *Haram*.

The concepts of *halal* and *haram* are derived from the Al-Quran and Sunnah. *Halal* is a term used to denote those actions or consumption that are permissible and permitted in Islam. At the same time, *haram* is the unlawful actions or consumption that are forbidden in Islam. The concepts of *halal* and *haram* are meant to keep Muslims safe from the impurities of living, and therefore any doubtful undertakings must be avoided (Annabi, Husein, Hassan, & Nasir, 2017). Specifically, these terms (i.e. *halal* and *haram*) are used in the consumption of food products including meat and poultry, cosmetics, personal care products, pharmaceuticals, food ingredients, and food contact materials among other things (Islamic Council of Victoria, 2019). Example of *haram* in Islam includes the consumption of alcoholic beverages like wine or all products with alcohol, pork, or the slaughtering of permissible animals not following *Shariah* principles. Marketers need to cater to the demand of Muslims for *halal* products, as this can be a sensitive issue to Muslim consumers. Hence, a firm understanding of consumer attitudes towards *halal* products is essential (Wilson & Grant, 2013). Over the years, there is a high demand from local and global markets for *halal* products (Hanzaee & Ramezani, 2011), and this has increased steadily. Muslims count their good deeds when they can refrain from the consumption of *haram* (not permissible) products or services and consumes only *Halal* (permissible) goods (Alserhan, 2010). Some evidence from the Al-Quran and Hadith that express *halal* and *haram* consumption of products are as follows,

"O you who have believed, eat from good things which we have provided for you and be grateful to Allah if it is (indeed) Him that you worship."

(Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:172)

"So eat the lawful and good food which Allah has provided for you. And be grateful for the Graces of Allah, if it is He whom you worship."

(Surah An-Nahl, 16:114)

"Eat of what Allah has provided for you, and follow not the footsteps of Shaitan. Surely he is to you an open enemy"

(Surah Al-An'am, 6:142)

"Allah and His Messenger made it illegal the trade of alcoholic liquors, dead animals, pigs, and idols"

(Hadith Sahih Al-Bukhari: 2028)

Additionally, branding and labelling as part of the product strategy in marketing, require adherence to the Islamic requirements in order to be regarded as *Shariah*-compliant. From the Islamic perspective, products in Islam are prohibited from using the name of Allah in branding and labelling. Claims made by marketers of products must be truthful and bound by Islamic rulings. A case in point is the marketing of hand sanitiser with an alcohol content that is advertised as *halal*, where the use of alcohol in such instances are permissible as only the consumption of alcohol is *haram*. Also, alcohol for medicinal purposes is permitted. According to the Fatwa Committee of the National Council for Malaysian Islamic Religious Affairs in 2011, medicines and perfumes that contain alcohol (not from wine) used as a solvent is not regarded as ritually unclean (*najis*). Essentially, Islam prohibits marketers from misusing branding and labelling in product strategy to avoid any misconceptions associated with the Islamic principles. Marketers must ensure that the products that they are selling is accurate in labelling and are not misleading. Accurate labelling provides customers with factual and relevant information about the product they are consuming. Organic marketing products, for example, marketers must ensure that the product is genuinely certified organic following the *Shariah* ruling and meet the specific criteria established.

Another issue that is associated with the product strategy is in terms of the weight of items sold. Unscrupulous marketers or traders who place an inaccurate weight of their products in the labelling is regarded as dishonest and is a practice that is prohibited in Islam. Islam emphasises that all Muslims are honest and fair in every aspect of their lives, including in the execution of business transactions. There are pieces of evidence from the Quran and Hadith that express honesty in trade. Some of them are,

"And establish weight in justice and do not make deficient in balance."

(Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:275)

"For men, there are angels who always take turns, in advance and behind them, they guard it on the commandments of Allah s.w.t. Indeed, Allah does not change the state of a tribe so that they change the circumstances of themselves. And when Allah s.w.t wills the ugliness of a tribe, no one can resist it; And there was no protector for them except Him."

(Surah Ar-Rad, 13:11)

"And give full measure when you measure and weigh with an even balance. That is the best way and best in the result."

(Surah Al-Isra, 17:35)

2.2.2 Price

Another vital element in the marketing mix is the price as this is the element that generates revenue in business transactions. Price is the amount paid by the customers to the sellers when customers purchase the product. The determination of fixing a price may be quite complicated, as it is often a confidential matter for most businesses. In pre-purchase stages, the probability of the potential customers to buy the product is high if he/she is satisfied with the pricing offered by the marketers. On the other hand, the possibility of the potential customer to buy the product is low if he/she is unsatisfied with the pricing offered by the marketers. In a post-purchase stage, customers will likely re-purchase the products if they are satisfied with the quality of the products as well as the pricing offered by marketers. In cases where they are unsatisfied with the products in terms of price, the possibility for them to choose another product

offered by competitors is high. According to Nasir, Roslin, and Chui (2017), the participation of people to purchase the product is high if they have positive behaviour towards that product. Hence, setting the right price for products and services can be critical for marketers as this will influence their sustainability when re-purchase is possible.

Marketers need to consider numerous factors when fixing the price of a product. These factors include the costs involved in making the product, the ability of the customers to pay for the product, and any relevant government restrictions (Thabit & Raewf, 2018). First, marketers must ensure that the pricing of the products reflects the product quality. If the product is of high quality, it is reasonable for marketers to set relatively high prices. Islam permits marketers to set a high price, as long as the price is reasonable and justifiable. Islam prohibits marketers from charging a high price for products that are obviously of low quality. However, Islam permits marketers to charge prices that are higher than the cost of producing them, as long as it is not exorbitant (Hejase, Hamdar, Orfali, & Hejase, 2012; Saeed, Ahmed, & Mukhtar, 2001).

Essentially, Islam emphasised on value-maximisation rather than profit-maximisation in order to provide justice for the welfare of society (Hassan, Chachi & Latiff, 2008). The concept of justice is based on value-maximisation. Income inequality creates an unequal opportunity for the people, and therefore, the establishment of prices of goods or services should be fair and just. On this note, Islam strictly prohibits the act of monopoly. Islamic teachings condemned the act of dominating the distribution channels to set high prices of goods and services (Trim, 2009). There is evidence from the Al-Quran and Hadith regarding the prohibition of monopoly in Islam as follows,

"O you who have believed, do not consume one another's wealth unjustly but only (in lawful) business by mutual consent. And do not kill yourself (or one another). Indeed, Allah is to you ever Merciful."

(Surah An-Nisa, 4:29)

"Whoever is stockpiling goods, then he has sinned."

(Hadith Sahih Al-Bukhari)

Monopoly is a sole market power in business that is conquered by the single seller in the market. There are various reasons why a monopoly creates high barriers to competitors from entering an industry. The reasons include the ownership of an essential resource, legal barriers (i.e. governments franchises, licenses, patents, copyrighted), and economies of scale (Tucker, 2004). Specifically, a monopolist will continuously earn profit in the long run by maximising profit and minimising losses. In other words, the monopolist misallocates resources to set a maximum price. The presence of *gharar* is exceptionally high in monopoly businesses. A monopolist freely charged a higher price than would be charged with the reason that there is only a single seller in the entire industry. As a result, the rich become richer and will be able to accumulate their wealth while the poor get poorer if such practices continue. Islam prohibits monopoly in business from avoiding income inequality among people.

Also, marketers need to ensure that there are no additional charges incurred to the consumers during the delivery of the products. In other words, delivery charges to consumers must be clearly stated in the contract and must not be misleading. For example, if standard delivery rates do not cover certain areas, due to certain limitations, and this might incur an additional extra charge to consumers, marketers need to

clearly state this in the contract to avoid problems in the future. Sometimes, buyers are surprisingly burdened with extra additional charges incurred during the delivery of the goods and products. Marketers need to ensure that the price of the products is similar to the price agreed in the contract. Marketers must prohibit the elements of *Maysir* in business transactions. Charging the consumers with additional payment without their consent is one of the elements in *Maysir*.

2.2.3 Place

Place in the marketing mix refers to the availability of product to customers at the desired time and location. Marketers need to ensure the safety of the customers in the business transaction. From the Islamic perspective, appropriation of the distribution channel, delivery time, and avoidance of mixing *Halal* and *Haram* products are aspects to consider in the distribution strategy that should be made aware to the marketers (Arham, 2010; Kamaruddin, Iberahim, & Shabudin, 2012). The appropriate distribution channel is needed to avoid burdening the customers. Marketers need to avoid mixing *Halal* and *Haram* products in delivery and consignment as established earlier. Specific procedures of handling, transporting, storing and manufacturing are needed to ensure that the products are entirely *halal* (Omar, Jaafar, & Osman, 2013). There are pieces of evidence from Hadith that are related to the element of place in marketing. Some of them are,

"Ibn Umar (Allah be pleased with them) reported Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) as saying: He who buys foodgrain should not sell that before taking possession of it. He (the narrator) said: We used to buy foodgrain from the caravans in bulk, but Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) forbade us to re-sell that until we had shifted it to some other place."

(Hadith Sahih Al-Bukhari)

"Ibn Umar (Allah be pleased with them) reported Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) as saying: He who bought foodgrain should not sell it until he had taken full possession of it (after measuring it)"

(Hadith Sahih Al-Bukhari)

2.2.4 Promotion

Promotion in marketing is the form of communication used by marketers to notify their customers about products and services offered. Apart from that, promotion acts as a mechanism to attract potential customers to purchase their products. For marketers, promotional efforts are vital in addressing sustainability in the market. Consistent promotional efforts are needed to retain existing customers and to attract new potential customers. Creating a positive image through promotion is essential, as it attracts potential customers to marketers' offerings. There is various form of promotions, such as personal selling, telemarketing, direct mail, commercials in a broadcast medium, trade fairs and exhibitions, sales promotions, outdoor advertising and many more. Islam has given several guidelines to marketers in promoting their products and services as it encourages Muslims to engage in trade and to promote their products, as long as this is done correctly.

It is quite common to see many promotional practices that do not meet the *Shariah* compliance framework. The portrayal of women in the advertisement should comply with the Islamic requirement, including the demand for covering the '*awrah*'. The meaning of '*awrah*' is the prohibition of the human body that are not to be seen by those who are not *mahram*, unless in the circumstances of an emergency (Karyono, Ahmad, & Asmai, 2017). In principle, women should cover their hair with hijab and wear loose clothing. Many advertisements use celebrities or famous figures such as actress, television personalities, comedians, beauty queen, and fashion models in their advertising strategies. Women are generally regarded as beautiful objects in promotions. Marketers need to be sensitive on this issue and use a communication medium that is more appropriate and in line with Islamic teachings. The importance of the '*awrah*' is stated in the Al-Quran below,

"And tell the believing women to reduce (some) of their version and guard their private parts and not expose their adornment except that which (necessarily) appears thereof and to wrap (a portion of) their headcovers over their chests and not expose their adornment except to their husbands, their fathers, their husbands' fathers, their sons, their husbands' sons, their brothers, their brothers' sons, their sisters' sons, their women, that which their right hands possess, or those male attendants having no physical desire, or children who are not yet aware of the private aspects of women. And let them not stamp their feet to make known what they conceal of their adornment. And turn to Allah in repentance, all of you, O believers, that you might succeed".

(Surah An-Nur, 24:31)

In promotion, marketers need to ensure that they do not over promise and under deliver. In a bid to win customers, marketers will make promises to ensure their potential customers choose them over other competitors. Customers are likely to be disappointed with over promises made by marketers. Overpromise, and under-delivery will unlikely lead to re-purchase of the products. Keeping promises is an essential value in life. The breaking of promises is strictly prohibited in Islam. Marketers need to ensure that they are delivering more than their customer's expectations or better than what was promised to their customers. Keeping promises is mentioned periodically in the Al-Quran. As a Muslim, one should fulfil their promises as evident from the Al-Quran verses below,

"And be true to every promise for, verily you will be called to account for every promise which you have made."

(Surah Al-Isra, 17:34)

"You, who have iman! Why do you say what you do not do? It is deeply abhorrent to Allah that you should say what you do not do."

(Surah As-Saf, 61:3-4)

It is also essential that marketers ensure there is no existence of fraud in the promotion. The presence of fraud in promotion is when false or misleading promotion claims are made for-profit purposes. The element of fraud in the business transactions where the sale of the product is higher than the advertised price, misleading of warranties and guarantees, false or misleading in the selling price presentations, bait and switch selling, and misleading or unauthorised use of testimonials relating to products and services are examples of such fraudulent cases.

Some companies use celebrities as testimonials to prove the effectiveness of their products when in actuality, celebrities do not use them. The element of fraud is also present when car dealers promote second-hand cars with a description of "accident-free" when this is not true. Marketing deceptions such as illegal practices, making false claims, or misleading promotions are strictly prohibited in Islam. Denial of crucial information and manipulation in promotion is unethical and strictly prohibited in Islam. Generally, manipulative promotional behaviour occurs when marketers manipulate consumers to buy products with the sole purpose of gaining better profits and sales (Bahari, Faizal, Yue, & Anwar, 2012). Denial of information occurs when companies conceal unflattering information of their product or services to increase their sales. Some retailers attract Muslim customers to purchase their products by concealing critical details about the products such as those containing prohibited ingredients (Hassan & Hanif, 2017). It is warranted that marketers disclose all relevant information and not be ambiguous or hide stipulated information relating to the products or services as this may amount to fraud (Abuznaid, 2012). Islam encourages Muslims to promote products and services, as long as the promotion is done following Islamic guidelines and is free from acts prohibited in Islam. The prohibition of fraud is explained in detail in the Al-Quran as follows,

"No prophet could (ever) be false to his trust. If any person is so false, He shall on the Day of Judgment restore what he misappropriated; then shall every soul receive its due whatever it earned, and none shall be dealt with unjustly."

(Surah Ali-Imran, 3:161)

"Woe to those that deal in fraud. Those who, when they have to receive by measure from men, exact full measure. But when they have to give by measure or weight to men, give less than due."

(Surah Al-Mutaffifin, 83: 1-3)

2.2.5 People

A relatively recent addition to the element of the marketing mix is that of people. They are also termed as internal market and marketers are now keener to use their employees as part of the marketing tool. The employees represent the organisations in which they work, and therefore they are the visible part of the marketers' offerings apart from the products and services. Thus, it is pertinent that marketers handle their employees appropriately and train them to understand the company's vision and mission in order to execute key marketing activities. On this note, ensuring that the internal market of the organisation carries out their duties following the Islamic principle is key to effective marketing. Corruption is one example of misconduct in the execution of transaction done by people in the organisation and as such, must be dealt with appropriately. Additionally, relating to customers must always abide by the Islamic principle of just and sincerity. The following Al-Quranic verses relate to the responsibilities of the internal market when dealing with other people including customers,

"Eat and drink from the provision of Allah, and do not commit abuse on the earth, spreading corruption."

(Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:60)

"And spend in the way of Allah and do not throw (yourselves) with your (own) hands into destruction [by refraining]. And do good; indeed, Allah loves the doers of good"

(Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:195)

3. Conclusion

Islam encourages Muslims to engage in trading and businesses, as long as Muslims abide by the Islamic *Shariah* rulings and business ethics. Regulations following Islamic teachings and business ethics are essentially derived from the Al-Quran and Sunnah or the teachings of the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH). There is a parallel between the teachings of Islam and ethical considerations as commonly dictated in conventional marketing practices. As such, there is never a difficulty in merging Islamic concepts with that of conventional norms. Be it Muslims' business organisations or non-Muslims' business enterprises, the demand for doing good in the execution of business transactions are present and expected. This paper has merely outlined some of the parallels that Islamic rulings established in terms of conducting the marketing mix activities as proposed by established Western scholars in marketing literature. Much more needs to be addressed in-depth in the understanding of the marketing mix to extend knowledge in this area.

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