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Islamic marketing as macromarketing

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Received 17 September 2012
Revised 15 April 2013
Accepted 15 April 2013

Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of the article is to propose and develop a distinct perspective in Islamic marketing research through fusing the Islamic paradigm and the macromarketing theory.

Design/methodology/approach – This is a conceptual article that is based on intellectualising and reflecting on differences in understanding what marketing is and what role it plays in society.

Findings – The article reveals some commonality of purpose between the macromarketing discipline and Islamic macromarketing, while the latter field of inquiry offers a unique outlook to a number of domain-specific issues.

Research limitations/implications – The characterisation of Islamic macromarketing will open new avenues for future research and will make researchers more theoretically sensitive to ontological and epistemological assumptions that underlie marketing investigations. The limitation of the present discussion is that Islamic macromarketing may not have yet emerged as a separate discipline. Additionally, research on genuinely macromarketing issues in Islamic contexts is very sparse.

Practical implications – Muslim practitioners and managers are to realise that the means and ends of marketing are better understood if viewed from a broader perspective of marketing's impact and consequences on society. By adopting the Islamic macromarketing perspective, public, societal institutions, business stakeholders, and managers will find a better platform to cooperate on maximising the realisation of hasanah (excellence) for all.

Originality/value – This article contributes to the discipline by introducing and characterising a potentially new field of marketing inquiry.

Keywords Society, Islamic marketing, Macromarketing, Means and ends of marketing, Micromarketing

Paper type Conceptual paper

Introduction

Islamic marketing is growing in importance as an independent domain of marketing inquiry and it is in need of further conceptual development (Arham, 2010; Sandikci, 2011; Wilson, 2012). It seems that an increase in the relevance of Islamic marketing is truly phenomenal (Sandikci, 2011; Wilson, 2012). In a recent editorial, Wilson (2012, p. 6) notes that "[. . .] emergent phenomena and global events point towards the study of Islamic marketing becoming a prerequisite for any truly global and forward-thinking marketer". While there has been much talk about what Islamic marketing is and how it should be defined or understood, most discussions have so far focused on the relationship between Islam and the mainstream orthodox theory of marketing, which is referred to as micromarketing.

The author thanks Jonathan Wilson (editor) and two anonymous reviewers for their insightful and helpful comments on the previous drafts of the manuscript. The author is also grateful to Ibraheem Bahiss for his critical comments that helped to improve the article.

Journal of Islamic Marketing
Vol. 5 No. 1, 2014
pp. 2-19

1759-0833
DOI 10.1108/JIMA-09-2012-0054

Micromarketing predominantly focuses on marketing practices of firms and consumers and it is premised upon the principle of self-interest maximisation and the assumption that the ultimate purpose of marketing practice and scholarship should be to benefit managers and individual consumers while almost no emphasis is given to societal welfare and well-being for all (Hunt, 1981; Kilbourne *et al.*, 1997; Mittelstaedt *et al.*, 2006). In contrast, macromarketing as a more holistic marketing perspective focuses on marketing systems (or individual market players in the capacity of system enablers/participants) and the functioning of marketing systems as a provisioning technology of society (Fisk, 1974). Macromarketing is premised upon the idea that individual marketing activities should not compromise the common good or well-being for all (Mittelstaedt *et al.*, 2006). Regrettably, ever since micromarketing has gained a centre stage in academia and the original macro-thinking represented by early marketing thinkers such as Wroe Alderson, Charles Slater, Reavis Cox, Robert Bartels, and George Fisk has become marginalised, the marketing discipline in general became associated with a narrow set of managerial techniques and mass marketing tools (Nason, 2006). While reconciling Islam with micromarketing, the discipline that has been shaped under the influence of neoclassical economics, is fraught with theoretical challenges (Sandikci, 2011), we believe that macromarketing as an alternative theory of marketing has more to offer than mere conceptual refutations of micromarketing tenets, specifically for understanding, conceptualising, and investigating issues within the Islamic marketing domain.

The purpose of this article is to fuse Islamic marketing with macromarketing theory to envision a potentially new field of inquiry that we call Islamic macromarketing. To the best of our knowledge, there is no study in the field that explores how macromarketing principles could potentially inform Islamic marketing investigations. It is very important to address this gap in research because we feel that researchers might run into a stone wall in their attempts to reconcile the morally-charged Islamic commerce with a by and large amoral micromarketing approach (Crane, 2000). Marketing practices informed by Islam, a religion defined as sincere concern for another, clearly need a relevant conceptual basis in marketing that is more consistent with the true essence of Islam. In other words, marketing practices that uphold Islamic principles would clearly need to work within a defined framework of morals and paradigms best tailored to promote those principles. We think that the debate on Islamic marketing is situated at the heart of a micro- versus macro-marketing debate. By summoning the macromarketing theory to the task of conceptualising a new direction in Islamic marketing, we aim to show that Islamic marketing and macro (non-managerial) marketing have much in common, at least in these two domain's aspiration to design well-balanced marketing systems and market institutions that serve societal welfare and collective well-being. In this article we are going to argue that Islamic marketing is too important to be left to micromarketers: Islamic marketing is multi-faceted and should not just be analysed from one perspective, such as micromarketing.

To bridge the conceptual gap mentioned above, in this article we first introduce the macromarketing perspective and discuss its tenets by contrasting them to those of micromarketing. Next, we merge the Islamic paradigm with the macromarketing perspective to propose a unique perspective in Islamic marketing research, Islamic macromarketing. In the final section we discuss theoretical and practical implications of the current conceptual endeavour for Islamic marketing inquiry.

Macromarketing

There is growing unease around the dominant modes of thinking about marketing both by practitioners and academics. The mainstream definitions of marketing stress (in)famous 4Ps and give an impression that marketing is only about infinitesimal manipulation of micro-managerial tools (e.g. advertising, price, sales promotion) to elicit desired response from consumers and maximise marketing performance (Brownlie and Saren, 1992; Mittelstaedt *et al.*, 2006). Moreover, micromarketing appears to be failing to stand the test of rapidly developing and bifurcating economies and global interconnectedness (Sheth and Sisodia, 2006). Layton (2008, p. 217) comments:

> In the midst of all this change marketing seemed to have lost its way. Simplistic frameworks such as the 4P's seemed largely irrelevant in providing the logical foundations needed for relevance in an increasingly complex, connected world. The important questions seemed to deal with issues that did not fit easily into the fragmented or specialized fields characterizing marketing, leaving gaps that invited scholars from nearby disciplines to explore.

While the marketing orientation is based on a notion of total commitment to satisfying consumer needs (one could conceptually extend the notion to encompass not only short-term wants and desires but also the long-term well-being of both individuals and collectives), marketers have never sincerely implemented it in practice due to excessive emphasis on response elicitation (Brownlie and Saren, 1992). Under the "micromarketing spell", marketers have come to understand the marketing concept as paternalistic engineering of consumer culture put to the service of investor enrichment instead of dispassionately resolving consumer problems in a profitable way (Holt, 2002). Although the supremacy of the profit motive might find its appeal among some stakeholders, particularly some managers, this is by no means shared by all marketing thinkers and practitioners. Holt (2002) shows that consumers do not want brands to be excessively commercialised. Society demands from the marketing manager sincere commitment to the ends of a sustainable society and less portrayal of excessive obsession for growth, profit, and power (Varey, 2010). Regardless of whether marketing managers openly fall back to their original hawkish (retromarketing) instincts (Brown, 2001) or recognise that they are "hardwired to hard sell" (Woodall, 2012), from the point of the publics they will still be responsible for creating and maintaining healthy societal outcomes.

In addition, micromarketing generally lacks the means to tackle a wide spectrum of public and social issues directly related to marketing that can be only understood by examining marketing as a societal process (Fisk, 1981). Specifically, there is a lack of understanding of how local marketing decisions generate externalities on a larger scale, influence the efficiency of allocation of goods and services, affect quality-of-life and the definitions of quality-of-life, transform societal institutions, impact the natural environment, and bear upon the consumptive ability of future generations. The nearly zealous adherence to mathematical and other tools of decision-making creates an assumption that marketing is a managerial responsibility only (Layton, 2008). Micromarketing tends to treat complex societal problems as narrow technical problems, hence, it encourages the use of inadequate research methods and tools which tend to inhibit managers from seeing the forest for the trees, i.e. a macro picture (Fisk, 1967, 1974, 1981). It has been suggested that to be able to see the macro picture one should accept micro-managerial goals, decisions, processes, and performance criteria

at a firm level not as the ends in themselves but as the means to a sustainable society (Nason, 2006; Varey, 2010).

Fisk (1981, p. 3) defined macromarketing as the study of a societal process of marketing. He defined marketing as "a life supply support provisioning technology". There is a positive connotation in this definition: marketing should enable productive, beneficial life through effective provisioning systems rather than promote lifestyles that are based on pursuing individual material well-being and excessive consumption. A guiding question to be answered in such investigations is "how well is marketing serving societal purposes?" In the macro-sense, different communities of citizens engage in marketing so as to attain enhanced quality of life for these communities (Kilbourne, 2008). By engaging in marketing practices, society members should be able to improve standard of living, collective well-being, health care, education, social equality, justice, and interpersonal relations.

A more detailed definition is provided by Hunt (1981, p. 7). He defined macromarketing as follows:

> Macromarketing refers to the study of (1) marketing systems, (2) the impact and consequence of marketing systems on society, and (3) the impact and consequence of society on marketing systems.

Hunt (1981) provides a number of criteria used for constructing the definition given above. These criteria are:

- aggregation that is reflected in research on comparative marketing, institutional structure of marketing, and power relationships in distribution channels;
- interests of society that are exhibited in research on social and ethical marketing and the role of marketing in economic development; and
- society's impact reflected in research on legal aspects of marketing and political/social norms.

Accordingly, macromarketing is understood as a field of marketing inquiry that is not limited to discreet cases of exchange. Rather, macromarketers strive to transcend beyond the boundaries of a single exchange. A particular approach to study macro-phenomena was to focus on analytical aggregation of exchanges into a single system and to study the impact and consequences of such aggregated systems on society (Bagozzi, 1974). Bartels and Jenkins (1977, p. 17) suggested that "macromarketing means marketing in general [...] marketing process in entirety, and the aggregate mechanism of institutions performing it".

Macromarketing does not only focus on aggregation but also on assumptions (both ontological and epistemological) that give rise to different interpretations of relevant concepts. For example, Kilbourne *et al.* (1997) consider how the notion of "quality-of-life" is interpreted within the Western dominant social paradigm (DSP). The authors show that guiding assumptions and beliefs in the Western countries institutionalised as DSP inform the interpretation of quality-of-life as material consumption and increased ownership of material wealth. In the similar vein, Kadirov (2011) empirically shows that inadequate conceptualisations of societal welfare lead marketers to believe that incremental ecological deterioration is a worthy sacrifice that is necessary to improve societal welfare. Taking a broader perspective, Nason (2006) argues that any micromarketing investigation can be contextualised as a

macromarketing inquiry. This contextualisation can be achieved by extending the orientation of the original investigation. If researchers go beyond the micro-managerial orientation and set an aim to explore a particular issue for the benefit of all stakeholders, then they are likely to find themselves in the macromarketing domain. Hence, the macromarketing orientation comprises of society, public policy, and general welfare whereas micromarketing aims exclusively at a single group in society, and most often, those are managers or consumers.

To express the interrelationship between marketing and society, Mittelstaedt *et al.* (2006) use the metaphor of "agora". Agora is an ancient Greek term that encompasses a specific aspect of the marketplace: markets are an inherent part of social/cultural/power structures and relationships. Mittelstaedt *et al.* (2006) argue that macromarketing explores modern agoras and that this discipline can be named as "agorology". The authors go further to characterise a modern agora as:

- a system;
- a heterogeneous entity; and
- a phenomenon that shapes and influences other social systems.

However, the notion of marketing-society interaction comes with a strong caveat: effects are not unidirectional. Macromarketing should not be taken as a science of merely measuring and calibrating unidirectional marketing-society impacts. There is wide recognition that marketing and society are inseparable and co-constructive; these forces are viewed as two sides of a coin (Dolan, 2002; Kilbourne, 2008; Kadirov and Varey, 2011; Layton, 2007). The concepts some researchers use to describe such interrelation is "enactment" (Weick, 2001). Enactment refers to the act of enabling, depicting, playing the part of, taking a form of, and assuming a guise of a focal object. It is recognised that macromarketing is the study of marketing-society enactment and the traditional assumption that marketing stands apart from all other social life aspects is not founded. Although marketing as a societal phenomenon is far from being absolute, one view is that members of society (e.g. citizens) in their roles as marketers, consumers, and policy-makers, construct (enact) society in acting together, and vice versa (Dolan, 2002). Thus, favoured forms of building societal relations require corresponding marketing structures. It is also recognised that most often marketing problems are deeply rooted in issues that arise from fundamental societal institutions.

The macromarketing perspective is premised upon the understanding that marketing is society's mode of self-provisioning to the same extent as society could represent marketing systems' mode of meaning construction. If society utilises marketing for the purpose of provisioning, marketing utilises society to imbue its operations with relevant socio-cultural meanings (Kadirov and Varey, 2011). The terms "impact" and "consequences" ubiquitously used in macromarketing represent self-constructive or self-defining transformation. Marketing-society transformations are neither linear nor incremental. They are holistic. Based on this notion, we note that macromarketing scholarship investigates not only how society generates various marketing structures for provisioning but also how marketing generates societal structures to instil symbolism into otherwise bleak marketing/provisioning mechanisms.

To recapitulate, in this section we defined macromarketing and contrasted it to micromarketing. We introduced macromarketing as an independent field of inquiry and showed that it is based on distinct assumptions and knowledge about society,

markets, and marketing. Focusing on the task of fusing the Islamic perspective and marketing theory, we will next demonstrate that this task requires extending not only micromarketing tenets but also macromarketing theory to comply with the mainstream Islamic philosophy and thinking. The following section will propose and characterise a new domain for Islamic marketing investigations, Islamic macromarketing, and compare this discipline to both micromarketing and macromarketing along several suggested dimensions.

Islamic macromarketing

Islamic macromarketing will be generally based on the macromarketing discipline or will be perhaps considered as a subfield thereof. This new discipline will build on the macromarketing principles by a means of incorporating Islamic ontology, epistemology, and eschatology into the body of macromarketing knowledge. In this section we propose and develop the new discipline of Islamic macromarketing through comparing its proposed principles to those of micro/macromarketing. Table I shows the summary of the comparison of Islamic macromarketing to micro versus macro-marketing along a number of dimensions that generally characterise a field of marketing inquiry.

Unit of analysis

Generally, the unit of analysis in micromarketing is the firm or the customer, whereas the unit of analysis in a macromarketing inquiry is a market or a marketing system

Dimension	Micromarketing	Macromarketing	Islamic macromarketing
Unit of analysis	A firm or a consumer	A marketing system	A marketing system framed by Islamic values and principles
Domain/scope	Interactions within the marketing system	Interactions of the marketing system with other societal systems	Interactions of transformed marketing systems with other societal systems
Orientation	Managerial	Social, cultural, policy	Muslim publics, societies, communities, and the Single United Community (Ummah)
Ends (benefits to be maximised)	Profit/power/growth	Happiness, welfare, justice (worldly)	Hasanah/good (in this world and the hereafter)
Means	Customer (dis)satisfaction	Empowering silenced stakeholders (e.g. the environment, citizens, the poor)	Facilitating marketing as worship and worship as marketing
View of man	Economic man	Person-in-community	Person-in-submission
Role of scholars	Business consultants	Advocates of the sustainable world	People of (macromarketing) knowledge
View of the marketing system	"Cowboy economy"	"Spaceship earth"	Transitory abode for replenishment
Essence	The function and philosophy of business	The social process and a provisioning technology of society	The provisioning process that enables and improves the servitude of the created to the Creator

Table I.
Islamic macromarketing versus micromarketing/ macromarketing

(Layton, 2007; Mittelstaedt *et al.*, 2006). However, the suggested delineation is not clear cut here. One finds that in some cases micromarketing does in fact deal with a marketing system, while some macromarketing research projects happen to focus on a particular firm. Layton (2008, p. 216) comments:

> At a meso or intermediate level of analysis, systems ranging from shopping malls to business ecosystems to reverse distribution channels become legitimate themes in both micro- and macromarketing research where the primary analytical tool is the concept of a marketing system, looked at from two rather different points of view – the inside out (a micro perspective) and the outside in (a macro perspective).

The "outside in" perspective is particularly useful when researchers are focusing on the long-term survival and development of communities including religiously inspired ones instead of emphasising the survival and growth of an entity within community (e.g. a firm). Generally, what makes a marketing analysis macro by giving it a systems orientation is the broader perspective of including relevant environmental constraints into the analysis (Daly *et al.*, 1994). Instead of focusing on a single firm or an industry, one should focus on, for example, a man-in-community or a firm-in-community (Daly *et al.*, 1994). From the Islamic macromarketing perspective, the firm-in-community (or the man-in-community) operates with some constraints imposed to its commercial transactions by Islamic law. For instance, the principle "la dharara wala dhirar" (there should be no harm or reciprocating harm) places a fundamental constraint on the marketing system. There is certainly enough room in the field to explore how such fundamental Islamic principles influence how markets operate and how market systems are regulated.

Domain

Most micromarketing issues can be situated within the domain of commercial exchanges that take place within a marketing system. In micromarketing, the focus is on an individual exchange, while the impact and consequences of this exchange on society is not of concern. Differing from this, the macromarketing domain of inquiry encompasses both interactions within a marketing system and how these interactions influence other social systems (Hunt, 1981; Layton, 2007). It is not our intention to argue that focusing on a single type of exchange in a particular industry is a problem. Pursuing the effectiveness and efficiency within a particular exchange dyad or a local exchange network is a viable research objective. However, what such a micro approach lacks is a sense of morality (Crane, 2000). From the micromarketing perspective, morality has no role in the marketing profession. Marketing is understood as a science of simply transforming consumer needs into products and services (Crane, 2000). However, evidence suggests that the dialectics of marketer-consumer relations have always been underpinned by assumptions of morality due to the excessive authority claimed by marketers (Holt, 2002). Morality is introduced when one could formulate macro questions that focus on an impact of the exchange on other societal systems. How well does our marketing practice serve relevant societal goals? How are our decisions going to influence societal institutions? As a typical religion in general primarily deals with the issues of morality, i.e. what is bad or good (e.g. different degrees of approved and prohibited actions in Islamic jurisprudence), generally it will be advantageous to opt for the macromarketing foundations when developing marketing theory informed by religion (Mittelstaedt, 2002). In particular, Islamic law

judges all human interaction based on their perceived effect upon other humans, creatures and the environment, therefore it would be more expedient to launch an inquiry into Islamic marketing from a macromarketing point of view. Islamic law seeks to regulate all human activity in a manner so as to optimise the benefit to individuals, communities and their environment. This can sometimes lead to quite divergent results in how Islamic law interprets, for instance, different market-related notions and situations as opposed to an amoral regulator.

Islamic marketing is "a school of thought which has a moral compass which tends towards the ethical norms and values of Islam and how Muslims interpret these, from their varying cultural lenses" (Wilson, 2012, p. 6). Accordingly, Islamic macromarketing will deal with how transformed marketing systems interact with other societal systems. Here, transformed marketing systems refer to societal provisioning systems that have been designed/altered/modified based on the Islamic values and principles and with a mind to maximise societal welfare for a Muslim population (however, it is to be realised that the benefit is not just intended for a Muslim population but is supposed to transcend religious boundaries). Systems transformation can be substantial such as a proposed change in the mode of currency (Yusuf *et al.*, 2002) or less substantial such as product adaptation according to the extent of consumer religiosity (Shabbir, 2010). Specifically, it would be of interest to investigate mechanisms and ways through which marketing systems transformed to comply with Islamic law impact on societal institutions or society in general. Particularly the focus should be on how transformations or adaptations impact societal welfare, population well-being, the level of public happiness or social justice.

By "transformation", we do not mean a "cosmetic" transformation. Islam should not be used as either a tool or a "finite resource" in transforming marketing (Jafari, 2012). It is often the case that researchers assume that the Islamic morality is upheld by applying dichotomous labels such as *halal/haram* or *sunna/bid'a* in a quite automatic manner: such a micro approach is restrictive if not destructive (Jafari, 2012; Wilson and Lui, 2010). Islamic transformation should be fundamental and it should be driven by reflective realisation that sharia rules and concepts are not the ends in themselves but the means for attaining the common good (*al-masalihul mursalah*). Based on al-Ghazali's explanation, Muslim scholars have long understood the objectives of Islamic law to be the promotion of the common good and the protection of public interests against major harm (for an extended debate see Salvatore and Eickelman, 2004). Similarly, Ibn Qayyim states that Islamic law and justice are the same: Islamic law aims to do justice to all and any instrument which is just in nature or application can be seen as an extension Islamic law. More particularly we foresee that even a foreign/alien theory such as macromarketing can well be seen as a compliant Islamic instrument if it is amended so as to comply with the objectives of Islamic law.

Such an understanding of the morality in macro terms opens new avenues for research. For example, instead of focusing on how to force existing financial products into a "halal" straitjacket, marketing specialists should be researching communal systems of interest-free credit that conform to the Islamic maxim that the lender should not benefit in any material way from loans he/she provides. In addition, studies that focus on how societal institutions influence the process and modes of Islamic transformation in marketing systems will come under this umbrella. Furthermore, the

history of Islamic transformation in marketing systems (i.e. the evolution of Islamic transformations) is of substantial interest (Meloy, 2010; Savitt, 2000).

Orientation

A discipline's orientation refers to its general inclination toward specific issues and problems. The orientation of micromarketing is managerial, whereas the macromarketing orientation has a general tendency of thought that concerns society, publics, or communities (Mittelstaedt *et al.*, 2006). As it flows from the context of the current discussion, the orientation of Islamic macromarketing should be Muslims, Muslim communities, and Muslim societies. By the notion "Muslims" we do not intend to refer to specific interest groups such as the Muslim manager or the capital owner. Within the Islamic macromarketing paradigm, researchers are to be cautious about using modernist terms (e.g. the Muslim consumer, the Muslim producer) because of negative connotations attributed to such notions (Firat and Venkatesh, 1995). Islamic macromarketing should avoid the view of passive Muslim consumers manipulated by "marketing-smart" Muslim producers. Instead, the Islamic notion of the Single Unified Community (the SUC), also called Ummah Wahidah or Ummah, should be investigated for potential operationalisation (Alserhan and Alserhan, 2012). The basis is the Noble Qur'an's injunction that declares that: "Truly, your nation is one united nation, and I am your Lord [. . .] " (21:92). Alserhan and Alserhan (2012) in their recent research argue that Muslims all over the world, one of the four groups with more than a billion members, project a greater degree of commonality and it is warranted to consider them a unified community. On a slightly different note, Jafari (2012) argued that the conceptualisations of the SUC should not be simplistic which might lead to self-alienation:

> [. . .] Muslims fuel the project of Orientalism by alienating themselves as an Islamic Ummah, a collective nation of states. This collectivism is often associated with homogeneity. To clarify, I do not deny the existence of certain homogeneous characteristics (e.g. beliefs and practices) that prevail in the Muslim world, just as they do in any human society; the core of my argument is that homogeneity should not be oversimplified at the expense of historical trajectories that underpin contemporary Muslim societies' life conditions and practices. (Jafari, 2012, pp. 24-25).

One must note, however, that the orientation toward Ummah, its common goals, aspirations, and ideals, is not as the same as thinking of Ummah as a unified consumer group. From the orientation point of view, we accept Ummah to be as homogenous in its long-term aspirations and ideals as, for instance, a group of managers aspiring to maximise profits. The view that Ummah represents a group of consumers with identical needs who passively respond to marketing stimuli is no longer feasible. Ummah is to be understood as the public that not only guides but also benefits from Islamic marketing research. Consequently, Islamic macromarketing will study marketing/consumption to benefit Ummah's communal self-regulation instead of studying the characteristics of Ummah to benefit powerful corporations (owned by both Muslims and non-Muslims). From a critical perspective, researchers should be wary of serving the corporative profit motive: corporations tend to take advantage of knowledge generated by (mostly sincere) research on Ummah in order to exploit this community's weaknesses for the sake of hoarding material wealth. Islamic macromarketing's prerogatives are in direct opposition to those of the corporate world that operates to syphon world resources on

a global scale to give greater advantage to the already advantaged. Particularly, Islamic marketing or Islamic finance or other such concepts can only be feasible if they are directed at Muslim communities as a whole. It would be self-defeating to create an "Islamic" instrument but then only focus on a particular group (e.g. managers, nations, Arabs). Any instrument that is "Islamized" as such is generally done for the sole purpose of extending its appeal/benefits to a wider community of peoples (i.e. all Muslims or in some case even all of humanity). Even if an observation by some scholars is correct regarding Ummah failing to represent a unified community, we submit that then it is high time for Islamic macromarketers to start working towards contributing to its unification. In this sense, Islamic macromarketing investigations are to be conducted with a vision to benefit the SUC.

The ends

Here, the concept "benefit" needs further clarification. In micromarketing, the ends of marketing are exemplified in the following benefits for individual market actors: growth, profit, or market power (Varey, 2010). In macromarketing, the ends of marketing as a societal process are understood to be an increased level of welfare, happiness, and social justice. In Islamic macromarketing, the ends is to be seen in maximising good deeds that are the basis of "hasanah" (goodness, excellence) in this world and the hereafter (Alserhan, 2010). Specifically, other than "ibadat" (worships) most Islamic instruments seem as though they aim at some of worldly benefit or justice even if they have rewards for the hereafter. Since micro/macromarketing focuses on marketing activities and policies that are limited to deriving worldly benefits only, Islamic macromarketing is different because it focuses on the ends that make the SUC successful both in this world and the hereafter. In this sense, we argue that Islamic macromarketing takes a wider view (that is beyond the reality we experience) on marketing consequences and implications. It should be noted, however, that this discussion does not imply that the general field of macromarketing completely rejected a religious focus on the reality of the hereafter. To the contrary, a number of researches looked at how religious values shape marketing in different societies (Friedman, 2001; Klein, 1987; Klein and Laczniak, 2009; Laczniak and Klein, 2010; Mittelstaedt, 2002; Mittelstaedt and Mittelstaedt, 2005). A subtle difference that exists is probably due to understanding the notion of the "success of humanity". For macromarketing, the success is defined as a situation where human beings attain good life in this world. In this context, macromarketing might consider religious beliefs and practices in terms of their capacity to influence this notion of worldly good life. For Islamic macromarketing, the success is the success in the hereafter. Hence, all marketing activities including religiously motivated actions are assessed for their potential to lead to the ultimate success in the hereafter. Accordingly, the question that we need to ask in Islamic marketing investigations is "do marketing activities under focus facilitate Muslims' effort and aspiration to attain the ultimate success?"

The means

Under the micromarketing perspective, satisfying customers is thought to be the means of attaining business objectives. This claim is what the formal definitions of marketing found in main marketing textbooks assert. However, in reality a firm's own needs and wants take precedence over all other considerations (Brownlie and Saren, 1992). More

often than not micromarketing practices are based on techniques that create dissatisfaction feelings to manipulate the process of problem recognition on the part of consumers (Brown, 2001; Varey, 2010). Hence, it can be said that micromarketing is largely about businesses satisfying their own needs through creating perceptions of dissatisfaction. In contrast, macromarketing offers distinct means. Macromarketing seeks to voice the concerns of silenced stakeholders in marketing exchanges (e.g. the environment, society members, the poor, and the vulnerable) and thus, empower these parties. It is assumed that by empowering marginalised participants of wider life-provisioning eco-systems, macromarketing brings a desired balance to exchanges to obtain a well-balanced level of welfare and justice.

We suggest that the means of Islamic macromarketing should be to design marketing systems that facilitate citizens' engagement in marketing in the form of worship and engagement in worship in the form of marketing. Indeed, marketing activities become worship and a means of expressing servitude to Allah subhanahu wa taala if these activities generate good deeds that lead to hasanah in both this world and the hereafter (Alserhan, 2010). Similarly, the structure of marketing systems should promote and foster those market relationships that maximise the capacity of Muslims to engage in thawab (divine reward) earning activities (e.g. saqadah, zakat, taawun).

View of man

The latent view of a human being in micromarketing is a neo-classical notion, economic man (homo economicus), who is assumed to have insatiable total wants. In general, the discipline of economics teaches us that economic man has a utility function (i.e. satisfaction) that can be only increased via consumption (or income). In the quest for maximising the function, economic man is driven by greed for valuable things (that have the greatest marginal utility for him/her) and well pronounced self-interest. Economic man is in constant search for pleasure, highly individualistic, and indifferent to others' joy or pain unless it has been paid for by him/her (Daly *et al.*, 1994). Daly *et al.* (1994, p. 159) point out that:

> [...] the individualism of current economic theory is manifest in the purely self-interested behavior it generally assumes. It has no real place for fairness, malevolence, and benevolence, nor for the preservation of human life or any other moral concern. The world that economic theory normally pictures is one in which individuals all seek their own good and are indifferent to the success or failure of other individuals engaged in the same activity.

Although many realise that economic man is an abstraction from the social reality, this idea has long influenced how marketers visualise themselves and their practice (Woodall, 2012). In the micromarketing framework, a tacit assumption that marketing is an amoral profession of selling more and generating excessive wealth (something that would enable one to eventually indulge in rampant consumption) undergirds how marketers approach their profession. Similarly, consumers seek satisfaction and happiness from individualistic consumption (Kilbourne *et al.*, 1997).

The notion of economic man represents a view that is far from the reality (Daly *et al.*, 1994) and a conceptual aberration (Brockway, 1995). Instead, macromarketing accepts the notion of person-in-community. Person-in-community is deeply concerned with community's long-term development and prosperity (Daly *et al.*, 1994). Although person-in-community is individualistic to some degree, he/she realises that happiness is achieved not only through consumption but also through serving community,

helping others, benevolence, environmental protection, healthy social relationships, and last but not least, genuine interest in others' happiness.

We, as marketing researchers, should decide for ourselves which of the notions of a human being fits our objective of bringing Islam to marketing and marketing to Islam. The Muslim (man-in-submission) is the one who is preordained to show sincere concern in another. Although one cannot deny that in the reality human practices may differ and that marketers as Muslims will be anyway driven by self-interest in attaining the hasanah in the hereafter, it is widely understood that the only way of getting there is through wishing others what one wishes for him/herself. From the Islamic perspective, self-interest and greed in vying for worldly wealth is an abhorrent perspective that has been rejected for centuries by Qur'an, Sunnah, and almost all Muslim thinkers and practitioners.

Role of scholars

The role of scholars in micromarketing is to discover (or create) knowledge that would help managers to solve micromarketing problems in decision-making situations, whereas macromarketing scholars are motivated by the possibility of saving the world from the grips of greed-driven corporatocracy (Nason, 2006; Mittelstaedt *et al.*, 2006; Varey, 2010). In doing this, macromarketers actively advocate sustainable marketing systems. Distinctively, the scholars of Islamic macromarketing should be considered as the "people of knowledge" (ahl-al-dhikr) who can guide the design and development of Islamic marketing systems that facilitate the attainment of hasanah. The noble Qur'an (21:7) instructs "So, ask the people (having the knowledge) of the message, if you do not know". There is a clear instruction that scholars specialising in relevant Islamic matters should lead in those relevant fields. Simply imitating Western economies or following recipes generated under the Western DSP is not a viable option.

Universal view

The view of the marketing system in micromarketing is that it is a system that is contained within the unlimited space containing unlimited resource reservoirs for extraction and pollution. This view is referred to as "cowboy economy" (Boulding, 1966). Since a cowboy's farm represented a tiny economy within vast prairies, its impact on the environment was insignificant. However, applying such an assumption to modern marketing systems is untenable. Marketing systems are contained within an environment that is not unlimited. Marketing systems are growing constantly, while earth's capacity to sustain life mostly stays constant (Boulding, 1966; Reidenbach and Oliva, 1983). Therefore, macromarketers argue that we all are on "spaceship earth" and the negative consequences of marketing systems on the environment are going to impact us all sooner or later (Boulding, 1966).

Islamic macromarketing will share the macromarketing view while recognising that the "spaceship" we are on has been created for us as a temporary/transitory abode. The spaceship has a final destination, i.e. the hereafter, while we are all travellers in this spaceship. Although this transitory abode might not survive into an indefinite future, the travellers will continue their existence in subsequent stations. The catch is that the traveller's status in the hereafter will be determined based on whether they have realised that they were in fact in the transitory abode.

Essence

Finally, under the micromarketing perspective, the essence of marketing is summarised in the view that marketing is either a function or a philosophy of business. That is, it is assumed that marketing functions to serve business objectives. In contrast, macromarketing postulates that marketing is a societal process and a provisioning system of society. So, instead of serving business interests only, marketing should serve societal interests and benefit all members of society.

From the Islamic macromarketing point of view, marketing represents a provisioning process that enables and improves the servitude of the created to the Creator. As we believe that provisions (i.e. *naeem*) are the work of the Creator, marketing systems in society are to be understood as institutions that transform, add value, and channel *naeem* to the final user in responsible (Islamic) ways. Islamic marketing systems should be designed to ensure that both participants and non-participants of markets (e.g. marketers, customers, publics) are empowered and able to attain and maximise hasanah in the process. This task should also involve guaranteeing that all of these parties have their rights protected, their benefits maximised, and the overall benefit amongst the various groups balanced for optimal value.

Research agenda

We believe that the current conceptual exercise will open new avenues for future Islamic (macro)marketing research. Among many other topics, Islamic macromarketing will cover such issues as Islamic marketing systems, societal performance criteria, Islamic regional development and progress, sustainability and Islamic marketing, welfare Islamic marketing, the history of Islamic marketing practice and thought, vulnerable Muslim consumers, Islamic public policy and marketing, and societal/distributive justice. Based on research streams one is likely to come across in Macromarketing conferences and the *Journal of Macromarketing*, we propose some research areas that might be of interest for marketing researchers:

- *Islamic marketing systems.* In this area, topics for potential investigation are the design and development of Islamic marketing systems (Layton, 2007), symbolic and functional Islamic marketing systems (Kadirov and Varey, 2011), Islamic marketing systems in developing/emerging economies, marketing system-environment relationships, legal challenges and public policy related to introducing new Islamic marketing initiatives, authentic Muslim community provisioning systems, and the operation of Islamic marketing systems within broader global economic systems, alternative credit and financial systems (e.g. Baytul-Mal), global Islamic marketing institutions, and Islamic trading schemes.
- *Marketing systems' societal performance criteria.* In this area, the main question to be answered is "what are the criteria by which the performance of Islamic marketing systems is to be judged?". Research on Islamic conceptualisations of societal well-being, quality-of-life, welfare, happiness, and justice would be welcome (Pan *et al.*, 2007; Sirgy *et al.*, 2007). Specifically, the considerations of the common good (almasalihul mursala) in Islamic marketing decisions and how these considerations influence halal/mustahab/haram judgments would be of interest (Daly *et al.*, 1994; Salvatore and Eickelman, 2004).
- *Sustainable marketing.* The Islamic perspective to sustainability, sustainable business models in Islamic countries, welfare marketing (Varey, 2010),

transformative green marketing (Polonsky, 2011), and Islamic DSP (Kilbourne *et al.*, 1997), the institutional foundations of marketing (Kilbourne, 2008).

- *Service-dominant logic (SDL) and services.* The applications of SDL in Islamic Marketing (Peñaloza and Venkatesh, 2006); Islamic macromarketing and SDL (Layton, 2008), Islamic conceptualisations of service, the notion of "khidmah", history and institutions of khidmah, the concept, role, and impact of slavery in Islamic marketing systems, and servitude in Islam.
- *Critical marketing studies* (Burton, 2001; Jafari, 2012; Murray and Ozanne, 1991; Sandikci, 2011; Tadajewski and Brownlie, 2008). Critical marketing theory challenges established marketing practices, ideas, concepts, and understandings (Tadajewski, 2010). This perspective that is based on critical discourse offers a structured scholarly approach to analyse the negative impact of individualistic tendencies (e.g. self-interest, narcissism, and egoism) on society, welfare, and well-being (Tadajewski, 2010; Tadajewski and Brownlie, 2008). Potentially, critical Islamic marketing studies could address the negative and positive consequences of Muslims imitating orthodox marketing approaches, postmodern consumerism, materialism, and hedonism. Reflecting on how we understand and practice marketing is crucial under this perspective. It is notable that work in this direction has already started in the example of works by Jafari (2012) and Sandikci (2011).
- *Islamic philosophy, politics, and political economy of markets and marketing.* These two areas are possibly the most important but under-researched domains in marketing. The contribution of Islamic orthodox and heterodox philosophy on modern philosophical thinking and scholarship cannot be underestimated. Similarly, there is robust political thinking and strong political activism in Islamic countries that needs to be investigated in terms of its impact on marketing. One of the examples is the research on how different of political forms of marketing activity such as capitalism, communism, socialism, or liberalism are compatible with Islamic modes of production and marketing (Adas, 2006; Labib, 1969).
- *History of Islamic markets and marketing.* This area includes studies that investigate histories of markets and marketing in Islamic countries, the biographies of Islamic marketing thinkers, history of specific marketing functions, history of marketing institutions in Islam, history of Islamic marketing thought.
- *Influence and evolution of the Islamic commercial law, legal systems and institutions, consumer laws, consumerism, and public policy*. In addition, the macro principles of Islamic commerce (e.g. la dharara wala dhirar) stipulated in works by Islamic jurists on sharia and the Ottoman grand codex "Majalla" can be of interest.
- *Holistic marketing ethics and morality.* This area of research will include studies on marketing ethics and Islamic morality from a holistic societal perspective that takes into account the ends and means of Islamic macromarketing. Such investigations should be premised upon the idea that Islamic ethics is not to be used as a means to promote inherently anti-ethical (so called "amoral") ends of micromarketing (e.g. to sell more; to promote excessively wasteful lifestyles). The existing research by Rice (1999), Saeed *et al.* (2001) and Yusuf (2010) may serve as a starting point for Islamic macromarketing ethics research.

- *Consumer culture, consumer culture theory (CCT), consumer acculturation, theories of practice, and consumer vulnerability.* This area of research will include studies on consumers and consumption that are oriented toward improving the condition of Muslim consumers in the age of complexity, inauthenticity, and postmodernism (Arnould and Thompson, 2005; Firat, 2001; Firat and Venkatesh, 1995; Holt, 2002; Venkatesh, 1999; Warde, 2005). Research on consumer vulnerability in Islamic context is also a possibility (Baker *et al.*, 2005).

Conclusion

The purpose of this article was to propose and develop a distinct perspective in Islamic marketing research. The distinguishing aspects of the proposed discipline, Islamic macromarketing, were developed and compared to those of micro/macromarketing. The preceding discussion indicated that Islamic macromarketing's dimensions are most likely to be related but in many ways distinct from those of the existing macromarketing perspective. We believe that directly importing and adapting micromarketing concepts into the field and giving them a cosmetic "religious" treatment will not make marketing Islamic. As the preceding discussion demonstrates the relevance of the micromarketing principles for Islamic marketing is highly questionable. A question might arise regarding whether the term "Islamic macromarketing" is necessary since "Islamic micromarketing" seems to be an oxymoron anyway. We believe that there is a need in this field for the clarity of conceptual foundations that inspire researchers.

We do not contend that the ideas expressed in this article are final. The present discussion simply represents an initial theoretical deliberation on this topic. Nevertheless, we believe that the current theoretical exercise will make researchers theoretically sensitive to a number of ontological and epistemological assumptions that underlie marketing research projects. Muslim practitioners (managers, public policy makers) are to realise that the means and ends of marketing are better understood if viewed from a broader perspective of marketing's impact and consequences on society. By adopting the Islamic macromarketing perspective, managers and policy makers will be able to work toward maximising the realisation of hasanah (excellence) for all (including the SUC). However, the current discussion is not without a limitation. We realise that Islamic macromarketing may not currently exist as a separate discipline yet as research on genuinely macromarketing issues in Islamic contexts is very sparse. However, considering global challenges we are facing now, it is perhaps the right time for all of us, including marketing researchers, to embark on exploring new potentialities offered by the Islamic macromarketing perspective.

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