

Economic Rationalism and Consumption : Islamic Perspective

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Abstract

This paper presents a comparative view of Islamic economic rationalism and consumption framework to its counterpart's conventional capitalist and socialist economic system. In conventional economic system, only self-interest and rationality of the consumer is the main principle to maximize utility whereas moral, religious, national, historical, cultural and social values are absent here. Consequently, the consumers enjoy sovereignty with little or no intervention of regulatory authority to maximize the utility. On the contrary, Islamic economic system designs its rationality and consumption principle in moderation that is far away from extremism where freedom and regulation is moderately recognized. Therefore, Islamic rationality encourages the consumers to maximize his utility by insuring religious, national, historical, cultural and social values. Besides, conventional economics have no treatment to immoral activities of consumer while Islamic economics derived from the Holy Quran and Hadith offers rewards and punishments for moral and immoral activities in worldly and hereafter life.

Key words: Rationalism, Consumption, Islamic Economics, Consumer Sovereignty, Moral and Social Values

1. Introduction

The evolution of economics describes that the prime goal of Economic theories is to fulfill the consumer's satisfaction regardless whether it is approved or not by the laws of the ethics or religion (Robbins, 1935, Sen, 1988, Groenewegen, 1996, Peil & Staveren, 2009). In addition, in economics decision making, Conventional economics emphasize on the self-interest and the rationality of the consumer whereas Islamic economics accentuates on the social and moral values, scale of welfare etc.

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In conventional economics, “Economic man” is the appropriate name of consumer while in Islamic economics, the consumer is known as ‘Islamic man’. Ethics is absent in conventional economics (Gamal, 2006). Here, the term-‘conventional economics’ is used as synonymous to the ‘Capitalist and socialist or communist’ economic system. ‘Capitalism’ sponsors the consumer with endless freedom to maximize their utility whereas ‘communism’ handing over the all economic power to the bureaucracy and induces the imbalanced allocation of resources ((Rice 1998, Akhter, Abbasi, & Umar, 2011). Besides, conventional economic system is motivated by positive economics (explain the facts) and avoid normative economics (value judgments, ethical precepts and norms of fairness) (Friedman, 1979, Chapra, 1995).

In contrast, Islamic Economics includes both positive and normative economics on basis of religion, believe in “Islamic man” (Ashker, 2006). Consequently, Islamic economics provide a unique principle of economic rationalism and consumption which is different than the conventional consumer theory.

This paper highlights the core difference between conventional and Islamic Economics in the aspects of economic rationalism and consumption principles.

2. Objectives

The main objective of this paper is to present an inclusive framework of Islamic economic rationalism and consumption. More specifically, the answers of some questions will be disclosed throughout this paper. Such as: a) how does Islamic economic Rationalism differ from conventional Economic rationalism? b) Has Islamic Economics any consumption framework of its own?

3. Methodology

This paper is a descriptive analysis on ‘Islamic perspective of economic rationalism and consumption.’ To prepare this, Al-Quran, the revealed book of ALLAH, different Hadith books, different articles, papers and books has been reviewed carefully. In addition, relevant secondary data are collected from the websites, survey report and research paper etc.

4. Literature Review

Each and every human behaves as a consumer to fulfill his wants (Smith, 1776). Meaning of consumer varies in different economic doctrines. Conventional economics define a consumer as a utility maximizer of material wants and needs, while norms and religious value is absent here (Friedman, 1979). The behaviour of conventional consumer varies due to culture and character in different fields of life (weber, 1958). Self-interest and Economic rationalism is the way of determining consumption and religious values are considered here (Quiggin,

1997). On the contrary, Islamic economics combines both positive and normative aspects in its principles and defines a consumer as a utility maximizer of material as well as spiritual wants and needs, where, norms and religious value is a strong factor (Chapra, 1995). Islamic economic rationalism includes religion, social and cultural values to regulate consumption (Ahmad, 1992). Mannan (1984) in his book calls for the presence of consumer as Islamic man. Besides value neutral factors (such as disposable income, wealth), the value loaded factors (such as beliefs, religions) are also important to determine the wants and demands of an Islamic consumer (Kahf, 1980, 1996). Hasan (1985, 2005) criticizes the consumption framework of Fahim Khan (1984, 1995) and discusses that, Islamic consumer theory successfully modifies the conventional concept of scarcity; wants, need, demand, utility, and satisfaction, to meet Islamic norms and requirements. Zarqa (1992) mentions 'the reward or penalty in hereafter life' as the key difference between Islamic and conventional consumer. Moreover, Islamic consumer must give up the consumptions of some goods and services which are harmful for the society (Siddiqi, 1988, 2001). Hence, Islamic consumer model ensures social and economic justice (HaiderNaqvi, 1997). In addition, Khan (2013) describes that, the framework of conventional theory of consumer behaviour is not enough to explain all aspects of behaviour of a consumer, so the Islamic theories are most important here.

This paper is an addition of previous research works and describes the comparative views to economic rationalism and consumption in Islamic and conventional economic perspectives.

5. Economic Rationalism: Conventional and Islamic Approach

5.1. The Idea of 'Economic Rationalism'

'Economic Rationalism' was first introduced by Weber and Tawney to represent the scope of commercial activity in which moral considerations, beyond the rule of business probity dictated by enlightened self-interest, have no role to play (Quiggin, 1997). Weber, in his thinking and writing, emphasizes on value-neutral sociology. He argues that, the gap of thinking between 'religion and intellectual knowledge' is widening day by day. Besides, religion becomes the irrational or anti-rational of super-human power. Moreover, Tawney (1962) wrote in his book: "For today it is even clearer that the dividing line between the spheres of religion and secular business is shifting, and that economic interests and ethical idealism are no longer "safely locked up in separate compartments."

More precisely, Pusey, (1991) in his book defines that, "Economic rationalism is the dogma which says that markets and money can always do everything better than governments, bureaucracies and the law. There is no point in political debate because all this just generates more insoluble conflicts. Forget about history and forget about national identity, culture and 'society' ... Don't even think about public policy, national goals or nation-building. It's all

futile. Just get out of the way and let prices and market forces deliver their own economically rational solution” (Pusey, 1991)

After reviewing the definition of economic rationalism, it is determined that, the goal of rationalist is to the ‘Making of money’ which implies that the acquisition of wealth is the goal of life and yardstick of economic success. Some other vital views of economic rationalism are:

- Utility and profit maximization is the ultimate goal of economic rationalism
- Moral, religious, national identity and goals, historical, cultural and social values considerations is beyond the rule of business probity
- Economic agent (consumer and producer) is able to take perfect decision by enlightened self-interest as directed with rigorous calculation, foresight and caution toward economic success.
- Interference of government, market or religious authority has been discouraged and it is wise to be absent.

5.2. Elimination of Religious values in 'Economic Rationalism' and the Rise of Islamic Economic Rationalism:

It was the success of economic rationalists’ in implementing their views in modern economics through enlightenment movement of 17th century. The aim of ‘enlightenment movement’ was to make a separation of religious and ethical values from the social and economic life of people. For example, at the time of the Puritans, the use of interest and profiteering were major issues of conflict between religious authorities and businessmen. Finally, the goal of economic rationalists dominates the conventional economic system through positive economics (Explain the fact and value free analysis) (Chapra, 2000). Thus, religious values and morality shunned away from economics theories and whim or self-interest of consumer became the standard of policy and decision making (Chapra, 1995).

So some questions arise, why do the rich people donate the needy and the poor? Will it maximize the utility of a consumer? Since, there is no visible profit or rewards to donor in the worldly life (but it has rewards in hereafter life in Islam). So donation is meaningless. High income inequality, for example, is the sign of economic rationality and positive economics. Therefore, Tawney Poses a question, "Has religious opinion in the past regarded questions of social organization and economic conduct as irrelevant to the life of the spirit...?"

Now consider that, let the answer of Tawney's question is No. then what may happen? People as economic agent may ignore religious and ethical values more and more to maximize their worldly benefits and utility. Thus an imbalanced economic society may be created.

Again, let the answer of Tawney's question is Yes. Then, what may be the probable effect? Mutual cooperation in economic activities, donation for needy, utility maximization in dual life (worldly and here after life), dual accountability, human dignity, etc. will be the instruments of this economic system. Besides corruption, exploitation, wastage, misuse and disuse of wealth, etc. will be highly discouraged in this system. Wright (2003) says, what is rational for you to choose will depend upon your aims, your values, or your desires where values include social, moral and religious values (Wright, 2003).

However, among other religions, Islam has complete code of social, moral and economic life. For example, Islam prohibits exploitative gears such as usury, gambling, and imbalanced society; instead encourages for profit loss sharing economic system, Zakah (obligatory Islamic tax), charity, dual accountability, etc. to insure highest economic welfare. Besides, it considers the Al-Quran, the unchanged and unchangeable, revealed and divine book of ALLAH, as the sources of knowledge. In addition, it is highly respectful to other religious values.

Islamic economic principles are superior to the conventional economic principles (Hossain, 2014). Hence, Islamic economic thinkers are not agreed with max Webber definition. They gave the unique ideas about Islamic rationalism. Khursid Ahmad (1992) says, Islamic rationalism does not deny the self-interest as the bases of utility maximization in human manners but purify it through a social, moral and religious filter. It is not merely a utility maximizer of an individual but also for whole society. Islam rationalism stimulates the consumer to attain ultimate success of life. The concept of success in Islam is always associated with moral values. M.N. Siddiqi says, the more one's behavior is in accord with moral standards and the higher the level of his goodness, the more successful he is throughout his life, in each and every phase of existence, at every step, the Islamic individual is endeavoring to act in harmony with moral values." (Siddiqi, 2000).

Furthermore, an economic man in Islamic economic rationalism always includes religious as well as moral tenets in his activities. Besides, his utility derives from the two stages of life, for example, worldly life and here after life. Figure-1 & 2 uncovers the philosophy of life of two consumers.

Figure-1: Economic Doctrines of life and Main theme of Rationalism

Economic Doctrines of life and Main theme of Rationalism		
Conventional Rationalism		Islamic Rationalism
Capitalism	Communism	Islam
Worldly life & confused about Hereafter life	worldly life is the only life & no Hereafter life	Worldly life & Hereafter life
Self-satisfaction	Self-satisfaction through state intervention	Satisfaction of ALLAH
Self-interest & Rationalism is the sole authority of decision making	Rationalism and state is the sole authority of decision making	Individualism & Rationalism through moral filtering is a part of decision making
Competitive market: survival for the fittest	State control the market	Combination of competition and state intervention: Humanity & Philanthropy
No value judgment	No value judgment	Value judgment, social, national, cultural values
Independent of revealed religion, Religion is unreliable	No religion	Religion is key determinant
Earning at any way	Earning at any way	Earning at honest way

Figure-2: Stages of life and difference in Visions of two consumers (Schematic chart)

Conventional rationalist	Islamic rationalist
Born (coming from Heavenly life)	Born (Natural Law of human life)
↕	↕
Education life (worldly+ Religious)	Education life (worldly)
↕	↕
Working/professional life (earning an honest way directed by Religion)	Working/professional life (earning an any way)
↕	↕
Family life (Religious)	Family life (Wealth)
↕	↕
Life Style (Moderate/simple life style)	Life Style (Luxurious life style)
↕	↕
Worldly life (Enjoy the worldly life & Prepare for Hereafter life)	Worldly life (Enjoy the worldly life-Only place for success & rewards)
↕	↕
Retired life (reading, travelling, Ibadah, etc.)	Retired life (reading, travelling, etc.)
↕	↕
Death (start the journey for Hereafter life)	Death (Natural departure)

Some important aspects of Islamic Economic Rationalism are:

- Instead of 'self-interest', Islam emphasize on social and moral interest.
- Utility and profit maximization is a subset of his satisfaction, but the ultimate goal is ALLHAH's satisfaction.
- Value free Economic agent (consumer and producer) cannot take appropriate decision, but Success lies in being virtuous. Virtue implies a positive attitude toward life and other human beings.
- Harm free National identity, historical, cultural and social values are the part of Utility maximization.
- Unlimited freedom may create social dreadful conditions; instead moderate policy in Intervention can be symbol of recovery. E.g. Drug addiction, prostitution may generate a debauched society while religious interference embolden to make a honest society

6. Characteristics of the Consumer in Islamic Economic Rationalism

Islamic Economic Rationalism has designed some assumptions. A consumer who satisfies these assumptions will be considered as an Islamic consumer. More precisely, Islamic consumer refers to the consumer whose behavior is not against the principles of Islam (Hamid (2009)). The key assumptions are as follows.

- Consumer behavior is based on Islamic Economic Rationalism and fear of Allah, the Creator and Almighty God. A consumer designs his consumption pattern to please Allah, the omnipotent. It is a matter of Gratefulness; it is also an act of worship (Ibadah).
- An Islamic consumer strongly believes in Islamic Shariah. Shariah is the revealed divine law in Qur'an and Sunnah. Al-Qur'an is the book of Allah revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and Sunnah is used as synonymous to Hadith. Hadith means the Speech, action, habits and events of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)'s life.
- A consumer is regarded as economic and moral utility maximizer. He determines his consumption in terms of moral and ethical principles. Ethics can be defined as the moral principles that make a distinction between right and wrong and between good and bad (Beekun, 1997).
- He can control his wants as well as demand.
- Utility or Satisfaction derived from worldly (life before death) and Heavenly (life after death) consumption.
- He only consumes useful while avoid harmful goods and services, for himself and for whole society. Moreover, be co-operative and socially responsible, who always consider the disadvantages of other consumers in society.

- Spend in moderation neither as miser nor extravagant, both for here (worldly) and hereafter (Heavenly) life. Sadaqah (Charity or donation) and Zakah is the Islamic instrument for spending. Zakah is an obligatory Islamic wealth tax to distribute it among the poor and the needy, a tax that is levied on all persons having wealth above an exemption limit (87.48 grams gold) at a rate of 2.5 %. It is levied on cash, cattle, agricultural produce, minerals, capital invested in industry and business, etc. it is the third pillar of Islam.
- Strictly consider Halal and Haram in consumption. Halal means Permissible and Lawful things or activities permitted by the Shariah. Haram means unlawful things or activities prohibited by the Shariah.
- He does not hoard his wealth.
- He preferred leading a simple as well as moderate life.

7. Islamic Consumption Framework and Discussion

a. Useful (goods and services) are Permissible (Halal) and harmful are Prohibited (Haram)

Islam encourages the consumer to consume of good and useful things and discourages wasteful and unnecessary expenditure to insure good quality and purity (AL-Quran: 2: 172, 5: 4-5, 16: 114). In the Holy Quran, The word Tayyeb (Best and useful) is used to denote the good and pure things which means anything one finds pleasing, sweet, good, agreeable in sight, smell and eating and which is useful for health. As ALLAH says in the Holy Quran: ye Messengers enjoy (all) things good and pure (AL-Quran: 23: 51).

On the contrary, In the Holy Quran, the word Khabaa-es (bad and harmful) is used to represent the bad and impure things which means anything one finds displeasing, bad, disagreeable in sight, smell and eating and which is harmful for health. The verse of ALLAH is: He makes lawful to them the good things and prohibits for them impure things (AL-Quran: 7: 157). Some forbidden foods are: dead meat, blood, the flesh of swine, and that on which has been invoked the name of other than Allah..." (Al-Qur'an 5:3). The prophet (pbuh) said, all drinks that intoxicate are Haram (unlawful) and every intoxicants are haram (Al-Bukhari: 492, Muslim: 4956)

Consumptions of impure, harmful and bad goods and services are strictly prohibited, which endanger the social security and welfare of the state and spending on that goods are considered as waste (AL-Quran: 2: 60, 6: 142, 2: 168).

b. Consumption for Here (Worldly-life before death) or Hereafter (Heavenly-life after death) life

A consumer, who follows Islamic and moral principles, usually believes in two periods, here and here after life for his consumption choices. For this consumer, life before death and life after death are closely interrelated in sequential Manner.

There are two effects of his choices. Firstly: It's immediate effect in this life and its later effect in the life to come. The utility derived from such a choice is the total of the present values of these two effects. Secondly: The number of alternative uses of one's income is increased by the inclusion of all the benefits that will be gained only in the hereafter. Some of such alternative uses are: Interest free loans, donation to the poor and needy, spending for the welfare of the future generation, improvement of the community life, propagation of the message of Islam, promotion of goodness and demotion of evils, time and effort for the improvement of the spiritual, moral and economic life of the community.

c. Spending

There is no difference between spiritual and worldly expenditure. It is considered as an act of piety and virtue to spend for worship of ALLAH and the welfare of people as well as the society, such as spending on religious activities, family and distressed people (Ibn-Mazah: 1844). This is proved by the verses of The Holy Qur'an: *They ask thee as to what they should spend. Say: whatever wealth you spend, it is for the parents and the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer. And whatever good you do, God surely is a knower of its* (Al-Qur'an, 2: 215). Holy Prophet (pbuh) says: ALLAH receives the donation from the lawful wealth directly. As a result, the wealth increases day by day even become the big more than the mountain (Al-Tirmidhi: 661).

d. Unlimited Wants and Balanced Consumption

Wants in economics refer to human needs plus the will and power to satisfy those needs (Rahman, 1975). Human wants are unlimited (Samuelson and Nordhaus, 1998). There is practically no end to human wants and it is also true that, a consumer is never being able to satisfy them all. As the Holy Prophet (pbuh) said; if god were to give man a valley full of gold, he would ask for the second, and if he were given the second, he would ask for the third; man would never be satisfied until he was dead (Al-Bukhari, 5992-5996).

According to Islamic economics, wants are consists of Four Types of necessities in life. These are Necessaries of life, Necessaries of efficiency, Comforts and Luxuries. Those want which are absolutely necessary for human life and man cannot survive without it, e.g. food, clothing and shelter etc. are called necessities of life. The necessities which are necessary for increasing the efficiency of work are called Necessaries of efficiency, e.g. good food, meat, milk, butter, good bed for sleeping, shoes, and fruits etc. Comfort includes those things

whose utility in general is greater than their cost. Good and delicious food, good and expensive clothing and well-furnished buildings and mansion houses are his comforts. Excessive in personal gratification or excessive expenditure on unnecessary and superfluous wants is called luxury. The costs of luxuries are usually greater than the benefit, e.g. costly dress, wine, utensils of gold and silver etc.

Islam has forbidden the use of Luxuries as they encourage the growth of unproductive and immoral industries and spread mischievous and disruptive elements in society which ultimately destroy the unity and integrity of the entire community. ALLAH says, Eat and drink: but waste not by excess for, God loves not the wasters (AL-Qur'an, 7:31). Besides, luxury may makes a man idle, wasteful and extravagant and promotes bad habits of ease loving, dependence on other, laziness, hatred for work, irresponsibleness.

He also may commit a crimes and thus spread bribery, corruption, nepotism; red-nepotism etc. It may create high economic inequality and thus makes an unrest society. In view of these evils, the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) discouraged and prohibited the use of vessels of gold or silver, wearing of a golden ring and silken clothes, which were considered luxuries (Al-Bukhari, 5032). ALLAH says: *'And He enforced the balance. That, you do not exceed the bounds; but observe the balance strictly; and fall not short thereof'* (AL-Qur'an, 55:7-9).

e. Standard of Living

Standard of living refers to the mode of living and level comforts which a man considers necessary for his life and for the acquisition and maintenance for which he is prepared to make any lawful sacrifice (Rahman, 1975, Sen, 1987). Islam adopts a middle course between extreme views held by the spiritualists and the materialist respectively. Islam denounces asceticism as unnatural way of life. It leads the life to austerity and miserliness. While Condemns materialism as extravagance because it makes people prodigal and selfish. The Islamic scholars derive four types of living standard from the views of Holy Qur'an and Hadith. The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) preferred moderate and simple life standard.

Living with Miserliness : Miserliness occurs when one does not spend wealth on one's self and his family according to one's means and when one does not spend anything on good and charitable purposes. In Islam, Miserliness is crime. *'It makes people ungrateful to God for not spending on themselves, their relatives or their friends'* (Al-Qur'an, 3: 180). As ALLAH says; *'Surely God not loves such- who are niggardly and bid people to be niggardly and hide that which God has given them out of His grace'* (Al-Qur'an, 4: 36-37).

Living with Extravagance: Tabzeer (squander) is used in Holy Qur'an to mean extravagance. It can be defined as, Firstly, spending wealth on unlawful things such as

gambling, drinking, etc., even if the amount involved is insignificant. Secondly, excessive expenditure on lawful things, whether within or beyond one's means, Finally, Expenditure for good and charitable purposes merely for show (Al-Bukhari: 6055). Islam censures those who are extravagant and spend thrift (Al-Qur'an, 17: 26-27).

Moderate life: Islam encourages the Moderate living standard, because it's spending is neither extravagant nor niggardly but the balanced between them for consumer (Al-Qur'an, 17: 29, 65: 7). As Quran reveals; *and those who, when they spend, are neither extravagant nor niggardly, but hold a just (balance) between those (extremes)* (Al-Qur'an, 25: 67). Besides, in the field of consumption, Moderation checks the evils of wrongful expenditure i.e. hoarding and extravagance and thereby saves the community from the hardships and evils of unemployment and corruption. ALLAH says: *Thus we have made you a justly balanced nation, that you be witnesses over mankind and the Messenger be a witness over you* (Al-Qur'an, 2:143).

Abu Darda reported that the Holy Prophet (pbuh) said, It is a part of intelligence and wisdom of a man that he should adopt moderation in his economy, it is half of the happiness of economic life and the best course in everything (Al-Bukhari: 6019). Abu SaeedKhudri reported that, the Holy Prophet (pbuh) advised people to adopt moderation in consumption and said, good comes out of good but wealth of this world is like green grass, if an animal eats it in excess, it kills him or brings him nearer to death. The animals which eat green fodder walk in the sun; digest their food, pasture again; are perfectly well. So in the case of wealth, it is a sweet fodder, the best man is one who earns wealth lawfully and spends it on lawful (good) things. This wealth will bear witness against one (who has misused it) on the Day of Judgment (Al-Bukhari: 5997).

Simple Life: Historically, simple living standard was one of the characteristics of the prophets (pbuh). The prophet Muhammad (pbuh), like many other prophets before him, always liked simple and moderate living. His four caliphs maintained his tradition of simple living after him. So it is the best policy for a Muslim consumer to lead a simple and moderate life.

The Holy Prophet (pbuh) once remarked: "Successful is the man who has acted on the principles of Islam and lived on simple necessities of life (Ibn-Mazah: 4934). Furthermore, The Prophet (pbuh) said: "The rocky land of Mecca could be turned into gold for me if I had wished, but I said, O Lord! I wish I had enough to fill my stomach one day and remain hungry the other day, so that I might remember you when hungry and be thankful to you

when my stomach was full (Al- Tirmidhi:4935, Al-Bukhari:6001-2). Moreover, He said, I saw that, most of the residents of heaven (Jannah) are poor (Al-Bukhari: 6005).

From a case study from the life of Omar, who was the second caliph of Islam it is reported that Utbah-bin-Farqad, a governor of a province, once visited the Caliph while he was taking his meals. The governor seeing his coarse food, remarked, “Why don’t you take food made of fine flour”? Omar replied, “Ibn-Farqad! Is there anyone with greater resources than myself in the land of Arabia at present? Utbah said that there was none with greater resources you. Then Omar enquired from him saying, “Ibn-Farqad! Do all the Muslims get fine flour (to eat)? He replied in negative. Then Omar said, “I would be a bad ruler if I were to take nice (and good) things for myself and leave the bad ones for the people (Tabari, 1990).

f. Hoarding

An Islamic consumer does not hoard wealth. The people, who are hoarding, are responsible for lowering the level of consumption, production and employment in the community (Al-Qur’an, 102: 1). The verse of the Al-Qur’an is: Woe to every slanderer, defamer, who amasses wealth and counts; thinking that his wealth would make him last forever (Al-Qur’an, 104: 1-3). The prophet (pbuh) said: He who hoards is a sinner. No one hoards but the sinner (Muslim: 3910-12). Do not withhold your money by counting it (i.e. hoarding it), (for if you did so), Allah would also withhold His blessings from you (Al-Bukhari: 514). Hoarding up food (to sell it at a high price) in the sacred territory is a deviation (from right to wrong) (Abu-Dawud: 2015). He who brings goods for sale is blessed with good fortune, but he who keeps them till the price rises is accursed (Ibn-Mazah: 2153).

g. Consideration of Halal (legal) and Haram (illegal)

The consumption of goods and services, which are allowed in Islamic Shariah, is called HALAL and which are not allowed is known as Haram. The Prophet (pbuh) warns that and said, a time will come when one will not care how one gains one’s money, legally or illegally (Al-Bukhari-3:275). But the believer will follow the Halal (legal) and Haram (illegal) in their consumption.

h. Consumption Pattern: Different from Capitalist and Communist

A capitalist passes his whole life to accumulate more and more wealth and believes that his wealth will make him abiding in prosperity which will never come to an end but will remain forever (Al-Qur’an, 89: 20). As ALLAH says, He thinks that his wealth will make him abide (Al-Qur’an, 104: 3). Similarly; a communist uses wealth in thinking that, there is no

accountability in here and here after life and does not believe in ALLAH. On the contrary, an Islamic consumer consumes the resources of the world as a vicegerent of ALLAH and believes in dual accountability. As a result, though the utility from a certain goods or service is high to a capitalist or communist consumer, but an Islamic consumer may gain a zero or negative utility from the same goods or service, e.g. utility from consuming wine. Moreover, an Islamic consumer prefers hereafter life as a real and endless life over worldly life (Al-Bukhari: 5971-5973). The prophet (pbuh) said: Richness is not having many belongings, but richness is the richness of the soul (contentment) (Al-Bukhari: 6002). The Prophet (pbuh) also said: No human being has ever filled a container worse than his own stomach. The son of Adam needs no more than a few morsels of food to keep up his strength, doing so he should consider that a third of his stomach is for food, a third for drink and a third for breathing (At-Tirmidhi-2380, Ibn-mazah-3349).

8. Conclusion

This paper is an overview of Islamic rationality and consumption framework. It can be said that, obviously, Islamic economics are far better than the convention economics in designing consumption principle that is neither extreme nor outdated but is moderate. For a discrimination free balanced and peaceful society, the principles of Islamic economic rationalism may be applied in modern economics. The most important conclusion is that, conventional economics should include normative and religious instrument to attain the goal of consumer satisfaction.

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