Environmental Education through Islamic Lens: Values and Practices

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Abstract. Faced with mounting environmental issues, the convergence of religious beliefs and ecological consciousness appears as a critical domain for long-term solutions. This article examines environmental education via an Islamic lens, revealing the rich tapestry of environmental lessons woven within Islamic tradition. As global challenges such as climate change, deforestation, and pollution worsen, varied cultural and religious viewpoints become increasingly important for comprehensive understanding. Islam, as a holistic way of life, uniquely defines humanity's interaction with the natural world, providing direction through the Qur'an and Prophet Muhammad's teachings. This research looks on the ethical foundations of Islamic environmentalism, focusing on stewardship, interconnectedness, and moderation. It goes on to look at practical applications of environmental sustenance in everyday life, with a focus on water conservation, sustainable agriculture, and ethical consumption. The research also looks into the emotional well-being promoted by Islamic environmental education, focusing on mindfulness, purpose, and coping methods. Finally, the importance of Islamic environmental education in community involvement and social cohesion is examined, highlighting its ability to motivate collective action and develop links among various populations. This research contributes to a worldwide conversation on sustainable practices, across cultural and religious divides and establishing a shared commitment to environmental stewardship.

1 Introduction

In an era of serious environmental challenges, the convergence of religious beliefs and ecological consciousness has emerged as a focal point for solving sustainability issues [1]. This article dives into the issue of environmental education through an Islamic lens with the goal of exploring the rich tapestry of environmental teachings buried within the Islamic heritage. As the globe grapples with the effects of climate change, deforestation, and pollution, it becomes increasingly important to draw insights from many cultural and religious viewpoints [2].

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Islam, as a comprehensive way of life, offers a unique viewpoint on humanity's interaction with the natural world. The Quran, Islam's holy book, and the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be upon Him) provide instruction on responsible Earth care [3, 4]. Islamic teachings emphasise the moral and ethical components of environmental protection, from verses emphasising the interdependence of all creation to directions on resource judiciousness. This article examines how these principles might inform and shape environmental education activities around the world.

Islamic environmentalism's ethical basis extends beyond academic debate to actual implementations in daily life, reflecting a seamless integration of spiritual values with practical applications. Water conservation, a fundamental tenet in Islamic teachings, finds expression in rituals such as ablution (wudu), emphasizing the importance of preserving this life-sustaining resource [5]. Sustainable agriculture, guided by Islamic principles of moderation (wastefulness is discouraged) and fairness in distribution, aligns with contemporary environmental concepts. Ethical consumption, underscored by the Islamic notion of moderation and avoiding extravagance, encourages a mindful approach towards resources and waste reduction [6].

It is critical to engage varied perspectives in the pursuit of sustainable solutions as we negotiate the complexities of the modern environmental challenge. The integration of Islamic beliefs with environmental education not only improves the conversation, but also gives a comprehensive framework for solving contemporary environmental concerns [7]. This study aspires to contribute to a worldwide discussion on sustainable practises that transcend cultural and religious boundaries by encouraging an understanding of the ethical components of environmental stewardship within an Islamic setting. In doing so, we hope to instil a feeling of social responsibility and a shared commitment to preserve the planet for future generations.

2 Method

This study examines the significance of Environmental Education via an Islamic lens using qualitative methods and a literature study approach. Dunn defines literature study (library study) as "collecting data by studying books and documents related to research points" [8]. Therefore, it can be stated that a literature study is any attempt to collect knowledge that is relevant to the topic or will be researched [9]. Scientific books, research reports, scientific essays, theses and dissertations, laws, legislation, yearbooks, encyclopaedias, and written sources, both printed and electronic, can all be used to get knowledge. The theories that underpin the topic and the field to be investigated are studied in literature studies.

The hunch of literature will examine the connection between these ideals and contemporary environmental issues, emphasising how Islamic teachings advocate for responsible environmental management. Furthermore, historical examples of environmental stewardship within Islamic civilizations will be painstakingly investigated, offering light on long-lasting practises. The research attempts to not only synthesise existing knowledge but also to identify gaps, establish linkages, and add to the emerging debate on the junction of Islamic values and environmental education using this literature-centric approach.

3 Ethical Foundations of Islamic Environmentalism

Environmental ethics within the Islamic tradition are deeply ingrained in the teachings of the Quran and the practices of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). At its core, Islamic environmentalism rests on the concept of stewardship (khilafah), emphasizing humanity's role as custodians of the Earth. This ethical foundation posits that humans are entrusted by the Divine to responsibly manage and care for the natural world [7].
The notion of stewardship in Islamic environmental ethics extends beyond a mere acknowledgment of responsibility; it underscores the moral and spiritual dimensions of environmental care [1]. The Quran emphasizes the interconnectedness of all creation, portraying the natural world as signs (ayat) of Allah. This perspective invites contemplation and reflection on the beauty and complexity of the environment, fostering a profound sense of reverence for the Creator's handiwork [4]. Discussions around these ethical foundations often center on the spiritual significance of environmental stewardship, highlighting how the care for the Earth is inseparable from the larger Islamic ethos of worship and gratitude.

Moreover, the principle of moderation (wasatiyyah) is integral to Islamic environmental ethics, guiding believers toward a balanced and sustainable way of life. This ethical injunction against extravagance extends to the use of natural resources, reinforcing the idea that sustainable living is not only an environmental imperative but also a moral obligation [10]. The discussions on the ethical foundations of Islamic environmentalism, therefore, delve into how the principles of moderation and balance resonate with contemporary notions of ecological sustainability and responsible resource management [6]. In the context of these ethical foundations, discussions often revolve around the proactive role of Islamic teachings in shaping environmental behaviour [11]. The Quranic principles not only provide a moral framework but also offer practical guidance on how to navigate the challenges posed by environmental degradation. The concept of accountability (muhasabah) features prominently, emphasizing that individuals will be answerable for their actions, including their treatment of the environment, in the Hereafter. This moral accountability serves as a powerful motivator for believers to adopt environmentally responsible behaviours, tying ethical considerations to a deeper sense of spiritual responsibility [12].

In summary, the ethical foundations of Islamic environmentalism form a comprehensive framework that intertwines spiritual, moral, and practical dimensions. These foundations, rooted in the Quran and the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be upon Him), offer a profound and holistic perspective on humanity's relationship with the environment. Discussions on this topic contribute to a nuanced understanding of how Islamic ethics can inspire and guide environmental stewardship, promoting a harmonious and sustainable coexistence with the natural world.

4 Practical Applications of Environment Sustenance in Daily Life

The integration of environmental principles into daily life within an Islamic context extends far beyond theoretical discussions, finding expression in the practical aspects of individual and communal living. Water conservation stands out as a fundamental practice deeply embedded in Islamic rituals and daily activities. The act of ablution (wudhu) before prayers serves as a prime example, where Muslims are encouraged to use water judiciously, emphasizing the importance of preserving this life-sustaining resource [13, 14]. These practical applications of water conservation not only align with contemporary environmental concerns but also highlight the seamless integration of religious rituals with environmentally responsible behaviour.

Sustainable agriculture, guided by Islamic principles of moderation (wasatiyyah) and fairness in distribution, represents another tangible manifestation of environmental sustenance in daily life. The Quranic injunctions against wastefulness and the promotion of justice in resource distribution provide a strong ethical foundation for agricultural practices [15]. Discussions surrounding sustainable agriculture within an Islamic framework delve into the practical implications of these principles, exploring how they influence farming techniques, land use, and food production. By aligning with modern environmental concepts
Islamic agricultural practices offer a blueprint for promoting biodiversity, soil health, and responsible land management.

Ethical consumption, a principle underscored by the Islamic notion of moderation and the avoidance of extravagance, permeates various aspects of daily life. This includes choices related to food, clothing, and other material possessions. The discussions on ethical consumption explore how Islamic values guide individuals in making mindful choices that prioritize sustainability and minimize environmental impact. From the selection of ethically sourced and halal food products to the promotion of fair trade practices, these practical applications illustrate the compatibility between Islamic ethics and contemporary environmental ideals. The incorporation of ethical consumption into daily routines becomes a means through which individuals express their commitment to environmental stewardship.

Moreover, the practical applications of environmental sustenance in daily life provide an opportunity to demonstrate the immediate and tangible benefits of infusing Islamic beliefs into environmental education programs. By investigating and promoting these practices, discussions aim to showcase the potential positive impact on individual behaviour and communal lifestyles. The examination of everyday routines and rituals serves not only to highlight the compatibility of Islamic values with environmental goals but also to inspire individuals to adopt environmentally responsible behaviours in their daily lives.

To sum up, the practical applications of environmental sustenance within an Islamic framework offer a blueprint for harmonizing religious values with contemporary environmental challenges. Discussions on this topic contribute to a nuanced understanding of how Islamic principles can be translated into tangible actions, fostering a holistic approach to sustainable living. By exploring the day-to-day manifestations of environmental ethics, the research contributes to the broader discourse on the intersection of religious values and practical environmental stewardship in the modern world.

5 Emotional Well-being in Islamic Environmental Education

The exploration of emotional well-being within the context of Islamic environmental education unveils a multifaceted connection between spiritual teachings and individual mental states. Islamic environmental education, with its emphasis on the interconnectedness of all creation and the divine stewardship entrusted to humanity, contributes to a profound sense of purpose and connection. The Quranic verses that portray the natural world as signs (ayat) of God invite contemplation and reflection, fostering a deep emotional connection to the environment. This emotional resonance provides individuals with a source of solace, instilling a sense of awe and gratitude for the beauty and complexity of the world around them. Central to discussions on emotional well-being is the concept of mindfulness embedded in Islamic environmental ethics. The practice of mindfulness, encouraged through reflection on the signs of God in nature, offers individuals a way to cultivate a present-moment awareness. This heightened awareness not only deepens the connection to the environment but also contributes to emotional well-being by reducing stress and promoting a sense of calm and centeredness. Islamic environmental education, therefore, becomes a vehicle for nurturing emotional resilience and fostering a positive mental state through the cultivation of mindfulness in the contemplation of nature.

Furthermore, the ethical foundations of Islamic environmentalism, with their emphasis on stewardship and accountability, provide a sense of agency and purpose that positively impacts emotional well-being. The understanding that individuals are entrusted by the Divine with the responsibility of caring for the Earth creates a sense of meaningful engagement. This sense of purpose contributes to emotional well-being by instilling a feeling of responsibility and commitment to a greater cause, transcending individual concerns and fostering a sense of fulfilment derived from contributing to the well-being of the planet.
The emotional well-being discussions within Islamic environmental education also address the potential alleviation of eco-anxiety and environmental grief. Recognizing the challenges posed by climate change and ecological degradation, Islamic teachings offer a perspective that encourages individuals to take positive action while relying on faith and trust in divine wisdom [20]. This spiritual coping mechanism, intertwined with environmental education, provides emotional support, enabling individuals to navigate the emotional challenges associated with environmental concerns [21].

In summary, discussions on emotional well-being in the context of Islamic environmental education emphasize the transformative potential of spiritual teachings in fostering a positive mental state. By exploring the emotional dimensions of mindfulness, purpose, and coping mechanisms within Islamic environmental ethics, the research contributes to a holistic understanding of the impact of religious values on individual well-being. Islamic environmental education emerges not only as a source of ecological knowledge but also as a pathway to emotional resilience, providing individuals with the tools to navigate the complex emotional landscape associated with contemporary environmental challenges.

6 Community Engagement and Social Cohesion

Islamic environmental education serves as a catalyst for community engagement and social cohesion, forging a collective sense of responsibility for the well-being of the environment [22]. The teachings of Islam emphasize the interconnectedness of humanity and the environment, fostering a communal ethos that extends beyond individual interests. Discussions on community engagement often revolve around how Islamic environmental education encourages collaborative efforts to address environmental challenges, creating a shared vision for sustainable living [23].

One significant aspect of community engagement is the role of Islamic environmental education in promoting collective action. The understanding that environmental stewardship is a shared responsibility emphasizes the importance of collaboration within communities [24]. Discussions on social cohesion within the framework of Islamic environmental education delve into how shared values contribute to the development of strong and resilient communities. The ethical foundations of Islamic environmentalism, including principles of stewardship, moderation, and accountability, provide a common ground that unites individuals in a shared cause. This shared ethical framework becomes a source of social cohesion, transcending differences and fostering a sense of belonging and shared identity [25]. Furthermore, Islamic environmental education contributes to community engagement by inspiring grassroots initiatives and environmental projects. From neighbourhood clean-up campaigns to collaborative efforts in sustainable living, discussions explore how Islamic teachings motivate individuals within communities to take tangible actions for environmental betterment [3]. By examining these initiatives, the research highlights the potential for Islamic environmental education to serve as a catalyst for local activism, thereby strengthening social ties and community bonds.

The role of mosques and Islamic institutions as focal points for community engagement in environmental initiatives is a noteworthy aspect of these discussions [26]. Islamic environmental education encourages the integration of environmental awareness into community activities, Friday sermons, and educational programs [27]. Mosques become hubs for disseminating information, organizing eco-friendly events, and fostering a sense of environmental responsibility within the Muslim community [28, 29]. These initiatives not only enhance community engagement but also contribute to the broader dialogue on the intersection of faith, education, and environmental action [30].
In summary, discussions on community engagement and social cohesion within the context of Islamic environmental education underscore the transformative potential of religious teachings in fostering a sense of collective responsibility. By examining the ways in which Islamic values encourage collaboration, shared ethical commitments, and grassroots initiatives, the research contributes to a deeper understanding of how faith-based environmental education can shape resilient and connected communities. Islamic environmental education emerges not only as a source of individual transformation but also as a powerful force for building cohesive and environmentally conscious communities.

7 Conclusion

Finally, this study has looked at the various aspects of environmental education via an Islamic perspective, shining light on the ethical foundations, practical applications, emotional well-being, and community engagement within this framework. The Islamic ethical principles of stewardship and moderation give a complete roadmap for sustainable life. From water conservation to ethical consumption, everyday applications demonstrate the seamless integration of Islamic principles with environmental practises. The study of emotional well-being highlights the transforming power of Islamic teachings in developing a positive mental state in the face of contemporary environmental difficulties. Furthermore, the study emphasises the importance of Islamic environmental education in developing community involvement and social solidarity, as well as in creating a common vision for a sustainable future. This study intends to establish a sense of social responsibility and shared commitment to conserving the world for future generations by encouraging awareness and application of the ethical components of environmental stewardship within an Islamic context. Islamic environmental education emerges as a potent catalyst for individual and societal transformation, incorporating environmental concern into the fabric of daily life and community relationships.

References