CROSSROADS BETWEEN MUSLIM SPIRITUALITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

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Abstract

The inherent argument in the study is that spirituality helps refine Muslims' introspective and extrospective awareness and conception towards earth stewardship, extending the capacity for development and environmental sustainability. This study examines the pathways through which spirituality contributes to cultivating and promoting deeper awareness of sustainability and responsibility towards nature among Muslims, with inherent potential for catalyzing action on declining environmental conditions. This conceptual paper draws on the Muslims sources to discuss the framework according to which spirituality re-wires Muslims' perceptions, attitudes and decision-making vis-à-vis the management of natural resources. This study concludes that Muslim spirituality brings forward relevant prospects to re-conceptualizing and re-packaging environmental sustainability and sustainable development in a multicultural and global context. Further research is essential to investigate potential added value by Muslim spiritual capital to a global agenda of sustainability and to cross-cultural environmental development.

Keywords: Muslim spirituality, environmental sustainability, spiritual ecology, eco-education, religious values

Introduction

In this global age, the resynthesizing of sustainability is expected to be increasingly holistic, inclusive, forward, and equitable. It is with such a view that the current study on Islamic spirituality and environmental sustainability is self-generated and not arising as a reaction to the notion of modern man's moral failings as a cause of sustainability's failure. This research presupposes that solid spiritual connection with earth yields meaningful ecological impacts, and that spirituality, which continues to display overwhelming significance to Muslims' business and life, can act as viable catalyst for sustainability in Muslim communities to say the least; with significant potential for paradigm shifts in perception and policy together.[1] Moreover, advancing research on the effects of Muslim spirituality on sustainable development and environmental sustainability however, carries with it several merits, foremost among them, appreciating key driving forces of Muslim communities whilst reinforcing the need for an inclusive global development agenda reflective of indigenous spiritualities and representative of native cultures, alongside broadening stakeholders' engagement towards development, and enriching dialogue on the agenda of development with renewed perspectives.

The study of Muslim spiritual discourse on sustainability continues to be interesting, especially in the light of several global developments like the growing global media interest in Muslim population, their religion and culture, particularly in the 9/11 post era, the recent phenomenal Muslim immigration to Europe alongside its associated needs to understand Muslims dogmas, cultural norms and spiritual needs, and last, the growing industry of Islamic Finance and halal Market. Particularly, the Islamic finance market estimates a value ranging from $1.66 to $2.1 trillion USD, and market size projections expected to reach $3.4 trillion USD by the end of 2018. The halal services and goods market currently consists of over 400 million Muslim consumers and a Muslim buyer base estimated at 1.9 billion distributed over 112 countries. Those factors among many others partly demonstrate the need for exploring the position of Muslim spiritual theory and practice vis-à-vis numerous issues of sustainability, development and environment. This explains the need to explore the Muslims' plight to sustainability, their approach to complex challenges ahead, and struggles with pressing dilemmas in education, health, security, governance, social justice, and employment.

In this paper, we argue that the quality of resource and environmental management, added to the perception of sustainability, largely reflect spiritual mindfulness, thus both spirituality and ethicality require attention if any discourse on environmental sustainability is to be revisited. We shall discuss spirituality's inherent re-wiring of perceptions, attitudes and decision-making vis-à-vis production, consumption and management of natural resources, and its influence in specific sustainable ecological approaches towards land, water, soil, flora and

[1] The theoretical and religious affiliation of Muslim spirituality poses limitations, yet does not detract from the policy value brought to the fore by the research as it draws on Muslims' referent sources, which continue to inspire and shape Muslims' moral choices and affect their decision-making. Representative of fifty-seven Muslim countries, the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC), an international governmental organization, openly declares strong affirmation of the spiritual, cultural and moral value-based context of its policies in the diverse areas of development and sustainability.

fauna, marine life, and other biological systems. It is according to the relationship between sustainability and spirituality that we choose to discuss the role of Muslim spirituality, not only in enriching the discourse on sustainability, but also in discovering Muslim contribution to the planning, sharing, enriching and guiding of the sustainability agenda.

On Muslim Spirituality

In the following we discuss the concept of Muslim spirituality; especially how it wires the Muslim ethical mindset to earth stewardship, development and environmental sustainability. Spirituality generally seems as vague as sustainability. Canda and Fuhrman refer to spirituality as a universal and fundamental human quality comprising of a search for a sense of meaning, purpose, morality, wellbeing and deeper relationships with the self, others and reality, adding that this may be expresses in a religious or non-religious way.[2] Similarly, Rothman viewed spirituality as an awareness of transcendence and a connection beyond the self to a greater entity or power.[3]

Some however, prefer to strip spirituality off any religious institutionalization, doctrinal denomination, or theological, eschatological and political configurations; they instead, associate it with the subjective experience of the temporal world. For instance, Zohar and Marshall argued that their use of the term 'spiritual' is not indicative of religion or organized belief system. For them, religious organizations and religiously based cultures have undoubtedly developed measures of genuine spiritual capital, but have done so within limitations of belief systems, often excluding other religious beliefs, and those ascribed to no faith.[4] Similarly, Van Ness argued that a 'secular spirituality' represents the quest for attaining an optimal relationship between what one truly is, and everything that is.[5]

Muslim spirituality however, is believed to represent an integral ingredient in the Islamic religious and ethical map, and further represents an experiential state of piety and devotion, highlighting the intrinsic essence of man's faith in God and his quintessential connection with the Divine. Commonly known as '*tazkiyyatul-ruh*' (purification of the spirit) or '*ruhaniyyah*', Muslim spirituality represents a fundamental component of the Muslim quest for purpose and meaning in life (Qur'an 17: 85). According to Nasr, the term *ruhaniyyah* is the prevalent translation for spirituality; the term deriving from *al-ruh*, meaning spirit. He defined spirituality as the inner spiritual dimension of traditional religions dealing with the nominal and formless that can be experienced directly, and which extends beyond mental categories, but is not anti-intellectual.[6] This view finds support in the Muslim spiritual tradition, which presupposes that neglect of the soul results in corruption of the inner being, and its eventual decline (Qur'an, 91: 9-10).

Essentially, Muslim spirituality is entrenched in the principle of the devotion to God, however, not as ideal self-satisfying journey of inner peace, tranquility and serenity. This is because Muslim spirituality seeks to synchronize the world of reality with that of spirit by way of forging bridges to reforming the inner and outer self, community and surrounding. Islam further intends to promote an integrated approach to esoteric and exoteric realities, mundane and transcendental, deep motives and intentions with actions, individual with community and nature, worship of God with service of humanity. Thus, the core idea of spirituality is one of acquiring intimacy with God whilst ensuring the harmony of inner with the outer, and promoting all that is good, beneficial and constructive. However, irrespective of race, color, language, or ethnicity, the Islamic shapes of spirituality remain uniform throughout; providing spiritualists not only with a discipline of devotional worship, but also with an appreciation of their inner genuine inclinations, expressions, cultural and linguistic manifestations.

Prior to further discussion of the make-up of Muslim spirituality, it is worthwhile shedding light on the position of a relevant yet original concept in the Islamic tradition (Qur'an 30: 30). *Fitrah* (innate nature of man) is believed to represent a fundamental ingredient of the human creation as it shapes the sustainability compass in accordance with the original human pre-dispositions and the potential to ascend towards the divine ideals and effectively unite with nature. According to Ibn Achour, *fitrah* is a specific order encompassing all dimensions of the human

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[2] Edward R. Canda & Leola E. Furman (2010), Spiritual diversity in social work practice: The heart of Helping, New York: Oxford University Press, p. 59.

[3] Juliet Rothman (2009), "Spirituality: What we can teach and how we can teach it?" Journal of Religion and Spirituality in Social Work: Social Thought, Volume 28 (1-2), pp. 161-184.

[4] Danah Zohar & Ian Marshall (2004), *Spiritual Capital Wealth We Can Live by*, San Francisco: Berret-Koehler Publishers Inc., New York: M.E, Sharpe, p. 3.

[5] Peter V. Ness (1996), "Introduction: Spirituality and the Secular Quest. Spirituality and the Secular Quest", Peter Van Ness (ed.), World Spirituality: An Encyclopedic History of the Religious Quest, New York: Crossroad, p. 5.

[6] Hossein Nasr (2006), *Spirituality and Science Convergence or divergence?* The Essential Sophia. World Wisdom Inc., p. 209.

personality or the state in which God created the human species free from all frivolity and bad habits.[7] *Fiṭrah* is not understood to be pre-existing beliefs or virtues; it rather implies predispositions and preferences, which occurs with no prior learning. Ibn Taymiyyah posited that *fiṭrah* is both the divine order in every created being and God's creation of the body and the intellect in addition to being the set of qualities, characteristics, attributes, in which God created humans.[8] Fiṭrah also denotes the primordial covenant of God in the pre-existent world, in which God made with the children of Adam. The implications of *fitrah* necessitates a stand for adherence to the natural religion, which cherishes human nature, esteems its virtuous predispositions, appreciates intellect, and is tolerant towards human error (Ghazali, 2004). In the light of the above, spirituality presumes an active role for man's *fitrah* and hence the symbiotic interfaces with earth, resulting in man's heightened responsibility before God towards earth and nature, and by extension, the incumbent responsibility for personal change and of attuning one's thinking and behavior according to the divine norms regulating those inherent relationships. Such spiritual interconnectivity with earth and the concomitant stewardship to it however, are powerfully present in the Islamic literature.

Next, we will delve into the relationships associating spirituality with ethics, morality, and earth. The relational quality of spirituality forms a core theme of the Islamic religion, comprising beliefs, rituals, daily-living behaviors, and knowledge.[9] One key dimension of spirituality is the intimate link it holds with ethics, morality, and social responsibility. Kamali noted that Islam is not concerned with inner spirituality alone, and unless this is manifested in the external conduct of individuals and in societal relations, spirituality decentered from its manifest form can be subjective, misinterpreted, and even seen to be anti-social–as is often said regarding some Sufi movements. For mainstream Sufism, this integration of the inner spiritual self with outer conduct is in line with Islam's over-arching principle of *tawhid*.[10] Such a perspective is entrenched in Muslim philosophy of ethics, morality and law, which seek to generate and simultaneously restore harmony and balance, beginning effectively with restoring a 'sustainable soul'. Islam perceives spirituality not as an exercise in literalness or self-gratification, nor a journey to demean one's accountability and social responsibility or submerge spiritualists in mystical experiences that are detached from nature or hostile towards it. On the contrary, it is set to nurture and sustain social and moral obligation of man towards fellow humans and the environment.

Spirituality sets to resolve inner being's conflicts, help apply wisdom to life, and authenticate spiritual experience by ways of investing in the best interest of the self, others and the surrounding. Through the several routines of prayer, remembrance of the Divine, reflective meditations, thankfulness, and mindfulness, spirituality seeks to drive spiritualists to higher levels of self-satisfaction while facilitating inward introspection, refining of personal and moral character, and sustaining community cohesion and bonds. Throughout, spirituality remains open, transparent, adaptable, accessible, allowing for diversity, creativity, and collectivity. According to Bonab, Miner and Proctor, Muslim fundamental beliefs are lived out daily in spirituality; those include ways of relating to God, to others, nature, and the self.[11] Likewise, in following the set of Islamic religious rites and codes, an individual strives to grow closer to God and in doing so finds personal worth and actualization.

Muslim spirituality also invokes moderate chemistry for the soul, intellect, emotions, and physical body while prescribing earth stewardship and reform as fundamental pre-requisites for inner discipline and vice versa. It continually calls for cultivating, refining, and monitoring one's behavior towards oneself, household, community, and environment, and above all, the Divine. Hanapi maintains that an individual's practice of moderation allows for a healthy pursuit of earthly matters without compromise of the after-life; similarly, a sustainable pursuit of material wealth whilst uplifting the unfortunate.[12] For instance, Muslims' production, distribution and consumption of food is shaped largely by spirituality which sets linkages between inward purification and abundance in resourcefulness, to an extent that one's spirituality ascends in proportion to their servitude in the common interests of the community. This partly highlights the Muslim stance on the need to authenticate spiritual purification with the engendered effects on life, community and environment. Moreover, spirituality invokes four inter-related relationships; the transcendent, the self, the community, and the surrounding, while further requiring a balanced approach and improved mindset to all areas of life, including health and wellbeing, work ethics,

[7] Tahir Ibn Achour (2006), *Treaties on Maqasid al-Shariyyah*, Trans. Mohamed el-Tahir el-Mesawi, United States of America: International Institute of Islamic Thought, p. 79.

[8] Taqi al-Din Ahmad Ibn Taymiyyah (1981), *Dar' Ta'aruḍ al-'Aql wal-Naql*, M. R. Salim. Eds, Riyadh: Saudi Arabia, Volume 4, p. 284.

[9] Ghobary Bonab, Bagher, Maureen Miner, and Marie-Therese Proctor (2013), "Attachment to God in Islamic Spirituality," Journal of Muslim Mental Health, Volume 7 (2), p. 77.

[10] Mohammad H. Kamali (2013), "Tajdid, Islah and Civilizational renewal in Islam," Special Issue: Islamic Perspectives on Civilizational Renewal and Reform, Islam and Civilizational Renewal (ICR), International Institute of Advanced Islamic Studies (IAIS) Malaysia. Volume 4(4), p. 490.

[11] Ghobary, op. cit., p. 78.

[12] Mohd Shukri Hanapi (2014), "The Wasatiyyah (Moderation) Concept in Islamic Epistemology: A Case Study of its Implementation in Malaysia," International Journal of Humanities and Social Science, Volume 4, No. 9(1),

familial relations, community, flora and fauna, natural resources, and every imaginable aspect of human interaction.[13] William C. Chittick illustrated this point further through reference to the Sufi practice:

> One of the major tasks of the Sufi masters is to guide the disciples through the dangers and pitfalls faced by the soul when it meets the Unknown. The realm into which the adept first enters is, after all, the World of Imagination, whose byways never end. It is the domain of the Satans and other deceiving forces. One might say that unveiling opens the door to direct experience of the myriad worlds of Samsara… As we have already seen, the 'states' provide the wayfarers with the sciences of tasting. In other words, by being taken up in a state of love, yearning, fear, thanksgiving, dread, or any other positive psychological and spiritual attribute, to adept gains first-hand knowledge of the unseen realities which these states manifest".[14]

On the Islamic Concept of Development and Sustainability

Sustainability is a long-term commitment that emphasizes among many others, resource conservation, social development, and environmental stewardship. Sustainable development focuses on improved living and future prospects for all by way of wise and calculated investments in the present, or as commonly defined, meeting needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs[15]. Another popular definition of sustainability highlights the need of meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own need.[16] This however, gives rise to the importance of temporal dimensions, which involve inter and intra generational needs.[17] Human needs consist of variety of goods and services in health, education, employment, housing,[18] training, relationships, and includes the conditions for maintaining acceptable life standards for all.[19] For Beder, essential human elements will be culturally determined, and vary by community and individual values.[20]

The economic approach to sustainability based on the Hicks-Landahl concept of maximum flow of income can be generated while maintaining a minimum good stock of assets or capital.[21] This is based on the underlying concept of optimality and economic efficiency applied to the use of scarce resources. However, the social concept of sustainability is people-oriented, and seeks to maintain the stability of social and cultural systems, including the reduction of destructive conflicts.[22] Sustainable development consists of the following pillars; the social, economic, environmental and global ethical and spiritual consciousness. The Earth Charter recognizes the ethical and spiritual as well as the environmental, social, and economic dimensions of the sustainable development challenge.[23]

Reconciling those various concepts and operationalizing them is a major challenge, since all three pillars must be given balanced consideration. The economic and social elements interact to give rise to issues such as intra-generational equity (income distribution) and targeted relief for the poor. The economic-environmental interface has yielded new ideas on valuation and internalization of environmental impacts. Finally, the social-environmental linkage has led to renewed interest in areas like inter-generational equity (rights of future generations) and popular participation. Sustainable development calls for integrating economic growth, social

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[13] Abu Bakr al-Siddiq (634 AD), the first Muslim Caliph instructed his military commanders as follows: "I advise you of ten things relating to the rules of war. Do not kill women, children, or an aged, infirm person. Do not cut down fruit-bearing trees. Do not destroy an inhabited place. Do not slaughter animals except for food. Do not burn bees and do not scatter them. Do not steal from the materials captured in combat, and do not be cowardly." Bayhaqi, 1993, 3: 387.

[14] Chittick C. William, (1989), *Ibn al-'Arabi's Metaphysics of Imagination*, New York: State University of New York Press, p. 263.

[15] Bruntland Report (1987), "UN Documents: Gathering a Body of Global Agreements, NGO Committee on Education of the Conference of NGOs", Retrieved from: http://www.un-documents.net/wced-ocf.htm.

[16] World Commission, (1987), "Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future", retrieved from http://mom.gov.af/Content/files/Bruntland_Report.pdf, p. 43.

[17] Briguglio, Lino, (2003), The Usefulness of Sustainability Indicators, Symposium conducted at Sustainability Indicators for Malta, Valletta, Malta, pp. 1-9.

[18] Hamida Aburounia & Martin Sexton (2004). "Sustainability in Housing from a Social Cultural Perspective in Libya". 5th International Postgraduate Research Conference. pp. 839-856.

[19] Malik A. Khalfan (2002). "Sustainable development and sustainable construction: a literature review for C-SanD", Loughborough: Loughborough University.

[20] Sharon Beder (1993). "The Nature of Sustainable Development". Australia: Scribe Publications, p.7

[21] Robert M. Solow (1986), "On the Intergenerational Allocation and Natural Resources". Scandinavian Journal of Economics, Volume 88 No. 1. Karl-Goran Maler (1990), "Economic Theory and Environmental Degradation: A Survey of Some Problems," Revista de Analisis Economico, Volume 5 (2), pp. 7-17.

[22] Mohan Munasinghe & Jeffery McNeely (1995), "Protected Area Economics and Policy", World Conservation Union and World Bank, Geneva and Washington, D.C

[23] Rockefeller, Steven (2010) "Challenges and opportunities facing the Earth Charter initiative." *Keynote Address at the Conference on an Ethical Framework for a Sustainable World, Ahmedabad, 1-3 November*. Retrieved from earthcharterinaction.org

development and environmental management as interdependent, mutually supportive and reinforcing pillars of long-term development. It also calls for participatory and multi-stakeholder approaches to dealing with development issues, involving a wide range of actors-government, private sector, civil society organizations, institutions of higher learning and research and development partners.[24]

For Morelli, environmental sustainability is a condition of balance, resilience, and interconnectedness that allows human society to satisfy its needs while neither exceeding the capacity of its supporting ecosystems to continue to regenerate the services necessary to meet those needs.[25] He proposed five categories as operational guiding principles of sustainability: Societal Needs, Preservation of Biodiversity; Regenerative Capacity; Reuse and Recycle; Constraints of Nonrenewable Resources and Waste Generation.[26] Specifically, environmental sustainability seeks to avoid depletion or degradation of natural resources and allow for long-term environmental quality. The environmental view of sustainable development focuses on the stability of biological and physical systems.[27]

Similar definitions of sustainability however, place central significance on the role of resources, where approaches that are not sustainable are identified through the contention of resource mismanagement,[28] and that what has been done in the name of "progress" currently represents a self-destructive strategy for meeting basic human needs. Pirages' point is that the shaping of a global perspective on sustainability requires the revisiting of decisive effects of rules and roles in view of the fact that creating a sustainable world not only involves changing how do we use and allocate natural resources, but also the rules and roles of particular societies and social groups in reshaping values and institutions shaped over the course of generations and increasing materialistic affluence.[29] For Caldwell, environmental crisis is an outward manifestation of a crisis of the mind and spirit; it pivot around our nature as creatures, and what we must become in order to survive. For him, there could be no greater misconception of its meaning than to limit its definition to endangered wildlife, manmade structures, and pollution.[30]

In the face of such growing climate crisis and environmental degradation, technological solutions, political regulation or financial instruments alone cannot lead to sustainability. The challenges faced are many, beginning with fighting inequality, poverty, discrimination, exploitation, and the urgency for forest and habitat preservation, empowering communities, promoting cultural diversity, uplifting impoverished communities, researching clean yet equitable energy, and achieving just distribution of food. The need for a paradigm shift on sustainability and development is partially highlighted in the discussion of Jeffry Sachs who posits that current approaches to sustainability are similar to a business-as-usual approach used to manage the complex problems of sustainable development, and particularly challenges of unprecedented climate change, causing rapid rise in rates of resource consumption, environmental degradation, economic stagnation, and social distress.[31] In his 'Sustainability and Spirituality', Carroll examines the inherent pathways crossing sustainability with spirituality, and contends that ecological sustainability should question society's fundamental values.[32] Ulluwishewa discusses spiritual underdevelopment, as the root cause of the failure to achieve sustainability while arguing that sustainable development can only be met by developing the spiritual self. According to Ulluwishewa, development is a spiritual activity which promotes spiritual values and the sharing of material wealth, equity and –ultimately-a higher prioritization of relationships that leads to higher contentment, love and fulfillment. Development which does not cause too much stress on a natural environment is healthy and sustainable.[33]

Next, we turn to discuss the Muslim view of sustainability. The exhortation to engineering a prosperous future is self-evident in the Muslim literature. Beginning with the Muslim primary sources, the Qur'an refers to earth on four hundred and sixty-five occasions; this comes with interesting implications for Muslims' environmental education, especially, with regards to the spiritual need of rethinking environmental responsibility and stewardship. Similarly, Islam appears to favor forward constructive and optimistic planning for prosperous human

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[24] Mohan Munasinghe. (Ed.). (1996), "Environmental impacts of macroeconomic and sectoral policies", World Bank Publications.

[25] John Morelli (2011), "Environmental sustainability: A definition for environmental professionals". Journal of environmental sustainability, Volume *1*(1), p 2.

[26] Ibid

[27] Munasinghe 1995, op cit.

[28] Dennis C. Pirages (1991). Building Sustainable Societies: A Blueprint for a Post-industrial World: A Blueprint for a Post-industrial World, New York: M.E Sharpe, pp. 9-10.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Lynton K. Caldwell (1996), International Environmental Policy: From the Twentieth to the Twenty-first Century (3rd Ed.), USA: Duke University Press, p. 10.

[31] Jeffery D. Sachs (2015). The Age of Sustainable Development. New York, USA: Colombia University Press, pp. 42-43.

[32] Carroll, E. John (2004), Sustainability and Spirituality, USA: Suny Press.

[33] Rohana Ulluwishewa (2014). Spirituality and Sustainable Development. United Kingdom: Palgrave Macmillan.

and economic conditions as is showcased in numerous Qur'anic references. For instance, the Qur'an (12: 45-49) relates Prophet Joseph's recommendation to the King of Egypt on the need for economic planning in a foreseeable harvest crisis, and for effective management of available food resources. The Qur'an (18: 77-82) also draws on the efforts made by Khidr (The Green One), Moses' guide, to rebuild a crumbling wall, which conceals a treasure belonging to orphan children so that they may utilize the wealth in their future.

The Qur'an appears to be very preoccupied with nature and its resources, the position of man in the eco-system (Qur'an, Chapter 2: 22, 29, 117, 164, 255; 3: 189; 5: 17; 14: 32; 17: 44; 20: 6; 21: 16; 24: 41; 31: 20; and 34: 3), as well as the animal kingdom which he declares to be no less important than the human race.[34] The thesis of the Qur'an is that sustainability fundamentally evolves from within; the inner being as a locus of drives, motivation, change, and judgment, which calls for the pursuit of meanings inherent in spiritual devotion, and a constant check of the purity of intents and motives. The Qur'an also alludes to the positive correlation between the state of community's righteousness and the standards of economic prosperity.[35] This perspective highlights the pledge of Islam to reform the inner human space as a fundamental driver of change, which in our context of discussion highlights the need for pursuing ways and means for spirituality in the planning, execution and evaluation of sustainability.[36] Similarly, the Qur'an introduces basic principles for sustainable development and reforms in general, foremost among them are the belief in the oneness of God, vicegerency, malleability, inner purification, responsibility to earth known as '*i'mar*'.[37] Vicegerency (*istikhlaf*) and responsibility to earth (*i'mar*) demonstrates that God wishes for the preservation of resources and that they not be wasted or consumed greedily by a single generation.[38] They both require organized collective efforts, continuously and responsibly maintained throughout the ages.[39]

Along similar lines, one would be particularly interested to the Muslim concept of development '*tanmiyyah*'. Inspired by the Qur'anic philosophy of development, Chapra argues that in all matters, a Muslim's faith is to be prioritized as it generates the worldview, which greatly influences human personality, behavior, life-style, tastes, preferences, attitudes, resources, and ultimately the environment.[40] In another definition, the element of balance is emphasized; hence, sustainable development is that which seeks to establish balance between environmental and socio-economic dimensions, while upholding consumer welfare, economic efficiency, social justice, *shura* (mutual consultation), and charity.[41]

Others highlight the relationship between religious and worldly matters, and hence perceive the environment in its broader context encompassing man's social wellbeing and their economic activities. This comparison draws on the following characteristics of Islamic sustainability and thus differentiates with the current view of sustainability: a) Muslims are religiously bound to manage and prosper the earth under the 'contract' of vicegerency; b) Islam perceives environment or nature in the bigger context; and c) Islam is a way of life to include every spectrum of human life socially, economically, politically.[42] Hassan and Chachi noted that Islam

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[34] The Qur'an states: "There is not an animal (that lives) on the earth, nor a being that flies on its wings, but (forms part of) communities like you. Nothing have we omitted from the Book, and they (all) shall be gathered to their Lord in the end" (Qur'an: 6: 38).

[35] The Qur'an states the following: "Indeed, he will prosper who purifies himself" (Qur'an, 87: 14); (O ye who believe! Devour not usury, doubled and multiplied; but fear God; that ye may (really) prosper) (Quran, 3:30); and, "Had the people of the towns believed and turned righteous, We would have opened for them the blessings of the heaven and the earth; but they rejected the truth, so We seized them by what they were doing." (Qur'an, 7: 96). The Qur'an also states: "Corruption has appeared throughout the land and sea by [reason of] what the hands of people have earned so He may let them taste part of [the consequence of] what they have done that perhaps they will return [to righteousness]" (Qur'an 30: 41; and, "Then We made you successors in the land after them so that We may observe how you will do" (Qur'an 10: 14).

[36] Several verses in the Qur'an point to this principle, chief among them are the following: "Indeed, God will not change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves" (Qur'an, 13: 11).

[37] The Qur'an states: "And it is He who has made you successors upon the earth and has raised some of you above others in degrees [of rank] that He may try you through what He has given you."(Quran, 6: 165). Translation of this verse varied. Pickthall translated it as (He it is who hath placed you as viceroys of the earth and hath exalted some of you in rank above others, that He may try you by (the test of) that which He hath given you); ASAD: (For, He it is who has made you inherit the earth, and has raised some of you by degrees above others, so that He might try you by means of what He has bestowed upon you.); Yusuf Ali: It is He who hath made you (His) agents inheritors of the earth: He hath raised you in ranks some above others: that he may try you in the gifts He hath given you).

[38] The Qur'an reference to the story of Adam's appointment as vicegerent of God draws some insights alluding to the Quranic perspective on sustainability, which honors life and stands against mischief, and more interestingly capitalize on knowledge and education (knowledge of the names). The Qur'an (2: 29-31) states: "He it is Who created for you all that is in the earth. And He directed Himself to the heaven, so He made them complete seven heavens; and He is Knower of all things. And when thy Lord said to the angels, I am going to place a ruler in the earth, they said: Wilt Thou place in it such as make mischief in it and shed blood? And we celebrate Thy praise and extol Thy holiness. He said: Surely I know what you know not. And He taught Adam all the names, then presented them to the angels; He said: Tell Me the names of those if you are right".

[39] Rajab M. Kamil, (2017). "Al-Tanmiyyah al-Mustadamah fil Qur'an". Majallat al-Buhuth wal-Dirasat al-Quraniyyah, Volume 10(16), pp. 29.

[40] Muhammed U. Chapra, Shiraz Khan & Anes Al Shaikh-Ali (2008), "The Islamic vision of development in the light of maqasid al-Shariah", Iiit, Volume 15, p. 119.

[41] Hamida Aburounia & Martin Sexton (2004). "Sustainability in Housing from a Social Cultural Perspective in Libya". 5th International Postgraduate Research Conference. pp. 839-856.

[42] Azila A. Sarkawi, Alias Abdullah & Norimah M. Dali (2016), "The Concept of Sustainability from the Islamic Perspectives". International Journal of Business, Economics and Law, Volume 9(5), p.115.

establishes guiding principles in the development of appropriate models of sustainable development and draw attention to basic principles of Islam's holistic nature, redefining true ownership, the *khalifah* on earth, Islam's objection to environmental abuse, waste and destruction, and the need for *tazkiyah* (purification and growth).[43]

The above discussion draws attention to the need for rethinking the discourse of sustainability entirely, more specifically, reconnecting it to the spiritual and moral capital of man. Given the multi-dimensional nature of the current environmental crisis, there is a need to consider the moral and spiritual faces of the current global challenges as essential to long-term solutions. This involves an address to man's unchecked, rapacious approaches to managing earth's natural resources, rising global temperatures, increased toxic emissions, polluted land and water bodies, declining natural resources, equitable resource distribution amongst communities and nations, and spirituality as a remedying alternative. For growth and development to be sustainable, spiritual awakening and discipline altogether need to be incorporated in the human development algorithm. Such incorporation touches key issues including the ways, modes and styles through which humans interact with the environment, and raises further critical discussions pertaining to the reversal of sustainability and of managing ecosystem crises or balancing the currently disruptive relationship between man and his surroundings. Such spiritual review becomes inevitable in light of failing material and technological remedies to problems and challenges of sustainability.

Ophuls sees that in light of diminishing possibilities for material development leaves us with little choice but to foster spiritual development and that real commitment to stewardship requires a change of heart. He further maintained that the natural resources scarcity can be viewed as a moral crisis in which environmental destruction is a reflection of the spiritual wasteland within. To him, the sickness of the earth reflects the modern industrial man's soul sickness, diseased with endless gaining and spending that can never satisfy his deeper aspirations and must be eventually end in cultural, spiritual, and physical death. He noted that a state's newfound morality must involve a movement from matter toward spirit, not simply in the sense that material pursuits and values will inevitably be deemphasized and restrained by self-interest necessity, but also that a recovery or rediscovery of virtue and sanctity will take place. Ophuls further argues that canons higher than self-interests ad individualistic wants are necessary for men to live in productive harmony with themselves and with others.[44]

Along similar lines, Zohar and Marshall believed in an intrinsic link between spiritual capital and sustainability. For them, no other form of capital operates without an underlying basis of spiritual capital. The wealth of meanings, values, and higher motivations of spiritual capital are necessary to a sustainable society. Individuals, organizations, and cultures that possess spiritual capital will in turn be more sustainable, having developed qualities including a broader, value-based vision, global concern and compassion, long-term thinking, spontaneity (hence flexibility and adaptability), and an ability to learn from and make positive use of adversity.[45] Dhiman argued that spirituality and sustainability are vitally interlinked. For him, the underdeveloped spiritual dimension of a being can result in pleasure-seeking automatons, plundering the planet in a mindless race called progress, greedily pursuing material wealth, creating social disharmony and the obliteration of natural resources. He further argued that there is no sustainability without spirituality, and that for material development to be sustainable, spiritual advancement must be incorporated into the human development algorithm. Finally, political and economic thinking should be attuned to spirituality rather than materialism—and economic model without moral consideration is a failed one.[46]

Sardar considers the roots of present day ecological crises as axiomatic, for they lie in the very mindset belief and value structures, which shape human relationship with nature, with each other and the lifestyle. This reasoning leads to the idea that unless man comes to terms with his own nature, returns to his intrinsic good, taps into his potential and capabilities, develops the spiritual and intuitive character, cultivates inter-connectivity with nature, checks destructive inclinations, and synthesizes a harmonious interaction with the world; proposed solutions to the environment and development in general, shall remain incomplete to say the least.[47] This may be understandable in view of dominant values and attitudes that shape human behavior towards planetary biodiversity and ecosystems governed by anthropocentric and utilitarian worldviews permitting the natural world to exist solely to the end of resource accumulation through human exploitation. Protecting the biosphere requires

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[43] Abul Hassan & Abdelkader Chachi (2005), "The role of Islamic financial institutions in sustainable development". Islamic Finance and Economic Development, p. 7.
[44] William Ophuls (1977), "Ecology and the Politics of Scarcity: Prologue to a political theory of the Steady State" W. H. Freeman and Company San Francisco, pp. 231-232.
[45] Danah Zohar & Ian Marshall (2004), *Spiritual Capital Wealth We Can Live by*, San Francisco: Berret-Koehler Publishers Inc., New York: M.E, Sharpe, p. 3.
[46] Satinder K. Dhiman (2016), "Ethics and Spirituality of Sustainability: What Can We All Do?", The Journal of Values-Based Leadership, Volume 9 (1), p 1.
[47] Ziauddin Sardar (1985), Islamic Futures, New York: Mensell Publishing Limited, p. 218.

a deeply rooted base characterized by appreciation of the environment and endorsed by a deep sense of spiritual discipline and moral responsibility. To this end, this manifested vision sees man as the steward of environmental sustainability with spiritual capital as the drive to sustainability's three E's; ecology, economy, and equity.

Some view sustainable development as the mission of providing basic human needs for current times and the future, both material and spiritual; including the right of man throughout time and place to benefit from moral, cultural and social development.[48] The Islamic Declaration on Sustainable Development presented at the UN World Summit on Development in Johannesburg in 2002 and formally presented as the "General Framework of Islamic Agenda for Sustainable Development", re-emphasized the age-long commitment of Islam to environment conservation through sustainable development. The declaration, based on seventeen underlying principles of environmental conservation in Islam, covers areas of economic growth, poverty alleviation, population and urban development, health and environment, natural resources, world trade and globalization, legal and institutional aspects of environment, civil society, awareness, peace, security, and funding.[49]

This discussion also invokes another inter-related issue of the priorities of sustainability and the role spirituality in re-conceptualizing the objectives and priorities of sustainability. Here, the notion of 'Basic Human Needs' (BHN) embraces the following understanding: "...respect and care for the community of life, improve the quality of human life, conserve the Earth's vitality and diversity, minimize the depletion of non-renewable resources, keep within the Earth's carrying capacity, change personal attitudes and practices, enable communities to care for their own environments, provide a national framework for integrating development and conservation and create a global alliance".[50]

As the source of the philosophy and juristic rulings for the organization of human society, Maqasid al-Shari'a (fundamental intents of lawgiver) are imbued with spirituality, human accountability, and awareness of God and of His commands. The Shari'a identifies fundamental intents of the Lawgiver pertaining to life organization, management and improvement, commonly known as Maqasid al-Shari'a (Shari'a intents). The latter revolves around the basic principle of fulfilling, maximizing and promoting interest (*maslaha*) and preventing, removing or reducing harm.[51] Interestingly, the example of Prophet Muhammad sets referential norms for what is good and beneficial. Prophet Mohammed encouraged Muslims to seek education seriously, engage in development by advancing their spiritual and moral character and to exhibit decency, honesty, sympathy, humility, resourcefulness, and leadership. He condemned self-idolatry, alienation, greed, hatred, and discrimination while reinforcing concepts of human dignity, communal interaction, service and social justice. Numerous Islamic traditions point to this mode of thinking and approach to sustainability and further demonstrate Islam's interest with not only the present, but with the holistic well-being of the future as well. Prophet Muhammad is reported to have said: "If the Hour (Judgment Day) is about to be established and one of you is holding a palm shoot, let him take advantage of even one second before the Hour is established to plant it".[52]

Islamic law serves sustainability and environment both directly and indirectly. It sets the fundamental philosophy and vision for conceptualizing and refining the plan and agenda of sustainability, and develops legal and ethical codes for managing environment and natural resources. The power of the legal code however, rests primarily in laying foundational terms for the spiritual health of individuals and communities through reference, devotion, motivation, action, and supplying a rich environment for self-correction, advocacy of truth and justice. Islamic law is committed to both an irreducible and unshakeable engagement with the environment, as reflected in its protection of flora and fauna in *harim* and *hima* grounds, which are effectively reserves for water sources where no human settlement or interference is permitted for preventing pollution. A similar concept is applied to forested regions made accessible during certain periods, such as following pollen harvests[53] with the forest's health and safety in mind. Such attention to the environment also extends to the idea of virgin lands (*mawat*).[54]

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[48] Yahyawi & Aqili. (n.d). *al-Tanmiyyah wal-Masuliyyah al-Ijtimaiyyah min al-Manzur al-Islami*, 122).http://iefpedia.com/arab/wp-content/uploads/2012/11. Retrieved June 4th 2017.

[49] Abdul Haseeb Ansari, Parveen Jamal & Umar Oseni (2012). "Sustainable development: Islamic dimension with special reference to conservation of the environment", Advances in Natural and Applied Sciences, Volume *6*(5), pp. 607-620.

[50] Sharon Beder (1993), "The Nature of Sustainable Development," Australia: Scribe Publications, p.7.

[51] Along similar lines of reasoning, Ibn al-Qayyim posited that the Shari'a is founded upon wisdom and welfare for people in this life and the afterlife. For him, every matter which abandons justice for tyranny, mercy for cruelty, benefit for corruption, and wisdom for foolishness is not a part of the Shari'a even if it was introduced therein by an interpretation" (Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, I'lāmal-Muwaqqi'in. Cairo: Egypt, n.d., 3/11).

[52] Nasir M. Albani (1993), *Sahih al-Adab al-Mufrad* (Ed. 1), Dar al-Siddiq, p. 371.

[53] Eren Güvercin (2012). "The Environmental Crisis is also a Spiritual Crisis," *Qantara.de,* German Foreign Office, 11 May 2009, Web.

[54] Mawat are lands without a specific utility or the right of ownership. Therefore, any individual taking part in the upkeep and caretaking of the land, Muslim or otherwise, with or without the permission of the Muslim ruler is entitled to guardianship of the land. It seems this may entail irrigating the land, creating drainage systems to prevent soil degradation, or even cultivating it. Islamic law takes a firm stance in that a ruler ought to give this land to its reviver.

The hierarchy of the law comprises of three distinct categories: fundamentals, necessities and embellishments. Those Islamic fundamentals seek to preserve belief, life, intellect, progeny of man (human lineage), wealth, freedom, justice, environment, and community/social relations. Ibn 'Achour, a contemporary Muslim legal theorist, defined the *maqasid* according to a broader perspective in which he argued that the overall objective of Islamic legislation is to preserve the social order of the community and insure its healthy progress by promoting well-being and virtue (*salah*) of the human being. What underlie those higher ends is the sense of human responsibility and earth stewardship and a deep sense of submission to the commands of the divine.

The Maqasidic pathways to sustainable development are grounded in the fundamental interest of realizing human needs, and appear rather multidimensional and call for a holistic and balanced approach to life and environment; one which acknowledges the spiritual nature of man, his need to connect with the divine source, and manage oneself and the environment accordingly. It seeks to develop and maintain a balance between environment, economy and the community, and intends to create balanced consumption, economic efficiency, and ecological health according to the perspective of knowledge, spirituality, and moral based development. Such a paradigm shift necessitates the synthesis and integration of faith with reason, spirit with matter, man's individual needs with public interests, human and societal welfare with the ecosystem wellbeing, and present conditions with the aspired future of humanity. This prioritizes the task of drawing man towards humanness, divine consciousness, and spiritual and moral re-discipline through the revisiting of current eco-education syllabi and strategic environmental media campaigns to accommodate man's instinctive and rational aspirations.

Crossroads of Muslim Spirituality, Development and Sustainability

In the following, we seek to map out the broad approaches according to which spirituality interacts with and shape and sustain development and ecological wellness. First, one notices man's inter-connectivity with earth is showcased in the close attention Islam paid to nature, environmental stewardship, and above all, to man, the principal driver of sustainability. The belief in man's creation from dust, clay, black mud and wet earth (Qur'an 23:12) ingrains the spiritualist with a deeper persuasion of similitude, intimacy, and unity of creation with earth (Qur'an, 71: 17-20). Through spiritual practice, those beliefs and persuasions begin to see growth and are expected, under proper education and guidance, to propel resilient eco-spiritual capital resistant to greed, hostility, abuse, enmity, or destruction of planetary resources.[55] It is perhaps in this context and in parallel lines of reasoning that draw on Adam's descent to earth as mentioned in the Qur'an; the narrative highlights a gracious inter-connection with earth and accorded Adam special spiritual attitude and moral responsibility towards earth. What appears to underpin those inherent interactions however are the belief and acknowledgement that the beauty and awe of nature as well as its rich resources are divinely bestowed gifts and blessings demanding the duty of submission and thankfulness to God, and a concomitant responsibility towards the wise management and development of natural resources.

Indications of viable spiritual consciousness towards earth is found in examples of the set criteria for soil purity, teachings of responsible water use in worship purification, the substitution of water with stone or dust in ablution, the regard of water as a source of healing and relief, the Zamzam well's significance in holy pilgrimage, and recommendations for making invocations during rainfall. In addition, several other traditions of Prophet Muhammad elaborate such spiritual linkages, which help bring Muslim spiritualists closer to earth.[56] Among those traditions are the Muslim religious supplications prescribed for times of changing weather conditions whether pertaining to rainfall or snow,[57] windstorms, lightning and thunder, fire, earthquakes, extreme temperatures, calamities and disasters,[58] added to special prayers prescribed for rainy seasons or eclipses. Those spiritual prayers not only continually nourish favorable cognitive and emotional grounds of environmental consciousness but further affect the general bearing of individuals and community vis-à-vis environmental responsibility, stewardship and deep regard for nature.

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[55] The Qur'an is clearly concerned with uprooting all forms of corruption on earth. In one of its many verses, it says: "…and do not commit abuse on the earth, spreading corruption" (Qur'an, 2: 60). In the field of Islamic law, the following Islamic legal maxim states: "Harm should be removed". It forbids all causes and obstructs all avenues leading to harm, and implies adoption the lesser harm courses during conditions of unavoidable major harms.

[56] Prophet Muhammad is reported to have said: "Earth has been made sacred and pure and mosque for me, so whenever the time of prayer comes for any one of you he should pray whenever he is". Dhahabi, 1984.

[57] Prophet Muhammad is reported to have used the following invocation: "O Allah, give water to Your slaves, and Your livestock, and spread Your mercy, and revive Your dead land". Abu Dawud, Sulayman, 2001: 177. He is also reported to have made the following supplications: "O Allah, (bring) beneficial rain clouds; or O Allah, shower upon us abundant rain, beneficial not harmful, swiftly and not delayed". Tabarani, 1995.7: 320.

[58] Prophet Muhammad is reported to have used the following supplication: "To Allah we belong and unto Him is our return. O Allah, recompense me for my affliction and replace it for me with something better." Muslim. Sahih Muslim, 2016. 918.

Through various legal decrees, Islam aims to instill a sense of responsibility towards earth and biosphere reserves into Muslim spiritual conscience, as shown for instance in the consideration of the sacred sites of Makkah and Madinah and all that falls within their boundaries as inviolable sanctuaries where trees and animals cannot be harmed and must be protected.[59] Interestingly, the shared background of spiritual discipline is manifested in the performance of regular congregational prayers, fasting, alms taxes, pilgrimage and other related activities allowing for inner purification all while reforming socio-cultural and economic patterns, thus building upon the energy and potential of diverse communities in improving mutual understanding and the undertaking of development. In the course of spiritual engagement however, pure intents matter; they set a straight path to the Divine, validate deeds and actions, drive personal accountability, and provides solid ground for sustainability. It is according to this perspective that Muslims are reprimanded over dishonesty, deceit, arrogance and artificiality. Moreover, the community is a crucial component to any spiritual endeavor as manifested in Islam's urging of adherents to celebrate spirituality in open community space, such as promoting congregational prayers to express commonalities and attaining a sense of unity. This expression of spirituality through community, not only maintains a normative spiritual practice, but also reinforces heightened spirituality throughout the life of the community and eventual undertaking of environmental responsibility.

Moreover, spirituality helps redefine the meanings and worth of things, re-configure the hierarchy of needs and thresholds of satisfaction, rearrange life priorities and expectations, re-wire the mind from destructive temptations and reshape student attitudes towards needs, wants and other major eco-friendly lifestyle changes. The example of Prophet Muhammad who is reported to have milked his goat, mended his clothes, repaired his shoes, helped with household work, and visited the ill and poor helps demonstrate this philosophy of life. It also seeks to help spiritualists strive for self-mastery, gain control of animalistic desires, free themselves from greed and unchecked consumption modes, and adhere to a minimalist lifestyle while exhorting against needless waste and excess. It also calls for the purity of heart, body, and space; stipulating hygiene and cleanliness as fundamental requirements of spiritual purity. Hence, students are encouraged to observe cleanliness of public spaces and natural ecosystems.

Like many other religious and ethical systems however, Islam assigns central attention to the inner (heart/mind or both) through which the quality of ideas, motivations, interests, choices, and decisions are constantly filtered and routed accordingly. This supported with proper education, can provide the necessary capital for growth and development. It is through capitalizing on the purification of the inner being that spirituality seeks to re-wire thinking on sustainability, refine the inner motivations of man, and re-shape responsibility towards environmental degradation. Spiritual discipline however, operates amid atmospheres of awakening, insightfulness, mindfulness, thoughtfulness, determination, introspective self-accountability, self-questioning, and self-reflection. Reflection reveals the truth and characteristics of the self while reinforcing the persuasion that man is both the source of evils and corruptions, and the inspiration and drive for beauty and perfection. The discussion of those interactions between spirituality and eco-education also invokes interesting perspectives holding that corruption of the inner (heart) causes eventual corruption to the external environment.

Similar to physical bodies, hearts believed to also be subjects of spiritual infections, diseases and contaminations such as pride, love of praise, indolence, and boastfulness, in addition to unlawful acts of stealing, excessiveness, greed, or transgressing the rights of man and the earth. The cure to such spiritual diseases in a spiritual setting requires engagement an acquisition of piety, repentance, wisdom, remembrance of the divine, self-criticism, minimalism, patience, thankfulness, truthfulness, humility, mannerism, and tranquility, in addition to the need for mental and emotional wellbeing, observing a balanced lifestyle, improving attitudes, and elevating of attention, devotion and reverence of the divine. Thus, Muslim spiritualists are encouraged to engage in exercises of self-reflection, scrutiny of inner motives, probing of personal drives, and a constant refining of behavior. However, such spiritual exercises should not be abused for self-blame or demeaning of the self; rather, as a means to strengthen emotional and personal resilience.

At this point however, and in view of the intimacy of the above spiritual themes with Sufism (*tasawwuf*), one needs to note that the latter in as much as it provides rich repositories of extraordinary spiritual traditions may easily suit the design and undertaking of spiritual eco-education curricula or plans for sustainability. The reason being that in its broad spectrum, it requires critical review in view of its reported forms of excessiveness, isolation, subjective experiences, theories, and at times, grave distortions of the spiritual experience and discipline. What

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[59] Fazlun, M. Khalid (2002), *Islam and the Environment, in Social and Economic Dimensions of Global Environmental Change*, Encyclopedia of Global Environmental Change, Timmerman P. John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, Chichester, pp. 332–339. The following tradition of the Prophet Muhammad illustrates the point: "Ibrahim declared Mecca as sacred; I declare Medina, that between the two mountains, as inviolable. No tree should be lopped and no game is to be molested". Albani, 1988, pp. 1271.

is needed rather is a generic module of sustainability education designed for the broader Muslim masses, one that is feasible in both minority and majority settings, capable of integrating most concepts of spiritual moral growth, refining inter-personal ethical relations, strengthening inclusion, equality, participation, responsible citizenship, peace, and dialogue. These, shall enhance corporate accountability alongside mobilization of the law to enforce social standards and capitalize on individuals' built-in spiritual accountability.

Spirituality also invokes attention to the effect of the spiritual inputs resulting from the undertaking of the Islamic fundamental pillars. In their study entitled "Shari'a objectives (Maqasid al-Shari'ah) as a tool of socio-economic policy", Nizam and Larbani posited that performance of prayer (*salat*), possesses significant loading on the religious factor (*din*) and thus, secondary data such as percentage of individuals conducting prayer can be included as a variable in the composite index under dimension *din*.[60] It is perhaps the simplicity, flexibility and accessibility of the daily and seasonal prayers, both compulsory and recommended, that ensures continuous spiritual flow and readiness to connect with the divine in the life of spiritualist. Prayers require Muslims to adhere to body, clothing, and worship site cleanliness; most importantly however, to purify their intents and motives, seek God's forgiveness, act righteously, kindly and generously towards others and towards the environment. Those prayers also contribute at varying scales to developing and sustaining awareness of the divine, nourishing the self-discipline, strengthening community cohesion and the unifying of purpose with other worshippers.

Hamidullah posited that prayers assemble the inhabitants of a locality five times daily, provide them the opportunity of relaxation in the course of the daily monotonous individual duties and avocations to gather the highest and lowest of people in perfect equality. He also maintained that through prayers, believers begin to sense the Sovereignty of God, and live in a state of discipline. Moreover, come time of worship service, believers from across the globe turn towards the same focal point, the Ka'aba or the House of God in Mecca, reminding all of the world community of Muslims, united without distinction of class, race, or region.[61] What prayers provide is not only the ready opportunity for the spiritualist to connect with God, but also forms a prolific atmosphere for self-inspection, self-auditing, reviewing of inner motives and drives, and the potential for improving acts and choices to obtain God's satisfaction and blessings. Hence, prayer and its associated exercise of thoughtfulness, meditation, remembrance of God, and Qur'anic reflection remains perhaps one of the most powerful stations through which Muslims cultivate their spiritual character, refine their personal and moral stamina, regenerate connections with the world, and accordingly reshape their passage through life with deep regards for themes of sustainability and environmental care.

Zakat (purifying alms or taxes) follows similar logic. According to Hamidullah, zakat represents both growth and purification and connotes that one must pay part of his growing wealth in order to purify it. Charity (*sadaqah*) implies that to be true to humanity, one must be charitable towards the less fortunate, entailing duty on the one who possesses.[62] Zakat also applies to harvests, livestock, merchandises, precious metals, fossil fuels, and marine resources, for those are Gods entrusted gift to humankind for good use. In other words, what underlies the human persuasion for wealth is a sense of caretaking and stewardship; Muslims are forbidden to abuse and destroy, but should rather develop way and means to cultivate it, develop its base, strengthen its capital, enjoy it, and share it with others. This renewed understanding views wealth as a trust, dictates forms of income acquisition, consumption, management, distribution, and by extension responsibility towards poverty alleviation and collective wellbeing. Muslims are required to give (2.5%) of their wealth or assets saved over a one-year period in charity to the poor, extend genuine help to the needy, in addition to other virtuous acts of financial support such as giving compensation for excused exemptions from fasting, interest free money lending, endowing goods and properties, exchanging gifts, or bequeathing inheritance.

As additional forms of community support, Islam exhorts its disciples to diversify their community portfolio building, whether through imparting education and capacity building, nurturing positive relations towards one's household, neighbors, wayfarers, ill people, conducting lenient sales, reconciliation, mediation, and removing harm and potential danger from public spaces. For Muslims, such generous acts are spiritually worthwhile as they overcome the ego and draw them closer to the divine. Yet again, what appears to drive and shape the financial and economic behavior at its deepest foundations, is the presence of the Sovereign in business transactions, a resultant spiritual awakening and the pursuit of divine rewards and expiation of sins. Having said that, one may argue that spiritual discipline associated with systematic general education would generate healthy conditions for

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[60] Ismail Nizam & Moussa Larbani (2016). "Chapter 7: A Structural Equation Model of the Maqasid al-Shari'ah as a Socio-economic Policy Tool," Policy Discussion on Maqasid al-Shari'ah for Socio-economic Development in Penerbit KUIS, p. 20.
[61] Muhammed Hamidullah (1973), Introduction to Islam, Sh. Muhammad Ashraf Publishers, 167-168; 222.
[62] Ibid., 186.

energy and water conservation, ecosystems and biodiversity preservation, prevention of pollution and waste, resource efficiency, and mature consumerism not to mention ethical business and trade, improved governance, and realizing of sustainable solutions for business, economy, philanthropy, and corporate social responsibility.

Fasting in the month of Ramadan on the other hand seeks to transform the mere act of abstaining from food and drink into a profound spiritual experience leading to moral and social transformation. Fasting is neither a means of self-mortification or self-punishment intended for causing jeopardy to productivity, economy or undue burdens and harm to life. It is essentially set to strengthen the will of man, deepen his social and humanistic experience, and to adjust the moral compass; those should translate into enhanced levels of community cohesion, deepening of solidarity (*takaful*) with the hungry, poor and the displaced while inspiring strength and resolve for poverty eradication on earth. Fasting seeks to discipline the self, raises deep awareness of the divine, authenticates the spiritualists' attitude towards hungry and poor, and nurture moderate culture of consumption[63] while deepening a profound conscience of others' needs; effectively leading to the formation of a Universalist experience and consciousness about the catastrophism of individualism, selfishness, egoism, waste, and human exploitation.

Spirituality neither presents itself as substitute of the law nor an ideal alternative to eco-education nor to obscure boundaries of environmental responsibility nor mystify the world of human accountability; it rather seeks to influence the veins and hence the foundational philosophy and methods of fulfilling the human needs while integrating them with *maqasid*. Likewise, it acts as a drive for decision making in the domain of ethics, and a viable crystallizer for fulfilling the personal and community needs without compromising environmental wellbeing. This allows for further merging of spiritualists with community needs and exigencies of the environment and development by way of reinforcing one's inner responsibility to God, undertaking a moderate minimalist lifestyle and utilizing all available resources for the wellbeing of the cosmic health. Spirituality acts as a strong definer of man's position on earth; it outlines the approach, fulfillment, and transformation of human needs into capital of piety and integrity; that are expected to add value to the business of production, industry, consumption and re-distribution. The role of spirituality's with respect to the fulfillment of those higher *maqasidic* ends becomes visible with the observation that the law is very much interested in the notion of uprightness (*salah*) in the deduction, operation, promotion and reinforcement of its legal rulings and their accommodation of change.[64] That notion presumes a residual human capital set to raise humans to greater horizons of functionality, allowing for an organic attachment to earth, and guiding man's connection to God, stewardship of earth and constant struggle against greed and selfishness.

In this way, Muslim spirituality sets to reshape the vision of development through re-organizing community needs and priorities, and capitalizing on the reform of man as pre-requisite for effective change. It also acts as a deeper crystallizer leading to the eradication of poverty and hunger, support of health and wellness, ensuring of education for all, endorsing human equality, preserving divine blessing and bounties found on earth, avoiding corruption and abuse of the environment and energy, sustaining equitable working conditions, promoting human equality and justice for all, bringing values to the design and architecture of modern cities and communities, reinforcing responsible production, distribution and consumption, integrating awareness of climate action into the constant spiritual routines, reinforcing care for all species, and striving to materialize peace and justice via restoring peace with God, self and the surrounding environment. Al-Jayyousi states:

> Islam evokes the soul-focused integration of mind and heart in the realization of the essential oneness (*tawhid*). By anchoring the essence of human motivation and intention as 'the construction of Earth' and stewardship, the spiritual principle acts as the causal root which sets the tone for the whole. It drives the integration of the four principles (material, economic, life and social domains). It integrates them in a balanced way to evolve a value-based and objective community able to infuse a common purpose, provide a common foundation and stimulate common resolve. A balanced and full integration of all five principles is essential, however, for conceptualizing and realizing sustainability as a state.[65]

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[63] This principle is well established in the Qur'an. The following are some of related verses: "Eat of the good things which We have provided for you." (Qur'an 2:172); "Eat of what is lawful and wholesome on the earth." (Qur'an 2:168), "O mankind, eat from whatever is on earth that is lawful and good and do not follow the footsteps of Satan. Indeed, he is to you a clear enemy" (Qur'an 2: 168).

[64] According to Chapra, it is necessary to specify the major needs of human beings that must be satisfied to not only raise and sustain their development and well-being, but also enable them to play their roles effectively as khalifahs of God (p. 9). For him, those needs involve the following objectives: 1) Dignity, self-respect, brotherhood and social equality; 2) Justice; 3) Spiritual and moral uplift; 4) Security of life, property and honor; 5) Freedom; 6) Education; 7) Good Governance; 8) Removal of poverty and need fulfillment; 9) Employment and self-employment opportunities; 10) Equitable distribution of income and wealth; 11) Marriage and stable family life; 12) Family and social solidarity; 13) Minimization of crime and anomie; and, 14) Mental health and happiness.

[65] Omar R. Jayyousi, (2012), Islam and Sustainable Development New Worldviews. Farnham: Gower Publishing Limited, pp. 16-19.

On Muslim Spiritual Eco-Education

One last issue pertains to the relationship of spirituality to eco-education. Much has been written recently on environmental and ethical education for sustainability. In this section, we seek to explore the pathways according to which spirituality may affect environmental education and imbue it with meanings and vocation. Prior to such discussion however, we must first draw on some of the current definitions of environmental education. According to Pope Francis, environmental education must "promote a new way of thinking about human beings, life, society and our relationship with nature; otherwise, the paradigm of consumerism will continue to advance, with the help of the media and the highly effective workings of the market" (Francis on). The Belgrade Charter defines the goal of environmental education as developing a world population that is aware of, and concerned about, the environment and its associated problems, while equipped with the knowledge, skills, attitudes, motivations, and commitment to work individually and collectively toward solutions of current problems and the prevention of new ones.[66]

Education for sustainable development is a dynamic concept that utilizes all aspects of public awareness, education and training to create or enhance an understanding of the linkages among the issues of sustainable development and to develop the knowledge, skills, perspectives and values which will empower people of all ages to assume responsibility for creating and enjoying a sustainable future.[67] The Tbilisi Declaration on the other hand sees environmental education as a learning process that increases people's knowledge and awareness of the environment and associated challenges, develops their necessary skills and expertise to address the challenges, and fosters their attitudes, motivations, and commitments to make informed decisions and take responsible action.[68] It also seeks to change people's perceptions about the value of the natural world and teach them how to change environmental behavior; in addition to helping them develop factual knowledge about the natural environment, fostering more positive perceptions about the value of the natural world, developing eco-friendly habits, engaging students in environmental rejuvenation projects, and developing their psychological and spiritual relationship with nature.[69] According to Tblisi Declaration, environmental education consists of the following components: Awareness and sensitivity to the environment and environmental challenges; Knowledge and understanding of the environment and environmental challenges; Attitudes of concern for the environment and motivation to improve or maintain environmental quality; Skills to identify and help resolve environmental challenges; and, Participation in activities that lead to the resolution of environmental challenges.[70]

A review of the related literature reveals genuine interest to further develop and enhance the associated variables, which shape environmental behavior. Neither Muslim spirituality nor religiosity should have an objection to that; In fact it essentially promotes and encourages the development of knowledge, skills, attitudes, motivations, and commitment for they are the key drivers to sustainability. What Muslim spirituality draws attention to is the need to be sensitive to Muslims' spiritual and moral geography as a way to be inclusive in the global age, for Muslims to engage, participate, and reflect on their experiences with eco-education and the rest of the sustainability agenda. This finds support in Tolliver and Tisdell's advocacy of incorporating spirituality into higher education, and relating spirituality as a means of fostering transformation and paradigm shifts. Their view is that learning is more likely to be transformative if it permeates the self, and allows for identifying and embracing interconnectedness.[71]

Spiritual eco-education helps provide additional means for students to construct knowledge, derive meanings from experiences, and move toward authenticity; all while contributing to holistic transformation. For students who are spiritual, such activities can serve as inspiration to examine existing environmental attitudes, question assumptions and beliefs, and through reflection and discourse, transform their view of their place, responsibility, and importance in the natural world. Hunger and Volk described a complex mix of twelve major and minor variables contributing to an individual's environmental behavior.[72] While no single variable is expected to transform environmental attitudes and behaviors sufficiently throughout the learning process to make a sustainable difference in attaining environmental education goals, a responsible combination of factors is far more likely to be successful. To this end, spiritual elements are likely to enhance this success when endogenously

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[66] The Belgrade Charter. (2017). Retrieved from https://www.gdrc.org/uem/ee/belgrade.html. Retrieved August, 2016.

[67] UNESCO (2005), Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, International Implementation Scheme, UNESCO, Paris.

[68] UNESCO (1977), "The Tbilisi Declaration," In Intergovernmental Conference on Environmental Education, pp. 14-26.

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matched to students' demographic. Muslim spirituality is vital to eco-education and may affect it in many different yet deeper ways, both directly and indirectly. Essentially, it places God at the core of the eco-thinking, balances out the transcendent and mundane, soul and matter while promoting living modestly and nurturing one's emotional and cognitive re-connection with earth. Similarly, it influences the human concept and experience of happiness, satisfaction, balance, quality of life, and so forth while ingraining a deeper sense of the divine in the environmental care and re-wiring it to man's self-discipline and reform of the inner. Spirituality complements the learning of concepts, skills, attitudes and technologies that would improve students' perceptions, attitudes and motivations leading them to effectively understand and solve impending environmental challenges. However, it does not pose itself as alternative to current methodologies or pedagogies of school eco-education; it only seeks to re-connect all processes of education and building of care and responsibility back to the inner world, and to re-wire students' persuasions to their inner higher meanings and morality.

Limitations

The conceptual study of spirituality for an estimated population of 1.6 billion people certainly poses limitations of generalization in view of the difficulty of portraying Muslims in a monolithic fashion. However, one must acknowledge the existence of universal ideals of beliefs and religious practices that continue to bond together different schools of thought and sects within Islam. What appears to hold the commonality, and further nurtures the organic integration amongst Muslims is the prescribed system of belief, worship (The five obligations of Islam), laws and moral code of Islam. Those not only justify the generalization of spirituality notions and practices over the understanding and approach to sustainability, environment and development, but also help provide Muslims with the vision and capital required for effective envisioning and execution of sustainability.

Conclusion

Given the significant impact of Muslim spirituality on the Muslim environmental mind-set, it remains to say that there remains a strong need to develop a new perspective on rethinking spiritual eco-education. The following guidelines may be useful in such a process: 1) approach of Muslim spirituality on its own indigenous terms of Muslim piety, self-fulfillment, self-discipline in lifestyle, and through its very inter-connectedness with beliefs, ethics and law; 2) the holistic treatment of spiritual themes, away from secularization, reductionism, or fragmentation of its themes in response to changing needs of development; 3) due attention to the inter-relationships of spirituality with other variables of sustainable education; 4) avoiding the idealized or romanticized relevance of spiritual experiences or a presentation of mystical illuminations as authoritative cases for eco-environment curriculum; 5) filtration of reported spiritual practices detrimental to education and sustainability; 6) espouse spirituality yet with a spirit of tolerance, inclusion, equality, and justice for all; and finally, 7) investing in areas of sustainability that may potentially strengthen the spiritual performance of individuals, groups or communities. Muslim spirituality is shown to be an interesting driver of sustainability and development; it essentially sets a philosophy and approach to life, disciplines the inner motivations of man, nurtures a minimalist behavior, supports effective coping strategies towards changes and crisis, reinforces social responsibility, serves as a positive catalyst for peace and empathy, and strengthens environmental stewardship. Having said that, the review of links associating spirituality and development remain vital. In view of the above, this study stresses the need to undertake further empirical research around the impact of Muslims' spiritual engagement, and explore potential obstacles hindering the implementation of spirituality into a life perspective and transformation into capital for sustainable development. This cannot be understated as it presents access to a sustainability platform of a vast global population and by extension the global village, and therefore when utilized as a mechanism for education and engagement, the ambition of a sustainable future on our planet, hopefully, comes closer to its realization.

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