

Islamic Brand: A Conceptual Definition of Brand from Islamic Perspective

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Abstract

This article involves the construction of Islamic brand definition. The accuracy of explaining the definition of Islamic brand from the Islamic point of view is limited in current studies. Most studies only employed the conventional brand definition in the western countries to examine the similarities and differences of Muslim consumers' attitudes towards a brand. This article asserts that adopting the conventional brand pivot in defining Islamic brand is inappropriate to explain Muslim consumers' attitude towards brand. This is because conventional brand theory did not fully portray the Islamic values and principles. Thus, the main focus of this study is centered on the key principles of Islamic views that must be incorporated in developing a definition of Islamic brand itself. The usage of epistemology (Quran and Sunnah) and ontology approach from Islamic perspective is needed. It includes three Islamic principles that are belief (Aqidah), Islamic law (Sharia) and morality (Akhlaq). Qualitative approach has been employed in this article.

Keywords: Islamic brand, belief (*Aqidah*), Islamic law (*Sharia*) and morality (*Akhlaq*)

1.0 Introduction

In the last few decades, Muslim market began since the late 2000s due to the growing size of the Muslim purchasing power (Kearney, 2007; Ogilvy & Mather, 2010). Significantly, statistics showed approximately 1.6 billion Muslim populations which contributed sufficient purchasing power. As matter of fact, the rapid development of current *Halal* concept in global marketing also leads into growing value more than USD 2.3 trillion a year (Adnan, 2013).

According to Global Islamic Economy 2015, Dinar Standard estimates of the global Muslim population expenditure on Islamic economy identified global Muslim spending on Food and Beverages (F&B) has increased 10.8% to reach \$1,292 billion in 2013. This takes the potential core *Halal* Food market to be 17.7% of the global expenditure in 2013 compared to 16.6% the year before. This expenditure is expected to grow to a \$2,537 billion market by 2019 and will account for 21.2% of the global expenditure. While, the consumer spending on attires and footwear has increased 11.9% to reach \$266 billion in 2013. This makes the Muslim attiring market to be 11.9% of the global expenditure and is expected to reach \$488 billion by 2019 (Thomson, 2015).

Currently, the development of Islamic brand was still in initial stage, as the scholars' debated with regards to the Islamic brand since 2007. According to Copinanth (2007), there seems to be no clear definition of what the term Islamic brand means. It has been supported by Wilson (2011) as the definition of Islam brand still remains elusive. Besides, Temporal (2011) identified that there was a lack of a precise definition of brand based on the Islamic perspective since the study regarding Islamic brand is still in initial stage and yet have scarce literature.

In fact, the concept of Islamic brand is used differently by different scholars' presumption in terms of using the descriptive "Islamic" correctly. As a matter of fact, many academicians developed Islamic brand definitions which were adapted from conventional brand pivot. The statement above indicated an interesting issue of whether the Islamic brand definition is based on Islamic pivot? In this sense, is it possible to claim that the Islamic brand can be adapted or modified from the conventional point of view?

Henceforth, this article attempts to perceive the issue with through the discussion on current definition of conventional and Islamic brand. Later, it attempts to defined Islamic brand from Islamic teaching that based on

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Quran and *Sunnah*. Therefore, the outcome of this paper is to draw such overview of Islamic brand definition from Islamic perspective. For the future research, it is noticeable to assist the marketing scholars to understand clearly on Islamic brand itself.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 The Precision of Conventional Brand Definition from Islamic perspective

Brand has penetrated almost every aspect of life in economy, culture, social, and religion (Maurya & Mishra, 2012). In marketing literature, brand plays actual important role as an intermediate position in associating between firm and consumer. To the consumer, brand ideally provides multiple sensory inducements to enhance consumers' identification towards firms' product. For example, a brand can be visually recognized from its packaging, shape, logo, and tagline. It can also be recognizable via sound, such as hearing the name on a radio advertisement or talking with someone who mentions the product. The symbol, logo or trademark indicated as a vital sign to the consumer in identifying the product features. Hence, the easy identifiable among the consumer towards the product make sense to the firm in establishing their well-known brand (Bauer, 1960; Duboff, 1986; Aaker, 1996; Hampf & Lindberg-Repo, 2011). To the firm, brand also has been perceived as an asset, value, and equity to the organization (Farquhar, 1989; Kapferer, 1992; Seetharaman, Nadzir, & Gunalan, 2001; Deagon, 2002; Bernoff, 2011). According to Aaker (1996) brand refers to the process that involves the formation of brand in the consumers' heart and mind which will influence their attitude and behavior. For example, if the consumer has positive attitudes towards the brand, they may repeat the purchases. To the firm, this behavior will help to increase the firms' sales and profits.

The concept of brand has been debated among the marketing scholars. One of the most important researches performed in brand is on its definition. In post-modern societies, few definitions of brand existed in marketing literature (Bauer, 1960; Joyce, 1963; Farquhar, 1989; Alt & Griggs, 1988; McKenna, 1991; Brown, 1992; Kapferer, 1992; Meenaghan, 1995; Crainer, 1995; Kapferer, 1995; Reil & Balmer, 1997; Chernatony & Riley, 1998). All these definitions have been compiled and analyzed by Chernatony and Riley (1998). Based on their content analysis of over one hundred academic articles published in between 1980s to 1990s, and focused interviews with 20 leading edges brand consultant, they proposed that there were twelve dimension constructs in the brand concept. The authors had categorized those brand definition into twelve (12) different themes namely; brand as a logo, brand as a legal instrument, brand as a firm, brand as a risk reducer, brand as an identity system, brand as an image in consumers' mind, brand as a personality, brand as a relationship, brand as a s adding value, brand as an evolving entity brand as a value system and brand as a shorthand. These twelve dimensions consisted of firm functional and emotional values with the performance and psychosocial needs of consumer. These definitions were based on the conventional marketing discipline through various perspectives in macroeconomics, microeconomics, anthropology, sociology, history, and philosophy (Kapferer, 2004). Then, Maurya and Mishra (2012) further classified these twelve themes into three major perspectives such as firms' perspective, consumers' perspective, and the combination of consumer and firm perspectives. Subsequent researches have used existing definition in their study (see Table 2.1).

Maurya and Mishra (2012) found there were limitations in defining brand among the themes. It may seem simple but in reality it is very complex. In fact, there is no single explanation is able to make complete sense of brand (Gerzema, 2008; Maurya & Mishra, 2012). Most of the definitions referred to the firm perspective (i.e. brand as a logo, brand as a legal instrument, brand as a firm, and brand as an identity system, brand as value system and brand as an adding value). While, brand as shorthand and brand as a risk reducer considered looking into consumers' perspective. Last but not least, the authors clarified brand as a personality, brand as an image in consumers' mind, brand as an evolving entity, and brand as relationship in both perspectives (i.e. firm and consumer).

Table 2.1 Thematic Twelve Definitions of Brand

Classifications	Firms' Perspective	Consumers' Perspective	Both Perspectives
Themes	Brand as a logo Brand as a legal instrument Brand as a firm Brand as an identity system Brand as value system Brand as an adding value	Brand as a shorthand Brand as a risk reducer	Brand as a personality Brand as an image in consumers' mind Brand as an evolving entity Brand as relationship

Nevertheless, this article argued the definition of brand is basically based on conventional marketing definition. Primarily, marketing has been defined as one social process or management which enables individual or group to achieve what they desire by inventing anything through values or products exchange with the other party (Kolter & Keller, 2012). Another definition of marketing is a planning process and execution of conception, price, promotion and idea hearing as well as forming the exchange which could satisfy individual and organization's objectives (Kassim, Ismail, Hassan, Said, & Md, 1999). It can be concluded, the idea of brand definition is basically based on the marketing principles. Those marketing definitions lead to three main conclusions as describes by Adnan (2013).

Firstly, there must be a relationship between buyer and seller to create the social interaction in business transaction (demand and supply). Secondly, the success of social interaction is determined by good comprehension of the concepts between both parties (i.e. buyer and seller) which is related to the desire, needs, request, value, products, quality, and market. The good comprehension means the ability of seller to fulfill the needs and desire of consumer which were relevant in the market nowadays. Thirdly, the final objective is to ensure the firm and consumers' satisfaction can be achieved. Thus, the firm is able to maximize the profitability, while the consumer gratified with the product purchases. Based on these conclusions, Adnan (2013) described the formula of marketing definition as follows:

Figure 2.1 Formula of marketing definition

(Needs and Desire) + (Product or Service) + (Value, Satisfaction, and Quality) + (Amendment, Transaction and Relationship) + Marketing = Maximizing Satisfaction.

The formula above showed the consumer is naturally encompassed with all the needs and desire. The maximizing satisfaction is achieved when the marketing transaction is completed with the value and, satisfaction, qualities of the products involved. In marketing theory, brand became as an important tools to achieve the social interactions between the consumer and the firm. Brand played as a role of intermediaries between both parties in order to succeed the social transaction. The present research claiming the twelve (12) themes brand definition is categorized under this formula. Table 2.2 explained and categorized those themes as indicated below. Brand is enormously pioneered by the concept of needs and desire.

The needs and desire is an urge to fulfill a satisfaction that closely into human characteristics, nature and feelings (Aaker, 1997). The creation of brand product is beginning by identifying the opportunity and demand from the consumer. There are many aspects that need to be considered in order to attract the consumers' need and desire such as price, social, culture, experience, lifestyle and others.

Then, the product or services provided are evolved with identification such as design, symbol or product logo which is easy to recognize by the consumer (Goodyear, 1996). If the consumer has positive attitudes towards the brand, they may repeat the purchases. This attitude would benefit the firm by increasing their sales and profits. When the consumers are getting interested with the brand, indirectly, it creates a relationship with the value of the brand through mental connection, trustworthiness, and emotional value (Temporal, 2011).

Table 2.2 Twelve thematic brand definition under marketing formula

Needs and desire	Product or service	Value, satisfaction, and quality	Amendment, transactions and relationship
-Brand as a personality (human desire, needs, and characteristics). -Brand as an image of consumers' mind (image, shape the feeling and consumer is an idea in develop of product).	-Brand as a logo (design, symbols, form of product, identity, and trademark). -Brand as evolving entities (identification and entities of product). -Brand as a firm (competitive advantage, acknowledge consumer with their firm brand) -Brand as a risk reducer (perceived risk into five types namely self-concept, social image, experience, price, and performance).	-Brand as adding value (value to social, economic, and psychology, value of equity, and product functional). -Brand as a value system (tools of trade, personal value).	-Brand as identity system (personality, culture, relationship, physical, reflection, and self-image). -Brand as relationship (logical extension of brand personality, benefit between two parties, emotional connections). -Brand as shorthand (mental connections, memory shortcut, and emotional value). -Brand as legal instrument (legal ownership, mark designate ownership, protect trademark infringement, and protection from unethical competitors).

In addition, once the product brand is well-known among the consumer, it gives the competitor advantage to forge or duplicate the trademark and create the new one as theirs. As the result, the original firm would face a high risk in maintaining the originality and copyright of the brand. In this circumstance, the severe prevention of the trademark infringement, brand designation the ownership and protect copyright is crucial to avoid from the unethical competitors (Simonson & Itamar, 1994). Hence, the marketers are able to sustain their brand product as well as can increase the revenues that can benefit the firm. It can be concluded that, Table 2.2 deliberated the marketing formula as closely related to the role of brand as an intermediaries between firm and consumer. It has the purpose to create a relationship through the identification of firms' product which fulfills the consumers' needs and desires. As a result, the consumer is able to achieve the satisfaction according to the product features. Meanwhile, the firms' satisfaction is to maximize the profitability from the product creation.

In association with the previous research, the definition of brand must be captured by both perspectives. In other words, it gives a benefit to both sides. The development of conventional brand might suits well with the reality as contributors and experienced a lot to the invention of brand concepts, model, and theories. However, it fails to understand the reality of Islamic teachings. Thus, due to this, the arguments on the above matter will be further explained in the critical review section on conventional brand from Islamic perspective.

2.1.1 Typical conventional brand provides definition which not able to understand the Islamic relation.

It is admitted that studies on brand have been carried out systematically and in a very well nature. Various definitions have been introduced by the scholars in order to understand the role of brand. All of the concepts of brand definitions approaches have clearly succeed in revealing social reality from consumers and firms' perspective. Primarily, brand theories, definitions, concepts, model, and approaches are based on the social construction methods.

Social constructions are a method that was applied by identifying the present reality in human interaction, behavior, and lifestyle. It met the requirements by the society's approval to decide whether it is good or bad according to the human judgment. This assumption was applied by Keller (2003) had devoted this discipline of brand for firms and consumers' agenda. For firms' agenda, brand was formed through productivity that enhances the market performance. This productivity was to generate and maximizing profit.

For consumers, the brand is considered as an attitude represented set of belief to purchase the product. It is also enhance the consumers' desire that solely into limitless for the short term benefit. Therefore in brand principles, the creation of brand that fulfills the human personality, desire, and limitless lust are permissible. However, these concepts, definitions, and approaches serve as tools for analysis of the study and are unable to understand the reality from Islamic perspective. Allah (SWT) prohibiting the believers to enhance their desires that souls to limitless which can leads into disaster. As explained in Al-Quran, 23:71;

"But if the Truth had followed their inclinations, the heavens and the earth and whoever is in them would have been ruined. Rather, we have brought them their message, but they, from their message, are turning away".

The verse shows the unbeliever's inclination would lead into disaster which clearly contradict with Allah's will. In fact, those definitions of brand do not represent as believing the Creator and is not able to educate both perspectives to rely on the element of worship to Allah (SWT). As indicated in Al-Quran, 51:56;

"And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship me."

(Al-Quran, 51:56)

Islam has prohibited the limitless desire that leads into human lust. Allah (SWT) forbids following Jews or Christian's desire. This limitless desire will cause human self-destruction as mentioned in (Al-Quran) 2: 264;

"And never will the Jews or the Christians approve of you until you follow their religion. Say, indeed, the guidance of Allah is the [only] guidance. If you were to follow their desires after what has come to you of knowledge, you would have against Allah no protector or helper."

(Al-Quran; 2: 264)

Human desire from Islamic perspective is governed by Islamic worldview. In this regard, Islamic worldview refers to the vision of reality and truth that appears before our mind's eye revealing what existence is all about (Al-Attas, 1994). It is not only for the goodness of individual himself but also every member of the society regardless his religion. In one of the verses of the Quran, Allah says:

"It is not righteousness that you turn your faces towards East or West; but it is righteousness to believe in God and the last day, and the angles and the Book, and the messengers; to spend of your substance, out of love for Him, for your kin, for orphans, for the needy, for the wayfarer, for those who ask, and for the ransom of slaves; to be steadfast in prayer, and practice regular charity; to fulfill the contracts which you have made."

(Al-Quran; 2:177).

Having mentioned that, the concept of *Aqidah* (belief) will become the most priority for every Muslims that touches upon man-Allah relationships (*Hablunminallah*), man-man relationships (*Hablunminannas*) and man's relationship with other creations of Allah (Salleh, 2003). This philosophical foundation of the Islamic society will eventually create peaceful surroundings between consumer and producers (firm) whereby every member will cooperate with each other to satisfy their needs and desires respectively. These vertical relationships (man-Allah relationships) apparently have not ever been discussed in any conventional theory of brand. In fact, it is the main foundation that will affect the entire structure of Islamic consumption.

In addition, Imam Al-Buhkari mentioned in his book of hadith that any transactions of sale and purchase between two parties, the intention must be rooted to acquire the blessing from Allah (SWT) (An-Nawawi, 1997). Thus, the conventional brand definition failed to fulfill Islamic aspiration due to neglecting the worship to Allah (SWT). Thus, it represented that the conventional brand definition unable to recognize the reality on Islamic relation. Specifically, in preventing the limitless on maximizing satisfaction between firms and consumers to full fill their personal agenda.

2.1.2 Current conventional brand definition leads the immoral behavior among consumer and firm.

As described above, the previous definition more ascertained on firms' performance to create a successful brand. Mostly, the marketer is focused on product development that was based on consumers' desire, characteristics, personality, and identity. As a result, it creates a product features that is able to win the heart and mind of consumer. Besides, it also crafted brand loyalty among the consumer that achieve the benefit to enhance firms' profitability. Nonetheless, there is a limitation which was not concerned to educate the consumer in seeking the decent values and manners, but the main aim is to fulfill consumers' desire and drained out consumers' money to purchase the firms' product. As quoted by Baker Alserhan from Oglivy and Mather (2010);

“Consumer is fed up with how they have been treated. They want to be seen as humans, not as wallets for marketer to drain. They want products that will keep the planet habitable for their children and their grandchildren. They want marketer who care more about health and well-being of their consumer. They want firm that view the interest of the community as a minaret that guides their operations, not as target to shoot at. The ethical principles of Islamic marketing can help greatly in this regard.”

The above statement clearly exposes the reality where injustice is imposed to the customer when the marketer recklessly urged them to spend to the maximum with the intention to fulfill their self needs and desires (mass consumerism education) in order to maximize the firms' profit. Moreover, current conventional brand definition leads into desire perspective which is endorsing elitism, hedonism, and obsession as well as to entice the subconscious desire of consumer. This was because the consumers are often manipulated into becoming obsessed with the glamour, and excitement that derived from the luxurious and symbolic brands. As proven, the current issue indicated that the obsession among consumers caused an immoral behavior which has been neglected by the marketer.

For example, the Black Friday America incident had led the consumer to act irrationally by stampeding into the complex during Thanks Giving's promotion without taking safety into their consideration. This action had caused several casualties and injuries due to obsession to purchase their favored brand which were on sales at that time. The parties involved (firms) does not take any responsibility since the damages (casualties and injuries) occurred were done by the consumer. For the firm, the main achievement in Black Friday's Thanks Giving was to increase the revenue and profits. According to IBM Black Friday's statistic 2015, the firm was able to achieve the profits which shows drastic increase compared with previous years. Referring to a similar case in Malaysia, the obsession towards Mood Republic promotions in 2016 has caused a serious mad rush by the public to possess the products.

The obsessions for the brand have caused consumers to act irrationality by standing in long queues for the whole day, which proved their lack of civic mindedness. As a conclusion, the idea of conventional brand in making profits originally turned out to be immoral behavior between consumers and firms. The definition also inspired to fulfill the capitalist aspiration in maximizing the profit in any vulgar ways and neglecting mass education among the consumers. Thus, it may suits well with capitalist philosophy, but, totally not acceptable in Islamic thought. The next section explains on current definition of Islamic brand that adapting from the conventional brand pivot.

2.2 Definition of Islamic brand

Initially, many academicians developed Islamic brand definitions which were adapted from conventional brand pivot. Table 2.3 briefly explains the definition of Islamic brand according to the academicians' view. Firstly, Alserhan, (2010a) creates the definition of Islamic brand in three different perspectives namely Islamic brand by compliance, Islamic brand by origin and Islamic brand by consumer (target audience). Islamic brand by compliance was strictly appealed on being *Sharia* compliance which was particularly concentrated in the food sectors and finance that was related to the *halal* compliances.

Their target consumers are Muslims (Williams & Sharma, 2005). Thus, many of these brands also attracted non-Muslim consumers such as in Dubai, where more than 60% of the consumers of Islamic hotels were non-Muslim. In fact, Kamaruzaman (2006) had proved the demands of *halal* food product are increasing among Jewish and Christian consumers because of their awareness towards *halal* product. Power and Abdullah (2009), McKenna (2007) and Alserhan (2010b) indicated Muslim consumers required brands that speak to them which are created according to the *Sharia* principles and were not only limited to food industry but also in finance, banking, insurance, real estate, clothing, pharmaceuticals, and cosmetic and logistic.

Table 2.3: Definitions of Islamic brand

Academicians	Islamic brand definition
Alserhan (2010a)	Islamic brand by compliance, Islamic brand by origin, Islamic brand by consumer (MNF).
Ogilvy and Mather (2010)	Islamic brand is a brand approach that follow the <i>Sharia</i> principles
Wilson (2011)	The definition of Islamic brand will remain elusive.
Temporal (2011)	As any activities related to the brand and marketing of countries, service, and product to Muslim whether or not they derived from a Muslim-minority or Muslim majority country or possess Muslim ownership.
Yusofand Jusoh (2013)	A product or service that meets the <i>Sharia</i> -compliant and any parties that involved in <i>Halal</i> accreditations should be seriously implemented strict procedures in getting the <i>halal</i> logo.
Ahmed and Jan (2015)	Islamic brand personality as "the set of Muslim characteristics associated with the Islamic brand."

Secondly, Islamic brand by origin means the brand were originally produced by Islamic countries such as Emirate Etisalat, Emirates Airlines, Saudi SABIC, and others. Unfortunately, these firms were not strictly following *Sharia* rules in their business. For instance, UAE Emirates and Etihad Airways served alcohol to their consumers and it was clearly against the Islamic teachings.

Third, brand by consumers was derived from non-Muslim multinational firm (MNF) originated from non-Islamic country such as Nestle, L'Oreal, KFC, McDonalds and others. These MNFs were investing specially to cultivate the large vacant markets target in Islamic countries, yet were designed to aim the Muslim consumers with *halal* product. In these days, 90% of Islamic food, cosmetic, and health market are dominated by non-Muslim MNF in the world.

Ogilvy and Mather (2010) noted Islamic brand as a brand approach that followed the *Sharia* principles. Wilson (2011) insisted the definition of Islamic brand will be remaining elusive. He described an Islamic brand in three aspects namely; the country of origin, target audience and whether it is *Halal*. The author also argued that the definition of Islamic brand should be focused on the aspect of *halal* requirement in the product. He suggested Islamic brand should be associated with brand emotions autonomy and brand emotions physiology. For him, those aspects are generally to identify the Muslim consumers' personality and behavior in order to create a successful Islamic brand.

Meanwhile, Temporal (2011) defined Islamic brand and marketing as any activities related to the brand and marketing of countries, service, and product to Muslim whether or not they derived from a Muslim-minority or Muslim majority country or possess Muslim ownership. This definition had applied not only to the Muslim firm, but also the non-Muslim multinational firm (MNF) which are targeting to the Muslim consumers. Temporal (2011) also claimed developing Islamic brand should not be on religious basis only such as concerning on five Islamic school of thoughts (Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'e, Hanbali and Shi'ie), but it ought to appeal a global Muslim populations who are bound together by market practices and common value such as *halal*. Whilst conceptually and culturally, brands and brand have always existed, brand theory as defined in business academic writing has largely hailed from the west, until recently.

Another definition came up by Yusof and Jusoh (2013) was carried out from the findings of the selected respondents. In sum, most of consumers agreed that Islamic brand defined as a product or service that met the *Sharia*-compliant and any parties that are involved in *Halal* accreditations should seriously implemented strict procedures in getting the *Halal* logo. The authors explained there is a relationship between brand and Islam in marketing perspective since there is a high demand by Muslim consumers these days. Besides, Ahmed and Jan (2015) explicitly defined Islamic brand personality as "the set of Muslim characteristics associated with the Islamic brand." The author inspired the definition based on Aaker's brand personality definition that was closely related to consumers' personality and behavior.

Previous studies had defined the concept of Islamic brand is use differently by different academicians' presumption and analogy which adopted from conventional brand theory into four categories (i.e. country of origin, target of audience, brand by *sharia* compliance, brand as a relationship, and brand personality). Hence, this article had listed several questions in defining Islamic brand; 1) is Islamic brand basically defined as *Sharia* compliance? 2) Must Islamic brand defined originally from Islamic countries? 3) Is *halal* product produced by non-Muslim multinational firm (MNF) can be defined as Islamic brand? 4) Can Islamic brand be defined according to conventional marketing/brand pivot?

2.2.1 Is Islamic brand basically defined as Sharia compliance?

Given these answers, the researcher agreed that Islamic brand must be complied with *Sharia* as well as *Halal*. First, the academicians highlighted *Sharia* and *Halal* as a vital role in Islam brand (Alserhan, 2010a; Alserhan, 2010b; Wilson, 2011; Ogilvy & Mather 2010; Temporal 2011; Jumani & Siddiqui, 2012; Fatima et al, 2013, Ozgen & Kurt, 2013). Islamic brand can be considered as *Sharia* compliant when it fulfills *halal* status, values, and identity. Fatema et al. (2013) described *Sharia* as dealing with faith and ideology regarding the human behavior, manners as well as practical daily activities. Young (2010) claimed the role of *Sharia* compliance must be considered in the lives of modern Muslim consumers as a starting point for marketing and brand. Within the *Sharia* compliance *halal* (lawful) and *haram* (unlawful) are the two indicators that have been heavily discussed. Meanwhile, Jumani and Siddiqui (2012) provided clear comprehension of Islamic brand where Islamic brand should meet all the aspects of the brands for Muslim consumers in term of providing goods or services which are in-line to *Sharia* value.

Based on the discussion above, the academicians stated *Sharia* compliance is a vital role on Islamic brand features. However, can Islamic brand be attained only by fulfilling the *Sharia* compliance? Moreover, there are too many morality issues among the firm and consumers' behavior towards Islamic products. Plus, Baker Alserhan (2010b) claimed the academicians and marketers were neglecting the morality values in educating Muslim consumer. In my view, the product which fulfilled *Sharia* features should be called *Sharia* compliant brand, but not as an Islamic brand. Apart from this limitations, this article ascertained that Islamic brand which only focused on *Sharia* compliance is incomplete. This is because Muslim way of life is more than fulfilling *Sharia* laws and regulations but it started with the worship to the Creator, and good morality (*Akhlak*). To incorporate the *Aqidah* (belief) in Islamic brand, one should understand that brand is a relationship between human and the Creator. It means, Muslim consumer purchased a product for the sake of Allah that was presented as a good deeds. Islamic brand primarily is a worship relationship with Allah (SWT) and brotherhood (*Ikhwana*) relationship with human being.

As been proved in AL-Quran (2:102-103);(102)...*O you who have believed, fear Allah as He should be feared and do not die except as Muslims [in submission to Him]. (103)And hold firmly to the rope of Allah all together and do not become divided.*

(Al-Quran, 2:102-103)

Habluminallah is a rope of Allah (SWT). It means that the relationship that was built between the Creator and His slaves (Ibn Kathir, 2003). Al-Maududi described "the worship relationship will saved you from false beliefs and unrighteous conduct in this life, and from the punishment of God in the Next (Ibn Kathir, 2003). As explained by Alserhan (2010b), the manufacturer who created a successful brand is also required to create a righteousness and worship to Allah (SWT). As a result; it deserved a reward which was bestowed by Allah (SWT). Aspect of *Ibadah* also tended to educate the marketer and Muslim consumer regarding sincerity (*Ikhlas*), low self-esteem, (*Tawaduk*) and piety to Allah (*Taqwa*).

In fact, the principle of *Akhlak* (good morality) is indecently implemented under the concept of *Bay' Mabruur* that was in relation with brand. It is according to *hadith Sahih* narrated by Rifa'ah Ibn Rafi';

From Rifa'ah Ibn Rafi 'that the Prophet was asked: What is that work best? He said: "The work of a person with his own hands and every sale of Mabruur."

(Musnad Ibn Hanbal, 16628; *Sahih*)

Bay' Mabruur means the business transactions which were acceptable do not mix with sinful acts as lie, cheat and perjury. (Al-Iraqi,1989). *Mabruur* is an act or effort that does not contain elements of fraud and cheating in accordance with *Sharia*. This was surely permissible instead of doing something forbidden by *Syarak*/Islamic law (Al- Maliki et.al, n.d). According to Ibn Hanbal (2012), *Bay' Mabruur* was a sale and purchase transactions that complied with Islamic law. Well in the ethics of selling, whatever process that complied with *Syarak* and does not complied with fraudulent or false agreement is eligible to achieve *Bay' Mabruur*.

He even stated that when the sale and purchase transactions fulfilled the Sharia requirement, and the seller is transparent or honest, then he surely will be rewarded by Allah (SWT), that he will surely enter Heaven (Ibn Hanbal, 2012). The proposed views were consistent with Alserhan (2010b) opinion which explained that brand cannot be separated from faith and morality among Muslims, which dictated that all actions must be in line with Allah's guidance and not based on human desires. He also explained not only the manufacturer produced objects, they also manufactured rightness. Sellers did not only sell things, they invited their customers into righteous life, and not only buyer purchase necessities for material comforts, and they also buy to be engaged in the process of worshipping Allah (SWT).

Therefore, the entire relationship that ceased to be of materialistic nature transformed into good deeds which acquired the blessing from Allah (SWT). In other words, the outcome of Islamic brand that needed to take be taken into account among the marketer and Muslim consumer are *Barakahtillah* (blissful from Allah (SWT)), peacefulness, and happiness in the world and hereafter.

2.2.2 Must Islamic brand defined originally from Islamic countries?

Initially, the idea brand based on Country of Origin (COO) was discovered by Peterson and Jolibert (1995) that investigated the aspect of brand for the past decade. The research revealed that there was an increasing competition from the international brands. The purpose was to establish an attractive brand based on country and popularity, for instance, the well-known perfume was originally from France. Then in 1990s, Agrawal and Kamakura (1999) clarified the advantages in applying COO through the brand strategy when the products were more dependent on the brand image such as wines, perfumes and others.

Regards with Islamic brand, Alserhan (2010a) and Temporal (2011) had adapted the concept of country of origin from conventional brand; later defined Islamic brand is originally from Muslim country. It is admitted that this definition was quiet irrelevant. As indicated by Fatema, Bhuiya, and Bhuiyan, (2013) as well as Alserhan, (2010a), there were brands originally from Muslim countries that provided product and services which did not follow religious provision (i.e. Fly Emirates, and Etihad Airlines). There were not specifically religious in character such as serving alcohol to the consumers or were involved with gambling investment that was against Islamic teachings. Another example, Turkey had become a massive wine producer according to the International Organization of Vine and Wine (IOVW) with an enormous 287000 liter per year (Alserhan, 2010a). Thus, exclusively, an Islamic brand whether the product was originally from Muslim or non-Muslim country, cannot be regarded as Islamic brand until their product fulfilled the Islamic provision.

2.2.3 Is Halal product produced by non-Muslim Multinational Firm can be defined as Islamic brand?

As a matter of fact, non-Muslim Multinational Firm (MNF) such as Nestle, Unilever, L'Oreal, Colgate, Baskin Robin and others dominated 90% of the Muslim market (Alserhan, 2010a). For example, Nestle continuously invested \$85 million in order to increase demand for *halal* products in Malaysia. Hence, can we assume the *halal* product which was produced by non-Muslim Multinational Firm (MNF) defined as Islamic brand?

This article will explain the law of sale and purchase between non-Muslim or with any firm owned by them. For clarity of this issue, the following facts should be understood as well. Allah (SWT) allowed Muslims to eat the animal slaughtered by *Ahlul Kitab*. This means dealing with Jews and their stuff as long as it met the will of Allah (SWT) as required. Besides, Allah (SWT) also legalizes Muslim to marry women from *Ahlul Kitab* with the condition for a good purpose only as stated in surah Al-Quran (5:5). If the marriage is allowed, of course, the sale and purchase between Muslim and Jews are allowed as long as it was in accordance with the conditions of the sale and purchase of Islam.

"This day [all] good foods have been made lawful, and the food of those who were given the Scripture is lawful for you and your food is lawful for them. And [lawful in marriage are] chaste women from among the believers and chaste women from among those who were given the Scripture before you, when you have given them their due compensation, desiring chastity, not unlawful sexual intercourse or taking [secret] lovers. And whoever denies the faith - his work has become worthless, and he, in the Hereafter, will be among the losers."

(Al-Maidah, 5:5)

The Prophet (SAW) also narrated in the *Hadith Sahih* deals had been made in making sale and purchase transactions as well as collateral with the Jews. Imam Bukhari clarified that there was a *Hadith* which contained a chapter about sale and purchase with *Mushrikin* and enemies of war.

"The Prophet purchased food grains from a Jew on credit and mortgaged his iron armor to him."

(Al-Bukhari, no 2326, Sahih)

Then Imam Ibn Hajar Al-Asqalani indicated the *Hadith* showed permissibility in buying arms from the non-believers (*Mushrikin*) (Al-Asqalani, 2000). As mentioned in the hadith, the Prophet (SAW) pledged that his shirt is only used for war, and it proved the law of trade with non-Muslims, and including Jews is permissible, as long as the business deals is in accordance with Islamic requirements. This Hadith is arguably the strongest points to allow Muslims to purchase the necessities from Jewish. (Al-Asqalani, 2000).

Plus, the scholars approved (*Ijma'*) that the transaction between Muslim and *Ahlul Zimmah* (non-believers) are permissible as long as the transaction do not fall into the prohibited things. However, Muslims cannot illegally sell weapons to the enemies (*Mushrikin*) and cannot also assist them in upholding their religion (An-Nawawi, 1997). Thus, the *Ijma'* highlighted that the transaction is permissible either with Jews, Christians, Buddhists, Hindus or others, as long as they did not directly involved (and officially) fight against Islam. The *Sahabah* also traded and applied sale and purchase deals with the *Mushrikin* including Jews. Not only the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), The *Sahabah* more often involved in trading with Jews, Christians, and others. As evidence is the word of God:

"O you who have believed, indeed the polytheists are unclean, so let them not approach al-Masjid al-Haram after this, their [final] year. And if you fear privation, Allah will enrich you from His bounty if He wills. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Wise."

(Al-Quran, 9:28)

These evidences proved clearly Muslim are allowed to perform the sale and purchase transaction with non-Muslim. Back to the point, is there permissibility to purchase the product, can the *halal* product which was produced by non-Muslim Multinational Firm (MNF) be referred as Islamic brand? My personal view is the product cannot be remain as an Islamic brand, but only considered as *halal/Sharia* compliant product. It is because, Islamic brand should be produced with an Islamic identity which included belief, *Sharia* features and morality value in product. Therefore, Islamic brand product should be reflected on Islamic way of life and produced by Muslim marketer. In other words, the researcher proposed MNF's brand be recognized as *halal* product while Muslim brand be identified as Islamic brand product.

2.2.4 Can Islamic brand be defined according to conventional marketing/brand pivot?

The previous studies found that the definition of Islamic brand is based on conventional marketing/brand pivot (Alserhan, 2010a; Temporal, 2011; Ahmed & Jan, 2015). Some of the academician discovered Islamic brand definition based on social constructionist, social reality and marketing/brand theory. They described these definitions according to Muslim consumers' perception, Aaker's theory of brand personality, and reality of Islamic product which monopolize by non-Muslim Firm (MNF).

Alserhan (2010a) definition on Islamic brand based on three dimensions (brand by compliance, brand by country of origin, and brand as target audience) is noticeably based on the marketing strategy of the way on how to encounter Muslim market. As closely related to Temporal's definition, he related Islamic brand to any brand and marketing activities that serve product or services for Muslim derived from Muslim or non-Muslim country. This definition concentrated more on how to adapt the conventional marketing or brand principles in way of how to comprehend the Muslim community demand. Indeed, Paul Temporal rejected the Islamic scholars' school of thought to understand Islamic brand theory.

Other definition carried out by Ahmed and Jan (2015) definition of Islamic brand personality is according to the theory of brand personality is quite illusive. Even though the authors reached the Muslim characteristics based on Al-Quran and *Sunnah*, yet, the modification on Muslim personality is still grounded under Aaker's theory. The present research initiated that there was an accommodative modification on definition of Islamic brand based on conventional marketing/brand pivot. Those definitions have remarked a question, should Islamic brand should be define based on marketing/brand concepts? In fact, those definitions were more on how the non-Muslim firm (MNF) attempted to meet Muslim consumers' need, desire, and personality.

Hence, this definition was purposely to understand Muslim's demand in order to encounter the Muslim market that will achieve the marketing goals (maximize satisfaction). This article argued that definition of Islamic brand should not be described based on Muslim's need, desire, and personality. The definition of Islamic brand will remain elusive if it was interpreted according to the western's worldview. It should be defined from Islamic perspective itself. The word of Islam must be clarified in line with Islamic teaching. The meaning of Islam itself is to achieve the blessing from Allah (SWT) as explained in Al-Quran, (3:19);

"Indeed, the religion in the sight of Allah is Islam. And those who were given the Scripture did not differ except after knowledge had come to them - out of jealous animosity between them. And whoever disbelieves in the verses of Allah, and then indeed, Allah is swift in [taking] account."

(Al-Quran, 3:19)

It gave the impression that; Islamic brand must be defined to the products that fulfill the will of God in order to achieve His blessing. A true Muslim will be in line with the religious provision to seek the blessing from Allah (SWT). Henceforward, Islamic brand attained to be defined based on epistemology from Islamic perspective. This epistemology was obviously agreed among Islamic scholars who was founded under Al-Quran, and *Sunnah*. Moreover, Islam has their own knowledge of principles which is called *Fiqh Muamalat* (legal maxim of Islamic transaction). This doctrine of knowledge was able to guide any transaction between firm and consumer to perform their obligation for the sake of Allah (SWT).

3.0 Conclusion

As a conclusion, all of the concept of brand definitions approaches have clearly succeed in revealing social reality according to conventional marketing and branding principles. The area of definition Islamic brand is suffered due to the limitations literature as indicated above. The academicians describe the definition in various interpretation and explanations which adopted from conventional brand theory into four categories (i.e. country of origin, target of audience, brand by *Sharia* compliance, brand as a relationship, and brand personality). The question is, should Islamic brand define based on conventional marketing pivot? As explained by Fatema, Bhuiya, and Bhuiyan (2013), Islamic brand has their own *Sharia* identification itself which no need modification from conventional brand pivot. Henceforward, this article proposed Islamic brand definition should be held under Islamic pivot (i.e. *Aqidah* (belief), *Sharia* (Islamic law) and *Akhlaq* (morality)). Therefore, this article proposed the Islamic brand can be defined as:

"The product produced by Muslim's firm which consist the integration of several aspects such as Sharia compliance product and marketer's integrity (Akhlaq) in order to educate (Da'wah) the consumer to achieve the blessing from Allah (SWT)".

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