

Religious Moderation on Food and Environmental Balance: Local Practices of Muslims and Confucians in Pontianak, West Kalimantan

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Abstract

The study on the role of religious moderation in food consumption practices as a strategy to maintain environmental balance highlights the unique synergy between Islamic and Confucian values within the local context of Pontianak, West Kalimantan, Indonesia. This article explores the moderate practices of Muslims and Confucians in Pontianak in valuing food to maintain environmental balance. More specifically, this article asks how Islamic and Confucian values of moderation are reflected and integrated into daily consumption practices to maintain environmental balance sustainably. Data was collected through in-depth interviews with informants representing Muslim and Confucian communities. The results show that both communities own environmentally friendly practices reflected in efforts to reduce food waste and control consumption. The concept of moderation and balance in Islam and Confucianism is the main foundation of this practice, as well as religious teachings, cultural norms, and ethical values. The findings suggest that environmental stewardship can be a point of convergence between religion and culture to maintain the sustainability of natural resources. These findings' policy and conceptual implications can be used to promote awareness of environmental stewardship among Muslim and Confucian communities and develop inclusive sustainability strategies.

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Further studies can expand the scope and go deeper in understanding sustainable behavior in diverse cultural contexts.

Studi tentang peran moderasi agama dalam praktik konsumsi makanan sebagai strategi untuk menjaga keseimbangan lingkungan, menyoroti sinergi unik antara nilai-nilai Islam dan Khonghucu dalam konteks lokal Pontianak, Kalimantan Barat, Indonesia. Artikel ini berusaha mengeksplorasi praktik moderat umat Islam dan Khonghucu di Pontianak dalam menghargai makanan sebagai upaya menjaga keseimbangan lingkungan. Secara lebih spesifik artikel ini mempertanyakan bagaimana nilai-nilai moderasi Islam dan Khonghucu tercermin dan terintegrasi dalam praktek konsumsi sehari-hari sehingga dapat menjaga keseimbangan lingkungan secara berkelanjutan. Dengan pendekatan kualitatif, data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam dengan informan yang mewakili masyarakat Muslim dan Khonghucu. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kedua komunitas tersebut memiliki praktik pemeliharaan lingkungan yang tercermin dalam upaya mengurangi pemborosan makanan dan mengendalikan konsumsi. Konsep moderasi dan keseimbangan dalam Islam dan Khonghucu menjadi landasan utama praktik ini, dengan referensi kepada ajaran agama, norma-norma budaya, dan nilai-nilai etika. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa praktik pemeliharaan lingkungan dapat menjadi titik konvergensi antara agama dan budaya dalam upaya menjaga keberlanjutan sumber daya alam. Implikasi kebijakan dan konseptual dari temuan ini dapat digunakan sebagai dasar untuk mempromosikan kesadaran akan pemeliharaan lingkungan di kalangan masyarakat Muslim dan Khonghucu serta mengembangkan strategi keberlanjutan yang inklusif. Studi lanjut dapat memperluas cakupan dan lebih mendalam dalam pemahaman perilaku berkelanjutan dalam konteks budaya yang beragam.

Keywords: environmental balance; Islam and Confucian; religious moderation; respect for food

Introduction

Maintaining environmental balance through respect for food for Muslims and Confucians has become an exciting phenomenon in considering the implementation of religious moderation in society. The context of religious moderation in food consumption practices includes the implementation of religious teachings in the way individuals or communities consume, choose, and manage food. Valuing food can reduce negative environmental impacts and promote ethical values that can shape responsible consumer behavior. Valuing food practices has been successfully implemented in Islamic and Confucian circles, including waste reduction,

consumption control, and practices that support environmental balance. A better understanding of valuing food can help create a harmonious lifestyle.

So far, studies on the practice of religious moderation have been limited to educational studies (Aslambik, 2019; Khasanah et al., 2023), at the policy level (Jamaluddin, 2022), and discourse in social plurality (Kawangung, 2019). Some academics connect the existence of local wisdom as a balancing indicator of community harmonization (Sabara et al., 2022; Saputera, 2021; Sumbulah et al., 2022) but have not explicitly explored the practice of religious moderation related to maintaining environmental balance through respect for food. Accordingly, three perspectives exist in Islamic and Confucian moderation teaching in food appreciation practices. First, the religious and ethical perspective provides a solid moral framework through religious teachings that encourage the practice of moderation through food appreciation. Second, an environmental and sustainability perspective that shows how moderation practices in Islam and Confucianism can contribute to environmental sustainability. Third, a social and cultural perspective highlights how the practice of food appreciation can shape societal norms and values.

This study is a response to the shortcomings of previous studies that should have addressed the successful practice of maintaining environmental balance through respect for food as a manifestation of the value of religious moderation in Islam and Confucianism. It is essential to understand that religion is important in shaping human behavior, including how they treat the nature around them. Therefore, understanding how these religious practices can be integrated with environmental conservation efforts becomes relevant. In line with that, three questions are present. First, how are Islamic and Confucian values of moderation reflected in daily food consumption practices? Second, to what extent can the moderation principles of both traditions address global environmental challenges, such as climate change and ecosystem degradation? Third, how can the integration of Islamic and Confucian values of moderation in food management provide practical guidance for the global community in maintaining a sustainable environmental balance?

This article argues that maintaining environmental balance through respect for food has not been seen comprehensively as an implementation of the value of religious moderation among Muslims and Confucians. Religious moderation is crucial in maintaining environmental balance, including ethical values and practices adopted by Muslims and Confucians. Three preconditions are the basis that make this study necessary. First is a global environmental crisis, including global warming, climate change, and ecosystem damage. Second, the significant impact of food production and consumption on the environment, including the overuse or waste of food, can compromise food safety. Third, global lifestyle changes and population growth are exacerbating pressure on natural resources. Thus, a deeper understanding of the conditions that support environmental balance through respect for food can provide a foundation for developing religious moderation that can be applied more broadly.

This research was conducted in Pontianak, a city in West Kalimantan known as “Khun Tien.” The nickname was given by the Pontianak Ethnic Chinese, who had long settled since the royal era of Sultan Syarif Abdurrahman Alkadrie. Initially, the ethnic group arrived in Pontianak to trade, and the name “Pontianak” has a horror feel because it comes from one of the ghosts (*kuntilanak*) that triggered the arrival of Chinese traders. At that time, they docked from ports in southern China to the Pontianak and Singkawang areas. In addition, Pontianak is also known as the Equator City because it crosses the equator. In the north of Siantan, an Equator Monument was built at the point crossed by the zero-degree latitude of the Earth.

This research took a qualitative approach using case study methods to gain a deeper understanding of the practice of environmental stewardship through food appreciation. Data collection involved respondents’ participation in the practice of food appreciation, with the respondents’ socio-cultural situation used to provide further context to this moderating practice. The initial stage of collecting the data was a review of primary data. In-depth interviews were then conducted with figures representing Islam and

Confucianism. Informants were selected based on their religious backgrounds to provide in-depth information on their backgrounds and the factors underlying their environmental stewardship practices. The collected data were then analyzed using the approach outlined by Miles et al (2013), namely through reduction, display, and verification.

During the data reduction process, classification based on themes and objectives was carried out, including waste reduction practices, consumption control, and practices supporting environmental balance. The information gathered was presented as tables, illustrations, and quotations. Finally, data verification was conducted by establishing relationships between data to ensure internal coherence and the socio-cultural context for further verification.

Cultural and Religious Foundations: Fostering Environmental Balance through Food Appreciation

Environmental balance is a philosophical foundation that defines the harmonious relationship between all elements in the ecosystem to maintain the sustainability and survival of the planet. Given the increasing pressure from human activities, ecosystem sustainability (Chapin et al., 1996) becomes an urgent at this point. When every component of an ecosystem, from plants to animals and humans, interacts in a balanced way, ecosystems can maintain biodiversity (Kremen, 2020), nutrient circulation, and the continuity of life cycles (Suikkanen et al., 2023). A change or imbalance in one element can trigger a detrimental chain effect, damaging the ecosystem as a whole. Ecological studies present concrete examples of the disruption of environmental balance that resulted in population declines of certain species, soil degradation, and climate change (Kapp, 1972, 2018). Therefore, understanding and applying the concept of environmental balance is crucial to protecting ecosystems' sustainability (Chapin et al., 1996) and maintaining the life balance on Earth.

The aspects that affect environmental balance through appreciation of food (Budianto, 2004) can be identified through moderation practices in

consumption (Riva et al., 2022) and food resource management. Cultural, religious, and ethical values associated with food appreciation can shape sustainable consumer behavior. An understanding and appreciating the value of food, as found in certain religious teachings, can create awareness of limited natural resources and the need to balance their use. Empirical evidence shows that moderation in food consumption, advocated by religious values such as Islam and Confucianism, can reduce waste and positively impact ecosystems (Kaswari et al., 2023). Incorporating religious values into food consumption practices made the awareness of environmental balance possible and provided a foundation for more sustainable consumer behavior (Trudel, 2019).

The notion of moderation in Islam and Confucianism has a significant role in shaping patterns of behavior, including in the context of food consumption. Both traditions advocate moderation as a fundamental principle in daily life. Moderation is recognized as a way to achieve balance in life and minimize waste. According to the Qur'an, Islam teaches its followers to avoid waste (QS. al-A'rāf, 7:31) and emphasizes maintaining balance in every aspect of life. On the other hand, in Confucianism, moderation is reflected in the concept of harmony with nature and respect for the cycle of life. The teachings of Prophet Kongzi highlight the importance of maintaining balance and avoiding extremes (Confucius, 1979, p. 6.28). Research by Muslichah et al. (2019) shows that the practice of moderation in Islam can influence food consumption patterns, while the study by Chen et al. (2021) illustrates how Confucian values provide a foundation for moderation practices in resource management. Thus, the concepts of moderation in Islam and Confucianism create an ethical foundation and provide concrete guidance for individuals to maintain balance in food consumption, creating a positive impact on sustainability and environmental balance.

Moderation in Islam and Confucianism includes a set of principles and practices that guide individuals in achieving balance and harmony in various aspects of life, including food consumption. Both traditions emphasize the

importance of moderation as an embodiment of living a balanced and morally-based life. Moderation is an ethical foundation that encourages individuals to avoid extremism and balance personal needs and social responsibilities. In Islam, moderation is reflected in the teachings of Sharia law, which includes the reduction of waste (Omar et al., 2018), consumption control (Cheema & Soman, 2008), and the encouragement to maintain a balance in meeting personal and social needs (Patterson, 1995). In terms of food consumption, Muslims are encouraged to eat moderately and avoid waste (Mohd & Fadzillah, 2020). On the other hand, in the Confucian tradition, moderation is reflected in the concept of *Li*, which refers to a moderate and ethical way of behaving in daily life. The teachings of Confucianism explicitly emphasize moderation and balance in action and behavior (Confucius, 1979, p. 6.29). Therefore, the moderation stages in Islam and Confucianism map out ethical principles and form a practical guide for individuals to develop a balanced lifestyle, positively impacting health and environmental sustainability and balancing human needs with conservation.

There is a close connection between Islamic and Confucian principles and maintaining environmental balance through moderation in food appreciation. Moreover, both religious traditions show the potential for synergy in creating holistic solutions to environmental challenges. The respect for food in Islam and Confucianism reflects the ethical and spiritual values that guide food consumption practices in both traditions. In Islam, food is considered a gift from God that should be treasured and not wasted (QS. al-Baqarah, 2: 205). Islamic teachings emphasize the importance of being grateful for sustenance, maintaining a balance in consumption, and avoiding wasteful behavior. Prophet Muhammad also taught his followers not to waste food (Fitria & Prastiwi, 2020). In Confucianism, respect for food is reflected in the concept of *Li*, which emphasizes manners and ethics in eating food. Support for this can be found in the Confucian teachings, which state that valuing food is a fundamental ethical act (Confucius, 1979, p. 10.8). Therefore, the practice of respect for food in Islam and Confucianism creates an attitude of gratitude and forms a holistic view

towards food consumption, creating a balanced relationship between humans and natural resources.

Mitigating Food Waste: Islamic and Confucian Approaches to Environmental Stewardship in Pontianak

The moderated practice of Islam and Confucianism in preserving the environment through reducing food wastage means minimizing or reducing the amount of food thrown away or not utilized efficiently. Food wastage occurs when consumable food is thrown away for no apparent reason, whether at the household, commercial, or industrial level. The main objectives of reducing food wastage are to increase natural resource use efficiency, reduce environmental impacts, and support food sustainability.

Several informants highlighted the importance of nurturing the environment by valuing food:

“Quranic proofs about the prohibition of wasteful behavior appear in Surah al-Isrā’ verses 26-27 and Surah al-Furqān verse 67, confirming that Allah prohibits wastefulness. Appreciating food includes finishing meals, dressing well when eating, sharing with others, and setting aside some for animals, though European eating habits are more respectful” (Ikhsanudin, interview, October 01, 2023).

These scriptural sources show how religious teachings can be applied in concrete policies and practices to reduce food wastage and support environmental sustainability. It provides a conceptual basis for the argument that moderation practices in Islam are not only ethically and religiously relevant but also have practical and policy implications that can be widely applied.

“Environmental care includes cleanliness, avoiding pollution, preserving ecosystems, and not wasting food. Prophet Khongzi emphasized ethical hunting and fishing practices only during appropriate seasons (Lun Yü, VII, 27; Xiao Jing, 45). These principles reflect Confucian ethics, advocating for respect towards nature and food” (Novianto, interview, October 03, 2023).

This statement is relevant to global environmental issues such as climate change and ecosystem degradation. The ethical principles taught by Confucius can guide sustainable practices that help address these challenges.

It shows that traditional and spiritual teachings can be essential in shaping human behavior towards the environment and supporting conservation efforts.

Efforts to reduce food wastage involve developing sensible meal plans, storing and managing food supplies properly, using appropriate storage methods, and recycling leftovers. In addition to environmental benefits, reducing food wastage can help save costs and positively contribute to global food security by maximizing resource utilization in food production.

“Regarding food storage, I like to buy various tools; for example, there are special places for rice, vegetables, side dishes, and others, in addition to storing them for me to take out. I feel uncomfortable if I serve something at home in the wrong place, for example, a fruit bowl for fried food; it makes me less eager to eat. It has a spiritual value for me” (Ikhsanudin, interview, October 01, 2023).

Good food storage for some Pontianak Muslims is part of moderation practice, as it helps to manage food resources more efficiently and reduce wastage. This statement supports the argument that moderation and attention to detail in food management are essential in supporting environmental sustainability. Respondents also stressed the importance of individual involvement in a community in supporting sustainable practices:

“I currently join Sahabat Eco Bhinneka or SEKA. Incidentally, many of our activity agendas are related to environmental maintenance to maintain religious harmony in Pontianak City. One of our activities is recycling food waste into compost or plant fertilizer” (Adi, interview, October 12, 2023).

Participation in SEKA is a clear example of how local communities can actively engage in environmental maintenance efforts. It shows that sustainability is not only an individual responsibility but a collective responsibility that can be organized through community groups.

Food waste can have significant economic, social, and environmental impacts. Food wastage is a waste of resources used to produce, process, and distribute food. Despite significant food wastage, millions of people around the world are still experiencing hunger. Waste creates an unfair food inequality, where food that could have been used to meet hungry people's needs is wasted.

“Throwing away food shows disrespect for it and wastes significant resources. From planting and harvesting to distribution, food involves a long, energy-intensive process. While many lack food, our leftovers could help others instead of being wasted. Respecting food means minimizing waste and aiding those in need” (Ikhsanuddin, interview, October 01, 2023).

Food waste also contributes to greenhouse gas emissions. Food rotting in landfills produces methane, a greenhouse gas more potent than carbon dioxide, contributing to climate change. Food waste can be seen as an unsustainable use of resources. In a world with a growing population and limited resources, reducing food waste is vital to maintaining the sustainability of natural resources. To address these impacts, it is essential to promote awareness of food wastage, support waste reduction practices, and develop policies that encourage efficiency in the food supply chain. Chairman of MATAKIN West Kalimantan states:

“Confucianism teaches *Ren-Ti*, the reciprocal relationship between humans and nature. Nature supports human life and must be preserved. Destroying nature harms our existence. Simple actions like taking only needed food and avoiding waste exemplify this principle. Eating without wasting reflects respect for nature and necessity” (Sutadi, interview, October 10, 2023).

Food control can reduce negative environmental impacts (Kroyer, 1995). One can manage financial budgets more efficiently by planning and controlling food consumption (Anderson & Bowman, 1943). The approach can reduce unnecessary expenses and support personal financial stability. Food control practices can help one enjoy food mindfully and appreciate the eating experience. The practice can bring satisfaction and improve the overall quality of life.

Wise Consumption: Adhering to the Values of Moderation and Balance

Consumption control is closely related to understanding and practicing wise consumption patterns. It includes considering the resources used in food production, choosing foods that meet nutritional needs without going overboard, and avoiding consumptive behaviors that can contribute to waste (Farid & Saputra, 2021). By controlling food consumption, individuals can

participate in efforts to maintain environmental balance and support the sustainability of natural resources (Erdoğan et al., 2021).

The Qur'an emphasizes the values of moderation and balance in life, "and eat and drink, and do not overdo it. Verily, Allah dislikes those who exaggerate" (QS. al-A'rāf 7: 31). A hadith by Ahmad from the Prophet Muhammad states, "Verily, a man has never filled a vessel worse than his stomach. It is enough for a man that a few mouthfuls may straighten his spine" (Trabelsi et al., 2023). Muslims in Pontianak are involved in household waste recycling programs as an act to implement the teaching. They separate organic and inorganic waste to ensure that recyclable waste does not end up in landfills. The Muslim community also often organizes *gotong-royong* or mutual assistance to clean up the surrounding environment, including rivers and markets, to prevent pollution and keep the environment clean. This practice reflects Islamic teachings on cleanliness and moderation and strengthens social ties within the community through collective activities. Ahmad Zaini (interview, October 30, 2023) states, "One of the environmental-based programs in the Muhammadiyah organization is to work together to clean up the waste of schools and mosques owned by the association so that the surrounding environment is clean and pollution-free."

Muslim communities in Pontianak are also active in plastic reduction campaigns. They promote the use of cloth shopping bags and reusable food containers. Mosques in Pontianak also encourage worshippers to bring their water bottles and avoid using single-use plastics during religious events. These campaigns reflect an awareness of the negative impact of plastics on the environment and the community's efforts to live more in line with Islamic teachings on protecting nature and resources. Respondent states, "as mosque administrators, we consistently advise worshippers to care about cleanliness by reducing the use of plastic at religious events" (Bustami, interview, October 30, 2023).

In the Lun Yü or Analects, Confucius states, "Being silent when full, restraining oneself when happy, and being genuinely kind to others are signs of a noble person" (Confucius, 1979, p. 4.4). Islam and Confucianism teach

that moderation in food consumption is wise (Salleh et al., 2022). Applying ethics and awareness in choosing, consuming, and utilizing food (Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006) is a way to maintain balance in life and engage in environmental stewardship practices.

Consumption control concerning environmental care practices can be categorized into several aspects that focus on the efficient use of resources and reducing environmental impacts. First, food types with a lower environmental impact, such as plant-based or local foods, can be selected. The aim is to reduce the carbon footprint and other negative impacts of food production and transportation.

“In Chinese food tradition, *Bai Cai* refers to salted vegetables for vegetarians. In worship, offerings should not include animals or anything with life or blood. Only fruits or lifeless foods are permitted. *Ciak Ce* (*Tio Ciu*) and *Sit Cai* (*Hakka*) also mean vegetarian food” (Sutadi, interview, October 10, 2023).

Second, food planning and inventory management to avoid waste. The management involves reducing food waste and minimizing contributions to landfills.

“In daily life, Confucianism teaches us to finish the food we take, minimizing waste. We eat according to our needs, avoiding excess. This generational teaching includes cooking appropriate amounts based on family size, ensuring minimal food waste” (Phiong Sunarto, interview, October 20, 2023).

Third, a moderation approach to consumption, i.e., awareness of portion size, frequency of consumption, and food policies, should be used to reduce pressure on natural resources and suppress excessive consumption patterns.

“Confucian teachings emphasize cultivating the Earth and respecting food by consuming according to needs, avoiding waste. Clean environments ensure better harvests. Chinese parents pass down respect for food, storing it properly to prevent waste, maintaining this tradition through generations” (Rudy Leonard, interview, October 15, 2023).

This categorization reflects a holistic approach to environmental stewardship practices through controlling food consumption. By paying

attention to these aspects, individuals and communities can contribute to preserving natural resources and maintaining a balanced ecosystem.

Balancing Human Needs with Nature

Practices that support environmental balance refer to actions or behaviors directed toward maintaining, preserving, and creating harmony in natural ecosystems. These practices intend to reduce negative human impacts on the environment and maintain a balance between human needs and the sustainability of nature. Some examples of practices that support environmental balance involve, firstly, natural resource management to prevent over-exploitation (Herdiansyah, 2018). Secondly, conscious consumption practices are used in choosing and consuming products with lower environmental impacts, such as local and organic, and supporting sustainable production practices (Csutora, 2012). Third, education should increase public awareness about the importance of environmental preservation, conservation of natural resources, and the impact of human behavior on ecosystems (Howe, 2009).

Islam teaches that humans are considered *khalifah* or God's representatives on Earth (QS. al-Baqarah 2: 30). In this role, humans are responsible for caring and protecting the Earth. This concept encourages wise management of natural resources not to damage the ecosystem and environmental sustainability. One aspect of diverse moderation, Islamic teachings also emphasize the principle of *'adl* or justice (QS. al-Mā'idah 5: 8). Natural resource management must be carried out fairly, ensuring that the rights of all living things, including humans and the environment, are respected and protected. It is in line with the teachings of Confucianism, which also emphasizes the importance of creating harmony with nature and the cycles of the universe (Xie et al., 2017). Humans are considered part of nature and are responsible for maintaining this harmony. The Confucian teachings' principle of moderation (*zhong yong*) creates the view that humans should not go overboard in taking natural resources. Moderation and balance are necessary to maintain the sustainability of nature (Gao et al., 2022).

Many Muslims and Confucians in Pontianak, such as those in the SEKA (*Sahabat Eco Bhinneka*) community, actively recycle food waste into compost or plant fertilizer. It is a tangible form of wise resource management that reduces environmental negative impacts. For example, in interviews with some respondents, they explained that they collect food waste from their households and process it into compost. This compost is then utilized to grow vegetables and ornamental plants in their home gardens, which helps reduce dependence on chemical fertilizers and maintain soil fertility naturally. Some traditional shops and markets run by the Muslim community have also started to provide environmentally friendly packaging alternatives, such as banana leaves or recycled paper, to wrap their merchandise.

Confucians practice maintaining harmony with nature through the tradition of releasing animals. One crucial practice by Confucians in Pontianak is the tradition of releasing animals into the wild, known as *fangsheng*. This practice becomes a symbol of respect for life and an effort to maintain the balance of the ecosystem. At certain times of the year, such as during religious holidays, the Confucian community will gather by a river or lake to release fish or birds previously purchased from the market. This practice is not only a religious activity but also a place to gather and strengthen ties between community members. It shows that environmental conservation efforts can be a collective activity that strengthens social ties.

“Confucianism practices environmental protection through *Fangsheng*, releasing animals to maintain ecosystems. Celebrations like eating moon cakes and *Bakcang* also reflect food appreciation tied to agriculture, seasons, and gratitude to God. *Duan Wu*, the *Bakcang* day, symbolizes repelling disease and bad air” (Novianto, interview, October 25, 2023).

In addition, during the *Duan Wu Jie* celebration, the Confucian community in Pontianak started to switch to using environmentally friendly materials for the celebration. For example, to make *Bakcang* (*Cang cake*), they try to reduce the use of plastic and switch to natural materials such as bamboo leaves for wrapping. The celebration also includes serving moon cakes and other traditional foods wrapped in biodegradable materials. Using

eco-friendly materials, the Confucian community demonstrates high environmental awareness and sets a positive example for the younger generation. This practice also shows how cultural traditions can function along with environmental sustainability efforts.

Practices that support environmental balance through food appreciation have varied positive impacts, covering environmental, social, and economic aspects. Choosing and consuming food with environmental awareness, such as reasonably or moderately, will help reduce pressure on natural ecosystems. In the social aspect, appreciation of food will foster a social spirit and empathy for others in need (Hasibuan et al., 2023; Poser, 2022; Robinson et al., 2011). From the economic side, there are financial savings and strengthening family resilience by reducing and minimizing food waste.

Based on the findings above, the Table 1 summarizes various aspects of how Islamic and Confucian teachings promote moderation in food appreciation, which in turn supports environmental sustainability. The religious and ethical teachings from both traditions play a crucial role in shaping responsible consumption behaviors and supporting environmental conservation efforts.

Islamic and Confucian Encounter on Food Management and Environmental Preservation

This research shows that Islamic and Confucian moderation practices are essential in reducing food wastage, contributing to environmental stewardship. Islamic and Confucian teachings encourage moderation in food consumption as a prudent action in accordance with the values of the Quran, Hadith, and Confucian Scriptures. The categorization of consumption control includes the selection of low environmental impact foods, inventory management, and moderation approaches. Practices supporting environmental balance involve natural resource management, conscious consumption, and public education. Respect for food is based on the understanding that humans, as stewards of the Earth, should be able to contribute to preserving the environment to support a balanced relationship between God, humans, and nature.

Table 1
Religious Moderation and Its Environmental Impact on the Muslim and
Confucian Communities of Pontianak

Aspect	Practices in Islam	Practices in Confucian	Impact
Reduction of Food Waste	Avoiding food waste according to the teachings of the Qur'an	Respecting food as a reflection of Li ethics	Reduces food waste, supports environmental sustainability
Consumption Management	Moderate consumption, avoiding excessiveness	Consumption according to needs, avoiding overindulgence	Reduces negative environmental impacts
Convergence of Religious and Cultural Values	Valuing food as a gift from God	Respecting food as an ethical act	Increases environmental awareness, strengthens social norms
Community Involvement	Participation in waste recycling, plastic reduction campaigns	Use of environmentally friendly materials in traditional celebrations	Enhances sustainability and community well-being
Spiritual and Ethical Values	Food appreciation is viewed as part of worship and an expression of gratitude to God.	Food appreciation and harmony with nature are integral parts of Confucian ethics and spirituality.	Spiritual and ethical values encourage sustainable behaviors that integrate environmental consciousness into daily practices.

Concrete steps to reduce food wastage involve planning food choices, good storage management, and a moderation approach to consumption. It aligns with the view that valuing food impacts the environment and can help save costs and support global food security. Controlling food consumption,

especially by choosing more sustainable food types, is also vital in environmental stewardship practices. Practices such as releasing animals, celebrating certain traditions, and consuming reasonably and in moderation that support environmental balance provide further dimensions to the understanding of moderation. Islamic and Confucian teachings emphasize the responsibility of humans as stewards of the Earth, aiming to maintain harmony between human needs and the sustainability of nature. In this context, such practices positively impact the environment and social and economic aspects, creating an awareness of sustainability and building empathetic attitudes towards others.

The research shows that practicing moderation by Muslims and Confucians in Pontianak supports environmental stewardship. There are several interrelated factors: first, the basis of religious and cultural teachings; Islamic and Confucian teachings have principles of moderation in the consumption and management of natural resources. Second, ethics and environmental awareness; in this case, as the informants pointed out, simple actions such as not wasting food can positively impact the environment and society as a whole. Third, the introduction of spiritual values; for example, the connection between dressing well for feasts, sharing with others, and setting aside food for animals is interpreted as a form of respect for the resource-intensive process of food distribution. Fourth, the role of communities and organizations, such as participation in groups or organizations that care about the environment, such as Majelis Tinggi Agama Khonghucu Indonesia (MATAKIN) and Sahabat Eco Bhinneka (SEKA), can strengthen awareness of the importance of protecting the environment; practices such as recycling food waste into compost show that communities can take part in creating sustainable habits.

The comparison between Islam and Confucianism in the context of moderation practices adds a diverse cultural and religious dimension to this research. The parallel can provide further insight into the differences and similarities in environmental approaches between different religious and cultural groups. This research differs from previous studies that have not explicitly linked environmental stewardship practices to Islamic and

Confucian concepts of moderation. This research highlights the importance of spiritual and ethical values in moderation practices, such as respecting food and maintaining a healthy relationship with the environment. Also, it adds a dimension differentiating from previous studies that have been more concerned with social or economic aspects.

This research has significant implications for policy development in the context of environmental stewardship and food wastage reduction. First, the government and relevant agencies could consider integrating the spiritual and ethical values of moderation practices in Islam and Confucianism into environmental policies. It could include public outreach and education to raise awareness of the environmental impacts of food consumption behaviors. Second, adopting consumption control practices and reducing food wastage can be accommodated in food sustainability policies. The adoption could include developing guidelines or incentives for individuals, families, and companies to plan and manage food consumption wisely. Third, a collaboration between governments, non-governmental organizations, and religious communities could be enhanced to promote practices supporting environmental balance that align with Islamic and Confucian values. It could strengthen cross-sectoral cooperation and build collective awareness in efforts to maintain the sustainability of natural resources.

The findings of this study also have a striking conceptual impact by providing deep insights into the practice of environmental stewardship in the context of Islamic and Confucian values. The main contribution of this research is to illustrate how religious teachings and philosophies of life can be articulated as a foundation for concrete actions in food wastage reduction and consumption control. Its conceptual implications highlight the importance of understanding and internalizing spiritual and ethical values in formulating concrete solutions to environmental challenges. Moderation, resourcefulness, and balance between humans and nature emerge as conceptual underpinnings that can be applied more broadly in developing a sustainability paradigm. By incorporating spiritual and ethical dimensions in the practice of environmental stewardship, this research presents a new

foundation to enrich and complement the understanding of the concept of sustainability, which is often limited to economic and ecological aspects.

Conclusion

Key findings from this research highlight that environmental stewardship practices in Islamic and Confucian contexts can significantly reduce food wastage and control consumption. Awareness of both faiths' spiritual and ethical values plays a crucial role in shaping individual and societal behavior about food. Respondents affirmed that the fundamentals of their religious teachings and philosophy of life provide clear guidance in regard to respect for food, management of natural resources, and understanding the balance between humans and nature. By practicing moderation in food consumption and treating food as a gift to be cherished, they take concrete steps in supporting food sustainability and environmental conservation. The findings illustrate the importance of the spiritual dimension in shaping human behavior towards the environment and contribute to the global discourse on food wastage and sustainable environmental stewardship practices.

Based on the description of the research results, the concepts used and the research methods have answered the questions posed. Concepts such as moderation, reduced food wastage, consumption control, and practices that support environmental balance provide the primary foundation for exploring environmental stewardship practices in Islamic and Confucian contexts. The research explores a deeper understanding of the spiritual values, ethics, and religious teachings that shape food and environment-related behaviors.

This study contributes significantly to understanding the practice of environmental stewardship in Islamic and Confucian contexts. However, some limitations need to be acknowledged for further studies. First, this study is limited to a particular population and context, which may not apply universally to Muslim and Confucian communities in other locations with different contexts. Further studies could involve a broader sample and a variety of cultural contexts to improve the generalizability of the findings. In

addition, the research focus on food-related environmental stewardship practices may result in limitations in understanding other dimensions of sustainability practices and environmental ethics. Future studies could expand the scope to include other aspects of sustainable behavior in daily life. Finally, this research is descriptive, and future studies could involve experimental approaches or further analysis to measure the real impact of the environmental stewardship practices identified in this study.[w]

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