

Concept of Welfare State in Islam and in Western Welfare States: A Comparative Study

Wing Commander Dr. Nasir Majeed

Registrar, PAF Air War College

PAF Base Faisal, Karachi.

Email: nasirmajeed484@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

According to Britannica on line Encyclopedia "A welfare state is a form of government in which the state protects and promotes the economic and social well-being of citizens, based upon the principles of equal opportunity, equitable distribution of wealth, and public responsibility for citizens unable to avail themselves of the minimal provisions for a good life. The first and foremost policy of a welfare state is to provide basic facilities equally to all its citizens. Post-modern world is trying to gain a selective mechanism to reinstate the system of welfare as a political and economic theory. Most of Western welfare states establish ideas of Marxism, while the Islamic welfare state is based on teachings of Quran and Sunnah. The major difference between a western welfare state and an Islamic welfare state is based on the economic factor. Western theory of a welfare state is the theory of economic progress, while in an Islamic welfare state, the economic factor is just a part of a comprehensive system. According to some critics, the idea of an Islamic welfare state is obsolete because they believe that the codes and conducts used to establish an Islamic welfare state are no longer active. They think that Islamic laws the time of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) are no longer applicable to modern societies today. The aim of this research is to explore the differences between an Islamic and a Western welfare state and their socio-economic patterns, besides providing an answer to critics of the concept of Islamic welfare state. This study also focuses on the approach of orientalist and their critique on Islamic state theory and practice. This research is qualitative. Data has been collected through comprehensive research, that involved reading of research journals, History and other relevant material.

Keywords: *Welfare state, Islamic society, homo economicus.*

Introduction

The concept of the welfare state in Islam has endured as the most perplexing idea from the beginning until today. Defining a 'welfare state' is hard because several scholars believe that there is no such state as a 'welfare state'; several others assert that if a welfare state exists, it changes from nation to nation and tradition to tradition. This is the major cause behind the lack of a standard definition of a welfare state. The human world comprises of states and state theories are many. These state theories can be distinguished as Western and Eastern. The concept of a welfare state is different from the modern states' conduct.

1. Theory of Western welfare state system

Following is the list of states which have nothing in common with a 'welfare state'. (1) Socialist state (2) Nazi state (3) Democratic state (4) Political state (5) Social services state (6) Totalitarian state. These states don't rely on individual's responsibility to act as a sole member of the society, while a welfare state ruminates on an individual to participate in mutual charity among social circles and the equal distribution of economic factors¹.

2. Islam and welfare state

The concept of Islamic state stirred after the migration of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) to the city of Madinah in the 7th century. He strived to build an Islamic society under the guidance of Allah's book. His teachings shaped a society, later came to be known as a welfare state. An Islamic welfare state cannot be separated from an Islamic society. Western divisions of Public/Private Societies and States are unknown to Islam because Islam is comprehensive in teaching and a far-reaching way of life. The word 'state' in Islam is a political term for an Islamic society. If there is no Islamic society, there will be no Islamic welfare state. The existence of Islamic society is attached to Islamic ideology. The struggle to reinstate an Islamic welfare state needs to review the Islamic society. If there exist an Islamic society based on Islamic laws, then the system of government and the whole body of administration can be shaped according to the concept of Islamic welfare state.

3. Literature Review

Chappra (1979) in his book "The Islamic Welfare State and Its Role in the Economy" provides a thought-provoking ground that makes the Islamic welfare and economic

¹Gutmann, Amy. **Democracy and the welfare state**. s.l. : Princeton University Press, 1988.

system. This book provides a thoughtful distinction of a variety of economic systems and Islamic economic philosophies. It expounds the vital theme of the role of an Islamic state in the context of welfare and economy. The author pursues basic laws of an Islamic way of life to map out, in a learned and inspiring way, the compulsions, strategy and functions of an Islamic state and how it fulfils its commitment to the welfare and material well-being of man — as part of an integrated approach to human life. He proposed a thesis that Islamic welfare system needs an organised Islamic community which obey Islam as a complete way of life and following the codes and conducts of the Quran and Sunnah. Economic sources provided by God are the bounties of God and must be utilised to promote good in a society. Also, a physical and organised structure is needed to implement a better economic plan. Islam provides proper guidelines regarding economic system which leads to a better welfare state. El-Ashker (2006), in his versatile book “Islamic Economics - A Short History”, discussed the problems of economic goals and their impact on modern society. This book intends to link the past with the present, to prepare for the future. Though a detailed study of Islamic economics has been carried out in this 450-page book, it progresses in chronological order. The initial part covers the development of Islamic economic thought from the emergence of Islam, long before economics became a separate discipline. The middle part highlights the concerns of economic issues predating the development of the analytical tools associated with contemporary economics and these concerns were evident in the writings of the early Muslim jurists. Some observations are made on the prospects of Islamic economics in the light of its history and a future that is in many respects full of promise².

-Soldatos, (2015) examined key factors of a welfare state in his book entitled “A Welfare State Approach to Islamic Polity”. This study builds upon the critique on Islamic economics. This book discusses the factors, relating to the economy, concerning Islamic laws, in the form of a literal interpretation of Islamic theology. This book presents a critical theory based on the rejection of other Islamic theorists, claiming the western concept of welfare state in Islam under the homo economicus³. Conclusion of this study is based on providing the counter-arguments in support of the homo economicus system and rejecting the pseudo phenomenology of European economists of modern times. He presents a critique on Islamic economic system besides explaining the role of Islamic law in building a socio-economic system. He also explores the western economic system and its impact on society. Western economic system was mostly based on Marxian theory and the impact of the cold

²El Ashker, Ahmed. **Islamic Economics; A short history**. Brill : Rodney wilson publishers, 2006.

³Gitman, Soldatos. **A Welfare State Approach to Islamic Polity**. Athens, Greece : American University of Athens, 2015.

war on European states played an important role in shaping the whole as a mighty standard.

Alexander Pacek and Benjamin Freeman in their research article "The Welfare State and Quality of Life" present a comprehensive view about a welfare state and its impact on the life of people in normal times. The Paper contemplates that while there is a vast and highly contentious literature devoted to understanding the economic, social, and political consequences of the welfare state, little attention has been paid to the fundamental question of whether social security programs actually improve the overall quality of human life. The Paper has made an attempt to present such an appraisal, using the extent to which individuals find the totality of their lives to be satisfying as an evaluative metric⁴. Considering national rates of life satisfaction in the industrial democracies from the 1970s to date, the study also finds that citizens find life more rewarding as the generosity of the welfare state increases, net of economic or cultural conditions.

A thought-provoking debate was started by Ilyas Ahmad in his book "The social contract and the Islamic state" to discuss the background of Islamic welfare state and its comparison with western political theories. He discussed the overall impact of economy and historical background of Thomas Hobbes' theory of the state of nature and its comparison with the pre-Arabic society in the time of ignorance. He concludes that the economic and political theories in the western mind took their shape from early Arabic society⁵. Hobbes' state of nature is similar to the historical interpretation of Arabs living before Muhammad (peace be upon him), hence it is neither new theory nor beneficial because it contains ample immoral laws. He compares Islamic welfare system with Democracy.

4. Philosophical and Political Theories

4.1 Quranic Concept Of A Welfare State

The concept of supreme sovereignty of Allah Almighty in Islam is the basis of Islamic ideology. Administration of Islamic state works under the guidance of Allah's book and teachings of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). The basic tenet of an Islamic state and society is *Tawhid* –unity of one supreme God. *Tawhid* assures that Human-beings under the state cannot be secular or atheist and secularism cannot curl under the shadow of an Islamic system.

⁴Pacek, Alexander. Texas A&M University. [Online]
<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/242231574>.

⁵Ahmad, Ilyas. The social contract and the islamic state (Allahabad India : The urdu publishing House, 1944)

4.2 Welfare state in the time of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him)

In the time of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), welfare state existed but without a name. Later in the time of caliphs, it was named as a welfare state. The concept of Islamic welfare state is based on moral and economical values of Islam. An Islamic welfare state is a protective tool for socio-economic welfare of its individuals. According to Islam, no man is free by nature rather they are the obedient servants of God and are bound to follow specific laws in the form of *Shariah*. Each man in Islamic society is bound to obey *Shariah* law and it says, "live with others as you live with your own self". Every man has some social responsibilities. Allah says; "Who spend during ease and hardship and who restrain anger and who pardon the people – and Allah loves the doers of good"⁶. Another similar verse of the Quran guiding us as a community to promote welfare in the society is: "And there may spring from you a nation who invite to goodness and enjoin right conduct and forbid indecency. Such are they who are successful". Interpretation of this verse can be found in the tradition of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him): "People who order good and forbid from evil. These are the *Khalifa* of God on earth, he is the *Khalifa* of book and *Khalifa* of his prophet on earth⁷. These are the blessed people in the language of the Quran.

In the time of the Second Caliph, Umar bin Al-Khattab, the concept of Islamic welfare state was familiarised for the first time in Madinah. Shah Waliullah defined a state as "The people of Madinah (State) were living in groups near to each other. They lived in separate homes but they mutually shared things and regards. Due to mutual help, the state of Madinah performed like a soul⁸". Another explanation was given by a western thinker Widrow Wilsonm: "State is a collection of people, living at one place at a time, in which majority leads minority"⁹. The concept of public welfare by the state was introduced in the period of second Caliph Umar bin Khattab in the Islamic state of Madinah (mid-seventh century). Subsequently, the concept and interpretation of a 'Welfare State' have been grossly misunderstood and

⁶Q.3:134. **The Noble Quran**, Translation by Dr Muhammad Muhsin & Dr Taqi ud din Hilali, Dar us Salam publishers, karachi

⁷Ibn Adi, Abu Muhammad Abdullah. **Alkamil fi marifa zuf'a al Muhadsin wa alal ahadith**. Berut : Darul Kutab Ilmia, 1997.

⁸Shah, Waliullah. *Hujjat al-balagah*. karachi : Kadeem Book Depot, 2003. p. 103.

⁹Alvi, Khalid. *The social system of Islam*. Lahore : Al Faisal Publishers, 2009. p. 276.

misinterpreted. Today many countries in the world claim to be welfare states, however, they cannot be termed as true welfare states in light of Islamic teachings.

4.3 Ibn-e-Khaldun's view about the welfare state

Ibn Khaldun's interpretation of state is vivid and diverse. Man, by nature is bound to live in a society. Although he prefers to live among people, yet he rescinds societies by following his weaker self (evil). Due to his evil actions, societies are torn apart. He is following no law but his self. That self-endorses rage and selfishness. Although one man is destroying a society, the struggle to unite and reinstate a society on moral grounds never ends¹⁰. If a man is so powerful to capture the whole society and lead them according to his wishes, then surely, he will destroy everything. For the purpose, a collective force is needed to protect society from a single man's evil actions, which is the state. State works as a force to protect itself and its elements

In a society, many people are full of egoism and hypocrisy. Egoism is the biggest of all evils, which needs to be treated consciously and reasonably. Egoistic person promotes egoism in the society and a society of egoistic attitude cannot prevail. Many great sins base on selfishness and egoism as they are the root of all evils. Man is gregarious by nature. Without a proper union or society, no fellow can survive alone. By nature, men are weak and feeble as stated in the Quran: "Man was created weak¹¹". Men cannot fulfil their basic needs all by themselves. This concept of living together in a family or a society is the base of the welfare state in a country or city.

Protection and security of the human race is the fundamental and foremost subject. Men cannot protect themselves. They need other people to help them out of day to day matters. Other animals are stronger than men. Ibn Khaldun says, "all animals were blessed with tools to protect themselves¹². Each human being is blessed with a tool to protect himself. Animals have been given different tools and human beings have been given mind and hands. With the help of mind and hands, men invented weapons for their protection. A single person cannot protect himself from a single animal or predator but with the help of others he can cope with them¹³".

These tools and weapons were invented to protect mankind from animals. If mankind is incarnate in society, they can use the same tools and weapons to protect

¹⁰ Ibn-e-Khaldûn. **The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History**. s.l. : Princeton University Press, 2015.

¹¹ op,ct.; Q.4:28. **The Noble Quran**.

¹² Ibn-e-Khaldun. **The Muqaddimah**. s.l. : Princeton university press, 1989.

¹³ Ibid

themselves from other human beings. Human beings are aggressive and weak by nature "God wants to lighten your burdens for man has been created weak"¹⁴. Their aggression leads them towards diversion. They cross boundaries and kill other human beings. Therefore, a separate institute was developed to protect men from other men. That institute was named a 'state'. The state has to be more powerful than individuals. If it isn't powerful then it cannot implement its decision for the common interest of other men. The state was invented to protect the man from man's aggression.

4.4 England's system of welfare state

In the mid of 20th century in England, the concept of a welfare state started evolving under the shadow of post-war environment. Especially cold war in Europe put it in a mixed plate to think about the wellbeing of its citizen and the survival of its economy. At that time, thinkers collected material to make a code of law under the title of welfare state. Economic equality resided at the very core of the idea behind the development of a welfare state. These moves were encouraged and ensured by the people of the state. But this type of welfare state failed to form a better government because it lacked basic laws. Also, the market economy wasn't much in a position to survive¹⁵.

4.5 Early Arabic civil society and welfare state

The whole life period of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was the period of contracts. According to a western thinker, 'To talk about the origin of Civil Society is to imply that it sprang from a state of things which was not civil'¹⁶. Before the entrance of Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) in Arab, it was a country of no-nation, no government and no civil rights. People were divided into tribes and vengeance was common among enemies. Gibson presents a picture of the scenario as: "The temper of a people, thus armed against mankind, was doubly inflamed by the domestic license of rapine, murder, and revenge with impunity. As the time of ignorance which preceded Mohammad are recorded by tradition; hostility was embittered with ancour of civil factions; and the recital, in prose or verse, of an obsolete feud was sufficient to rekindle the same passion among the descendants of the hostile tribe. Thus, there was no sense of any unity among the Arabs and

¹⁴Asad, Muhammad. *The Message of The Quran*. Sharjah, UAE : Dar al-Andalus Limited, 1980. p. 5:104.

¹⁵Hobbes, Thomas. **The Leviathan. United States** : Kessinger Publishing, 2004.

¹⁶Vaughan, Charles Edwyn. **Studies in the History of Political Philosophy Before and After**. New York : Russell & Russell, 1960.

Arabia¹⁷". Each Arab might point his javelin against the life of his countrymen. Every man was the judge and avenger of its own cause¹⁸. Arabs followed the customs and traditions of their forefathers. They were illiterate and unable to read and write. Confirmation of the above situation came from the Quran; "for when they are told, "Come unto that which God has bestowed from on high, and unto the Apostle." - they answer, "Enough for us is that which we found our forefathers believing in and doing." Why, even though their forefathers knew nothing, and were devoid of all guidance?"

There were other pious men as well living side by side with Arabs in the time of ignorance. They were named *Hanifs* in the Quran "Hence, [O man,] set thy face steadfastly towards the [true] faith, turning away from all that is false and be not among those who ascribe divinity to aught beside God¹⁹". Quran divided people of ignorance as idolatrous and *hanifs*. All Arabs were idolatrous but *Hanifs* were following the guidelines from earlier prophets. They were following one God, while the rest of the Arabs were following ample idols.

4.6 Political philosophy and the concept of welfare state

According to an Orientalist, Von Kremer, social life of Arabs was limited to three things namely wine, women and war. There was no prohibition of drinking alcohol and sexual immorality in the form of mothers marrying their children. Even a husband orders his servant to copulate with his wife to get a better seed²⁰. The Quran provides evidence to early Arab's immoral social conducts; "And when they commit an immorality, they say, we found our fathers doing it, and Allah has ordered us to do it. Say, Indeed, Allah does not order immorality. Do you say about Allah that which you do not know?²¹"

Quran itself condemns anarchy and it also forbids people from creating a situation of chaos and disorder. "But whenever he prevails, he goes about the earth spreading

¹⁷Gibbon, E. **The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire**. New York : Fred de Fau & Company, 1906.

¹⁸Ilyas Ahmad, M.A. **The social contract and Islamic state**. India : The urdu publishing house, Grand Trunk Road, Jum'a Masjid Allahabad, 1944.

¹⁹op. ct.; **The Message of the Quran**, p. 10:104.

²⁰Smith, William Robertson. **The History of marriage and kinship relations within tribal groups in Arabia at the beginning of Islam**. s.l. : Cambridge University Press, 2014.

²¹op. ct.; **The message of the Quran**. p. 7:28.

corruption and destroying [man's] tilth and progeny, and God does not love corruption"²². Arabs in the time of Ignorance were separated and disorganised, living in communal groups. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) disliked their style of living. He ordered the people of Makkah to stay united and organised like a unit. This thinking transferred from Prophet to his companions and finally, the second Caliph Umar bin Al-Khattab added a unit of imam, saying there can be no society without an imam, and imam is the role model for people who order good and forbid bad. Jurist Imam Al-Shafi'i (A.H. 150-204) stated that a mutual agreement is there to facilitate Muslims according to their demands, but a Caliph. Without a Caliph, Muslims may find diverse ways, which may lead them to disorganised social setup. A similar point of view was presented by another jurist of his time, Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal, saying without an Imam, Ummah may fall in disorder²³. Maintenance of order and discipline in the society was the major task of every Caliph through Muslim Jurist.

4.7 Welfare state and Thomas Hobbes' state of nature

Thomas Hobbes, a political philosopher, presented a theory which is quite similar to Arab's age of ignorance. He claims that all men in a state are equal; the same is true for Arabs in the age of ignorance. Hobbes discussed the right of nature in the form of liberty of individuals, while Arabs claimed the same rights in the time of ignorance²⁴. That unlimited freedom or liberty in Hobbes' theory was also practised in the Arab world in the age of ignorance. Every man in Hobbes' state of nature is enemy to other men while the Arabs practised the same.

It is a state in which the government is bound to take responsibilities for minimum standards of every citizen. If a state provides free facilities to sick, unemployed, aged and disabled people, it should also protect their right to live and enjoy social security. In a welfare state, the system of social justice is equal for everyone and the difference between poor and rich will not rise. They also provide free education to children and adults. Also the medical facilities are equally given to all citizens of the state. Employment is the basic factor that requires consideration by every state. A welfare state must provide some tangible means to every citizen to earn and live a better life. Hence, the job market improves and the means to fetch money through illegal sources comes to an end. Welfare state provides social securities and donations to needy people. Marriage donations, charity, family grants, school

²²ibid p. 2:205.

²³Al-Shafi'i, Muhammad ibn Idris. *Al Risalah*. Cario : s.n., 1940, pp. 419-1154.

²⁴Ibn Adi, Abu Muhammad Abdullah. *Alkamil fi marifa zuf'a al Muhadsin wa alal ahadith*. Berut : Darul Kutab Ilmia, 1997.

initiatives and ample free vacations and recreational allowance for men, women and children are made available in a welfare state. According to the German interpretation, Welfare state is a democratic state that guarantees not only the fulfilment of basic human rights but also personal and economic freedom. It takes legal actions, and supports financial measures to promote equal rights among social elements²⁵.

5.1 Islamic Welfare State: Structure and Functions

5.2 Islam and a welfare state

Mankind is a family to Islam. All members of the family are accountable before God, and God is taking care of their actions; He is all-knowing. God watches every person's actions and intentions. Islamic law focuses more on intentions than actions. If a family member does something wrong, it is the duty of the family to realise him his mistake and seek pardon from God. That makes a rich and a poor equal before God because wealth doesn't matter in the eyes of God, what matters is the intentions of the heart. There is no high and low in Islam, all men are equal before God. Islam denounces the philosophy of racism. Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) said; "Certainly God does not look at your faces or your wealth; He looks at your heart and deeds"²⁶.

5.3 Origin of Islamic Welfare state

The concept of equality can be seen in the time of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) when a person committed theft and the case was brought before the Prophet. He ordered to cut his hand. Then he saw, people are chatting about it. He said; "By God If my daughter committed the same theft, I will order to cut her hand." A tradition of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) stated a case; "Whoever humiliates or despises a Muslim, either male or female, for his poverty or paucity of resources, will be disgraced before God on the Day of Judgment."²⁷

Similarly, the concept of equality between an employer and employee is clear in Islam. Islam orders the employer to treat his employee with a civil tongue and forbids to order him to bear the burden he cannot take. This is the law of God. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon) pointed out three types of people, who will

²⁵Petring, Alexander. **Welfare state and social democracy**. Berlin : Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 2012.

²⁶Op. ct.; Bukahri, p. 15.

²⁷Ali, Imam Zayd b. **Musnad Al-Imam Zayd wa 'Ali al-rida ibn Musa al-kazim**,. Beirut : Maktabah al-Hayat, 1966.

face the wrath of God on the Day of Judgment: (1) who doesn't follow his contract with God, (2) who sells a free person and (3) who engages a labourer, and doesn't pay his wages after work²⁸. This hadith clearly mentions labourer and free man as a slave. It shows how keen Islam is about slaves and labourers. That is the perfect example of economic equality under a state. A labourer must accompany a helper if he is doing some task which is beyond his capacity. Offer him food what you are eating, is the concept of Islamic equality²⁹. If this role is applied to a welfare state and a state performs on these grounds, there will be no tormenting, and barbarism.

Islam teaches us the concept of Halal and Haram about income and the circulation of wealth. There are two important means of earning wealth: Halal and Haram. Halal means permitted by God, while Haram means forbidden by God. Between the two, there is a third way, which is permissible or not permissible under circumstances. This concept is important in Islam because it maintains equality, character and stability of law. If something is not permissible in Islam, committing it will be a crime. If that crime isn't reported before the authority, surely God is the highest authority to notice it. He will take action against it sooner or later. That compels a person to perform well³⁰. Theft is haram (forbidden) and the money earned through fraud or theft is Haram. This concept can be found in Islam and no other political theory offers it. Although there are some circumstances, under which western political theories offer the same concept but they are accountable before an authority, not God.

The system of *Sadaqāt*, *Zakāt* and *Alms* are the expenditures in the way of God and basic units of an Islamic welfare state. *Zakāt* is a type of Tax paid by certain Muslims in normal times on agriculture, mines, industry, pasturing herds and commerce³¹. *Sadaqāt* are obligatory, while *Alms* are not fixed or obligatory, but a form of charity similar to *Sadaqāt*. *Alms* are a voluntary charity. These three pillars of the state's economic system help the state to help the poor and needy.

“And what Allah restored to His Messenger from the people of the towns - it is for Allah and for the Messenger and for [his] near relatives and orphans and the [stranded] traveller - so that it will not be a perpetual distribution among the rich from among you. And whatever the Messenger has given you

²⁸op. ct.;Bukhari, p. 112.

²⁹op. ct.; Chappra, **The islamic welfare state and its role in the economy**.

³⁰ibid

³¹Ahmad, Dr. Anis , Social welfare: a basic Islamic value, 1997, Hamdard Islamicus, p. vol xx.

- take; and what he has forbidden you - refrain from. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is severe in penalty”³².

The system of *Sadaqāt* is for the needy and the poor, as explained in the Quran. Needy (*fuqarā*) and poor (*Masākin*) are synonymous to some scholars because Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) never distinguished between them. Although some scholar distinguished *Masākin* and *Fuqarā* saying, *Fuqarā* are poor Muslims while *Masākin* are poor non-Muslims living among Muslims³³. The author of *Futūh al-baladan* cited an incident of a Caliph who awarded pensions to non-Muslims living among Muslims. These pensions were collected from Zakat, paid by Muslims. Although some jurists like *Imam Al-Shafi’i* emphasised that the term *fuqarā* and *masākin* are similar but God used them to make a double provision³⁴.

Another way to collect revenue is the salaries of functioning bodies working as officers in an Islamic state like zakat collectors, accountants, auditors and controllers of expenditures. It expands to the entire administration: civil, military or political. *Al-Baladhuri* quoted an incident, in his *Futūh al-baladan*, in which the second caliph *Umar bin Al-Khattab* asked the governor of Syria for an expert Greek to put accounts in order³⁵.

There are other terms used in the Quran as a component of an Islamic welfare state, including Secret funds and freeing the necks. Dr Anis Ahmad explained, it in his article published in *Hamdard Islamicus*; that Quran uses the phrase “whose hearts are to be won” which includes four kinds of expenditures; (1) The aid of Muslims (2) abstaining from harming Muslims, (3) inviting non-Muslims to Islam, (4) inviting their families to Islam³⁶. To spend on these four types is obligatory and permissible. Another term is 'Freeing the necks'. It has two meanings: (1) freeing a slave, (2) freeing a prisoner of war. Freeing a slave or a prisoner of war is an act of charity. Aiding prisoners to buy their freedom is recommended under the Islamic state, in which they earn their living and freedom. It is a type of payment to aid a prisoner to buy his freedom. These acts define the ingredients of an Islamic state.

5.4 Orientalists’ critique on Islamic Welfare state

³²op. ct.; Q.59:7, The Noble Quran.

³³Yūsuf’s, Abū. *Kitāb al-kharāj*. London : E. J. Brill, 1969.

³⁴Balādhurī, Aḥmad ibn Yaḥyá. *Futuh al-buldan*. 1916.

³⁵op.ct.;Chapra, **The Islamic welfare state and its role in the economy**.

³⁶op. ct.;Ahmad, Dr. Anis, **Social welfare: a basic Islamic value**. p. vol xx.

The concept of Welfare state in the post-modern world is a basic demand by every country. Although it seems impossible; because a strict code of taxes and revision in economic laws is mandatory to implement a unit of welfare system inside a state. The Islamic concept of Welfare state is different from western and Marxian concepts. In the western world, economic welfare is the sole purpose of the state; while in an Islamic welfare state, economic welfare is just a part of it because Islamic welfare system is comprehensive³⁷.

The duties of an Islamic welfare state are elaborated in the Quranic verses. The sovereignty of God is the fundamental pillar of an Islamic state as stated in the Quran: "To God belongs the sovereignty of heavens and earth"³⁸. God is the supreme lord of everything; he feeds and protects the creation. He is the creator of life and death and every law given by God is supreme and just. He has power over all things³⁹. The concept of welfare and Zakat in the time of peace and war is stated in the Quran;

"And know that anything you obtain of war booty - then indeed, for Allah is one-fifth of it and for the Messenger and for [his] near relatives and the orphans, the needy, and the [stranded] traveller, if you have believed in Allah and in that which We sent down to Our Servant on the day of criterion - the day when the two armies met. And Allah, over all things, is competent"⁴⁰.

"Zakat expenditures are only for the poor and for the needy and for those employed to collect [zakat] and for bringing hearts together [for Islam] and for freeing captives [or slaves] and for those in debt and for the cause of Allah and for the [stranded] traveller - an obligation [imposed] by Allah. And Allah is Knowing and Wise"⁴¹.

The tradition of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) emphasised the role of welfare in a state and community. Here are some traditions reported by authentic

³⁷ op.ct.; Petring, Alexander. **Welfare state and social democracy**.

³⁸ op.ct.; The message of the Quran, p. 42:48.

³⁹ Ibid; p. 42:48.

⁴⁰ op. ct.; Q.8:41, The Noble Quran.

⁴¹ op. ct.; Q.9:60, The Noble Quran.

sources, claiming that mutual charity is a way of life and mutual caring is the base of a welfare state.

a) "Narrated Ibn Abbas (RA): Allah's Apostle (ﷺ) said to Muadh bin Jabal when he sent him to Yemen. "You will come to the people of Scripture, and when you reach them, invite them to testify that none has the right to be worshipped except Allah and that Muhammad is His Apostle. And if they obey you in that, then tell them that Allah has enjoined on them five prayers to be performed every day and night. And if they obey you in that, then tell them that Allah has enjoined on them Sadaqa to be taken from the rich amongst them and given to the poor amongst them. And if they obey you in that, then be cautious! Don't take their best properties (as Zakat) and be afraid of the curse of an oppressed person as there is no screen between his invocation and Allah⁴²."

b) The government is the guardian of anyone who has no other guardian⁴³.

c) When somebody dies with debt and lefts behind dependents unprovided, the dependents should come to me, because I am their guardian (head of the state)⁴⁴.

d) Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said; If a person dies owing a debt, leaving no property behind. To pay his debt is my duty. If a dying person leaves behind some property, it is for his heirs⁴⁵.

These traditions of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) showed us a way towards the welfare of human beings. Taking care of the poor and paying their debt is a duty of the head of the state, according to Islamic law. Similarly, the concept of *Zakat* and *Sadaqāt* is unique to ensure welfare across the board under the auspices of an Islamic Welfare state.

⁴²op. ct.;Bukhārī

⁴³Ashas, Imam Abu Dawood Sulaiman b. **Sunan Abi Dawood**, Sunan Trimdhi. Lahore : Fareed Book stall Urdu Bazar , 1998.

⁴⁴op. ct.;Bukhārī

⁴⁵Ibid

Conclusion:

There are ample philosophical and political theories dealing with the welfare state mechanism. The welfare states shaped under the ideologies of Capitalism and Communism did provide social and economic welfare to its people but in ultimate analysis, these states have failed to evolve a balanced system in their societies. Capitalism provides more freedom to common man, but it does not offer spiritual laws to check the immoral behaviours by the individuals or institutes. If there are no laws under certain circumstances, then individuals can force to make laws of their own choice. That's how law-making bodies are compelled to change the law according to an individual's demand. While in Islam, supreme law is made by God and no individual can change it. Like capitalism, Islam accepts freedom of enterprise. The profit motive is allowed in Islam but to a limited extent, so that poor can get the same thing in order. Both socialism and capitalism offer equality on economic grounds, but there are some flaws. Socialism, as conceived by Marx, allows it by negation and pressurising an individual's freedom. While, capitalism, being a secular ideology is, at best, morally neutral. In contrast, Islam stands on both material and spiritual aspects of life and emphasises on economic well-being based on moral values. Hence, the Islamic welfare state is neither socialist nor capitalist and bears no fundamental resemblance to any other form of state. It has its unique identity based on values of its own and is guided by goals of its own with spiritual imperatives to ensure a just distribution of income and wealth. Therefore, as far as the mechanism of welfare system under the concept of a welfare state is concerned, Islam is much balanced and all-encompassing and takes care of men's spiritual as well as material and intellectual needs.

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