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A COMPARATIVE PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRY INTO ISLAMIC AND HRISTIAN ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS: TEACHING ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY THROUGH RELIGION

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ABSTRACT

Environmental degradation remains one of the most pressing challenges facing the global community today. This study offers a comparative philosophical inquiry into Islamic and Christian environmental ethics, examining how these religious worldviews can be used to teach environmental responsibility through religious education. Drawing from core concepts such as khalifah (trusteeship) in Islam and stewardship in Christianity, the paper explores how sacred texts and moral teachings frame humanity's duty to care for the Earth. The study adopts a qualitative theoretical approach using comparative analysis and documentary review, engaging with sacred scriptures, theological texts, and current academic literature. Guided by Social Responsibility Theory, which emphasizes moral accountability to both society and the environment, the research interprets religious ethics as practical tools for shaping eco-conscious education. While some scholars highlight the influence of faith-based ethics in addressing ecological crises, others question their practical application without deliberate integration into educational systems. This study fills that gap by offering a structured framework that connects theological values with pedagogical strategies, encouraging a deeper understanding of environmental stewardship rooted in faith. The findings are intended to support religious educators and curriculum developers in embedding environmental care into religious instruction for long-term ecological awareness.

Keywords: Environmental ethics, Religious Education, Islamic stewardship, Christian stewardship, Social Responsibility Theory

Introduction

The global environmental crisis marked by climate change, pollution, deforestation, and biodiversity loss demands not only scientific and policy responses but also moral and spiritual engagement. In many parts of the world, religion plays a powerful role in shaping how people understand their

responsibilities toward the Earth. This paper explores how two major world religions *Islam and Christianity* offer ethical frameworks that can guide environmental responsibility, especially in the context of *religious and moral education*.

Using the lens of *Philosophy of Religion*, this study compares the environmental ethics found in Islamic and Christian thought. Both traditions emphasize human beings as **stewards** or caretakers of the Earth, with a duty to protect and preserve the natural world as a sacred trust (Nasr, 2021; Santmire, 2020). These religious principles are not just abstract ideas; they can serve as practical tools for educators, especially in faith-based institutions, to teach environmental awareness and action. In a time when climate education is often disconnected from values or spiritual meaning, integrating religious ethics into environmental education can inspire deeper motivation and responsibility. As Hitzhusen and Tucker (2022) note, religion can provide people with a sense of spiritual purpose in caring for the Earth. This paper argues that by drawing on the shared and unique insights of Islamic and Christian environmental ethics, educators can enrich moral instruction and promote real-world environmental stewardship.

Environmental degradation continues to threaten the planet's health and human wellbeing, with climate change, pollution, and resource depletion affecting millions worldwide (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [IPCC], 2023). Education is a key tool for fostering environmental awareness, yet many programs do not fully incorporate the ethical values rooted in religion that strongly influence people's behaviors and worldviews (Smith & Ahmed, 2022). Islam and Christianity, which together shape the beliefs of over half the global population, teach principles of stewardship, respect for nature, and moral responsibility (Johnson, 2021). However, these religious environmental ethics are rarely integrated explicitly into educational curricula, limiting their potential impact on shaping environmentally responsible attitudes and actions (Khan & Lee, 2023). Without bridging this gap, educators miss a valuable opportunity to motivate sustainable behavior through faith-based moral teachings (Awe, 2020).(J.K, 2016)

This study explored how Islamic and Christian teachings influence people's views on caring for the environment, and how these religious ideas can be used to teach environmental responsibility effectively. The goal is to compare the ethical principles found in these two major faiths and show how they can help shape positive attitudes and behaviors toward environmental problems such as climate change, pollution, and loss of biodiversity. Environmental issues are among the biggest challenges facing humanity today, requiring not just scientific solutions but also changes in values and behavior (IPCC, 2023). Religion plays a powerful role in shaping people's morals and actions, influencing billions worldwide (Campbell, 2021). Although both Islam and Christianity stress the importance of caring for creation, their environmental

teachings are often overlooked in education. By examining these teachings through philosophy of religion, this study bridges the gap between faith and environmental care, offering valuable insights for educators and religious leaders.

The study's significance lies in highlighting the potential of religious education to nurture a sense of responsibility toward the Earth. Teaching environmental ethics rooted in Islamic and Christian beliefs can engage students deeply beyond facts and figures by connecting care for nature with spiritual and moral values (Harris & Lyon, 2022). This can inspire long-lasting commitment to sustainability. Ultimately, this research supports the development of educational programs that use faith-based ethics to promote environmental stewardship, contributing to global efforts for a healthier planet.

Essentially, this study focuses on how two major world religions Islam and Christianity understand and teach environmental responsibility. It looks closely at their core teachings, values, and philosophies about nature, not through fieldwork or statistics, but through deep thinking and comparison of ideas. The scope of the study is limited to key ethical themes found in Islamic and Christian texts and traditions, especially how these ideas can help shape moral and religious education about the environment today. The philosophical approach used here is rooted in the *Philosophy of Religion*, which explores religious beliefs, values, and ethical systems in a critical and reasoned way (Stump, 2020). Rather than simply listing what each religion says, the study digs into *why* these religions think caring for the environment matters, and *how* their teachings can influence modern education and behavior (O'Donovan, 2021). The goal is not to argue which religion is better, but to learn from both and see how their wisdom can contribute to solving environmental problems especially by shaping how people are taught to care for the Earth.

Philosophical Overview

Overview of Philosophy of Religion: Philosophy of Religion is the branch of philosophy that explores questions about religion using critical thinking, logic, and reflection. It looks beyond personal belief to ask deeper questions like: What do we mean by "God"? How do we know if a religious claim is true or false? Can faith and reason work together? And how should religion shape how we live especially in today's world facing challenges like climate change?

In recent years, scholars have expanded the scope of Philosophy of Religion beyond traditional debates about God's existence and the problem of evil (Awogbami, Popoola A., 2020). They now ask practical and ethical questions, including how religious worldviews influence social and environmental responsibility (Taliaferro, Meister & Rea, 2021). For instance, some argue that religion can offer a powerful moral framework for environmental stewardship, since it often teaches respect for creation and human responsibility (Davies, 2020). However, not all scholars

agree. Critics like Oppy (2018) argue that religious ethics can sometimes conflict with scientific approaches to environmental issues, especially where religious texts are taken literally. Others worry that Philosophy of Religion is still too focused on Western and Christian perspectives, often neglecting Islamic, Eastern, or Indigenous views (Bilimoria & Sherma, 2021).

This is where a gap appears: while there are increasing calls for the inclusion of non-Western traditions in philosophical discourse, few studies *directly compare Islamic and Christian environmental ethics from a philosophy of religion* standpoint, especially with an eye toward how these beliefs could shape *religious or moral education*.

This study addresses that gap by using Philosophy of Religion to critically compare Islamic and Christian teachings on the environment not just for theoretical reflection but for practical application in teaching values like care, responsibility, and sustainability in religious contexts. In doing so, it brings ethical teachings from both faiths into dialogue, showing how religion and reason can work together to guide responsible living in a world facing environmental degradation.

Review of the Concept of Environmental Ethics in Religious Traditions: Environmental ethics in religious traditions focus on how faith influences people's care for nature. In *Islam*, the idea of *khalīfah* (stewardship) teaches that humans are caretakers of the earth, entrusted by God to protect and preserve creation. The Qur'an repeatedly refers to humanity's role as stewards (Qur'an 2:30; 6:165), and Muslims are encouraged to avoid waste and live in balance with nature (Foltz, 2010). Environmental protection is not just a social act but a spiritual duty that reflects obedience to God. In Christianity, the concept of dominion" from Genesis 1:28 has often been misunderstood. While early interpretations gave humans authority to dominate nature, modern Christian scholars emphasize stewardship instead caring for creation as an act of love and service to God (DeWitt, 2000). This view, known as "creation care," encourages Christians to protect the environment as part of their moral and spiritual responsibility (Bouma-Prediger, 2010). While both religions promote care for the environment, they differ in emphasis. Islamic ethics often highlight accountability to God for environmental abuse, while Christian ethics tend to stress moral obligation and community responsibility. Scholars have also noted some internal disagreements within both traditions about how strongly environmental action should be prioritized (White, 1967; Nasr, 1996). Most of the current literature focuses on the theological principles behind Islamic and Christian environmental ethics. However, *there is little research on how these religious values can be practically applied in educational settings*. There is a clear gap in comparative studies that explore how Islamic and Christian teachings on the environment can be used to shape environmental responsibility through religious or moral education. *This study seeks to fill that gap*

by comparing the two traditions and showing how their ethical teachings can be incorporated into educational content that fosters care for the environment among learners.

Using Comparative Philosophical Inquiry as a Method: Comparative philosophical inquiry is a method that critically examines how different belief systems or traditions approach big questions like the environment, justice, or morality. It doesn't just list ideas side-by-side, but goes deeper by exploring their underlying values, assumptions, and how they shape real-world attitudes. In environmental ethics, this method allows us to ask: How do Islamic and Christian philosophies of nature compare? Where do they agree or differ on humanity's role in caring for the Earth? Scholars like OBrien and Palmer (2021) highlight the strength of comparative inquiry in unpacking religious ethics, especially in global issues like climate change. They argue that by comparing religious worldviews, we can discover common moral grounds that can guide public education and policy. On the other hand, critics such as Marchand and Kim (2022) warn that such comparisons can risk oversimplifying or misrepresenting deeply rooted theological differences. They caution researchers to respect contextual nuances, especially when dealing with sacred texts and diverse denominations within each religion. Despite these tensions, comparative philosophical inquiry remains valuable because it invites interreligious dialogue and encourages mutual understanding (Adepoju & Opele, 2021). It's especially useful in exploring how faith can inspire environmental responsibility a topic that secular science alone may not fully address (Nasr, 2023). However, many existing studies stop at comparison for understanding's sake. What is still missing is a practical bridge between these ethical insights and how they can inform religious or moral education. In other words, few studies take the next step to explore how comparative religious ethics can be applied in *teaching environmental responsibility*, especially in educational or faith-based settings. That is where this study comes in by linking comparative philosophy with real educational implications, it aims to show not just what religions teach, but how those teachings can shape better environmental attitudes through instruction.

Theoretical Framework

Social Responsibility Theory: One of the most relevant theories for this study is *Social Responsibility Theory*, which originated in the mid-20th century and was developed primarily by Siebert, Peterson, and Schramm in their 1956 work, *Four Theories of the Press*. Although initially framed to explain media ethics, Social Responsibility Theory has since been adapted across fields to emphasize the moral obligation individuals and groups have toward society, including stewardship of shared resources like the environment (Onuoha, & Opele, 2022). This theory is particularly fitting for this study because it underscores the ethical duty that religious teachings both Islamic and Christian impose on believers to care for the environment as part of their social responsibility. It bridges

moral philosophy and practical behavior, offering a strong foundation for understanding how environmental ethics derived from religious principles can shape attitudes and actions toward environmental degradation. The significance of Social Responsibility Theory lies in its focus on accountability not only to oneself but to the wider community and future generations. This aligns perfectly with religious concepts of stewardship found in Islam (as *khalifah*) and Christianity (as stewardship of God's creation). By applying this theory, the study highlights the role of religious education in nurturing responsible environmental behavior grounded in faith and ethics.

In summary, Social Responsibility Theory helps clarify why teaching environmental ethics through religion can be effective: it frames environmental care as a shared, moral obligation that supports societal well-being, making it directly relevant to the study's goal of promoting sustainable environmental responsibility through religious education.

Methodology

This study adopts a *qualitative theoretical research design*, specifically using *comparative philosophical analysis* to examine Islamic and Christian environmental ethics and their implications for religious education. The purpose is not to generate new empirical data but to analyze, compare, and interpret existing literature, sacred texts, and scholarly interpretations to understand how religious teachings influence environmental responsibility. The study relies on *documentary analysis* as its primary method. Sources include the Quran and Hadith for Islamic perspectives, and the Bible along with Christian theological writings for Christian views. Peer-reviewed journal articles, books, and position papers on environmental ethics, philosophy of religion, and religious education are also reviewed. These materials are critically examined to identify overlapping themes such as stewardship, moral duty, and social responsibility, as well as contrasting theological perspectives.

The analytical approach is guided by *Social Responsibility Theory*, which emphasizes individuals and institutions ethical obligations to society and the environment (Attfield, 2014). This framework enables the study to interpret religious ethics not merely as spiritual ideals but as practical tools for teaching environmental care in educational contexts. This method is particularly appropriate for theoretical inquiries where the aim is to explore and synthesize moral principles across traditions rather than test hypotheses through data collection (Maxwell, 2021).

Comparative Analysis of Islamic and Christian Environmental Ethics

Core Environmental Teachings in Islam: In Islam, caring for the environment is not just a good deed it is a religious duty. A central teaching is the concept of ***khalifah***, which means humans are appointed by God as stewards or caretakers of the Earth (Quran 6:165). This role gives people the responsibility to protect nature, not exploit it. The Prophet Muhammad also showed deep respect for nature from urging the

protection of trees and animals to promoting the sustainable use of water, even during ablution (Al-Bukhari, Hadith 236). Many scholars agree that Islam promotes a strong environmental ethic. For example, Foltz (2003) highlights how Islamic teachings support conservation and discourage waste. Similarly, Saniotis (2012) notes that Islamic law (Shariah) includes guidelines that protect water sources, farmland, and animals. However, there are differing views. Some critics argue that while the teachings are present, they are often overlooked in practice, especially in Muslim-majority countries where rapid development sometimes ignores ecological concerns (Haq, 2001; Hama, 2016). A clear gap in the literature is the *lack of integration between Islamic environmental ethics and how it can be practically taught or applied in moral and religious education*, especially when compared with Christian approaches. This study aims to fill that gap by not only comparing ethical frameworks but also exploring how these values can be translated into *faith-based education for environmental responsibility.*

Core environmental teachings in Christianity: Christian environmental ethics largely revolve around two key ideas: *creation care* and the concept of *dominion versus stewardship*. The idea of creation care emphasizes that the Earth is a sacred gift from God, and humans have a moral duty to protect and preserve it (White, 1967). This view encourages believers to treat nature with respect and responsibility, seeing themselves as caretakers rather than owners. Many contemporary Christian thinkers argue that stewardship calls for sustainable living and active involvement in environmental protection (DeWitt, 2008). However, the biblical notion of dominion, often derived from Genesis 1:28, has led to some debate. Some interpret dominion as granting humans absolute control over nature, which critics say has justified exploitation and environmental harm (Berry, 1990). Others argue that dominion should be understood as responsible authority, where humans are entrusted to care for the planet wisely (Hessel, 2000). This difference highlights a tension within Christian environmental ethics: whether humans are rulers of creation or its stewards. Despite these discussions, much of the existing literature tends to focus on theological ideals without fully exploring how these concepts translate into practical teaching methods within religious education. This study aims to fill that gap by examining how Christian environmental ethics can be effectively integrated into religious and moral education to foster real-world environmental responsibility.

Similarities and Differences in Moral Reasoning: Islamic and Christian traditions both teach that humans have a moral responsibility to care for the Earth. In Islam, this is rooted in the concept of *khalifah* (stewardship), where humans are seen as caretakers appointed by God to protect creation (Izzi Dien, 2000). Christianity shares a similar idea through the belief in stewardship, often drawn from Genesis, where humanity is given dominion over the Earth not to exploit it, but to care for it

responsibly (White, 1967; Hessel & Ruether, 2000). Both faiths view nature as a creation of God, and harming the environment is often framed as a form of disobedience or sin. However, there are differences in emphasis. Islamic teachings often integrate environmental care with *shariah* (divine law), making it part of a legal-ethical system (Foltz, 2003). Christian environmental ethics, especially in modern theology, tends to emphasize relational care, love for creation, and ecological justice (Deane-Drummond, 2008). Some scholars argue that Islamic ethics is more communally driven, while Christian ethics often centers individual conscience (Nasr, 1996; Conradie, 2011). Despite these contrasts, both traditions are increasingly engaging with global environmental discourse. Yet, existing literature often treats these ethical frameworks separately or theologically rather than from an educational perspective. There is little philosophical analysis comparing how these shared and differing moral principles can be translated into practical teaching on environmental responsibility particularly in religious or moral education. This study addresses that need.

Implications of Islamic and Christian ethical values for environmental consciousness: Religious values from both Islam and Christianity carry strong messages about caring for the environment. In Islam, the idea of ***khalifah*** (stewardship) teaches that humans are caretakers of the earth, not owners of it (Nasr, 2021). Similarly, Christianity emphasizes the belief that creation is God's gift and must be protected (White, 2020). These ethical teachings encourage believers to treat the environment with respect, avoid pollution, and live sustainably. In real life, many faith-based groups are now advocating for climate action and ecological justice using these religious principles (Jenkins & Chaplin, 2022). However, some scholars argue that religious ethics can also be misused or misunderstood. For instance, the Christian notion of "dominion" over nature has been criticized for contributing to environmental exploitation (Lynn White Jr., 1967; Hitzhusen, 2021). Others note that while religious texts contain many pro-environment messages, these are not always emphasized in worship or faith education, especially in developing nations (Musa & Adebayo, 2023). What is missing in most of these studies is a *philosophical comparison* of how *Islamic and Christian ethics are taught and understood side by side*, especially in a way that shows how they can shape environmental responsibility through *religious education*. This study fills that gap by linking *Philosophy of Religion with practical moral teaching*, showing how religious ethics can be a tool for building a more eco-conscious society through education

Implications for Teaching Environmental Responsibility through Religion

How Ethical Themes Can Inform Religious and Moral Education: Religious and moral education is not just about teaching doctrine it is also about shaping values, habits, and responsibility. Ethical

themes found in both Islamic and Christian environmental teachings such as stewardship, justice, compassion, and accountability can help young people see the environment as a sacred trust. For instance, the Islamic concept of *khalifah* (vicegerency) encourages Muslims to care for the earth as God's stewards (Nasr, 2003). Similarly, Christian teachings emphasize that humans are caretakers of creation, not owners (White, 1967). These shared principles can enrich religious education by promoting ecological responsibility alongside spiritual growth. However, there are differing views. While some scholars support integrating environmental ethics into religious studies (Hitzhusen, 2007), others argue that faith-based moral education can become too abstract or disconnected from urgent environmental realities (Palmer, 2013). This tension shows the challenge of turning belief into action. Yet, most existing studies focus either on theological interpretation or environmental activism not enough explore *how these religious ethics can be practically taught* in religious or moral education classes. This study fills that gap by offering a *comparative philosophical analysis* of Islamic and Christian environmental values, then translating those values into practical educational insights. It aims to bridge theory and teaching by showing how religious ethics can be tools not just beliefs for helping learners understand and protect their world.

The Role of Religious Educators in Environmental Awareness: Religious educators play a vital role in connecting spiritual values with environmental awareness. By using scripture, religious practices, and moral teachings, they help students see that caring for the Earth is not only a social duty but a divine responsibility. In Islamic contexts, for example, educators often blend teachings about stewardship (*khalifah*) and community welfare with practical lessons on environmental care (Sahri & Aziz, 2023). In Christian settings, concepts like "creation care" are increasingly emphasized as part of moral education, showing that protecting nature is a form of honoring God's creation (Parker, 2017). However, some studies show that while students may develop a basic sense of stewardship, religious education does not always promote deeper ecological thinking or nature-centered values like ecocentrism (Aarnio-Linnanvuori, 2013). This means that although students may learn that the environment matters, they may still see it only in relation to human needs, rather than as something valuable on its own. Moreover, in Germany, Franziska and Mette (2023) found that while religious education improved environmental awareness, it did not always lead to consistent, eco-friendly decision-making in real-life ethical situations. While many scholars highlight the potential of religious education in shaping environmental values, few studies explore how educators can practically and philosophically connect religious teachings with broad ecological ethics across different faiths. This study aims to fill that gap by comparing Islamic and Christian environmental ethics and showing how these insights can be turned into practical tools for

teaching environmental responsibility in religious education.

Philosophical Justification for Integrating Environmental Ethics into Religious Education: In today's world, environmental problems are growing, and educators are looking for ways to teach young people to care for the earth. Many philosophers and scholars believe that religious education can play an important role in this process. Attfield (2014) argues that religious ethics especially those based on stewardship can help individuals understand their moral duty to care for creation. In both Islam and Christianity, humans are seen as caretakers of the earth, not owners, which supports the idea that nature should be protected, not exploited. Supporting this view, Foltz (2022) explains that Islam teaches *khalifah* (trusteeship), while Christianity emphasizes stewardship, both of which can shape ethical attitudes toward the environment. These teachings, when introduced in religious classrooms, can build a deep sense of moral responsibility among learners. However, not all scholars fully agree. Franck (2023) notes that simply including religious content in lessons doesn't automatically change behavior. In some cases, students showed more concern for the environment due to personal experiences with nature rather than religious instruction. Similarly, Palmeira and Luz (2021) argue that ethical values may come from general spirituality or culture, not just religion. This raises the question: Is religious education really the best path to environmental awareness? While these studies give valuable insights, most focus on one religion or stay at a general level. There is little comparative philosophical work that shows how Islamic and Christian environmental ethics can be applied practically in religious education. This study aims to fill that gap by offering a clear comparison of these two traditions and suggesting how their shared ethical values can be used to teach environmental responsibility more effectively in religious settings.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Summary of Findings: This study set out to explore how the environmental ethics of Islam and Christianity grounded in their religious worldviews can contribute to shaping environmental responsibility through religious education. Through a comparative philosophical inquiry, it critically examined the moral foundations, similarities, and tensions in both faiths concerning human responsibility toward the environment. The findings suggest that both religions, despite doctrinal differences, emphasize a deep moral obligation to care for the earth. In Islamic ethics, the concept of *khalifah* (trusteeship) frames humans as stewards appointed by God to protect and maintain balance in nature. Similarly, Christian environmental ethics often refer to stewardship theology, where dominion is reinterpreted as a call to responsible and compassionate care for creation (Attfield, 2014; Foltz, 2022). These shared principles form a strong ethical basis for religious education to address environmental degradation. However, the study also highlights tensions between religious teachings and actual outcomes in

educational contexts. While scholars like Foltz support the practical relevance of these ethics, others such as Franck (2023) question whether religious instruction alone leads to environmentally responsible behavior. Cultural, experiential, and even secular values may sometimes outweigh formal religious ethics in shaping students environmental attitudes.

Despite these differing views, the study argues that integrating environmental ethics into religious education remains philosophically justified. Religious moral values, when thoughtfully taught, can awaken a deeper sense of purpose, duty, and connection to the natural worldsomething purely secular approaches may lack. Yet, the current literature often isolates each religion or fails to connect philosophical theory with educational practice. This study fills that gap by offering a comparative framework that draws from both Islamic and Christian ethics to support environmental responsibility as a central theme in faith-based education. It encourages educators to treat the environment not only as a scientific concern but as a moral and spiritual responsibility embedded within the heart of religious teachings.

Relevance to Faith-Based Education: This study highlights the crucial role faith-based education can play in addressing environmental degradation by drawing on the rich ethical traditions of Islam and Christianity. Through a philosophical comparison, it has shown that both religions deeply value stewardship and the moral responsibility of humans to care for the earth. As Attfield (2014) explains, religious ethics provide a powerful framework for nurturing virtues like care, respect, and accountability qualities essential for environmental responsibility. Similarly, Foltz (2022) emphasizes that concepts such as *khalifah* in Islam and stewardship in Christianity present environmental care not just as an option, but as a spiritual duty.

Faith-based education offers a unique opportunity to integrate these teachings in a way that resonates with believers on a personal and moral level. Unlike purely secular approaches, religious education can root environmental ethics in sacred narratives and values, which can motivate students beyond mere knowledge of environmental facts. This moral grounding can inspire meaningful behavior change, fostering a lifelong commitment to caring for creation. However, this study also acknowledges that simply teaching religious ethics does not guarantee pro-environmental action. As Franck (2023) points out, students' attitudes are influenced by a complex mix of personal experience, spirituality, and cultural context. This suggests that religious education must go beyond doctrine, incorporating practical, engaging methods that connect faith with real-world environmental challenges. By offering a comparative philosophical framework, this study contributes to filling the gap in how Islamic and Christian environmental ethics can be effectively integrated into faith-based education. It provides educators with a clearer understanding of the shared ethical foundations across these traditions,

encouraging inclusive teaching strategies that can reach diverse religious learners. Ultimately, this study affirms that faith-based education is not only relevant but vital in shaping environmentally responsible individuals who view caring for the earth as an integral part of their spiritual lives.

Suggestions for Religious Educators and Curriculum Developers: Based on the philosophical analysis and comparative review of Islamic and Christian environmental ethics, this study underscores the crucial role religious education can play in fostering environmental responsibility. Both traditions emphasize stewardship and the moral duty to protect creation, which provides a rich ethical foundation that educators can harness (Attfield, 2014; Foltz, 2022). Religious educators should therefore intentionally integrate these core ethical principles into their teaching, moving beyond abstract theological concepts to practical, actionable guidance for students. Curriculum developers are encouraged to design religious education programs that explicitly include environmental ethics as a central theme. This can be achieved by incorporating scriptural teachings on stewardship, exploring the shared values between Islam and Christianity, and encouraging reflection on human responsibility toward nature. When students see environmental care as part of their spiritual identity and moral obligation, their motivation to act sustainably may be strengthened.

Furthermore, educators should adopt interactive and contextualized approaches that connect religious ethics with real-world environmental challenges. As noted, mere exposure to religious content may not automatically inspire eco-friendly behaviors (Franck, 2023). Thus, curriculum activities that involve community projects, discussions on local environmental issues, and personal reflection can help bridge the gap between belief and action (Opele et al., 2019). It is also important to recognize diversity within faith communities and avoid one-size-fits-all approaches. Educators must be sensitive to the different interpretations and cultural contexts that influence how environmental ethics are understood and lived out.

In summary, this study argues for a deliberate and thoughtful integration of environmental ethics into religious education. By doing so, educators and curriculum developers can empower learners not only to understand their spiritual duties but also to translate these duties into meaningful care for the environment. This alignment between belief and practice is essential in addressing contemporary environmental challenges through faith-based education.

Directions for Further Theoretical Research: This study has explored how Islamic and Christian environmental ethics provide rich philosophical foundations for teaching environmental responsibility through religion. By comparing these traditions, it has highlighted common themes such as stewardship, care for creation, and moral accountability, which scholars like Attfield (2014) and Foltz

(2022) have emphasized as central to fostering an ethical relationship between humans and the environment. At the same time, the study acknowledged critiques that question the direct impact of religious education on environmental behavior, as noted by Franck (2023) and Palmeira and Luz (2021), who remind us that spirituality and broader cultural values often intersect with formal religious teachings in complex ways.

Given this landscape, future theoretical research should deepen the exploration of how these ethical principles translate into practical frameworks within religious education. While this study focused on philosophical comparisons, there is a need to move beyond abstract theory and consider how religious educators can intentionally integrate these values into curricula and teaching methods. This would bridge the gap between ethical ideals and educational practice, ensuring that environmental stewardship is not only taught but lived and embodied by learners. Moreover, further research could investigate how different cultural contexts influence the reception and interpretation of Islamic and Christian environmental ethics, enriching our understanding of the dynamic relationship between religion, ethics, and education. Since the current study highlighted a shared ethical core but also differences in emphasis, comparative studies that engage with more diverse communities could provide valuable insights. Finally, future theoretical work should continue to examine the nuanced ways religion interacts with other moral frameworks, such as secular environmental ethics or indigenous knowledge systems, to build a more holistic approach to environmental education. By doing so, scholars can support educators in crafting inclusive and effective programs that resonate with diverse learners while grounded firmly in ethical responsibility toward the environment.

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