

Functional Prerequisites in Islamic and Western Sociological Perspectives (A comparative Study)

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This Research Paper deals with the Functional Prerequisites in Islamic and Western Sociological Perspectives. Functional prerequisites means: "the basic needs ; food, shelter and dress, etc. that an every individual requires to live his life. Functional prerequisites may also refer to the factors that allow a society to maintain social order." In Islamic context Allah is the creature of the earth and heavens and every thing which is found between them. He produces every Functional and Spiritual prerequisites of human kind. He creates the man for Him and every thing of the Universe for man. Almighty Allah says: "So eat of the sustenance which Allah has provided for you, lawful and good; and be grateful for the favors of Allah". (Quran 16:14) Functional Prerequisites are basic human needs, without them human cannot remain alive. Islamic sources discuss the basic needs of human in detail because Islam focuses on social issues keenly. The Shari'ah (Islamic Law) considers the saving of life in his basic objectives. In this research the Functional prerequisites from Islamic and western sociological perspectives are analytically compared

Key Words: Introduction to the Functional Prerequisites, Importance of the Functional Prerequisites, Definition of Functional Prerequisites, Divisions of Functional Prerequisites, Functional Prerequisites in Islamic and Western Perspectives, Comparison & Conclusion.

I. INTRODUCTION:

Every human society has some basic needs or requirements, which must be fulfilled for its survival. These basic needs or necessities for existence of a society are known as functional prerequisites of the society. Islamic and Western sociologists are different to some extent in its identifications, divisions and provisions but united in its significance. It means Islamic and western sociology are same in the existing of functional prerequisites. Islamic and Western sociology has different point of view about functional prerequisites. So there is no unanimous definition of functional prerequisites. Even in western sociology there is a lot of difference in definition because every sociologist tries to define it according to its theory and mentality. This paper attempts the Islamic and western concepts of functional

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prerequisites of a society. I hope it will prove a beneficial study to understand the functional prerequisites and its importance in Islamic and western sociological perspectives.

II. SIGNIFICANCE OF FUNCTIONAL PREREQUISITES:

In Islamic perspective, the Functional prerequisite is a significant topic because human being does not live without these basic needs of life. Another important issue is that health is very important in Islam and these prerequisites are most beneficent for health. But sometimes health and life both depend up on provision of these prerequisites. A renowned Muslim scholar *Shaikh Muhammad Abduh* said: "Life is the preface of Din (Islam), so health is necessary for religion's practices in this world because the hereafter life depend upon this life."¹ Islam gives much importance to Functional prerequisites because there is no concept of life without these basic needs. Almighty Allah provides every need to humanity. As we read in the Holy Quran²: "Praise be to Allah, the Cherisher and Sustainer of the worlds."³ Islamic *Shari'ah* gives much importance to the functional prerequisites because this is one the major objectives (*Maqasid*⁴) of the Islamic *shari'ah*. According to Islamic scholars there are five basic and essential objectives of Islamic *Shari'ah* (Law): I. *Deen* (Religion), II. *Aql* (Intellect), III. *Nafs* (Life), IV. *Mal* (Property) and V. *Irdhi* (Dignity)

According to Dr. Muhammad Hashim Kamali: "The Ulema have classified the entire range of *Maqasid-cum- Masalih*⁵ into three descending categories of importance: the *Daruriyyah* (the essential), the *Hajiyyah* (the complementary) and the *Tahsiniyyah* (the desirable or the embellishments). The essential *Masalih* are enumerated as five, namely life, intellect, faith, lineage and property."⁶ These functional prerequisites are necessary for satisfaction of a society for its survival. So Islam orders his followers to get these things from Pure (*Halal*) Sources. Allah almighty says in the Glorious Quran: "So eat of the sustenance which Allah has provided for you, lawful and good; and be grateful for the favors of Allah, if it is He Whom ye serve."⁷ The Biography (*Seerah*) of the Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihe Waalihe Wasallam*) is also witness of these basic needs. The Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihe Waalihe Wasallam*) says: "There is no right of *Ibne Adam* (son of Adam) without these three things: House: In

which he lives, Cloth or Dress: with it he covers his body Food: A morsel of bread and water."⁸ So it can be said that there is in no honourable concept of life without these basic needs of human being both in Islamic and western contexts. Sometimes life depends upon these things.

In Western perspective, the sociologists also give much importance to the functional prerequisites because human life stands on these prerequisites in this world. According to the Western perspective the Functional prerequisites are necessary for satisfaction of a society for their survival. As we read in a research article: "*Society has certain basic needs or necessary conditions, which must be satisfied if it is to survive. These basic needs or necessary conditions of existence of society are known as functional pre-requisites of society.*"⁹ Functional prerequisites are much necessary even according to western sociology life will be dissolved without these things. As a western scholar D. F. Aberle said: "*The performance of a given function is prerequisite to a society if in its absence one or more of the four conditions dissolving a society results.*"¹⁰ Functional Prerequisites are also called basic needs of human kind because human life depends upon these things. As we read in a research Article: "*Basic needs are defined as air; water, food, shelter and clothing, while there are a wide range of other services and supports that may be essential for an individual to reach self-sufficiency.*"¹¹

Protection of life is one of the basic and essential objectives of Islamic Law and these functional prerequisites are necessary to protect the life. The Functional prerequisites are also necessary for every person to maintain the minimum social order of human life. A renowned western Scholar Talcott Persons said: "*Functional prerequisites may also refer to the factors that allow a society to maintain social order.*"¹² Another notable thing is that western sociology considers and deals the social sciences as natural and experimental sciences. According to a research paper: "*A comparative social science requires a generalized system of concepts which will enable the scientific observer to compare and contrast large bodies of concretely different social phenomena in consistent terms.*"¹³ In the above statements of western scholars, it can be clearly observed that the Western sociology discuss the constitutional and rational aspects of the functional prerequisites of

the society. It does not discuss the ethical and moral ground of the functional prerequisites.

III. FUNCTIONAL PREREQUISITES IN WESTERN PERSPECTIVE:

After renaissance movement of knowledge in west many scholars have tried to stand the sociology on the basis of natural sciences. So they consider the sociology as a science and have a lot of work in this aspect. Many of the western scholars try to define the functional prerequisites in their own style but there are no agreed up on definition in western perspective. Even the important scholar presented a theory of Functionalism in this perspective. A Western Scholar Christine Langoff defines the functional prerequisites as: *“The basic needs or necessary conditions of existence some times are known as the functional prerequisites of the society, but it is often hard to identify them.”*¹⁴ He further said: *“A society needs elements for it to thrive that would be food clothing and shelter. Money is a requirement in this part of the world; even there are those that can live on food stamps the society they are immersed in depends on the earning and spending of the dollar.”*¹⁵

According to a well-known western Scholar Mr. Talcott Parsons : *“In sociological research, functional prerequisites are the basic needs (food, shelter, clothing, and money) that an individual requires to live above the poverty line. Functional prerequisites may also refer to the factors that allow a society to maintain social order.”*¹⁶ Functional prerequisites are necessary needs to succeed a social order of a society. As we read in the article of Socybertry: *“Survival - This need is a physiological need, which includes the need for food, shelter, and safety. Because we have genetic instructions to survive, not only as individuals but as a species, this includes the need to reproduce.”*¹⁷ Functional Prerequisites are also called basic needs of human because human life depends upon these things. In this way we can understand that western sociology differ from Islamic sociology.

IV. FUNCTIONAL PREREQUISITES IN ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE:

Some things are the basic needs of human life and there is no concept of life without these things. These are called in sociology Functional prerequisites of life. It means life can not be

functionalized without these basic needs. Arabic Dictionary *Al-Mujam al_Waseet* defines it as: "There is no subsistence of anything without it. Everything is need of it."¹⁸ Another famous Arabic Dictionary *Qwaid al-Lugha* defines: "Every thing the man is compelled to it and the thing is a strong need of it as food at the time of hunger."¹⁹ Muslim scholars define the prerequisites as: The definition of prerequisites which is described the *Ulama* of *Usool* and *Fuqha*. Imam *Shatbi* said: "The basic needs (prerequisites) means the things which are necessary for the affairs of Din and the world and there is no concept of life without them. Their provision is necessary for the continuity of life."²⁰ A renowned Islamic scholar and jurist *Ali Hasballha* said: "Prerequisites are the things on which based the life of people. If they end or do not available then the life can not be continued."²¹ According to the above understandings, human life is not possible without these basic needs is called prerequisites. It means these things are necessary for the survival of human life

V. DIVISION OF FUNCTIONAL PREREQUISITES:

There are many needs and prerequisites of human life but here are described those needs that without of them man can not alive satisfactorily. Without them he feels very much difficulty and complexity in his routine life. According to Islamic teachings Islamic scholars divide the Functional prerequisites into two main categories. In the Western perspective there is not found such kind of division. The focal point of the Western sociology is only physical prerequisites. The Muslim scholars have divided the functional prerequisites in two major types. A. Physical prerequisites and B. Spiritual prerequisites

A renowned Islamic Scholar Prof. Khursheed Ahmad said: "*There are two basic needs of a person in this World. One is related with his Material life and other is related with his spiritual life and it is religion.*"²² It means there are two basic needs of a civilized human society. A society can not exist without these two basic needs. It is in Islamic view because according to western scholars religion is not a human prerequisite.

Physical prerequisites are many types but there is a described only functional prerequisite. In this point I shall describe the functional Prerequisites from Islamic sources as *Quran*, *Hadith*, and *Ussol -e-Fiqh* and scholars' point of view, especially those

physical things which are necessary for the saving of human life. We do not find any clear Text (*Nass*) from Quran and *Hadith* for this purpose but we find some principles and hints for these prerequisites. Prerequisites from Quran and *Hadith* are following: Allah says in Holy Quran in the description of Adam's (AS) creation incident: "*We said: "O Adam! Dwell thou and thy wife in the Garden; and eat of the bountiful things therein as (where and when) ye will; but approach not this tree, or ye run into harm and transgression.23"*

Allah Almighty addresses to Adam (AS) in the Holy Quran: "There is therein (enough provision) for thee not to go hungry or to go naked "Nor to suffer from thirst, nor from the sun's heat",²⁴ Allah says about the *Nafqah*²⁵ of wives which is necessary for husbands to give them. Allah says in the Holy Quran: "*But he shall bear the cost of their food and clothing on equitable terms. No soul shall have a burden laid on it greater than it can bear.*"²⁶ Another place Allah says: "*Let the women live (in 'iddat) in the same style as ye live, according to your means: Annoy them not, so as to restrict them.*"²⁷

On another place Allah describes the importance of water as basic need. Allah says in the Quran: "We made from water every living thing. Will they not then believe?"²⁸ In the *Hadith* of the Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihe Waalihe Wasallam*) we also find some indications about prerequisites. The Holy Prophet (S.A.W) says: "There is no right of Ibne Adam (son of Adam) without these three things: House: In which he lives, Cloth or Dress: with it he covers his body Food: A morsel of bread and water."²⁹ A famous interpreter of *Hadith* Mulla Ali *Qari* writes about the meaning of *Haq*: "The meaning of right (*Haq*) basic needs and declares these things basic needs of a man."³⁰ There are many other verses and *Hadithes* which indicates us prerequisites of a man. In these verses we find four prerequisites of human being. It means according to Quran and *Hadith* there are four prerequisites, For example: 1-food, 2-water, 3-dress and 4-Shelter. It means according to the Quran and *Hadith* these are Prerequisites of a man. The *Fuqha of Islam* also mentions these four things as perquisites (basic needs of a man).

A renowned Muslim scholar Imam Abu *Bakar Kasani* said: He describes the basic needs in the perspective vise expenditure.

"The expenditure of food, water, dress and shelter are necessary on him and if a child needs milk then it is also necessary because these things are the basic needs."³¹ Imam *Ghazali* says about the basic needs of a man: "A man is compelling to three things: Food, Shelter and dress."³² He also says: "Food is necessary for life, dress from the saving to hot and winter and house for accommodation and to save the family."³³ According to a well-known *Muhaddith* and Muslim Scholar Imam Ibne Hazm: "Three things are necessary for the poor and needy persons: food, Dress and Shelter."³⁴

According to Imam *Surkhasi*: "Allah almighty creates the children of Adam (Owlade- Adam) and their body cannot alive without these things: Food, water, dress and Shelter."³⁵ Imam *Qurtabi* a famous Muslim *Mufasssir* and *Muhaddith* says under the commentary of this Verse of Quran: "There is therein (enough provision) for thee not to go hungry nor to go naked, "Nor to suffer from thirst, nor from the sun's heat"³⁶ He says in the perspective these verses of Quran: "Allah almighty tells us here that the necessary expenditure of wife on husband consists on these things: food, water, dress and accommodation, because there is no life without these things."³⁷ Some Muslims scholars add some more things in basic needs. For example: Security, health, marriage, education, and servant for sick person but these are not functional prerequisites

The prerequisites related to soul of human being are belonging to metaphysic world. So it is necessary for us to know that what spirituality is before discussion about spiritual prerequisites: According to Oxford English Dictionary: "*Spiritual means 1- connected with the human spirit, rather than the body or physical things. 2- Connection with religion. And spirituality means the quality of being concerned religion or the human spirit.*"³⁸ The Encyclopedia of Britannica describes: "*Soul or spirituality means the immaterial aspect or essence of a human being, that which confers individuality and humanity, often considered being synonymous with the mind or the self. In theology, the soul is further defined as that part of the individual which partakes of divinity and often is considered to survive the death of the body.*"³⁹ According to some scholars the First prerequisites is spiritual because man is compound of soul and

material. So he has spiritual needs as well as physical needs. So it can be understood that religion is Spiritual prerequisite because religion belongs to soul.

According to Islamic Point of view religion is basic need of human kind and every human group has a Law and *Shri'ah*. Allah says in the Holy Quran: *"To each among you have we prescribed a law and an open way. If Allah had so willed, He would have made you a single people, but (His plan is) to test you in what He hath given you: so strive as in a race in all virtues. The goal of you all is to Allah. It is He that will show you the truth of the matters in which ye dispute."*⁴⁰ According to Quran Religion is continuing throughout history. Allah further says in the Holy Quran: *"The same religion has He established for you as that which He enjoined on Noah – which We have sent by inspiration to thee – and that which We enjoined on Abraham, Moses, and Jesus: Namely, that ye should remain steadfast in religion, and make no divisions therein"* ⁴¹ Another place Quran tells us that Religion includes in the nature of human being. Allah says in the Quran: *"So set thou thy face steadily and truly to the Faith: (establish) Allah's handiwork according to the pattern on which He has made mankind: no change (let there be) in the work (wrought) by Allah. That is the standard Religion: but most among mankind understand not."*⁴²

The Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihe Waalihe Wasallam*) said religion is in the nature of human kind. *"Every Child is birth on the Nature (Din) and its parents make him Jew, Christian or Zoroastrian."*⁴³ There are many verses and *Ahadith* which show that religion is a basic human need. According to Islamic scholars religion is basic need of a good society. Moulana Shibly Noumani says: "Every Nation, Group and Society has a religion."⁴⁴ Dr. *Akhtar* also says: "Religion is basic human need."⁴⁵ Another very prominent modern scholar Prof. *khursheed Ahmad* says: "Religion is basic and very important need of human being."⁴⁶

VI. RELIGION AS FUNCTIONAL PREREQUISITES OF HUMAN BEING:

Religion is a natural need of human being because he is compound of earth and soul. Soul need spirituality and spirituality become from Religion (Islam). Allah says in holy Quran: "I have only created giants and men, that they may serve Me."⁴⁷ Another

place Allah orders the human being to adopt religion (Islam). Allah says in the Holy Quran: "So set thou thy face steadily and truly to the Faith: Allah's deed according to the pattern on which He has made mankind."⁴⁸ It is human nature that he wants to retune to his actual need and he is Allah. Allah says in the Holy Quran: "To the righteous soul will be said :) "O (thou) soul, in (complete) rest and satisfaction!" "Come back thou to thy Lord - well pleased (thyself), and well-pleasing unto Him!" "Enter thou, then, among My devotees!" "Yea, enter thou My Heaven!"⁴⁹ Religion is a basic need for every community. One is always attached with religion. It is almost impossible to separate oneself from religion. No body can live without religion. The Bible⁵⁰ says: "Man does not live on bread alone."⁵¹ A renowned Western Scholar Crissy Gottberg said: "It is my contention that humanity, in general, needs religion. Whether they practice some form of a major religion like Christianity or Islam, or lean toward Atheism or Agnostic, all people need religion."⁵²

According to the Islamic point of view religion is also a moral need of the society because religion develops moral values. Allah says in the Holy Quran: "*Truly he succeeds that purifies it and he fails that corrupts it!*"⁵³ According to my point of view Religion is a base of morality because prophets are the founder of human moral values in the World. People need it to act morally. Therefore, people need religion to act morally. A Christian scholar also said: "Many years ago when we were first creating new civilization type things, religion was a necessity. It was a way to bring people together and was mainly a step up from just morals; it gave more reasons to do what society needed (rewards and punishment)."⁵⁴ In Islamic perspective this is proved with strong evidence that religion is an ultimate peace for human kind. No body alive mentally peaceful without religion.

A very beautiful prays of the Jesus Christ at the time of crucifixion. "*Save me o God because I have come to you for refuge. I said to him "you are my Lord! I have no other help but yours."*"⁵⁵ A scholar of Islamic Studies said: "*Religion stresses on the fact that ultimate shelter of human beings is with God's relationship.*"⁵⁶

Religion is also an economic need because religion helps the needy and poor and also solves the economical problems of the

people with justice. Allah says in the Holy Quran: *"And in their wealth and possessions (was remembered) the right of the (needy,) him who asked, and him who (for some reason) was prevented (from asking)."*⁵⁷ Another place Allah says: *"So eat of the sustenance which Allah has provided for you, lawful and good; and be grateful for the favors of Allah, if it is He Whom ye serve."*⁵⁸ Religion is also a social need of man because it builds the society on moral and ethical grounds. Allah says in the Quran: *"O mankind! Reverence your Guardian-Lord, who created you from a single person, created, of like nature, His mate, and from them twain scattered (like seeds) countless men and women;- reverence Allah, through whom ye demand your mutual (rights), and (reverence) the wombs (That bore you): for Allah ever watches over you."*⁵⁹ Religion is very useful thing for human society. It gives many advantages for human beings. May be some people do not agree and they say that it has also disadvantages. We suppose what are they saying then they also have to accept that its advantages are much more than its disadvantages. Bjorn Grinde said: "I conclude that religion appears to offer more advantages than disadvantages and that it is possible to influence religion toward an even more Positive impact on society."⁶⁰

Religion is an important political need of human being, because world peace is due to international socio-political environment. And it can be established when we will consider that religion is a basic need for our society then we will believe it is also necessary for world peace. Especially when this world become a village it is so much necessary for world peace. It is said in a lecture which was delivered in London: *"Religion is the greatest motive power for realizing that infinite energy which is the birthright and nature of every man. In building up character in making for everything that is good and great, in bringing peace to others and peace to one's own self, religion is the highest motive power and, therefore, ought to be studied from that standpoint. Religion must be studied on a broader basis than formerly."*⁶¹ Religion promotes the world peace. As Allah says in the Holy Quran: *"And did not Allah check one set of people by means of another, the earth would indeed be full of mischief: But Allah is full of bounty to all the worlds."*⁶² There are also some historical and statistical evidences that show religion is presented in over the

history. There is no evidence that people stopped the religion totally for a moment throughout the history. The modern world survey also tells us that religious attachments and religion phenomena are increasing in all over the world. These evidences show that religion is basic human need especially for the Muslims.

VII. COMPARISON IN ISLAMIC AND WESTERN PERSPECTIVES:

If we compare the Islamic and western concept of functional Prerequisites then we see that the Muslim scholars include the functional prerequisites as spiritual and physical but the western scholars consider the functional prerequisites as only physical. The important characteristic of the Islamic prerequisites is Depth and Universality. We find more depth and Universality and depth in functional prerequisites of Islam. The source of Islamic Prerequisites is the Revelation (*Wahi*) but the Source of western prerequisites is Human mentality. Abu Salman Deya ud-Deen Eberle states : *"These rules and principles were set forth by Allah's Messenger (AS) some fourteen hundred years ago in the best form and manner and will remain relevant forever."*⁶³ Consequently, the Islamic functional Prerequisites are more universal from the West. Another important thing is the Islamic Prerequisites are more secured and guaranteed because these are granted by the Allah Almighty and announced by the Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihe Waalihe Wasallam*). Allah and his Holy Prophet (saw) is the Guaranteer of these Rights. It means these prerequisites provided constitutionally and ethically. The Holy Quran and the Hadith was the source of these Basic needs. But the western prerequisites have not these securities and guarantees.

In western sociology religion has no importance because according to majority of western scholars religion is an extra thing. Even some of them hate the religion. As Carl Marx Says: *"It (Religion) is the Opium of the people."*⁶⁴ In Islamic sociology man is compound of soul and earth, so religion is considered as prerequisites of man. Allah says in the Holy Quran: *"To each among you have we prescribed a law and an open way? If Allah had so willed, He would have made you a single people, but (His plan is) to test you in what He hath given you: so strive as in a race in all virtues."*⁶⁵ So, it can be observed that Islamic Sociology considers Religion as a basic need of human life but

western sociology does not give any weightage to the Religion because Islamic Sociology consists of revealed Sources Revelation and Western Sociology consists of human experience and mentality.

VIII. CONCLUSION:

Functional Prerequisites in Islamic and western perspective is a significant and interesting topic because it is related to social life of a man and it also mentions the basic needs of a civilized society. In Islamic sociology, Allah is the Creator of man and of all the things in Earth and Heaven. Allah has made the man from the compound of soul and earth, so man has physical prerequisites as well as spiritual needs (Religion). In Islamic sociology there are five Functional prerequisites and these are: - Religion, Food, Water, Dress and Shelter. In Western sociology the spirituality (Religion) has no place and importance. There first and last focus is on physical prerequisites. So there have only three prerequisites: Food, Dress and Shelter. Even there is no found a division of this kind in Western perspective. Consequently, Islamic Sociology covers more areas of human needs and requirements other than Western sociology. So we can say from the above analyses of the prerequisites of Islamic and western perspective that Islamic prerequisites are more comprehensive.

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⁵ **Masalih:** It means the public welfare and interest of the Islamic *Shari'ah* (Law). There are three basic *Masalih* of the Islamic *Shari'ah*.

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⁶³<http://www.islamland.com/Media/Books/HumanRightsinIslam.pdf/28/8/13>

⁶⁴ Haralambos and Halborn, *Sociology: Themes and Perspectives*, Farhan Raza Publishers, Lahore, P.436

⁶⁵ Al-Quran (5:48)