

Legal and Illegal Earning in Islam: A Literature Review

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Abstract: - Wealth is one of the immeasurable blessings of Allah (SWT) that He bestowed human being with. There are various provisions for achieving the wealth. In human life earning plays an important role in making life meaningful. The aim of this paper is to discuss on how Islam encourages and prescribes Muslim legal earning and forbids Muslim illegal earning. Based on the literature findings this paper intends to see the Islamic rulings pertaining legal and illegal income earning. It is very common now to see a Muslim who is able to differentiate between legal and illegal earning. However, it is a shocking phenomenon and a sad fact that a large number of Muslims now do not differentiate between the legal and illegal earnings. Some people are involved in earning money and seeking employments in undesirable occupations (Khan & Halal, 2010). This paper used a basic qualitative research design. All data are analyzed by using secondary data especially from the Qur'an as well as Hadith and related literature. The findings of this paper show that there is a prohibition of illegal earning in Islam as well as the encouragement of Islam to legal earning and a punishment for a person who engages himself on illegal earning.

Keywords: Islamic, Earning, Rulings

I. INTRODUCTION

We live in a world where everything needs money. The significance of wealth is increasing in the life of mankind. Everyone is looking after money to sustain life. However, among the integral principles of Shari'ah in earning income is the prohibition of illegal earning. It is compulsory in Shari'ah to use the legal ways of earning money and avoiding the illegal ways as Allah said in surah (*Albaqara*, 2: 173). The verse clearly stated that Muslim permitted only to eat good that was provided for him.

Nevertheless, earning income for a living is a common instinct for mankind on the earth. Humans are ordered to earn for a living as a way and means of life in order to comply accordingly with the purpose of his creation and his existence on the earth. Furthermore, mankind is permitted to work and to seek the bounty of Allah for the living. Therefore, the earning should not be only in the boundary of a rational manner or someone's wish. Mankind is naturally greedy and has the tendency of earning by any means. The Quran and Hadith have traced for Muslims some ethics and guidance throughout their life to avoid falling into the illegal means of earnings.

II. LEGAL EARNING IN ISLAM

Legal means, *Halal* in Arabic, that which is permitted, with respect to which no restriction exists, and the doing of which Allah (SWT) has allowed. (Al-Qaradawi, 1985). According to (Nnader, 2008). The word *Halal*, as used by Arabs Muslims and non-Muslims, refers to anything that is considered permissible and lawful under religion. However, in Islamic law, the word *Halal* is derived from the verb *Halla* "to become lawful, legal, licit, legitimate, permissible, permitted, allowable, allowed, admissible, un-prohibited, and unforbidden." (Jallad, 2008) the best among this definition is the saying of Prophet (PBUH):

"What Allah has permitted in His Book is halal, and what is haram is haram". (Hadith Ibn Maja:3358).

Legal earning means: The income earned according to the instructions and the ways approved by Allah and His Prophet (PBUH). (Science, 2017) Allah says:

"O you who believe! Eat the good things we have provided for you and be grateful to Allah if it is Him ye worship" (Albaqara, 2: 173).

According to Ibn Kathir, Allah SWT commands all Muslims to eat from the pure and legal things that He has been provided for them and to thank Allah SWT for it, if they are truly His believing servants. Eating from pure sources is a cause for the acceptance of supplications and acts of worship. Eating from impure and illegal sources prevents the acceptance of supplications and acts of worship, as mentioned in a Hadith narrated by Abu Hurayrah who said that Allah's Messenger said:

"O people, Allah is pure, and He accepts only what is pure. Allah has commanded the believers as He commanded His messengers. Allah said: O you messengers, eat from good things and do righteous deeds, for I am aware of what you do. And Allah said: O you who believe, eat from good things that We have provided for you. Then, the Prophet

(PBUH) mentioned a man who traveled far, becoming disheveled and dusty and he raises his hands to the sky, saying, "O Lord! O Lord!" while his food is unlawful, his drink is unlawful, his clothing is unlawful, and he is nourished by the unlawful, so how can he be answered?(Kathir, 1999).

It is known by a Muslims that Islam has commanded him to only earn and benefit from what is legal. Rifa'ah Ibn Rafi', said: The Prophet (PBUH) was asked about the best job, and he replied by saying,

"A job that is done by one's own hand, and every decent trade."(Hadith Imam Ahmad, :16628)

Alminawi on his comment to this hadith says: "Decent means, which is acceptable in Islam and will be rewarded by Allah (SWT), and it is in line with the teachings of Islam and it is not corrupt, cheated and betrayal and it aims is to deliver benefit to people by providing there needs in legal way.(Alminawi, 1994)

Islam clearly point out that it is an obligation upon a true Muslim to seek the wealth in a legal way and make himself busy in benefiting from all legal means at his disposal. So, when a Muslim intends to adopt an occupation, start out a business, or seek an employment, he must seriously think that if it is legal for him. He must not take up a job, rather he should try to know that the source is completely legal and pure.

III. SIGNIFICANCE OF LEGAL EARNING

Allah has created man to worship him. The main purpose of Man's creation on the earth is to worship Allah. One of the important acts of worship is earning that should be in a proper and legal way. Allah Says in the Quran:

"For ye do worship idols besides Allah, and ye invent falsehood. The things that ye worship besides Allah have no power to give you sustenance, then seek ye sustenance from Allah, serve Him, and be grateful to Him, to Him is the final return. (Al-ankabut,29: 18).

Islam has pronounced many significances for a legal earning from the bounties of Allah. Abu Hurairah (RA) reports:

"Once we were sitting in the presence of Allah's Messenger a young person came to him from the mountains. When we saw him, we wished that he devoted his youth, energy and efforts in the way of Allah. Allah's Messenger heard our words and commented, "Is the person killed in the way of Allah the only right person? The person who makes efforts for his parents is equal to

the one who fights the battle in the way of Allah. The person who tries to earn a legal means of living for his family is also in the way of Allah, the person who tries to keep himself away from illegal earning is also in the way of Allah. On the other hand, the person who is always in the pursuit of seeking much more wealth is in the way of Satan."(Sunan Al-Baihaqi, 9:25).

In another hadith the Prophet (PBUH) reported to have said,

"The person who seeks his livelihood from legal sources so that he could keep himself, his children and family from begging people, he will be raised on the Day of judgment with the Prophets and highly truthful people.(Alkhatib, Albagdadi, 2001).

This Prophetic hadith clearly shows that if a believer put more efforts to seek only what is legally permitted his status is raised higher by Allah for his effort. The income earned through legal means is a great basis of divine blessings, and it produces good results. The blessing of Allah SWT is also involved in such means of earning wealth. One of the most significant results of legal earning is that Allah SWT will answers a person's prayers as it mentioned in hadith. Earning in legal way will make Muslim to feel strength and courage in carrying out an act of worship, as is mentioned in the Qur'an:

"O you apostles! Enjoy good things and pure, and work righteousness, for I am aware of what you do"(Almumin, 23: 51).

Allah SWT says: "We said to Jesus: O Apostles eat of the Halal, which is good for you without the haram, (and do good)(Ibn Jarir 2000).

Consuming from legal source help Sa'ad Ibn Abi Waqas prayers to be accepted by Allah, it was reported that Sa'ad Ibn Abi Waqas asked the Messenger of Allah (PBUH):

"O Allah's Messenger pray for me to Allah that He makes me the one whose prayers are accepted. Upon this, the Holy Prophet commented, "O Sa'ad, make your food Halal and your prayers will be accepted." (Al-Mujam Awsat, 6: 311).

IV. ILLEGAL EARNING IN ISLAM

Illegal means *Haram* in Arabic, the word usually mean it is 'forbidden'. *Haram* refers to anything that is prohibited in the *Qur'an* or would result in sin when committed by a Muslim. For example, adultery, murder or money obtained through cheating or stealing. It can also refer to certain foods and drinks such as pork or alcohol, that are considered *Haram*.(Neal, 2016).

Haram earning refers to the income earned not according to the instructions and the ways approved by Allah and His Prophet (PBUH). Illegal earning is strictly prohibited and condemned in Islam. Allah said in the glorious Qur'an:

"O those who believe do not eat up each other's property by false means unless it is a trade with your mutual consent." (Al-nisa,3:29).

Allah SWT has forbidden His faithful worshipers to eat each other's wealth with falsehood, i.e., the kinds of trade and earnings that are not lawful, such as riba and gambling, and any related kind of unlawful trick. Ibn Abbas said: When Allah revealed: {O you who believe Eat not up your property among yourselves unjustly} Muslims said that God has forbidden us to eat our money between us vanity and the food is the best of our money, it is not permissible for one of us to eat at one's money in vanity, how people?! Then God revealed: "There is no embarrassment on the blind". And he says: {But be trade by mutual consent of you}.(Kathir, 1999).

In another verse Allah said:

And do not eat up your property among yourselves for vanities, nor use it as bait for the judges, with intent that ye may eat up wrongfully and knowingly a little of (other) people's property.(Albaqarah, 2:188)

Meaning of the verse according to tafsir, "Do not let one consume the goods of the other, in deception, that which is illicit according to the Law, such as theft and extortion; and, do not, proffer them, the regulation of these goods or any bribes, to the judges, that you may consume, as a result of any arbitration, a portion of other people's goods, embroiled, in sin while you are aware, that you are in error" (Jalalayn, 2007)

V. CONSEQUENCES OF ILLEGAL EARNING

Earnings from illegal source will result the following to a Mankind, in the Day of Judgment everyone will be asked on how he earn and how he spends Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) said,

"Man's feet will not move on the Day of judgment before he will be asked about his life, how did he consume it, his knowledge, what did he do with it, his wealth, how did he earn it and how did he spend it, and about his body, how did he wear it out."(Hadith, Attimidhi, 2341.).

This Hadith describes the situation of every human on the Day of judgment, even if he passed in answering the rest of inquiries, be it religious or social, he will not be able to enter Paradise unless it succeeds in giving satisfying replies to those five basic questions in which he will be account of all. Legal Earning is one of the prerequisites of accepting an act of worship as Allah Said in sura(Albaqara,2: 173) and(Almuminoon,23: 51), while illegal earning causes

supplications not to be accepted. Every flesh that grows with illegal consumption deserves fire. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) reported to have said:

"Every flesh nourished by haram deserves fire"(Hadith Shu`abul iman,5521).

All these Prophetic Traditions urge Muslim to abstain from earning and consuming illegal wealth. If anyone earn illegal wealth or consumes it, he will be punished in the Day of Judgment. The punishment regards to the earning and consumption of illegal wealth is severe and unbearable for such activities, so Muslim should try to save himself and work hard on this earth to see that he did not illegally earn wealth neither consume any of the forbidden things that might lead him towards the Hellfire.

VI. CONCLUSION

Islam permitted Muslim to earn wealth as much as he wishes, provided that he earn it through legal means. Islam has ordered Muslim to be cautioned in their way of earning income. It is very important for a Muslim to be careful on how he earn and how he spend, because any flesh that was faded by haram deserves nothing but hell. Well-being of mankind lies on legal earnings. Illegal earnings invite misfortune to a man. It is a compulsory duty upon a Muslim to earn income in a legal way. Therefore, any Muslim who earn his money illegally has to seek forgiveness from Allah SWT. It is understood that Islam is a religion that is not harsh and will not allow people to attain prohibited money. Whoever earn money in a legal way will be rewarded by Allah SWT and who so ever earn illegal money will be punished by Allah SWT on the day of Judgment.

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