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The Impact of a Sustainable Muslim Model on Community Development with Special Reference to Religious Tourism

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This paper uses the descriptive qualitative approach to answer questions about how a Sustainable Muslim Model (SMM) could work as a new approach to developing and sustaining communities. This study embraces the textual analysis method to examine the prevailing published research in the context of sustainability and community development. A number of scholars have approved this textual analysis method as a tool to study religious texts.

The purpose of this paper is to give an overview and discuss the status, issues and challenge of community development in tourism. As religious tourism is gaining more ground over time, the need to develop religious tourism sustainably and thus protect tourism communities, has become a priority. Developing and sustaining religious tourism almost always becomes a primary interest and priority for concerned communities. The religious virtues which form the cultural values of Muslim communities affect this crucial issue as they dovetail with the affective domain of sustainability awareness. This study explores the Qur'anic verses and Islamic teachings which urge Muslims to design and build communities in general and religious tourist sites in particular in a highly sustainable way.

The results of this study indicate that the SMM can be applicable to Muslim and non-Muslim communities in maintaining sustainability while developing tourism communities. The role of Islamic religious tourism in developing environmental, cultural and economic sustainability is highlighted in a variety of Islamic teachings. The study finds that the appropriateness of the aforementioned teachings are highly relevant to current sustainability issues.

This study presents for the first time the Sustainable Muslim Model (SMM) as new approach to deal with community development. The discussion presents a wealth of original research and source material, it illuminates and clarifies the concept of *Khairyyah* (goodliness / charitable), which, the literature argues, is central to an understanding of how sustainable tourism development can be implemented from an Islamic point of view.

Key Words: sustainability, the sustainable Muslim model (SMM), Islamic teachings, Qur'an, community, khairyyah, goodliness

Introduction

Several types of communities have been identified by the social sciences: community as place, community as relationship, and community as collective political power (Suttles, 1972; Gusfield, 1975; Heller, 1989). For all these types of community, there is a process to improve the quality of community life as defined in terms such as 'community development', 'community building' and 'community organisation'. The central mechanism in this process is the participation of individuals in voluntary organisations that produce collective and individual goods. These groups include neighbourhood organisations, professional societies, self-help groups, religious groups such as local mosques, political parties, advocacy organisations, or unions (Chavis & Wandersman, 1990).

The sustainable Muslim model (SMM) aims at making the tourism experience more positive. Such positive experience develops the impression of Islam from all perspectives: acceptance of other, hospitality, warm reception and welcoming without violating Islamic customs and traditions and with adherence to the rituals of the Muslim community. The (SMM) is a

> *'frame' which refers to a knowledge structure or structured set of elements drawn from the Qur'an and Hadith conceptual domains and consisting of encyclopedic knowledge associated with the Qur'an and Hadith code of ethics* (El-Hadary, 2008:69).

The human factor is an appealing touristic element in most tourist attractions; it is part of the tourism service because tourism is a human activity in the first place. The tourism provider is human - the first to meet up with tourists in tourism sites. That is why it is a must to develop tourism in communities which accept tourism idea and thought despite the potential cultural differences between tourists and the host country. Therefore, we should prepare the host community and the local people to accept and even embrace tourism activity. In addition, local people have to get involved in tourism and gain benefits such as tourism revenue so that they appreciate tourism and are enthusiastic to participate. Here the need arises for local communities which are involved in tourism and accept the other who is completely different regarding customs and traditions, religion, rituals and almost everything. The Sustainable Muslim Model ensures long term sustainable benefits for the environment, society and economy. In fact, it works towards the protection and preservation of natural resources, culture, heritage and local community. We shouldn't go without saying that all religions tackle this kind of goodliness in their teachings, however, for the sake of research purposes and brevity I will present the concept in light of Islamic teachings. I will attempt to shed some light on the Islamic spiritual, social, political, and economic aspects of tourism sustainability.

Richards and Hall state that human communities represent both a primary resource upon which tourism depends, and their existence in a particular place at a particular time may be used to justify the development of tourism itself. In light of this, communities can be a basic reason for tourists to travel, to experience the way of life and material products of different communities. Communities also shape the 'natural' landscapes which many tourists seek to consume (Richards & Hall, 2000). There is a multitude of citations from the Qur'an and Hadith which emphasise the importance of communities and set an ideal prototype of how to keep them intact, sustainable and even prosperous.

It is important to note that a holistic approach to sustainability requires that the continuing / improved social, cultural and economic well-being of human communities is an integral component of environmental renewal (Richards & Hall, 2000). This equates within notions of sustainable tourism; without community sustainability, tourism development cannot be expected to be sustainable. Hence, the role of community is crucial when it comes to tourism sustainability. In the same vein, Taylor argues that the concept of community involvement in tourism development has moved nearer to the centre of the sustainability debate (Taylor, 1995).

Methodology

In this paper, I use a descriptive qualitative approach to answer questions about how SMM could work as a new approach to develop and sustain communities. I have not found experimental and quantitative methods to be sufficient on their own in explaining the phenomenon I wish to study. As a result, I have implemented qualitative research as a mode of inquiry. This qualitative research is a scientific method of observation to gather non-numerical data (Babbie, 2016) and I embrace the textual analysis method to examine the prevailing published research on the topics of sustainability and community development. A number of scholars have approved the textual analysis method as a tool to study religious text and particularly the contextual meanings and associations of a particular issue, for instance, in the case of this study it is tourism community development (Karcic, 2006; Martin, 1982).

This type of research

> *refers to the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and description of things* ... [and not to their] ... *counts or measures* (Berg *et al*., 2012:12).

This type of research deals with 'why' and 'how' a certain phenomenon may occur rather than 'how often' (Berg *et al*., 2012).

Reflecting on validity, this is not seen as an issue in the current paper as the selected Qur'anic verses lend themselves to straightforward exegesis, thus almost excluding the rendering of different interpretations. Moreover, the Islamic Hadith which are cited are from the most authentic books of Hadith and thus, they are the most commonly used by Muslim scholars (Shawkani, 2008).

Sustainable Islam

There is a need to raise awareness of the Islamic concept of goodliness in the collective minds of Muslim Communities by highlighting the related Islamic teachings drawn from the Qur'an and Hadith which in themselves will help enrich the context of the tourist's experience in Islamic religious sites.

I would like to emphasise here how the concept of goodliness in Islam is related to tourism sustainability in general and the sustainability of religious tourism in particular. The concept of goodliness in Islam is directed mainly to the protection, maintenance, and preservation communities. We need to protect and develop communities to keep them sustainable. In this direction, if we highlight the concept of goodliness and make people aware of its religious impact we can help protect and develop communities and consequently we keep tourism cites and religious tourism cites sustainable. At its very simplistic level, sustainability entails improving people's lives and the lives of others around them.

The core interest of a sustainable Muslim is to improve their own life and the lives of those around them. How can this concept of improvement be achieved? Here is the action plan proposed by the author:

- The Islamic Concept of *Khairyyah* (Goodliness) (Planting trees)
- Responsibilities towards fellow human beings (being a good neighbour and good companionship)
- *Shura* (mutual and group consultation) as a scenario of solidarity
- The role of human as a vicegerent on Earth
- Keeping the environment clean
- No tolerance for mischief making
- Removing harmful things from the road
- Resources management (over-consumption is taboo)
- Charity
- *Ihssan (*Excellence)

A Sustainable Muslim Action Plan

Islamic virtue is distinguishable from other exemplars of virtue as it combines the best of all models. A Muslim loves goodliness for all people, and hates evil. They care about the affairs of their fellow humans because one who does not care about the concerns of Muslims is not one of them; they must be one who does not harm anyone else or anything, this is the human side of Islamic virtue. As for the divine side: when a Muslim does something good for people, or turns away from harming them, they do not ask for a price or something in return. He or she does good deeds for the sake of Allah. Therefore, this paper claims that a sustainable Muslim action plan is a manifestation of Islamic virtues.

> *We feed you seeking Allah's Countenance only. We wish for no reward, nor thanks from you* (Q76:9).

The Islamic Concept of Khairyyah *(Goodliness)*

> *If the Hour starts to happen and in the hand of one of you there is a palm shoot or seedling; then if he's able to plant it before the Hour happens, then let him plant it* (Ibn Ḥanbal, 2012).

This Hadith embodies the essence of sustainable development and implements an intrinsic strategy for community development. It illustrates at best, Muslim contribution to their community development and shows their responsibilities towards their fellow human beings. Such responsibility epitomises the core of Islamic teachings where Muslims populate the earth not only in normal situations but also in the most difficult conditions.

This is typified in the concept of tree planting. This can affect environmental quality across all communities the world over. The tourism community will be positively affected by turning green. SMM looks at it from another angle. SMM holds that any type of work is a virtue in itself. If this understanding of work as virtue is embraced by tourism operators and stakeholders, tourism will flourish at all levels.

Planting trees is a renewable source of *hasanat* (Credit for good deeds, which Allah weighs up against one's bad deeds at the final judgement after death) and considered a source of charitable donation.

Anas b. Malik reported:

> *The Messenger of Allah said: 'It is a charitable donation when a Muslim plants a tree or grows*

> *crops and the birds, humans or cattle eat from it'* (Al-Bukhari, 2003, Al-Hajjaj, 2006).

Anas also reported that the Prophet said,

> *If a Muslim plants a tree or sows seeds, and then a bird, or a person or an animal eats from it, it is regarded as a charitable gift (*sadaqah*) for him* (Al-Bukhari, 2003).

Rendering all good to everyone and everything along with being good to neighbours are important keys to fraternal peace and communal harmony. Consequently, this will result in all community members uniting to sustain and develop their community. This community consolidation will foster tourism sustainability as a matter of course. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) held this as an essential attribute of a believer on the Day of Judgment.

Responsibilities towards Fellow Human Beings (Neighbourliness and Good Companionship)

History did not previously know a cooperative and compassionate society such as the Islamic community, which, in its bright ages demonstrated the time of companions and the followers (Afsaruddin, 2013). This was achieved in countries of Islam, and to this day many Islamic societies have mercy on the young, provide for the poor and orphans, and are based on various acts of righteousness and goodness. The following Qur'anic verse shows one of the basic codes of ethics which is cooperation. A society that is based on such principles follows the guidance of God:

> *Help you one another in Al-bir and At-taqwa (virtue, righteousness and piety); but do not help one another in sin and transgression* (Q5:2).

Among the manifestations of this cooperation and compassion are appreciation of adults, their respect and their honour. The Prophet (PBUH) has shown that whoever does not have mercy and does not respect the little one is an exception to this society and is considered a corrupt member who is not fit to live in this compassionate society. He said:

> *He is not of us who does not have mercy on the young, nor honour the elderly* (Albani, 1988).

He also said:

> *A Muslim is a brother of another Muslim, so he does not oppress him nor betray him, and whoever was in need of his brother Allah will be in his need, and whoever brought his Muslim brother out of a distress, Allah will bring him out of the distresses of the Day of Resurrection, and whoever shields a Muslim, Allah will shield him on the Day of Resurrection* (Al-Hajjaj, 2006).

Islam seeks to establish a society that respects human values and virtues as it applies the laws of God, and in this way society turns into a coherent, and synergistic entity where all members of the society feel the importance of their roles. It is clear that Islam takes special interest in the neighbour concept, and considers it a justification for Islamic faith.

> *'By Allah, he does not have faith!' It was said, 'Who is it, O Messenger of Allah?' The Prophet said, 'He whose neighbour is not safe from his harm'* (Al-Bukhari, 2003).

The message carried by Gabriel to Prophet Mohammed was crystal clear and the emphasis on neighbour and good companionship was highly recommended. Thus, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) began to assume that a neighbour would have the right to be among the heirs of another neighbour.

The Prophet (PBUH) is quoted by his wife Aisha, as saying:

> *Gabriel has continued to strongly recommend me to be kind to my neighbour until I thought that he would make him among my heirs* (Al-Bukhari, 2003, Al-Hajjaj, 2006).

Islam urges its followers to do charity to all neighbours, and made that a proof of the sincerity of faith. Islam has magnified the right of the neighbour, and God Almighty has recommended charity to neighbour in the Holy Qur'an:

> *Worship Allah and join none with Him (in worship), and do good to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, the poor, the neighbour who is near of kin, the neighbour who is a stranger, the companion by your side, the wayfarer (you meet)* (Q4:36).

The types of neighbour are three:

- A Muslim relative neighbour; he has the right to neighbourhood, kinship, and Islam.
- A stranger Muslim neighbour; he has the right of neighbourhood, and Islam.
- A non Muslim neighbour; he has the right of neighbourhood.

Again and again the emphasis on neighbours interweaves certain scenarios of solidarity, steadfastness, kindness, and team work which describe the sustainable Muslim at their best. Community development and tourism sustainability do not exist in broken communities where hatred rather than peace prevails! The Hadith are a strong indication of how Muslim communities should be built on love, kindness, and integrity. It is the right of the neighbour to receive love, kindness, and respect from his fellow neighbour, and vice versa. Such communities are bound to be happy and strong. Such communities are the most developed and the most sustainable, and the most hospitable to guests, visitors, and definitely tourists.

Ideally good Muslims should be constantly aware of neighbour relations. The concept has always been applied in Islamic religious tourism, namely, Hajj and Umrah. One can just imagine, if the three million who perform Hajj every year did not observe neighbour rights as illustrated earlier, the efficiency of Hajj procedures would be impossible. Going further, if this concept of neighbour relation (good companionship) is observed by tourism operators and stakeholders, tourism could develop in places it has never before reached.

Taking this a step further, in another Hadith, the Prophet links certain attitudes not only to being a good Muslim, but in fact to believing in Allah. One of these attitudes is this good-neighbourliness. The Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *Anyone who believes in Allah and the last day let him be kind to his neighbour. Anyone who believes in Allah and the last day, let him be hospitable to his guest. Anyone who believes in Allah and the last day, let him say something good or be silent* (Reported Abu Shuraih Al-Khuzaie - see Al-Bukhari, 2003; Al-Hajjaj, 2006; Ibn Ḥanbal, 2012).

This Hadith highlights three main attitudes crucial for spreading love, peace, and gratitude among communities:

- Neighbourliness and good companionship,
- Hospitality to guests, and
- Speaking good or remaining silent.

It is the duty of neighbours to advise each other and to complement each other, so that love can spread among them. The advised must accept the advice with gratitude, and think well of the person who offered the advice, and thank them for their keenness and initiative.

We must review the rights of our neighbours and always remember the commandment of the Prophet (PBUH)

> *if you do good to your neighbour you will be a believer.*

To elaborate on the issue of neighbours, we need to explain who is a neighbour? The neighbour is not restricted to the ones who live next door. It is broader than that. In fact, a neighbour is almost anyone in the community. The identity of neighbour can extend and cover class mates, work mates, people who daily commute with us on the bus, train, etc., neighbours in mosques, people in shopping malls, streets, and almost everywhere in the Muslim community. Hence, the concept of neighbour is crucial in Muslim dealings because it has a tremendous impact on communities as it covers almost everyone.

Therefore, maintaining good relationships with neighbours guarantees a healthy, peaceful, and cooperative attitude among all people in the community. This is how a sustainable Muslim can keep their community sustainable, protected and developed. Consequently, tourism sustainability, and religious tourism sustainability can be observed, and preserved.

Shura *(Mutual and Group Consultation) as a Scenario of Solidarity*

Shura is one of the most important constitutional principles in Islam (Al-Raysuni, 2013). The system of good governance approved by Islam is based on the *Shura* principle. Acting and making decisions should be based on discussion and exchange of views. A number of factors illustrate the importance of *Shura* in Islam: firstly, the allocation of a *Surah* chapter in the Holy Qur'an

known as *Surat Al-Shura*, secondly, making *Shura* one of the characteristics of believers who will win the approval of God and; thirdly, mentioning it after prayer and before zakat (almsgiving) is a sign of the greatness of *Shura* and its importance as a basis for Islamic rule (Habib, 1976).

> *And those who answer the call of their Lord* [i.e. to believe that he is the Only One Lord (Allah), and to worship none but Him Alone]*, and perform As-salat (Iqamat-as-Salat), and who (conduct) their affairs by mutual consultation, and who spend of what We have bestowed on them* Q42:38.

Shura should also be also a basis for managing an Islamic nation's affairs and conducting its affairs and policy (Habib, 1976).

> *And by the Mercy of Allah, you dealt with them gently. And had you been severe and harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from about you; so pass over (their faults), and ask (Allah's) Forgiveness for them; and consult them in the affairs. Then when you have taken a decision, put your trust in Allah, certainly, Allah loves those who put their trust (in Him)* (Q2:159).

This important Islamic principle (*Shura*) can be taken as a basis to reach consensus regarding any issue, tourism or otherwise, or make a decision on a particular operation, development or change, and in this way we can minimise the risk of disunity among communities and tourism bodies.

It is noteworthy here to signal that the principle of *Shura* is mandatory for any community to prosper, develop and flourish. It is obvious that disunity ails any community and leads to its weakening and deterioration. Such political factor is significant for the sustainability of communities and their tourism sites. This clearly explains why Islam has signalled the *Shura* principle as one of its cardinal ones.

The applicability of *Shura* in tourism transactions and dealings has major potential. For the sake of argument, let's think about customer-firm dialogue and how each party can consult each other while planning trips details. This customer-firm dialogue exists in almost all sectors of tourism, however the practicality of applying *Shura* principles needs further investigation.

The Role of Human as a Vicegerent on Earth

The following verse explore the role of the human as vicegerent on earth and their role in community.

> *And when your Lord said to the angels, I am going to place in the earth a khalif, a vicegerent.* (Q2:30).
>
> *And He is the One who has made you vicegerents in the earth and exalted some of you over others in ranks, so that He may try you by in that which He has bestowed on you* (Q6:165).
>
> *O Dawud (David)! Verily! We have placed you as a successor on earth, so judge you between men in truth (and justice) and follow not your desire, for it will mislead you from the Path of Allah. Verily! Those who wander astray from the Path of Allah (shall) have a severe torment, because they forgot the Day of Reckoning* (Q38:26).

The logic of succession requires a person to be a natural extension of the prototype described in Qur'an in terms of thought and behaviour. God Almighty has delegated people to be His representatives on earth, and this delegation necessitates that humans should develop and prosper according to the Heavenly rules. This means that people should observe all the good commandments revealed by God. Therefore, Adam was the first sustainable person on earth! The principle of responsible stewardship extends to how one treats nature in general, whether trees, rivers, forests, soil or anything else on the earth. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) narrated great virtues about planting trees and encouraged his followers to plant trees. Even in a state of war, he prohibited Muslims from cutting down trees or plants. The following Hadith describes the ideal vicegerent, the Prophet, who is the true manifestation of all the virtues in the Qur'an:

> *I said to Aisha, 'O mother of the believers, tell me about the character of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH).' Aisha said, 'Have you not read the Qur'an?' I said, 'Of course.' Aisha said, 'Verily, the character of the Prophet of Allah was the Qur'an'* (Al-Hajjaj, 2006).

Keeping The Environment Clean

The general dispositions that support individual sustainability are awareness, motivation and the ability to engage in intentional self-development. In addition,

individual sustainability includes having a well-developed and proven value system that recognises the interconnectedness of global biological systems and our rightful place in the natural world (Pappas, 2012). The Prophet warned,

> *Beware of the three acts that cause you to be cursed: relieving yourselves in shaded places (that people utilize), in a walkway or in a watering place' (Albani, 1988).*

The Prophet (PBUH) also said,

> *Removing harmful things from the road is an act of charity (sadaqah)* (Albani, 1988).

The previous two Hadith call for environmental preservation: it starts with the simple act of relieving oneself in public and it can be extended to mean throwing any kind of waste in places which are not allocated for that particular purpose. In the same vein, removing harmful things from the road is considered very good and can be seen as an act of charity. One can just imagine our tourism communities free of litter and blessed by people who remove all kinds of dirt from the roads. These are two simple acts but can help the sustainability of our communities which includes tourism communities.

No Tolerance for Mischief Making

Mischief making and corruption are unforgivable crimes as they destroy societal peace, spread hatred and undermine the advancement of society. Therefore, the focus in the Qur'an is on the fact that the primary person responsible for corruption is oneself, as shown in the following verse:

> *... And seek not mischief in the land. Verily, Allah likes not the* Mufsidun *(those who commit great crimes and sins, oppressors, tyrants, mischief-makers, corruptors)* (Q 28:77).

> *... And reduce not the things that are due to the people, and do not commit mischief in the land, causing corruption* (Q11:85).

On the other hand, we see that fighting corruption and dealing with spoilers with absolute firmness and determination ensures the fair distribution of wealth and multiplies the feeling of a person's affiliation with society. Consequently, people work to preserve their communities and the environment because this stems from personal satisfaction with the quality of life that society provides.

There are many types of crime. These range from throwing rubbish on the street to bank crime, seizing public money or evading taxes to not caring about the environment, following procedures that cause increased levels of desertification to not employing healthy methods to get rid of toxic waste, which may cause people to lose health security. The following verse states that all the evils and harm inflicted upon earth are done by humans.

> *Evil (sins and disobedience to Allah) has appeared on land and sea because of what the hands of men have earned (by oppression and evil deeds)* (Q30:41).

People still have the power to eliminate corruption, disasters, etc. by believing in God and abiding by His commandments to protect our earth.

> *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] (Q30:41).

In avoidance of mischief, a person is advised to focus on trust. The word 'trust' is broad in meaning, accommodating all acts of deeds and worship. Trust should govern relationships between people, and every violation or negligence of trust or responsibility that is incumbent on individuals is a stark betrayal of trust.

> *Those who are faithfully true to their Amanat (all the duties which Allah has ordained, honesty, moral responsibility and trusts) and to their covenants* (Q23:8).

> *Every one of you is a shepherd and is responsible for his flock. The leader of people is a guardian and is responsible for his subjects. A man is the guardian of his family and he is responsible for them. A woman is the guardian of her husband's home and his children and she is responsible for them. The servant of a man is a guardian of the property of his master and he is responsible for it. No doubt, every one of you is a shepherd and is responsible for his flock* (Al-Bukhari, 2003).

Mercy and Kindness

Almighty Allah made the religion of Islam, a religion of mercy, ease, moderation, forgiveness and self-control. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was sent as mercy to the whole of creation; and he is full of compassion and kindness. There are several traditions from Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) which prove that he was merciful and that Almighty Allah gifted him as a mercy for His servants. Mercy holds a primary place in Islam and high moral values are set in our religion. Many of the narrated traditions tell us that, an act which may look very insignificant can have great virtues in it. Also, as believers we see the small gestures of kindness in life as reflections of faith: whether a smile on the face, or picking something off of the street; helping a person with a disability, etc.. these acts are seen as a reflection of faith. Let's consider the charity of mercy in the following Islamic teachings.

The Prophet (PBUH) said,

> *The believer is not he who eats his fill while his neighbour is hungry* (Albani, 1988).
>
> *Oh Prophet of God, teach me something which will benefit me. He said, 'Take what is bothersome out of the paths traversed by Muslims' (Al-Hajjaj, 2006)*

The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said:

> *Faith has seventy-something [or sixty something] branches. The highest branch is the declaration that is 'There is no deity but Allah. 'The humblest of which is the removal of harm from a public path, and modesty is a branch of faith (Al-Hajjaj, 2006).*

Resources Conservation (Avoiding Over-Consumption)

The Prophet passed one day by Saad ibn Abi Waqas while he was performing wudu ablution (ritual cleaning of body parts in preparation for prayer). The prophet asked Saad,

> *'Why is this wastage?' Saad replied 'Is there wastage in wudu also?' The Prophet said, 'Yes, even if you are at a flowing river'* (Ibn Ḥanbal, 2012).

Asked about what the Prophet used to do in his house, the Prophet's wife, Aisha said that he used to repair his shoes, sow his clothes and used to do all such household works done by an average person.

The Prophet said,

> *'Whoever kills a sparrow or anything bigger than that without a just cause, Allah will hold him accountable on the Day of Judgment.' The listeners asked, 'O Messenger of Allah, what is a just cause?' He replied, 'That he will kill it to eat, not simply to chop off its head and then throw it away'* (An-Nasa'i, 2011).

The Qur'an urges Muslims to protect and preserve the environment, and Islam considers this a religious duty. God Almighty has commanded us to deal with the environment as a public property - a Muslim must preserve its components, wealth, and resources. If a person does not fulfil their duty towards the preservation of the earth's resources they may harm the environment and consequently the people of the earth. God made humans as successors on earth, and the earth is a trust that they must protect. Both the Qur'an and the Hadith emphasise the importance of the preservation of the environment and not harming it in any way. Any kind of damage in all its forms to the environment is strictly forbidden.

Dawud ibn Ali reported:

> *Umar ibn al-Khattab said, 'If a lost sheep under my care were to die on the banks of the Euphrates, I would expect Allah the Exalted to question me about it on the Day of Resurrection'* (Al-Asfahani, 1996).

Removing harmful things from the road doesn't only mean the object which hinders, impedes or stops smooth movement. It means removing all kinds of obstacles, in other words, facilitating the lives of others, especially guests, of course the tourism industry benefits the most from this attitude. This principle can be applied at all levels in tourism operations and stakeholder circles. The logo and motto of sustainable Muslim is zero obstacles.

Charity

Allah's Messenger (PBUH) said,

> *Charitable donation is incumbent everyday on every joint of a human being on which the sun rises. It is charity to decide with justice between two men. Helping a person to mount a riding*

> *animal or putting his luggage over it is also almsgiving. Saying something good, every step taken towards offering the ritual prayer and clearing trouble from the road are also acts of charity (altruism). 'Reported Abu Huraira* (Al-Bukhari, 2003, Al-Hajjaj, 2006, Ibn Ḥanbal, 2012).

Allah's Messenger(PBUH) said:

> *Every morning wherein the sun rises, a charitable donation is mandatory for every human being!* (Al-Bukhari, 2003).

It was asked:

> *O Messenger of Allah! Whence can we manage charity resources?*

He said:

> *There are many doors to piety: reciting Allah's glorification* [tasbih]*; eulogizing His praise* [tahmid]*, pronouncing His Supreme Greatness* [takbir]*; declaring His Oneness* [tahlil]*; enjoining what is righteous and forbidding what is evil; removing the painful hurdles from the way; helping a deaf to listen; leading the poor-sighted to his path; guiding the one seeking guidance; attending to the needs of the victims of injustice on his footsteps and helping the elderly disabled and physically debilitated—all are charities donated from your (contented and pleased) self* (Ibn Ḥanbal, 2012).

According to Abu Tharr: 'Allah's Messenger (PBUH) said:

> *Your smiling in your brother's face is a charitable donation to your credit. Your enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong is a charitable donation to your credit. Your guiding the man who has lost his way is a charitable donation to your credit. Your leading the poor-sighted man to his path is a charitable donation to your credit. Your clearing the stone, the thorn and the bone from the path is also a charitable donation to your credit. Your pouring from your pail into your brother's pail (too) is a charitable donation to your credit* (Al-Bukhari, 2003).

Prophet Muhammad said: A woman got into Hell-Fire because of a cat whom she had tied, and thus it could not eat, and she did not let it free so that it could devour the insects of the earth, until it died. (Muslim)

Abu Hurayra reported: The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said,

> *'A man suffered from thirst while he was walking on a journey. When he found a well, he climbed down into it and drank from it. Then he came out and saw a dog lolling its tongue from thirst and licking the ground. The man said: This dog has suffered thirst just as I have suffered from it. He climbed down into the well, filled his shoe with water, and caught it in his mouth as he climbed up. Then he gave the dog a drink. Allah appreciated this deed, so he forgave him'. They said, 'O Messenger of Allah, is there a reward for charity even for the animals?' The Prophet said, 'Yes, in every creature with a moist liver is a reward for charity'* (Al-Bukhari, 2003).

We have explored charity in its broadest sense. Charity can entail all of the following and more: enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, guiding the person who has lost their way, leading the poor-sighted to their path, clearing the stone, the thorn and the bone from the path, etc.

One can clearly see that if charity in the above sense is the guideline for sustaining and developing communities, and the manual for tourism operators, and stakeholders the result will be true sustainability and the flourishing of tourism in general and religious tourism in particular.

Ihssan *(Excellence)*

We shouldn't go without saying that the above would be more accessible and workable if all the previous deeds were initiated by the virtue of seeking *Ihsan* (perfection or excellence). Excellence is the quality assurance of the tourism sector including tourism operators, stakeholders, and everyone in the tourism industry. By excellence we mean excellence in acts of worship, excellence in transactions, excellence in treating animals, excellence in physical actions. We also mean excellence in worship of any kind, such as prayer, fasting, or pilgrimage or other performance, by completing the conditions and pillars of Islam and fulfilling the Sunnah and etiquette, and this is not done unless one observes God Almighty in everything one does. If this is done, one even feels as if they are seeing the Almighty or at least they feel that God Almighty is looking at them. So one acts in the required manner, and this is what the Messenger (PBUH) said:

> *Ihsan is to worship God as if you see him, and if you cannot see Him, He sees you (Al-Bukhari, 2003).*

Ihsan in relation to the general public is to be kind when talking to people, to treat them with courtesy, to guide them when they are misguided, to educate their ignorance, to recognise their rights, to be of benefit to them, and to not harm them.

Ihsan is for everything that surrounds you, including humans, animals, plants and inanimate objects. However, there is a further type of Ihsan that can affect the topic under discussion which is mastering work, mastering workmanship, and purifying all other acts from fraud, deception and lies.

> *The good deed and the evil deed cannot be equal. Repel (the evil) with one which is better … Allah orders the faithful believers to be patient at the time of anger, and to excuse those who treat them badly), then verily! He, between you whom and you there was enmity, (will become) as though he was a close friend. (Q41:34)*

Sustainable Muslim Model in Practice

This study recommends that Al-Madinah in Saudi Arabia should become a prototype city to implement the SMM. The city has potential and its population are worthy to accept the challenge and to set an example for the rest of the world.

The assumptions in this paper are based on various authentic Hadith which could be applies to the virtue of Madinah. Besides, I have lived in the city during Hajj and I can state categorically that the people of Al-Madinah are friendly, pleasant, and amiable. More importantly, they love their city and I propose that if SMM was applied to their city they would spare no effort to make it a great success. So this paper is a call for Saudi authorities to set Madinah to be the first Islamic city to apply SMM. The study holds if this happens other world cities would follow suit. The choice of Madinah to be the first SMM is based on many Islamic teachings, and for the sake of completion I conclude with the following Hadith which describes the good nature of people of Madinah.

> *Abu Hurayra heard the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) say, 'I was ordered to a town which will eat up towns. They used to say, 'Yathrib,' but it is Al-Madinah. It removes the bad people like the blacksmith's furnace removes impurities from the iron'* (Al-Bukhari, 2003).

Conclusion

It is clear that the concept of goodliness in Islam as shown by Qur'anic verses and Hadiths instils into the minds and hearts of Muslims all that is necessary to make develop communities in a sustainable and protected manner. The amazing fact is that the message of sustainable communities was revealed fifteen centuries ago. This paper recommends that we present communities with their duties towards their fellow people as illustrated in Islamic teachings in order to maintain the goodliness and prosperity of everyone. The paper outlines a kind of action plan for promoting sustainable community and recommends it for implementation wherever needed.

The paper illustrates sustainable Islam as a spiritual act and a real integral part of the Islamic faith. It is a manifestation of the code of conduct presented in the Qur'an and Hadith. The respect and appreciation of values and virtues illustrated throughout this paper have impacts on sustainability and development of communities. Sustainability in its broadest sense should encompass tourism and religious tourism communities.

To sum up, the applicability of the Sustainable Muslim Model (SMM) is practical and has been applied in Hajj and Umrah rituals and procedures. SMM can be applied much more widely in Muslim and non-Muslim communities to promote the sustainability, and development of tourism communities.

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