



ROLE OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION ON DECREASING ENVIRONMENTAL DESTRUCTION TREND AT GUILAN PROVINCE, IRAN

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ABSTRACT

Human attitudes towards environment, to a great extent, result from human's being affected by celestial cultures, as one of the critical issues. Islam, as a religion that is beyond time and place, is able to meet all human needs at all eras and contains perfect contents, trainings and strategies about how to face and how to be consistent with environmental phenomenon. Assessing different texts and documents of Islam represent existence of specific attitudes along with environmental and natural resources. The current study was undertaken in order to assess religious education on decreasing environmental destruction trends in Guilan province. Thus, some of the university's religious experts and seminaries of Guilan province were interviewed. We used this statistical method in order to analyze represented responses, since multi-response analysis is a good technique to analyze data resulting from open questions. Results showed that thoughts taken from Islam plays have important roles in keeping with the environment. In this regard, most important presented cases, by experts, were: considering consumption savings, identifying human rights and considering public resources, responsibility and management taken from religion in relation with surroundings, recognizing moral and religious values, futurism, considering next and future generations, love of god and thanksgiving, and also keeping God's gifts, considering religious utterances, emphasizing violence decrease in religious education and its effects on environmental protection, importance given to health and cleansing by Islam.

Keywords: environmental destruction, religious education, religious experts, trends, Guilan province, Iran.

INTRODUCTION

Today, environmental issues are considered by various groups, especially philosophers, scientists and politicians. Most reputable firms in advanced countries know that considering environmental issues "as a major part of their plan and strategic management". Currently, this belief has established that human society needs an "environment revolution" today, after agricultural and industrial revolutions and it seems that the environment was considered as a base for global policy for the first time [1]. Environment refers to all environments that human generations depend upon, directly or indirectly, and his/her activities or life in relation to that [2]. Also, it is represented in an environment definition that "environment is that which contains life processes and acts upon them. Environment is formed by nature, human societies and places which were constructed by human hands or thoughts and surrounds all biological species of earth (i.e., biosphere) [3]. Human attitudes towards the environment, as one critical issue, to great extent results from humans being affected by celestial cultures. It is revealed from the verses of the Quran that, all His creatures, He created adequate, both qualitatively and quantitatively. We have in various verses that: absolutely we defined extent for everything, we created everything as adequate. Everything has a certain extent defined by Him. He created everything adequately, to an exact extent. So it should be used properly in order to be prevented from destruction (both qualitatively and quantitatively) and in addition, being kept for next generations. Whatever is

available in the world and the universe, all is for human well-being and are evidences for praising the Creator. He is the prescriber and determiner of all things and nothing is created without His wisdom and grace [4]. Generally, Islam is a religion that is able to meet all human needs at all eras beyond time and place of contents, perfect trainings and strategies about how to face with any environmental phenomenon. Assessing different texts and documents of Islam represents existence of specific attitudes along with environmental and natural resources. The current study was performed in order to assess religious educations on the increasing environmental degradation trends in Guilan province.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study was done in May 2011. Statistical population of current research consisted of seminary and university religious experts of Guilan province from whom the collection of data was effected through purposeful sampling and semi-structure oriented interview. Thus, 14 people were interviewed. Since multi-responses analysis is good a technique to analyze data resulting from open questions, so this statistical method was used to analyze the represented responses. All given responses to this question were assessed carefully, as a first step. Then, a maximum number of responses were identified by under study people and a number of variables were defined, accordingly. Then given responses were coded and they were analyzed using SPSS16 software. Output data of this



analysis were: response frequencies and percentages plus case frequencies and percentages.

RESULTS

Results of this discussion are given in Table-1. Accordingly, considering consumption, savings and modifying patterns of consumption were represented by 57.14% (8 persons) of religious experts who dedicated themselves to 12.12% of all responses. The importance of cleaning and sanitation were also represented by 7 religious experts and professors and by 10.61% of all represented responses, were ranked 2nd.

Each of the responsibility and management cases originated from religion in relation with surroundings and the recognizing of human rights and were represented by 42.86% of the respondents, separately, to which each of them dedicated themselves to 9.09% of all responses. Futurism and the considering of next and future generations, the love of God and thanksgiving and the keeping of God's gifts were also noted by 5 respondents of whom each dedicated themselves to 7.57% of all responses. Considering verses, traditions, and religious narratives that emphasize environmental morals, emphasis on decreasing violence in religious education and its effect on keeping the environment preserved and identifying moral and religious values had dedication with respect to 6.06% of all responses, separately, and each of them was represented by 4 respondents.

Cases such as green and clean production and considered the sustainability, proper production and coexistence with nature and scientists' emphasis in relation with respect to nature within an Islamic context, also represented by experts that in each case dedicated themselves to 3.03% of all responses. In addition to represented cases, 9 of these experts began to say something about some other management samples taken from Islam, separately, which were: living a simple life as one of the valuable instances for being appreciative of God's Nature, Islam's attention to ontological, anthropological issues and considering Villagers' development and improvement in Islam, education and extension in using resources for proper farming, extending tourism and the correct use of God's valuable gifts, preparing fields of bliss by living in a beautiful, manner, a belief in an individual faith which involves dealing with nature and creatures, correct and logical use of divine

blessings in order to reach a blissful state and the fair keeping of creatures who were created on a basis of natural justice. Hence, people must behave in such a way as to create a balance between Nature's facilities and human needs which are becoming established. Therefore, we can conclude that establishing such a balance is the moral task for each of all Muslims [5]. Earth and all of God's gifts upon this Earth were created for humans and they should be used properly and we should not seek to abuse them because, the correct usage of these resources, along with human benefits and the keeping of them for next and future generations, is an undeniable necessity [6]. It is mentioned in Quran that: maybe you do not know but, God put everything on Earth and in the Heavens for you and He created lot of obvious and hidden Gifts for you, but some people, even without previous knowledge, and with no guidance and Holy book, fight against God. Those that were emphasized in the Quran verses about vital resources and environment involve Human efforts to use them properly. Thus, improper changes and the destroying of each part of Nature, caused life to be endangered and it has led to the destruction of vital resources and, finally at best, to Human destruction [7].

The entrances of contamination and impurity to this universe in which God placed a certain order, would result in disorder. God says something, in Ayah No.12 of Mohammad Sura, with an emphasis on this point, that he created nothing in the world without thought, or in an aimless or invaluable manner. Therefore, the Human consumption of Nature should be enough and at a correct level so that there is a balance being established between Human needs and Nature's facilities, with which God provided us and, also, the sharing with others must be considered, otherwise, it would cause disorder in Nature and an oppression of Himself. Accordingly, prodigality and extravagance and acts of contamination and destruction within Nature are in opposition with Islam education and have disadvantages for Human interests and resources [5]. Base on Quranic verses, it can be said that all environmental regulations were contained in God, His prophet and Innocent Imams' utterances and, in fact, a basis of different sciences are available in our Islam, but the interpretation and usage of them is a Science and a scholar's duty as a base for long era-continuum conditions [4].

**Table-1.** Frequency of management thoughts and samples taken from Islam in order to decrease environment destruction trend.

No.	Management samples from Islam	Frequency of responses	Percentage of responses	Percentage of cases
1	Considering save-consuming and modifying consumption pattern	8	12.12	57.14
2	Importance given to sanitation and cleaning by Islam	7	10.61	50.00
3	Responsibility and management from religion in relation to surroundings	6	9.09	42.86
4	Recognizing human rights and considering natural resources	6	9.09	42.86
5	Futurism and considering next generations	5	7.57	35.71
6	Love of god and thanksgiving and keeping God's gifts	5	7.57	35.71
7	Considering verses , utterances and religious narratives which noted environmental morality	4	6.06	28.27
8	Emphasis on decreasing violence in religious educations and its effect on keeping environment	4	6.06	28.57
9	Identifying moral and religious values	4	6.06	28.57
10	Keeping natural resources	2	3.03	14.28
11	Clean and green production and considering sustainability category	2	3.03	14.28
12	Proper production and coexistence with nature	2	3.03	14.28
13	Scholars and scientists emphasis in relation to respect nature in Islam	2	3.03	14.28
14	Simple life as one of valuable instances in being appreciative of God's nature	1	1.51	7.14
15	Islam's attention to anthropological and ontological issues	1	1.51	7.14
16	Attention to improve and develop villages in Islam religion	1	1.51	7.14
17	Education and extension in using resources along with proper farming	1	1.51	7.14
18	Extending tourism and using properly of valuable God's gifts	1	1.51	7.14
19	Preparing field of bliss by living in clean and beautiful place	1	1.51	7.14
20	Individual belief which follows keeping and considering nature and creatures	1	1.51	7.14
21	Using properly and logically of God's gifts by humans in order to reach bliss	1	1.51	7.14
22	Fair keeping of nice creatures whom created in justice bed	1	1.51	7.14
	Total	66	100	471.37

CONCLUSIONS

In general, most important case noted by religious experts are: the considering of a consumption-saving category, the recognizing of Human Rights and the considering of natural resources, the responsibility and management of religion in relation to surroundings, the identifying of moral and religious values, futurism and the considering of all of the next generations, the love of God and the thanksgiving and the keeping of God's gifts, the

considering religious narratives and utterances, the emphasis on decreasing violence in religious education and its effect on the proper keeping of the environment, Islam's attention to cleansing and health. For that, Humans are as God's successors upon the Earth and are responsible for keeping natural resources. It is not expected of Humankind to destroy its own environment. Thus, Human life on this globe is with a collective responsibility which if Humans perform this correctly they would be rewarded



instead of being punished. Ayah No.165 of Alanam Sura says: if Humans keep natural resources they would enjoy better lives, otherwise, punishment would follow". God focuses on Humans who are his heirs of Earth and as responsible Human beings, they are persons who know the value of the environment well and must keeps it and use it properly. In summary, we can conclude that by using all available legal, moral and conventional facilities, we can prevent environmental destruction.

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