

Islamic Studies and Contemporary Discourse: Integration of Interconnections Between Islamic Studies and Ecology

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Abstract: The environmental crisis is an ongoing problem. One of the causes is the moral and moral crisis of humans as caliphs on earth. Education has an important role in providing understanding and education about the importance of maintaining the balance of nature within the framework of environmental Islamic education. The purpose of this research is to find out how to prevent and protect the environment through Islamic religious education. This research is library research. The results of this study indicate that preventive measures that can be taken to protect nature are (1) Humans must maintain and protect nature so that it can be enjoyed by the next generation; (2) To save and save on natural resources; (3) Manage and utilize natural resources effectively and efficiently; (4) Minimizing and avoiding actions that can damage nature; (5) Increase development in the economic sector to improve the quality of life so that environmental damage can be avoided; (6) Improving education and research that is adequate, of good quality and can reach all elements of society so that it can maintain nature conservation and prevent damage.

Keywords: Islamic Studies, Ecology, Environmental Education.

Introduction

The discourse on the view of how the relationship between human identity and the conversations that occur between humans, animals and nature continues to fluctuate. The existence of humans coexists with animals and the universe, including things that are instrumental in human life. Therefore, human life has cut itself off from all the needs and comforts that can be obtained from nature. Massive exploitation without regard to the impact on the environment and the chain of life can scorch civilization.

Today, in the modern era, information about various environmental damage is something we usually hear. Ecological damage is becoming more and more common. Losing nature with all its resources can endanger the lives of humans and other living things. Excessive exploitation of nature in inhumane ways is a sign that humans do not

know their own bodies. Awareness of human appreciation of nature cannot be built without the construction of the universe and the interdependence of thought between the two.

The basic problem is the lack of awareness of religious understanding about the equality and intertwining that exists between humans and the universe giving rise to exploitative thoughts. The anthropocentric paradigm views humans as the center of the universe and only humans have temporary value while nature and everything in it is just a tool to satisfy the interests and needs of human life. This lack of spiritual value causes humans to act arbitrarily to nature. The exploitation of nature is identical to the activities of the male world of work as holders of masculine characters such as ambitious and exploratory (Afriyah, 2015). One of the important roles of education is to build belief and understanding of human behavior. Religion has a set of values to

manage, maintain and treat nature which cannot be denied. On that basis, ecological values through religious insight need to be reviewed for consideration in order to prevent humans from damaging the environment.

Materials and Methods

The type of research used in this research is library research. This research collects the data by using collect data from various literature. Libraries are research aimed at gathering materials and information from sources available in the library such as books, journals, reports, documents, or records. The emphasis of library research is to find various theories, laws, arguments, principles, opinions, ideas, and others that can be used to analyze and solve the problem under study. In other words, this research refers to books that have relevance to the problem being discussed. Strictly speaking, library research limits its activities to library collection materials without the need for field research. In the context of this research, the available literature is used as an effort to find preventive efforts in order to provide education in protecting the environment through Islamic education.

Results and Discussion

The Concept of Islamic Education: The Relationship of Religion and Ecology

Terminologically, Islamic education is an effort in order to transfer Islamic values and teachings from parents or educators to children so that they can have the knowledge, understanding, and correct Islamic teachings. According to Al-Ghulayain, Islamic education is an effort to instill noble character in the soul of children during their growth period and to water them with instructions and advice in the form of main values so that they produce virtue in the form of goodness and perfection of life in this world and the hereafter (Suparnis, 2017).

In studying Islamic education, there are several terms *al-tarbiyah*, *al-ta'lim*, and *al-ta'dib*. *Al-tarbiyah* has the meaning of maintaining, raising, and educating also includes the meaning of teaching. *Al-ta'lim* means teaching to educate the human brain. While the term *al-ta'dib* is a special education that expands politeness, instills main values, and enhances morals (Wahidi, 2014). Therefore, Islamic education with an environmental perspective is a guideline or procedure as a provision for students to be able to interact and treat nature according to Islamic concepts (Wardhana, 2019). The approach used is an integrative approach in which environmental subjects direct other subjects. With this clarification, it is hoped that it can provide awareness for students to want to love and protect the environment.

The environment as a shelter for humans is one of the many signs of the greatness of Allah SWT. Islam has principles and ethics that are in line with efforts to protect nature. The concept of ecology or the environment in the Qur'an does not only discuss the relationship between humans and the environment but also has a more complex study of the relationship between Allah, humans, and the universe. The Qur'an itself refers to the environment by the term "all nature" several times. The mention of these several times is evidence that the Qur'an emphasizes the importance of the role of ecology for humans and other living creatures.

Thus, humans as intelligent beings are obliged to maintain the preservation of the universe (*al-hifdz al-'alam*) with all its contents that Allah has created. This is in line with the words of Allah Swt in Qs Al-Baqarah 30: "And remember when your Lord said to the angels: "Indeed I want to make a caliph on earth, the angels said why do you want to make (caliphate) on earth a person who will cause damage to it and shed blood, even though We always glorify You by praising You and purifying You? God says: Verily I know what you do not know."

The above verse in principle frames the existence of three important relationships between Allah, the universe, and humans. In this verse, the word nature is mentioned before the caliph (human) which gives a picture of humans in this

universe only as guests and nature as a house that Allah has created. Therefore, humans as guests cannot exploit nature arbitrarily. This is evidence that the Qur'an expressly forbids humans from making mischief on earth. The position of humans as caliphs on earth (*khalifatullah fil'ard*) makes humans have a moral responsibility to be able to display the attributes of Allah SWT in relation to nature. In managing nature, humans essentially have to act as *khalifatullah fil'ard* or an extension of Allah SWT because he has bestowed the ability in the form of reason and explosive power to humans that other creatures do not have. Therefore, the occurrence of an ecological crisis and environmental destruction in the current era is a sign of the abuse of the position of *khalifatullah fil'ard* held by humans.

Islam and the Environmental Crisis: Damaging Ecological Fitrah

The rise of the phenomenon in various places then becomes the subject of news about the current crisis and environmental damage that is often heard in various media. Islam as a religion that was revealed to be *rahmatan lil'alamin* is expected to provide a solution to this. Islam is a religion that not only brings *aqidah* and *sharia*, but Islam also displays *al-adabi wal al-hadlarah*, and *al-'ilm wa al-tsaqofah* which encourages the integration of interconnections between *al-hadlarah an-nash*, *al-hadlarah al-'lim*, and *al-hadlarah al-falsafah*. Islam with this discourse is expected as a step to encourage efforts to find relevant new applied technologies as an effort to improve the quality of human life and the environment so that ecological balance is realized.

The environmental crisis that occurs can be used as a catalyst for a reassessment of the values, vision, and mission of human life and the existing environment so that they can coexist without destroying their sustainability. Because most humans tend to have a destructive attitude towards nature. Humans are creatures who are never satisfied, always lacking, *tansah ngongso*, and trying to master all that exists. This mindset creates and preserves the massive exploitation of nature in the name of "needs and interests" which can be fatal for all living beings, in Java it is called

sagunging dumadi. This destructive human character in the Javanese cultural order in principle signifies a person who is not finished with himself. So that the principles of life for *memayu hayuning pribadi*, *memayu hayuning keluarga*, *memayu hayuning bangsa*, and *memayu hayuning bawana* are difficult to practice in their lives.

The environmental crisis is further exacerbated by the attitude of humans who are indifferent to the quality of the ethical values and aesthetics of nature, because they view nature not as a partner of life but as a servant for humans. Therefore, human actions like this are the root cause of the destruction of the universe which has an impact on the destruction of life in general. However, not all natural damage is caused by human negligence, natural disasters are one of the causes of natural damage. Whereas in this contemporary era, the cause of environmental damage lies in the values, attitudes, perceptions, and views of the global technological industrial society held by humans in perceiving nature (Fios, 2019).

The increasing number of human activities without regard to ethics and aesthetics in carrying out development to meet all their needs can have a negative effect in the form of the loss of other living things in the natural community. As a result, the harmony of the universe is disturbed, for example the extinction of several types of plants and animals is a clear example of the cruelty of human behavior by destroying other living things for their own interests such as clearing land for plantations, building industrial areas, building shelters, and tall buildings making the life of other creatures that exist in the universe marginalized and displaced so that the balance between humans and the environment can be disturbed. Basically all life in the universe is sacred, so if humans destroy the existing natural order, it means that they have damaged the sanctity of life itself.

Today, ecological damage is at a point of concern. Forests as one of the sources of life and the lungs of the world have been damaged due to human activities who are not responsible for the arguments to fulfill their life needs. Deforestation that is not based on the ethics and aesthetics of the universe not only causes the extinction of some plants and animals but also causes other negative

impacts such as flash floods, landslides, and most importantly, psychological damage to humans themselves. In addition, since the industrial revolution era which caused massive land clearing by burning forests, it also led to an increase in greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide (CO₂) and methane (CH₄). This then becomes a new problem again because it can cause air pollution which is not good if too much is inhaled by humans.

Environmentally Friendly Islamic Education

Today, the environmental emergency is getting more and more concerning. In the name of interests, resource control, and overexploitation by giving power to certain parties to manage natural resources are one of the factors causing damage and crisis of natural resources in the macro-cosmic order. In the world of education, the role of educators and students is needed in order to cope with environmental emergencies. Educators and students must play an active role in tackling environmental emergencies and must increase awareness of the importance of protecting the environment as a human responsibility as part of the universe and *khalifatullah fil'ardh*.

Islamic education is faced with big challenges because it must be able to integrate and connect learning materials or curricula that are not only theoretical in the classroom but must try to direct their students to have a responsible attitude towards nature. For example, with the green environment movement, students are asked to plant one tree in their respective environment. In addition, there is also an emission-free day movement in the educational environment so that reducing air pollution in the span of a day means providing an opportunity for nature to recover itself from what was previously damaged by humans. However, this is difficult to do because of the lack of application of the values of Islamic teachings in the practice of daily life because so far Islamic education has only been limited to the transfer of knowledge without being followed by the transfer of attitudes from educators to students. As a result, Islamic education that has been taught cannot be understood optimally. Islam is understood as a "religion" epistemologically but is not placed as a "religious practice" that has a sense

and good will for the preservation of the universe. This is what makes the epistemological discontinuity in Islamic education.

The principle of integration of interconnections must be a concern of educators to students and needs to be emphasized in the learning process of Islamic education with the aim of increasing sensitivity, ownership, and responsibility as part of the universe. With this increase, it is easier for them to strengthen their role as *khalifatullah fil'ardh* to protect, prevent and preserve nature from the threat of damage. In addition to the principle of attention, the principle of compassion and concern for nature also needs to be emphasized to students. According to Hosein Nasr, the environmental crisis that occurs is caused by the refusal of humans to see God as a real, empirical environment, surrounds humans, and maintains their lives. The environmental damage that has occurred so far is the result of the actions of modern humans who view the environment only as an order of reality without realizing that nature is an environment created by God.

Meanwhile, Amina Wadud assessed that the Koran supports environmental conservation, so it is important to revive the existing role in order to protect and maintain the natural environment and create a life revolution that is in line with Islamic guidance. Today, humans tend to prioritize a consumptive, ambitious, and hedonistic attitude which results in a diminishing sense of wisdom in life. Islam as a religion plays an important role in dealing with the condition of the human mentality. The Qur'an as a way of life (*mabda'al-hayah*) for Muslims can be used to guide how to live and behave better. The principle of mercy or compassion and care is one of the moral principles not only based on considerations of personal interests but also for the benefit of nature. When the love and care for nature is higher, the quality of the human person also increases and is more mature. Therefore, the principles of love and care can replace the principles of rights and obligations into mutual trust, mutual respect, and mutual synergy instead of dominating each other.

Islamic education is expected to put forward the principles of ethics, aesthetics, and compassion as a form of counter-narrative of violence,

confrontation, and domination that prioritizes giving, not just demanding and paying attention, not just wanting attention. With this attitude, it can create an attitude of concern for the universe or the environment in totality without seeing whether nature repays the kindness that has been given or not. This principle encourages humans to always pay attention to nature because it must be understood that there is a close relationship between humans and nature as a unified ecological community. As for Islamic education as a religious element, it puts forward several things as an effort to overcome the environmental crisis, namely it must start from realizing the role of humans as servants of "Abdullah" who must always serve Allah SWT and be responsible for their actions then move on to their role as "*khalifatullah fil'ardh*" so it takes some harmonization of the relationship.

First, harmonization of the relationship between humans and Allah SWT, where humans were created by Allah SWT as mandates and caliphs, then humans must be aware as the only creatures who are endowed with mind, heart, and feelings so that they must be able to appreciate all other creations of Allah SWT. The reason, instinct, and emotion are components that Allah has bestowed upon humans. These components move dynamically according to their respective instincts. The interaction that occurs between the physical material and non-physical components will form a relationship between humans as servants and Allah SWT as creator (Mufid, 2006: 50).

The main task of humans as servants is to serve by worshiping Allah, one form of worship is to preserve the universe. Believers have demands to apply their faith. One way is to maintain and protect the environment as part of faith in Allah SWT. Therefore, maintaining and protecting the environment is one clear proof of human obedience as a servant to Allah SWT. In addition to being Abdullah, humans as *khalifatullah fil'ad* are given the mandate to have a sense of responsibility for the security and preservation of the environment. The more tenuous the relationship between humans and Allah SWT, the human sense of responsibility towards the environment also decreases. In the end, it resulted in a more severe ecological crisis which was also accompanied by a

spiritual crisis and a moral crisis. All crises that occur can be resolved by awakening humans to appreciate the universe as a fellow creation of Allah SWT whose existence must be maintained and protected as a real form of human responsibility.

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Humans get demands to always behave well, especially in their interactions with nature as a mandate. This is in accordance with the word of Allah SWT in Qs Al-Ahzab verse 72. Several things can be done in regulating the environment that can be applied to humans as described in the Qur'an, namely: first, humans must understand their nature is the same as nature as God's creatures. swt. Second, humans must realize the importance of integration between humans and nature in order to create balance, empowerment, and justice. Third, humans must be able to respect the existence of nature; fourth, humans must be wise in utilizing natural resources and not to exploit them. Fifth, humans must practice ecological ethics and cooperate with other humans to protect the environment; and sixth, humans must obey the applicable laws and regulations (Febriani, 2012: 252). Harmonization of the relationship between humans and Allah SWT, humans with themselves, humans with fellow humans and humans with the environment can be realized if it is carried out properly and in balance. The principle of harmonization of the relationship is expected to be an alternative solution in solving the ecological crisis that occurred.

Conclusions

Humans are creatures created by Allah SWT who are endowed with reason, taste, and heart so that they can feel something outside of themselves as a

provision for their position as "abdullah" and "Khalifatullah fil'ardh." The existence of ecological damage and disasters that are getting worse are allegedly due to human activities that exceed limits in exploiting the environment. The attitude of humans who are reluctant to care about nature has also contributed to the worsening ecological crisis. Human actions that arbitrarily in the universe is the root of the problem of the ecological crisis. Islamic education has an important role in building beliefs and understanding of human ecological behavior. Islam teaches the existence of equality and equality for all its people. Wealth is not a measure of caste differences in Islam, but it is piety and faith that are a measure of human differences in the eyes of Allah, so humans must be willing to respect nature and make the best use of it because nature and humans are both created by Allah. This study give recommended that preventive measures that can be taken to protect nature are (1) Humans must maintain and protect nature so that it can be enjoyed by the next generation; (2) To save and save on natural resources; (3) Manage and utilize natural resources effectively and efficiently; (4) Minimizing and avoiding actions that can damage nature; (5) Increase development in the economic sector to improve the quality of life so that environmental damage can be avoided; (6) Improving education and research that is adequate, of good quality and can reach all elements of society so that it can maintain nature conservation and prevent damage.

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