

Maslahah and its Potential Role in Formation of an Islamic Perspective on Sociology

Hayatullah Laluddin, Zuliza Mohd. Kusrin and Mohd. Al-Adib Samuri
Department of Shariah (Islamic Law), Faculty of Islamic Studies,
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 43600 Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia

Abstract: This study analysis Islamic and Western world views briefly in a comparative perspective and attempts to analysis their influence and effect in the explanation of social phenomenon. It also delineates the two major problems of modern sociology, mainly, lack of universality and lack of applicability due to elemental mistake in the data of human behaviour and its Western value orientation. Using both comparative and analytical methods, the researcher makes his case for the necessity of drawing an Islamic perspective on sociology. Through the application of juristic principle of maslahah from three aspects, from the aspect of provision of material source, introduction of universal values and the endowing of purpose to corpus of sociological knowledge.

Key words: Islamic perspective, value, social phenomenon, sociology, maslahah, Malaysia

INTRODUCTION

The present state of sociology, its conception of human nature, social relation and its emphasis on the application of the method of natural science, in the study of human social behaviour have led to inadequate and deficient explanations of social reality. The whole scenario can be attributed to origination of the science of sociology in the West, hence its influence by Western world view which is humanly inspired and positivistic, recognizing positive facts and observable elements only in the study of social reality. Modern sociology is deeply rooted in Western world view; therefore due to its positivistic nature it fails to present an integrated over all vision of social reality. For, social reality besides physical elements includes spiritual elements which do not come under the purview of scientific method.

Therefore, the application of modern sociology in the context of non-Western societies, especially that of Muslims society, necessitates its reformation and rectification of its methodological means in the light of Islamic world view.

Islamic world view: Islamic world view is rooted deeply in the knowledge based on the unity of God or al-tawhid, a view of the universe in which God's wisdom and will role and in which all things are interrelated reflecting unity on the cosmic level. It relates lower level of being to the higher and considers the physical world to be simply the lowest plan in the hierarchic reality of the universe reflecting God's wisdom (Nasr, 1994). Islamic world view

presents a broad and integrated conception of knowledge which encompasses the whole gamut of information and reflects the true nature of reality and its operation in the world. It includes micro and macro understanding and expresses the metaphysical nature of the reality. It enhances such acumen as to comprehend reality and its eminence and manifestation in various forms. It equips human being with an understanding to differentiate between what is right and what is wrong and what is good and what is bad. This knowledge familiarizes a person with the absolute reality which is most valuable and of great importance in Islam. Accordingly, knowledge in Islamic world view is related to the principal or primordial reality which is sacred and the source of all sacred. Thus, the phenomenal reality is not independent. It does not operate and function on its own but on the guidance and principles laid down by the principal reality which is the source of its strength and existence. It is the creation of the absolute one and subject to his command. It has a purpose to be served. It is finite and has to exist for a period fixed for it. The phenomenal reality is thus contingent upon the ultimate and absolute reality. In fact, it can not be thought of without which it is contingent upon (Rahman, 1994). Therefore, the essence, nature and the adequate understanding of the phenomenal reality is highly dependent on the knowledge of its relation to the principal and primordial reality. This implies the principle of the unity of truth which is the fundamental principle of Islamic methodology. Islam manifests a comprehensive system of unity of creator, creation, knowledge and human life. It views life as a composite and

comprehensive system in which all of its aspects are blended to achieve the purpose of human existence and creation. It operates along the paradigm of al-tawhid (unity) which is a general view of reality, of truth, of world of space and time of human history and destiny (Al-Faruqi, 1983). Islam refuses to divide life into watertight compartment of the sacred and secular of the holy and the profane. It requires a whole hearted entrance into its fold and regards the division of life into religious and secular as deviation from the right path, hence presents an integrated vision of life and reality. It provides a comprehensive view of life in which both spiritual and material aspects are taken into account, hence leaving no room for conflict between the spiritual and physical aspects of human being. It insists on their coexistence and actual inseparability. As such, it presents a meaningful synthesis of both these aspects and a scheme of life according to the rules of nature which God has decreed upon His creation. Its supreme achievement is the total coordination of the spiritual and the material aspects of human life (Asad, 1976). Islamic world view provides a broad and comprehensive conception of social transformation which encompasses all dimensions of human nature with the ascendancy of the moral one. It sees material comfort and development not sufficient for changing human condition and delivering good to society. It views ethical and moral values as the necessary supplementary elements to material comfort and development. This means one should live in a distinct way prescribed by the divine order to achieve the purpose of human existence (Farooqui, 2002). Furthermore, in Islamic world view society is not the source of Islamic Ideology. Islam as a divinely inspired system of life, based on certain fundamental principles, motivates human beings to live and act in particular way to achieve their potentialities and attain the purpose for which they are created. Therefore unlike the Western world view, Islamic world view conceives society as a means to achieve the ideals and not as an end in itself. It is the effect and not the cause.

Norms, values and virtues that Islam presents are not created by society but ordained by God, the creator of the universe and of the human beings. Revelation plays a central role in the Islamic world view. In its epistemology the physically knowable world, reason and religion are interlinked. Furthermore, it considers the world not as a permanent abode for mankind where they have only to satisfy their desire and sensual urges and limit their activities to eating, drinking and being merry. It is in fact, a place of action where humans are placed for a limited period of time to prove their credentials as vicegerent and as faithful servants of God. Thus, life is meaningful and

has a purpose to be fulfilled. It is an amanah (trust) given to human beings and they are accountable for it before God. It is not a property of individual that can be spent according to one's own whims and desire. Consequently, unity of truth constitutes the fundamental principle of Islamic world view based on which the structure of knowledge in Islam develops. It signifies the conviction that there is only one absolute truth which is none other than God.

He is the source and cause of all other realities. They get strength and derive their meaning and values from his will which is their end and ultimate purpose. Therefore, their actuality has no meaning other than their fulfillment of or non fulfillment of values (Al-Faruqi, 1983). In sum, from the view point of the Islamic world view, the conception of reality in terms of its physical characteristics and property only cannot provide a clear picture of its nature and function. Therefore, a complete understanding of its nature and function requires taking into account its metaphysical dimension as well. By the same token, an explanation of social phenomenon in terms of observable elements without taking into account its spiritual elements which are unobservable can not yield a full picture of the social phenomenon. Therefore, an accurate understanding of the social phenomenon requires a methodology that takes into account both spiritual and physical aspects within its means of investigation.

Western world view: Contrary to the Islamic world view which is divinely inspired, Western world view is humanly generated. It is based on positivism which recognizes positive facts and observable phenomena with an objective relation of these to the laws which determine them. It abandons all inquiry into the cause or ultimate origin of things.

Positivism is a tendency in thought which restricts all explanation of phenomena to the phenomena themselves on the model of exact scientific procedure. It rejects all tendency, assumptions and ideas which go beyond the limits of scientific technique. According to August Comte, positivism means the application of the methods of natural sciences to the study of social phenomenon (Muhammad, 1977). Therefore, it stands for empirical knowledge while rationalism is a theory which regards reason rather than sense as the foundation of certainty in knowledge. Furthermore in contrast to Islamic world view, Western world view considers natural world as a reality which is separate from God and the higher level of being. In fact, it considers the physical world as independent reality which can be studied and known in ultimate sense without reference to the higher level of reality. It sees the

parameter of physical world, time, space, matter, motion and energy as independent from the higher order of being and being cut off from the power of God. It views the physical world primarily subject to quantification and in a sense, absolutizes the mathematical study of nature. It reduces the non-quantifiable aspect of the physical existence to irrelevance (Nasr, 1994). It conceives the origin of cosmos solely on the bases of material and mathematically definable causes.

It excludes systematically the theological and philosophical aspects of question involving the act of the Creator in the genesis of the universe from science. It views religion as a domain where reason plays no rule. Therefore unlike the Islamic world view, Western world view confines knowledge and investigation to the world that is knowable through the senses. Accordingly, Western world view reduces the concept of reality to sensible world only and presents a narrow conception of it. It means that conception of knowledge and its bases in the Western world view are confined to the world knowable by senses, hence presents a conception of matter oriented reality and not that of God oriented reality. In fact, it views matter oriented reality significant for having a correct knowledge of the external world and not God oriented reality. Therefore, its epistemology can be characterized as sensualist and empirical. It limits the meaning of reality and removes its conception as a category pertaining to God. Such a perception as stated earlier, contradict the fundamental principal of Islamic epistemology which is the unity of truth. Consequently, Western world view due to its sensualistic and empirical epistemology ignores completely the ideological bases of social reality and fails to appreciate the process by which they are transformed into action. As a result, it gives partial knowledge rather than complete knowledge of social realities (Farooqui, 2002). Social phenomenon or human social behaviours are very complicated ones. They cannot be explained adequately in terms of physical factors only. For, human existence is molded to a great extent by the meaning which a person conceives through activating his/her abilities of understanding the existing patterns of realities. Thus, the human world is the outcome of the attempt to realize that meaning. Therefore, an understanding of social phenomenon in a true sense is possible only when its ideological bases which give birth to it are taken into account. Consequently, Western world view due to its sensualistic and empirical epistemology, stresses on developing new attitude and work ethics in which material pleasure and satisfaction of human urges is emphasized. It emphasizes on the development of a new morality by transforming the spiritual aspect of life according to material ones (Farooqui, 2002). By doing so,

it relegated spirituality, religion and morality to second place, signifying that life is to be lived in this world by getting utmost physical and material pleasure. This tendency makes life meaningless for the satisfaction and gratification of human being is not as important as the way they are satisfied. Therefore in Western world view, the study and assessment of the structure of social relationship is conducted according to the quality and quantity of human gratification and urges. It ignores the ideological roots of social phenomenon and reduces reconstruction of society to material gain only.

Accordingly, Western world view's conception of social transformation is one sided one. For it, concentrates only on physical and material well-being of human society and neglects its spiritual and moral development. The major aim of its social transformation is to gratify physical needs of human being in the best possible way. While, Islamic world view presents a comprehensive concept of social transformation, requiring overall well-being of human beings and their adequate, meaningful and comfortable survival on the earth. Therefore, it encompasses all aspects of human life, hence is conducive to developing human potentialities and facilitating a peaceful, harmonious and purposive existence.

In Western world view, the normative system is subject to material change. This means if most of the people fail for one reason or another to adhere to or practice a particular norm, it loses its relevance. Hence, some other norms replace it and become generality. As time goes by the society accepts it and a new norm comes into being. For example, societies developed the institution of marriage by means of which sexual relations between individuals are systematized and their sexual needs are satisfied in appropriate way. In modern time, freedom and individualism have gained such a momentum in the Western societies that marriage is considered as a form of restriction which compels one to observe certain rules and share certain responsibility. In order to get oneself free from this bond, people prefer to live as husband and wife without marriage and societies in the West accept it. The whole scenario can be attributed to Western world view which views society as a generating force, creating its own norm, developing it own system, assigning certain purposes to human being and determining the manner of attaining them. As such, it is society's prerogative to change what it has developed (Farooqui, 2002). This conception has given raise to the expectation among the social scientists that with the development of science and technology the normative pattern, the moral and ethical system of society should also change.

Therefore, it can be concluded that Western world views' methodological means and hence, perception of reality suffers from a great deal of deficiency. For, it perceives reality on a lower level of being, physical aspect and ignores its higher level, metaphysical aspect. Hence, presents a partial knowledge of reality rather than its complete knowledge. This is particularly true as regards to its explanation of social phenomenon which is the embodiment of both material and spiritual factors. As a result, modern sociology under the disguise of scientific study and the influence of Western world view has produced theories that suffer from lack of universality and lack of serviceability.

Lack of universality: Since, modern sociology in the study of social phenomenon due to methodological concern, ignores its spiritual elements, the theories it presents, lacks universal application and practicality. This renders it irrelevant to the context of Muslim societies in its present form. Its relevance to the context of Muslim society requires reexamination in the light of Islamic world view, hence formulation of an Islamic perspective.

Therefore, for formulation of an Islamic perspective on sociology a new foundation of first principles that are in harmony with universalism of Islam is required (Hamid *et al.*, 1989). Maslahah in terms al-Ghazali's definition as what lead to the preservation of religion, life, intellect, property and descendent is of such a potential for the elements in terms of which it is defined, constitute the universal concern of humanity therefore are universal values. As such, they are in harmony with the universalism of Islam therefore can play a potential role in formation of an Islamic perspective on sociology. Sociology's emphasis on the application of the method of natural science in the study of society can be attributed to the assumption of the same possibility between nature and society. For, Western sociologists assumed that both are part of nature and therefore, subject to the same method of discovering them (Hamid *et al.*, 1989).

Beside this conviction the hope of manipulating social reality to preconceived ends was another factor that led to an overwhelming emphasis on the application of the method of the natural science in the study of society. As a result, they ignored the fact that not all data of human behaviour are governed by the natural law and therefore not observable by the senses. Admittedly, social phenomenon does not comprise of natural elements only, it includes element of a different order, order of morality and spirit which are governed by moral laws and are influenced by them to a great extent. They are not necessary corollary of the elements of nature and are not derivable from them. For, social phenomenon as

mentioned before, possesses a reality with specific property and principle of causality which is ruled by laws that has no resemblance in other zones of reality (Salvador, 1971).

Although, the elements of the moral order coexist with the natural elements for example, they are realized in the context of things, persons and relations in the empirical world. This does not necessarily mean that they should be subjected to the method of natural science only. Because moral laws exist before its examination takes place. Whether it is realized in real situation or not depend on the situation (Hamid *et al.*, 1989). Therefore, no description of social reality is complete without referring to them. The fact that they are spiritual elements does not by any way means that they can be isolated or separated from their natural carriers. Its meant is that they are not subject to quantity, the only measurement that science knows. Since, science insists on the analysis of observable natural element in human being in explaining his/her conduct, it treated spiritual element as non existent or irrelevant. As such, emphasis on observable and natural elements in explaining human conduct brought about bungled theories and incompletes explanations (Al-Faruqi, 1983). The whole situation can be attributed to the elemental mistake in the definition and identification of the data of sociology which is caused by fascination with the method of natural science in the study of social phenomenon.

Islam as a universal religion of epistemologically sound basis is cognisant of both elements of natural and moral orders of social reality. Therefore, its sociological perspective cannot be realised through the methodological means of natural sciences only. It needs a methodology which takes into consideration the elements of both orders, natural and moral in its structure. Therefore, the concept of maslahah due to its embodiments of the universal values which can be classified as belonging to order of morality and nature provides potential means for such methodology, therefore can play a potential role for formation of an Islamic perspective on sociology. Sociology lacks universality not because of its methodological concern only but also because of its origin and the nature of its concepts. This is clear from Marsh (1968) statement; Sociology has been developed in a small corner of the world and therefore may be highly limited as a universal scheme.

The reason for this is the inadequate presentation of the non-Western societies in the Western sociological thought which renders its application to the context of non-Western, specially Muslim societies irrelevant. Furthermore, it suffers from a sort of inconsistency in its approach in dealing with certain problems. This is clear

from the failure of some sociological theories, developed before in explaining the contemporary problems. For example in early 20th century, sociologists associating the problems of unemployment, crime or poverty with deviant individuals, focused on changing individuals behavior.

But by the mid of the century, they changed their perception, based on the assumption that social problem affect a large number of people, hence shifting their focus from individual to social structure (Frances, 2000). Consequently, sociological theories and concepts due to their nature and origin can not be used as the model for analysing the social realities of the non-Western or Muslim societies. Therefore, the explanation provided by Western sociologists for the problem of religion may not necessarily be true as regards to its application in the context of the non-Western societies. Because, their explanation of religion is based on the experiences in Christian Church and its sectarian problems, hence relevant to that specific society only.

It does not present an appropriate explanation of other religions that other societies uphold. In the same manner, the theory of social change that originated in the Western societies can not be applied to explain the social change in non-Western or Muslim societies. Because it is based on the aftermath of industrialization and modernization in Europe and America which non-Western societies did not experience (Ilyas and Ahmad, 1985). Similarly, sociological explanations of social stratification, marriage and family can not be applied to the context of non-Western or Muslim societies. This is because they are based on assumptions and researches that are foreign to the social realities of the non-Western, particularly Muslim societies. For in the case of later, there are hardly any sociological studies of Islam and the Muslim undertaken by modern sociologists. Therefore, the irrelevance of the explanations of Western sociologists to the context of the Muslims societies is not an exaggeration. This is due either to their ignorance of Islam or lack of interested in it. As a result they did not treat Islam as a unit of their social analysis. Turner (1974) has rightly observed: An examination of any sociology of religion text book will establish the fact that sociologists are either not interested in Islam or have nothing to contribute to Islamic scholarship.

Therefore, Western sociological thought can not provide an appropriate explanation of the social reality of Muslim societies due to their ignorance of Islam and their lack of interest. Accordingly, the most conspicuous defect of modern sociology from an Islamic perspective is its treatment of religion as a social product or as a thing people do in society. For example, Structure-Functionalist implicitly and Conflict Theorist explicitly have assumed

religion as a social product, based on their experience in the Christian West. Therefore, their conception of religion being Western oriented can not provide a proper explanation of the same for the societies of non-Western orientation. Emile Durkhiem, for example as one of the founder of Structural Functionalism, analyses religion in terms of totemic practice of the primitive society hence reducing it to almost a totem pole.

Islam does not accept conception of religion in such a narrow sense. It conceives it in terms of divine origin and as an all embracing universal scheme of life. For, it takes into consideration all aspects of life, body and soul, individual and society, God and His relation to man and the universe and this world and the Hereafter (Muhammad, 1977). Furthermore, it regulates the needs of society, means of livelihood and ways of earning and spending, a conception which is far beyond that of the Western sociologists. In sum, it presents a complete code of life that guides individual in his personal as well as social relation.

Accordingly, the deficiency of the Western sociological theories regarding the role of religion is due to the nature of their assumptions. For these assumptions do not allow research to extra-institutional and wider effects of religion in society. The result has been the emergence of sociology of religion which deals with different correlates of religion in theory and practice based on these narrow and inaccurate assumptions. Therefore, a critical analysis of Western sociological theories and concepts are a necessary requirement of the process of formation of an Islamic perspective on sociology. This is to rectify the problems of the modern sociological assumptions that arise out methodological concern and the nature of their concept.

The concept of *maslahah* in this regard is of significant importance. For, it provides the potential means as mentioned before, for the construction of a methodology which is the essence of knowledge and its foundation (Alwani, 1995) for analysis of social reality. It also provides a paradigm of epistemological significance for definition of religion as total scheme of life taking all relevant elements into account. As such, it can play a potential role in formation of an Islamic perspective on sociology.

Lack of applicability: Modern sociology, beside elemental mistake in identification of data of social reality, suffers from a false sense of objectivity. For, it emphasizes on objectivity of research which renders it impractical. The underlying assumption of objectivity is that an observer could establish the laws governing social reality only when he/she follows meticulously the rules of science by

not allowing his personal biases and prejudgment to interfere with the result of his research and letting the facts to speak for themselves. This is practically untrue because the data of human behaviour, unlike those of natural sciences are not dead but alive. They are invisible to the attitude and preference of the observer as such they do not reveal themselves as they really are to each and every investigator (Al-Faruqi, 1983). For the attitude, desires, feeling, judgment and hope of people can not be understood by observer unless he shows sympathy for them. This ostensible discrimination of the data against the observer can be explained by analysis of axiological perception. This is because in axiological perception which involves values the observer actively empathises with the data whether for them or against them. While in the perception of dead objects, the senses of observer are passive and totally determined by the data. As such, value perception is itself value determination. It happens only when value is apprehended in actual experience has moved, affected and stirred up an emotion or feeling in the observer. Otherwise, the perception of value is impossible. It is only understood when human behaviour is able to move the observer. Likewise, the observer cannot be moved unless he sympathises with the object of his experience. Thus, it can be concluded that the subject's attitude towards the data studied, determine the result of the study. It is for this very reason that humanistic studies of Western man and the social analysis of Western society by Western social scientist are necessary Western and can not serve as a model for the study of Muslim and their society (Al-Faruqi, 1983). Consequently, the false sense of objectivity of sociological knowledge is not only clear from the nature of human behaviour but also from the controversy relating to its pure and applied aspects. It is a predominant tendency among the sociologists to emphasis on enhancing the theoretical aspect of their sociological knowledge and not on analysing and developing strategies for solving the urgent problems. This is to preserve objectivity, as a conspicuous quality of their science. Since, the application of sociological knowledge involves value judgment as mentioned before, this raise the question of wither sociology has been value neutral or otherwise.

A survey of the classical contributions made by the forerunner of the modern sociology reveals that it is rather value laden. For despite their claim of scientific neutrality, their contributions are still flawed by value involvement. This is clear from their personal judgment given in the analysis of social phenomenon. For example, Weber (1930) calls bureaucratically organized capitalism; mechanized petrification, embellished with a sort of

convulsive self-importance. On the other hand, Durkhieme (1984) described suicide as evil and tried to find means of curtailing it. In fact in his book on suicide, he devoted a whole chapter which is the longest to this issue under the title of Practical Consequences. Even in American sociology which is presumably unique for its high concern for value neutrality, researcher find several very respectable contributors to Sociology such as Land Berg, Veblen, Lynd, Mills and others whose sociological contributions are marred with value judgment.

Those with Conflict Approach Orientation are critical in their view and those with Structure-Functionalist Orientation remain very conservative (Ilyas and Ahmad, 1985). Both qualities of criticism and conservatism which characterize these two approaches in explaining social phenomenon are indicative of value judgment, thus another proof of the fallacy of sociologist claim of the value neutrality of sociological knowledge.

Besides, criticism and conservatism as an indication of value laden nature of Sociology, its proliferation to various sub-disciplines such as Criminology, Industrial Sociology, Medical Sociology, the Sociology on Military and other is another indication of the same fact which can hardly be denied. Because the existence of these sub-disciplines reflects the demand for sociological skill, in the market place which sociologist themselves actively seek in order to achieve economic and social status. Thus, thematically classified nature of sociology is based on its dominant trend. Horowitz has rightly observed: Who pay how much for what best explains the dominant motive in American sociology (Gray, 1968).

Accordingly, in view of the classical foundation of the sociology which sociologist are not ready to reject and the impossibility of rejecting the lucrative offers in research and planning, the continued insistence of sociologists on value-neutrality become irrelevant. In other words, sociologist's claim of the value-neutral sociology does not match with what they do in practice. Thus, value-free sociology to put it in Gray (1968)'s words is a doctrine of hypocrisy and irresponsibility. In addition to its Western orientation and incompleteness, modern sociology violates an important requirement of Islamic world view namely, the principle of the unity of truth. Islamic methodology is rooted in 5-fold unity; the oneness of Allah, the unity of creation, the unity of truth, the unity of knowledge and the unity of life and humanity (Al-Faruqi, 1983). The principle of the unity of truth holds that truth is a modality of God and inseparable from him, truth is one as God is one. Reality does not merely derive its existence from God it also derives it meaning and values from his will, its ultimate purpose and end. As

such, the actualisation of reality has no meaning other than fulfillment or non-fulfillment of value. Reality becomes actuality so that it represents an example of divine will. However, researchers should remember that the unity of truth as a principle of Islamic methodology is not identical to the principle of the relevance of the spiritual. It adds to it something peculiarly Islamic namely, the principle of ummatism.

This principle holds that God's commandment or the moral imperative is necessarily social. Hence, no value or imperative is personal, pertinent to individual. Neither value perception nor value realization pertains to consciousness in its personal moment to individual secret relation with God (Al-Faruqi, 1983). Modern sociology due to its methodological concern separated all consideration of ultimate value and dumped it to humanity where its concern and application became personal and individualistic. This lay sociology open to whatever determinant happen to affect it. Thus, assigning to the factual the power of constituting it own norms and value. The principle of factuality and then the axiological autonomy of the social actualities being investigated led to moral deterioration of society. Western sociology by assigning humanities to where no scientific objectivity is required laid them bare to the attack of relativism, scepticism and subjectivism, hence weakening the power of faith and creed to determine life and history.

CONCLUSION

Modern sociology, due to the lack of universality and Western value orientation can not present a proper means for analysis of the social realities of the Muslim society. For, Muslim society has its own set of values and norms provided by revealed law which can not be understood through scientific method due to limitation of its scope. Therefore, recasting sociological knowledge in the framework Islamic world view by familiarizing it with the divine values of Islam is a necessary requirement for formation of an Islamic perspective on Sociology. This constitutes the essence of the process of formation of Islamic perspective on sociology based on the elements of universal implication.

Social reality has to be studied in the modality of value realization or value violation otherwise it has no meaning. Therefore, it is invalid to seek to establish knowledge of human social reality without acknowledging what that reality ought to be. Thus from Islamic methodological perspective, both questions of what is and what ought to be play an important role in explanation of the human social reality, hence, neither can be compromised at the cost of other.

Since, the concept of *maslahah* does not only explain social phenomenon in terms of humanity concern for the universal values of religion, life intellect, property and descendent but also prescribe the manner of their realization in a broader context of the society on epistemological basis, comprising the elements of universality, certainty and necessity. As such it takes both aspects of what is and what ought to be into consideration in analysis of social phenomenon hence can play a potential role in formation of an Islamic perspective on sociology. This is necessary due to the value-laden nature of sociology and the natural biasness that sociologists have towards Islam.

REFERENCES

- Al-Faruqi, I.R., 1983. Islamizing the Social Sciences. In: Islam and Sociological Perspective, Abubakar, A.A. (Ed.). Muslim Youth Movement Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur, pp: 10-15.
- Alwani, T.J., 1995. The Islamization of knowledge: Yesterday and today. *Am. J. Social Sci.*, 12: 81-101.
- Asad, M., 1976. Islam: Basic Principles and Characteristics. In: Islam Its Meaning and Message, Ahmad, K. (Ed.). Islamic Council of Europe, Londonk, pp: 11-20.
- Durkhieme, E., 1984. The Division of Labour in Society. 2nd Edn., Macmillan, New York, ISBN: 9780333339817, Pages: 352.
- Farooqui, J., IIU Malaysia, 2002. Towards an Islamic Sociology. IIU Malaysia, Malaysia, Pages: 53.
- Frances, M., 2000. Social Problem of the Modern World. A Reader. 1st Edn., Howard, US Eve, ISBN: 978-0534566821, Pages: 392.
- Gray, D., 1968. Value Free Sociology: A Doctrine of Hypocrisy and Irresponsibility. In: Sociology for Seventies, Medley, M. and J.E. Conyers, (Eds.). John Wiley, New York, pp: 176-185.
- Hamid, A., Abu Sulayman and IIIT, 1989. Islamization of Knowledge: General Principles and Work Plan. In: 2nd Ed., International Institute of Islamic Thought, USA., Pages: 126.
- Ilyas, B.Y. and F. Ahmad, 1985.. Islamic Sociology: An Introduction. The Islamic Academy/Hodder and Stoughton Ltd., UK., ISBN: 9780340359044, pp: 13-14.
- Marsh, R.M., 1968. Comparative Sociology. Brace and World, New York, Pages: 19.
- Muhammad, M., 1977. Sociology and Islam. Islamic Publication Limited, Lahore, pp: 7.
- Nasr, S.H., 1994. A Young Muslim Guide to The Modern World. Mekar Publisher, Malaysia, Pages: 181.

Rahman, F., 1994. Major Themes of the Qur'an. Bibliotheca Islamica, Chicago, ISBN: 978-0882970516.
Salvador, G., 1971. Sociology. Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, pp: 9.

Turner, B.S., 1974. Weber and Islam. Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, pp: 1-2.

Weber, M., 1930. The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism. 2th Edn., Routledge, New York.