

ISLAMIC EDUCATION, NATIONAL UNITY AND THE CLAMOUR FOR RESOURCES CONTROL IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Unity is essential for fostering harmonious and peaceful coexistence within a society, making it imperative to adopt strategies that promote national unity for progress and development. Nigeria, a country rich in natural resources, faces persistent economic challenges despite its vast resource base. This has fuelled the growing demand for resource control, a central issue in contemporary political discourse. This study seeks to review the Islamic teachings relevant to national unity and resource control, aiming to uncover Islamic perspectives on these matters. Descriptive and analytical research approaches were employed, with data sourced from both print and electronic materials. Findings revealed that Islamic education, when properly implemented, emphasizes moral uprightness, social justice, and mutual respect, which are crucial for addressing the tensions arising from resource distribution. It was also noted that the integration of Islamic teachings on economic equity and conflict resolution into national educational curricula could foster a sense of shared responsibility and national cohesion. However, the study identified challenges such as political manipulation, ethnic divisions, and inadequate religious education frameworks, which undermine the potential of Islamic education in achieving these goals. The study concluded that Islamic education offers significant insights for addressing resource-based conflicts and strengthening national unity. It recommended that policymakers and religious leaders collaborate to incorporate Islamic principles of justice and resource management into civic education programs, while promoting interfaith dialogue and community engagement to address the broader socio-political challenges facing Nigeria.

Keywords: Islamic Education, National Unity, Resources Control

Introduction

Islam is a religion that spreads its tentacles to permeate all spheres of life. Among the virtues stressed and enjoined in Islam is unity. *Alwahdah* (unity) is a concept in Islam that could not be undermined as it is regarded as the strength of people in all situations. Unity is the foundation of success, progress and development in the society. In the same vein, Islam sees mankind as *khalifah* (Allah's vicegerents) on earth, and as such, the resources on earth are to be explored for the benefits of man. However, in exploring Allah's endowments, justice and caution have to be employed as man has to bear in mind that he would be accountable in the sight of Allah on how he had utilised the resources at his disposal.

Nigeria, a country rich in cultural diversity and natural resources, has long grappled with the complexities of balancing national unity with the equitable distribution of wealth. Central to the country's political discourse is the clamour for resource control, particularly in regions endowed with vast oil and gas reserves. This demand for greater control over local resources has become a focal point of tension, particularly between the federal government and regional stakeholders, who argue that the current system of resource distribution is unjust and disproportionately benefits certain areas while marginalizing others.

Amidst this on-going debate, Islamic education offers a unique lens through which to examine the interplay between national unity and the management of natural resources. Islam, with its strong emphasis on justice, equity, and the welfare of the community (Ummah), provides moral and ethical guidance on how resources should be managed and shared for the common good. The principles of fairness and the equitable distribution of wealth, which are integral to Islamic thought, may offer valuable insights into resolving Nigeria's resource control conflicts in a way that fosters both national unity and social justice. In this paper, attempt is made to highlight the essence of National unity and to address the issue of clamour for resource control according to the teachings of Islam.

Concept of National Unity

National unity is a multifaceted concept central to the peaceful coexistence of diverse groups within a nation. It is often defined as the processes that bring together various segments of society to create a shared sense of belonging, pride, and common identity. According to Lee, Baharuddin, and Muhammad (2013), national unity refers to the mechanisms that unite a community and country by fostering shared values and a collective identity. This unity, they argue, cultivates a sense of love and pride for the nation, promoting peaceful cohabitation among citizens of different ethnic, religious, and regional backgrounds. The authors emphasize that national unity is not merely the absence of conflict but involves a commitment to a national identity rooted in constitutional principles and a national ideology that underscores social cohesion and collective responsibility.

National unity is closely associated with the concept of *national integration*, which, as noted by the authors, extends beyond simply the unification of people to include the integration of various cultural traditions, including differences in beliefs, values, religion, culture, language, and race. National integration, therefore, requires a broad acceptance of diversity, ensuring that different groups within a country do not merely coexist but actively contribute to a harmonious and integrated society.

In this regard, Etzioni (2002), as cited in Alvan (2017), provides a nuanced perspective on national unity, defining it as a form of solidarity that transcends individual sectors and regions, with minimal sectorial practices and a strong adherence to law and order. Etzioni's view on national unity, however, cautions against the misconception that unity requires homogeneity. Rather, he advocates for a "community of communities," where different groups retain their distinct identities but are bound by shared values and experiences, fostering a national spirit that respects diversity while promoting the common good. This vision of national unity stresses the importance of tolerance and

mutual respect among diverse communities within a nation, ensuring that unity is achieved not through assimilation but through collaboration and respect for pluralism.

In the context of Nigeria, national unity remains a critical challenge due to the country's vast ethnic, religious, and cultural diversity. The complex relationships between various ethnic groups, regions, and religions have, at times, been sources of tension, particularly when disparities in wealth distribution and access to resources—such as the contentious debate over resource control—are considered. For instance, Nigeria's oil-rich Niger Delta region has long demanded greater autonomy and control over its natural resources, arguing that the central government disproportionately benefits from the exploitation of local resources while leaving the local population impoverished. These tensions highlight the need for a national unity framework that acknowledges and addresses the concerns of diverse communities while ensuring that all citizens are united under a shared commitment to the country's constitutional principles.

The concept of national unity, therefore, is not a static or simplistic ideal but a dynamic process that requires continuous negotiation and adaptation, particularly in a multi-ethnic and multi-religious society like Nigeria. As the country seeks to address the demands for resource control, it must also reaffirm its commitment to national unity by fostering a sense of belonging, fairness, and mutual respect among its citizens, regardless of their ethnic or regional affiliations. Through this approach, national unity can be nurtured in a way that does not deny the diversity of Nigeria's people but rather embraces it as a strength that contributes to the nation's overall progress and stability.

Clamour for Resource Control in Nigeria

The clamour for resource control in Nigeria is a significant socio-political issue, particularly in relation to the exploitation of the nation's abundant natural resources, including oil, gas, and minerals. It refers to the efforts by various ethnic groups, regions, and states within the Nigerian Federation to assert greater control over the natural resources found within their territories. This demand for control, as noted by Ado-Kurawa (2002), signifies the attempt by certain constituent units of the federation to manage, exploit, and benefit from resources located within their own regions. The controversy over resource control stems from the centralization of resource management by the federal government, which critics argue results in the marginalization of resource-rich areas, especially the oil-producing regions in the Niger Delta.

Rhuks (2012) identifies four primary dimensions to the clamour for resource control in Nigeria, which represent differing perspectives on how resources should be managed:

1. **Absolute Resource Control:** This view advocates that each region, especially those endowed with significant natural resources, should have complete autonomy over the resources within its geographical boundaries. Proponents argue that regions should not only control the exploration and exploitation of resources but also be able to dispose of them and retain the financial benefits without federal interference.
2. **Principal Resource Control:** A somewhat moderated version of resource control, this perspective proposes that each region should have a primary role in the exploration,

exploitation, and management of its resources. While not calling for total autonomy, this stance seeks a substantial role for regional governments in deciding how resources are developed, including determining the terms of sales and benefiting from the revenues generated.

3. **True Federalism and Resource Control:** This argument focuses on the ideal of federalism, suggesting that true federal systems allow for the autonomy of constituent states or regions. According to Haruna and Abdulrahman (2008), in a true federation, each of Nigeria's 36 states should have the constitutional right to manage its own resources, collect taxes, and make fiscal decisions independently, remitting only agreed-upon contributions to the federal government. This would align the practice of resource control with the principles of federalism, ensuring that local governments have the power to make decisions that directly affect their development.
4. **Local Resource Control:** This view emphasises the right of local communities, particularly those in resource-rich regions, to benefit from the environmental resources and wealth beneath their lands. It advocates for the devolution of power to local populations, allowing them to access, manage, and derive benefits from their ancestral resources. Local resource control is often presented as a means to address historical grievances and ensure that the communities most affected by resource extraction are directly compensated for the environmental and social costs incurred.

The clamour for resource control is not merely an economic issue but a direct response to the historical marginalization and suffering experienced by communities, particularly in the Niger Delta. The region, which holds the majority of Nigeria's oil reserves, has long complained of environmental degradation, inadequate development, and poor living conditions despite the immense wealth generated from oil exploitation. As Haruna and Abdulrahman (2008) observe, the failure of successive governments to address these concerns has exacerbated local demands for greater control over resources. The grievances of the Niger Delta have often been articulated through protests, militancy, and agitation for resource equity, arguing that the centralization of resource management has perpetuated poverty and underdevelopment in these areas.

While the focus of the resource control debate has historically cantered on the Niger Delta, it is important to recognize that the issue is not limited to this region alone. As Haruna and Abdulrahman (2008) point out, every state in Nigeria has its own share of resources, and the question of how to explore, develop, and benefit from these resources is a matter of national importance. Resource control, therefore, should not be seen as an issue exclusive to certain states or ethnic groups but as a broader national concern that speaks to the principles of fairness, equity, and justice in the distribution of Nigeria's wealth.

Furthermore, the resource control debate is intertwined with broader discussions about governance, the balance of power between federal and state governments, and the constitutional framework that underpins the Nigerian Federation. The centralization of resource management in Nigeria is rooted in historical factors, including colonial-era policies and post-independence governance structures that sought to unify the country

under a centralized authority. However, this centralization has often been perceived as detrimental to the development of resource-rich regions, leading to widespread calls for decentralization and greater local autonomy in resource management.

Islam and National Unity

Islam is a religion that profoundly emphasizes human dignity, social harmony, and collective welfare. It provides a framework that stresses the significance of unity, particularly within a nation, as a vital component for stability, development, and peaceful coexistence. Islam teaches that individuals must not only love their nation but also actively work for its progress. The Qur'an, Islam's holy book, reflects this commitment to national harmony and unity. For instance, it highlights the importance of solidarity and selflessness among citizens, as seen in the verse:

“Those who entered the city and the faith before them love those who flee unto them for refuge, and find in their breasts no need for that which hath been given them, but prefer (the fugitives) above themselves though poverty become their lot. And whoso is saved from his own avarice - such are they who are successful” (Qur'an 59:9).

This verse underscores the virtue of prioritising the collective good over personal interests, an essential tenet for fostering national unity.

One of the key steps to ensuring the progress and stability of a nation is through unity. Without national unity, achieving desired growth and development becomes increasingly difficult. Islam advocates for a sense of belonging among citizens, which promotes social cohesion and pride in one's nation. This sense of collective identity is critical for fostering collaboration and mutual understanding. Collectivism, or working together for the common good, is central to Islam's vision of national unity, as it facilitates socialization and helps individuals recognize their rights and duties. According to Islamic teachings, there is no right without a corresponding duty, and fulfilling duties is paramount to enjoying the benefits of a harmonious society.

The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) exemplified the significance of unity when he established the first Muslim community in Medina. Before his arrival, the people of Medina were divided along tribal and ethnic lines, engaged in longstanding conflicts. However, through the Prophet's leadership, these divisions were healed, and he established the *Constitution of Medina*, a pact that outlined the rights and responsibilities of the city's diverse inhabitants, including Muslims, Jews, and other communities. This document laid the groundwork for unity and peaceful coexistence in a multicultural society (Abdur-Rafiu & Ajidagba, 2015). The Prophet's actions reflect Islam's emphasis on reconciliation, cooperation, and solidarity key ingredients for national unity.

Islam's teachings offer a solid foundation for fostering national unity through principles of equality, justice, and mutual respect. Meftah et al. (2012) noted that in Islam, national unity is viewed as a cohesive and cooperative system, built upon the understanding that all human beings are equal in the eyes of Allah. This understanding promotes a vision where human dignity is respected, and all people, regardless of their background, work together for the common good. Islam teaches that the diversity of nations and tribes

exists only for identification purposes, as emphasized in the Qur'an: *"O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you"* (Qur'an, 49:13). This verse reinforces the idea that unity among people from different backgrounds is rooted in shared moral and spiritual values, with the highest honour going to those who embody righteousness.

Ameen (2013) emphasises that Islam teaches reconciliation and self-restraint as the best ways to achieve and sustain peace in society. Even when it requires personal sacrifice, Muslims are encouraged to work towards peace and unity. This ideal reflects the broader Islamic principle that social cohesion is achieved through patience, humility, and a collective effort to put the welfare of others above individual gain.

Moreover, Islam promotes the idea of unity through acts of charity, mutual support, and kindness. Human Appeal (2018) outlines key principles of unity in Islam, which include:

1. **Selflessness:** True faith in Islam involves loving for others what one loves for oneself. This extends to inviting others to Islam with sincere intentions and fostering a spirit of generosity.
2. **Mutual Support:** Believers are described as being like the parts of a building, supporting one another in times of need. This mutual support fosters strong bonds and a sense of communal responsibility.
3. **Unity through Kindness:** The Qur'an and Hadith encourage kindness and cooperation. The Prophet Muhammad's example of showing compassion even to his enemies is a powerful model of how unity can be achieved through kindness.
4. **Unity through Charity:** The act of giving to others is not only a way to alleviate suffering but also strengthens bonds within the community and reinforces a connection with Allah.

According to Mishaan and Ali (2024), Islam's perspective on national unity is rooted in the historical context of the Arabian Peninsula, where tribalism and divisions were prevalent. Before Islam's emergence, the region was rife with racial, class, and tribal conflicts. However, with the advent of Islam, these divisions were replaced by a sense of brotherhood and solidarity. One of the earliest examples of this unity was the bond of brotherhood forged between the *Muhajirun* (immigrants) from Mecca and the *Ansar* (helpers) in Medina. The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) established a society where racial, tribal, and class distinctions were abolished, and equality and mutual support became central values. Despite the challenges faced by the Muslim community throughout history, the unity established by the Prophet remains a model for how different nationalities and cultures can be integrated under the banner of Islam. Mishaan and Ali (2024) argue that the Islamic principles of unity should be revitalized today, emphasizing that returning to the Islamic model of unity is necessary to counter the divisions and conflicts that continue to plague many societies.

Islam, through its teachings, lays a strong foundation for the promotion of national unity by stressing equality, justice, and respect for human dignity. It encourages citizens to

work together for the common good, to love their nation, and to obey constituted authority. These principles of unity are essential for the peaceful coexistence and development of any society. The Prophet Muhammad's example, as well as the teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith, provide clear guidelines for achieving national unity, emphasizing the importance of social cooperation, reconciliation, and a commitment to justice and equality.

Equality as a Pillar of National Unity in Islam

Islam emphasises the fundamental equality of all humankind, teaching that distinctions based on race, ethnicity, or social class are not meant to create division but to foster understanding and mutual respect. The Qur'an underscores this by reminding humanity of its shared origin from a single source and emphasizing that true worth lies in righteousness, not in external characteristics (Qur'an 4:1; Qur'an 49:13). Practices like tribalism, racism, and favouritism, which breed division and injustice, are strongly condemned in Islam, as reflected in the Prophet Muhammad's (SAW) farewell sermon and teachings (Sunan Ibn Majah; Sahih Muslim). While Islam encourages love for one's nation or community, it rejects any form of unjust favouritism or discrimination. By promoting values such as justice, fairness, and respect, Islam aims to create a harmonious society where individuals are treated with dignity and equality, forming the foundation for national unity and social cohesion (Ameen, 2013).

Preaching of Love among Citizens and Prohibition of Discord and Rancour

Islam emphasizes the promotion of love, harmony, and unity as fundamental principles for building cohesive societies. The teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) highlight that genuine faith is linked to mutual love, which is a prerequisite for entering Paradise. Acts as simple as exchanging greetings foster unity and bring people closer, while the ethic of wishing for others what one desires for oneself forms the foundation of community cohesion and conflict resolution (Sahih Muslim; Sahih Bukhari). The Prophet also stressed the importance of treating others with kindness and refraining from harmful actions, advocating for respect, shared aspirations, and mutual understanding as central to societal peace (Sunan Ibn Majah).

The Qur'an reinforces the importance of unity as a divine gift, urging believers to avoid discord and internal disputes that weaken social bonds and collective strength (Qur'an 3:103; Qur'an 8:46). Islam prohibits actions like harbouring grudges, jealousy, and resentment, which disrupt harmony, and calls for prompt reconciliation to resolve conflicts. The Prophet warned against mutual enmity, emphasizing the spiritual consequences of division and the necessity of forgiveness for social cohesion (Sahih Muslim). These principles underline Islam's commitment to fostering a just, peaceful, and unified society where individuals work together for the common good, guided by love, patience, and benevolence.

Provision of Responsibilities, Rights, and Privileges in Islam

Islam establishes a comprehensive framework of rights and responsibilities for individuals within society, fostering mutual care, cooperation, and justice. The concept of

responsibility is deeply rooted in stewardship (*amanah*), where everyone is accountable for their assigned roles, whether as leaders, parents, or community members. The Prophet Muhammad's (S.A.W) teaching that "each of you is a shepherd, and each of you is responsible for his flock" highlights the ethical obligation to act with integrity and uphold societal welfare (Sahih Bukhari; Sahih Muslim). This structure ensures that individuals understand their duties and contribute positively to social harmony. Alongside responsibilities, Islam emphasizes fundamental rights, such as the right to live in peace, security, and dignity, which the Qur'an and Hadith safeguard. For example, the Qur'an states, "There shall be no compulsion in religion," underscoring religious freedom and the value of peaceful coexistence (Qur'an 2:256).

Moreover, Islam guarantees economic and social rights, such as the right to work, fair earnings, and the equitable distribution of wealth through practices like *zakat* (charity), reflecting its commitment to social justice and poverty alleviation. Justice is a central tenet, with the Qur'an mandating fairness in all dealings, irrespective of social standing or ethnicity (Qur'an 4:135). Freedom of movement and access to opportunities are also affirmed, with the Qur'an encouraging individuals to traverse the earth responsibly (Qur'an 45:13). By balancing these rights and responsibilities, Islam creates an environment that promotes dignity, justice, and collective progress, ensuring a harmonious society where all members contribute to the common good.

Injunctions on Justice, Kindness, Generosity, Peacekeeping, Tolerance, Corruption, Treachery, and Injustice in Islam

Islam provides a comprehensive moral and ethical framework that promotes social harmony, justice, and the well-being of all people. Among the most important values emphasized in the religion are justice, kindness, generosity, peacekeeping, and tolerance, which serve as the foundation for fostering unity within society. These values, alongside the prohibitions against corruption, treachery, and injustice, form a core part of the Islamic teachings that guide how individuals and communities should interact with each other in a spirit of mutual respect and cooperation.

Justice is one of the most fundamental principles in Islam. It is repeatedly highlighted in the Qur'an and the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W), with Allah commanding believers to stand firm in justice at all times, even if it requires sacrificing personal interests. Allah says in the Qur'an: *"O you who believe, be persistently standing firm in justice as witnesses for Allah, even if it be against yourselves or parents and relatives. Whether one is rich or poor, Allah is more worthy of both. Follow not your desires, lest you not be just. If you distort your testimony or refuse to give it, then Allah is aware of what you do."* (Qur'an 4:134). This verse underscores that justice should not be swayed by personal feelings, social status, or familial ties. True justice is about upholding the truth and ensuring fairness for all individuals, regardless of their background.

Moreover, Islam teaches that justice is not limited to the Muslim community alone. It extends to interactions with non-Muslims as well. The Qur'an emphasizes that Muslims should deal justly with all people, regardless of their faith. Allah commands: *"Indeed, Allah orders justice and good conduct and giving to relatives and forbids immorality, bad conduct, and oppression. He admonishes you that perhaps you will be reminded"* (Qur'an

16:90). This verse reflects Islam's commitment to fairness and integrity in all dealings, whether with Muslims or non-Muslims, and highlights the importance of promoting good conduct, mutual respect, and justice in society.

Kindness and Generosity are also integral to the Islamic ethos, encouraging individuals to treat one another with compassion and benevolence. The Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) was known for his kindness and generosity, and his life serves as a model for how Muslims should interact with others. The Qur'an enjoins believers to practice kindness: *"And speak to people good [words] and establish prayer and give zakah"* (Qur'an 2:83). Islam encourages believers to extend kindness and support not only to fellow Muslims but also to non-Muslims, recognizing that acts of charity and kindness promote social cohesion and create bonds of empathy and understanding. Generosity, both in terms of material wealth and in terms of one's time and effort, is regarded as one of the highest virtues in Islam. The act of giving, particularly in the form of charity (zakat), is not only a means of helping the less fortunate but also a way to purify one's wealth and soul.

Peacekeeping and Tolerance are also essential components of Islamic teachings. Islam encourages individuals to seek peace and to resolve conflicts in a manner that is just and fair. Allah says in the Qur'an: *"And if two factions among the believers fall into dispute, then make peace between them. But if one of them oppresses the other, then fight against the one that oppresses until it returns to the command of Allah. And if it returns, then make peace between them in justice and act justly. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly"* (Qur'an 49:9). This verse highlights the importance of resolving conflicts peacefully, with an emphasis on justice and fairness. The Islamic approach to peacekeeping is based on reconciliation, dialogue, and justice rather than violence or oppression.

Furthermore, **tolerance** is a value that Islam upholds, especially in the context of a diverse society. The Qur'an teaches that differences in race, ethnicity, language, and religion are part of Allah's divine plan and should be embraced as an opportunity for mutual understanding rather than conflict. Allah says: *"O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted"* (Qur'an 49:13). This verse underscores that human diversity is a source of enrichment, and the emphasis is placed on righteousness as the true measure of a person's worth, rather than external differences.

On the other hand, Islam strongly **prohibits corruption, treachery, and injustice**. Corruption, whether in governance, business, or any other aspect of society, is regarded as a major moral failure. Allah condemns those who engage in deceitful practices and misuse their position for personal gain. The Qur'an says: *"And do not consume one another's wealth unjustly or send it [in bribery] to the rulers in order that [they might aid] you [to] consume a portion of the wealth of the people in sin, while you know [it is unlawful]"* (Qur'an 2:188). This highlights the ethical and legal imperative to avoid corruption and ensure that all transactions and dealings are conducted fairly and transparently.

Treachery and dishonesty are equally condemned in Islam. The Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) stated: *"Whoever cheats us is not one of us"* (Sahih Muslim). This hadith reflects the gravity of betrayal and dishonesty, whether it occurs in personal, social, or political

contexts. Islam teaches that trustworthiness is a cornerstone of a harmonious society, and breaching that trust through treachery undermines social unity and stability.

Finally, **injustice** is one of the greatest transgressions in Islam. Allah's command is clear: *"Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due and when you judge between people to judge with justice..."* (Qur'an 4:58). Injustice, whether in the form of oppression, discrimination, or any violation of the rights of others, is strictly prohibited. Muslims are reminded repeatedly to uphold justice in all aspects of life, to protect the rights of the weak and vulnerable, and to resist any form of oppression.

In earnest, Islam provides a rich ethical framework that promotes justice, kindness, peace, and tolerance, while actively condemning corruption, treachery, and injustice. By adhering to these values, individuals can contribute to a harmonious society, where unity is achieved through mutual respect, shared responsibility, and a commitment to the common good. These principles not only guide personal conduct but also shape the moral and social fabric of the larger community, ensuring peace and prosperity for all.

Islamic Perspectives on Resource Control

Islam, as a comprehensive way of life, integrates both the spiritual and secular realms, addressing all facets of human existence, including governance, economics, and resource management. As a religion that emphasizes ethical and moral conduct in every sphere of life, Islam provides clear guidelines for the management and distribution of natural resources, emphasising the concepts of trust, justice, and the equitable use of resources for the benefit of all people. The core idea behind Islamic resource control is that all resources ultimately belong to Allah (SWT), and humans are entrusted as vicegerents (khalifah) on Earth with the responsibility to manage these resources wisely and justly. This understanding of resource ownership and management forms the basis for both individual and collective actions in resource control within Islamic societies.

Resource Ownership in Islam

The Qur'an makes it clear that all resources—whether land, water, minerals, or any other natural endowment—are the property of Allah. Humans, as vicegerents, are given the responsibility to manage and use these resources in ways that align with divine principles of justice and fairness. Allah states in the Qur'an:

"And the earth - We have spread it and cast therein firmly set mountains and caused to grow therein [something] of every well-balanced thing. And We have made for you therein means of living and [for] those for whom you are not providers. And there is not a thing but that with Us are its depositories, and We do not send it down except according to a known measure" (Qur'an 15:19-21).

This verse highlights that Allah has provided the Earth with resources in a well-balanced manner and that these resources are meant to sustain all living beings, not just human beings, but also animals, plants, and other creatures. The idea that there are *"depositories"* with Allah suggests that resource management is part of a larger divine plan, which is to be executed with careful consideration of justice and equity.

Islamic scholars and jurists have discussed the implications of this divine ownership in various schools of thought. As **Akhtar (1996)** explained, humans, as vicegerents (*khalifah*) on Earth, are entrusted with the responsibility to act justly in the management of resources. This stewardship does not give humans absolute ownership of resources, but rather the obligation to use them responsibly, to ensure that no harm is done to society or the environment. As part of this responsibility, resources must be used equitably, with no room for wastefulness, exploitation, or corruption.

The Role of Man as a Trustee

Islamic teachings emphasize the concept of trusteeship, or *amanah*, where individuals are viewed as stewards or trustees of Allah's resources. This principle is closely linked to the idea of justice and social equity. As mentioned by **Siti (1998)**, the doctrine of trusteeship implies that while humans have the authority to use resources, this usage must adhere to the moral and ethical guidelines laid down in Islam. Any action that leads to the destruction or unjust depletion of resources is considered a violation of the trust granted by Allah. The notion of trusteeship also extends to economic and social matters, where individuals and governments are expected to manage resources in ways that promote fairness and prevent exploitation. **Doi (1984)** pointed out that the trusteeship of resources in Islam also involves an ethical obligation to ensure that resources are distributed fairly, without causing harm to any segment of society.

Islamic economic principles also reject the doctrine of maximizing personal utility or profit at the expense of others, a concept commonly associated with capitalist models of resource control. Instead, Islam promotes a balanced approach to resource distribution that ensures everyone's basic needs are met. This includes the encouragement of social welfare programs, such as *zakat* (charity), to support the less fortunate.

Islamic Jurisprudence on Resource Ownership

The issue of resource control in Islamic jurisprudence has generated debate among scholars, especially concerning the ownership of natural resources such as minerals. Different schools of thought provide varying perspectives on how resources should be controlled. **Nurhayati (2017)** noted that according to the **Maliki school** of thought, mineral resources found on Earth belong to the state or government. Under this view, the state has the right to control and regulate the exploitation of minerals, and any mine found within the jurisdiction of a ruler (e.g., a sultan) should be handed over to the state, with compensation to the landowner. This view emphasizes the role of the state as a central authority responsible for managing resources for the benefit of the entire community.

In contrast, the **Hanbali** and **Hanafi** schools of thought argue that the mineral resources beneath a person's land are the property of the landowner. This view suggests that the person who owns the land should have the right to control the minerals found beneath it. Similarly, the **Shafi'i** school also supports the view that the owner of the land should possess the resources below the land.

While these schools of thought offer different perspectives on the ownership of resources, it is evident that Islamic jurisprudence stresses that resources should not be hoarded or exploited selfishly, but should instead be used in a way that benefits the broader society and promotes equity. Akhtar (1996) explained that the Islamic framework of Khilafah (stewardship) leads to a system where cooperation and mutual benefit are prioritized over individual profit maximization. This ensures that even if individuals or groups have some control over resources, their use must always be regulated to prevent harm to others.

Modern Application of Islamic Resource Control: Case Studies

Islamic resource management principles can be seen in practice in various contemporary contexts. Wallace (2016) pointed out that in Saudi Arabia, the government controls the country's vast oil resources, and the law vests ownership of natural resources in the central government. However, the government is also guided by Islamic principles to ensure that resource management serves the needs of the entire population and promotes social justice. For example, the Saudi government has invested heavily in infrastructure projects, social welfare programs, and public services, using the wealth generated from oil to benefit all citizens, particularly through initiatives that ensure equitable access to education, healthcare, and housing. This aligns with the Qur'anic injunction that resources should be shared among all people fairly, and that the wealth of the land should not be concentrated in the hands of a few individuals or groups. El-Malik (1996) observed that while the Qur'an is silent about specific details concerning the control and distribution of natural resources, it provides general principles of justice, equity, and fairness that guide the management of resources. In practice, this means that Islamic governance structures, whether in monarchies, republics, or other systems, must operate with transparency, accountability, and social responsibility when managing national resources.

Trusteeship and Justice in Resource Control

Regardless of the differing opinions on resource ownership among Islamic schools of thought, it is universally agreed that the principles of justice, fairness, and trusteeship must govern the control and management of resources. As the Qur'an states:

“Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due and when you judge between people, to judge with justice. Excellent is that which Allah instructs you. Indeed, Allah is ever Hearing and Seeing” (Qur'an 4:58).

The concept of trust (*amanah*) in Islam extends to the proper management of resources, ensuring that leaders and authorities discharge their duties with justice and fairness, for the benefit of all people. This means that regardless of the legal framework adopted, whether resource control is centralized or decentralized, the management of resources must always align with Islamic principles of equity, social welfare, and the avoidance of exploitation.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Islam provides a robust framework for resource control, emphasizing the principles of trusteeship, justice, and social equity. Whether through the central control of resources

by the state or individual ownership of land and minerals, the guiding principle remains the same: resources must be used responsibly, ethically, and in a manner that benefits the broader society. Islamic resource control advocates for the proper use of Allah's blessings, ensuring that these resources are not squandered or exploited for personal gain, but instead contribute to the welfare of all people. This framework encourages a balanced and just approach to resource management that reflects the values of fairness, compassion, and social responsibility upheld in Islam.

This paper has explored the Islamic perspectives on national unity and resource control. Islam emphasizes the importance of unity, cooperation, and social justice. By promoting values such as tolerance, compassion, and fairness, Islam provides a framework for building harmonious societies. Regarding resource control, Islamic teachings advocate for the equitable distribution and sustainable use of resources. The concept of *Khilafah* underscores the responsibility of humans as stewards of the earth. To achieve this, it is essential to prioritise the needs of the community and avoid exploitation. Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. **Promote Islamic Values:** Encourage the dissemination of Islamic teachings that promote unity, tolerance, and justice.
2. **Foster Interfaith Dialogue:** Facilitate dialogue and understanding between different religious and cultural groups to strengthen social cohesion.
3. **Implement Equitable Resource Distribution:** Ensure that the distribution of resources is fair and equitable, taking into account the needs of all citizens.
4. **Strengthen Governance:** Promote good governance, transparency, and accountability in the management of resources.
5. **Invest in Education:** Invest in quality education to empower individuals and foster a sense of national identity.
6. **Encourage Civic Engagement:** Encourage active participation in civic affairs and community development.

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