



Environmentally Conscious Islamic Education Curriculum Design (Eco-Theology)

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p>Article History: Recieved : 17-Jul-2025 Revised : 31-Jul-2025 Accepted : 15-Sep-2025 Available online: 30-Sep-2025</p> <p>Keyword: Islamic Education Curriculum; Environment; Eco-Theology.</p>	<p>The curriculum of Islamic education with environmental insight through the eco-theology approach is a response to the global ecological crisis and ecological moral degradation. The main objective of this study is to formulate an integrative curriculum design between Islamic values and environmental awareness in the context of formal education. The method used is qualitative descriptive with data collection techniques through literature studies, documentation, and in-depth interviews with Islamic and environmental education experts. Data analysis was carried out thematically to identify relevant Islamic principles in forming ecological awareness. The results of the study show that the integration of the values of tauhid, amanah, and khalifah in the curriculum structure is able to form the character of students who care and are responsible for nature. This curriculum includes strengthening spiritual, cognitive, and social action competencies in contextual and transdisciplinary learning. The conclusion of this study emphasizes the importance of updating the Islamic education curriculum that is responsive to environmental issues, not only as an additional aspect, but as the main framework for character formation and sustainability of life. The curriculum with eco-theology insight plays a strategic role in creating a generation of Muslims who are environmentally aware and globally competitive.</p>

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INTRODUCTION

The global environmental crisis is a crucial issue that concerns not only ecological aspects, but also human ethics and spirituality. Various international reports confirm that environmental degradation has reached a level that endangers the survival of future generations. Islam as a religion *mercy for all the world* has a strong theological basis in encouraging concern for nature. In the Qur'an, humans are positioned as caliph *on earth* (QS. Al-Baqarah: 30), who carries the mandate to guard and prosper the earth, not destroy it.

From an educational perspective, the environmental crisis demands a curriculum design that is able to instill eco theological values in students from an early age. Islamic education has great potential in forming a paradigm of sustainability through strengthening the values of faith, social responsibility, and love for the environment. Unfortunately, the existing Islamic Religious Education (PAI) curriculum still tends to be oriented towards ritual and normative aspects, so that the aspect of ecological awareness has not been systematically addressed.

Previous research shows that there is a gap between the ecological teachings of Islam and educational practices that have not integrated these values into the curriculum structure. In this context, the approach eco-theology becomes important as an effort to align theological teachings with ecological awareness. (Effendi, 2025) emphasized that ecological awareness which is placed above theological awareness, such as monotheism, worship, knowledge, caliphate, justice, beauty, and benefits, is the core of the concept eco-theology, which has been proven to be able to form environmental conservation behavior rooted in Islamic values in indigenous communities.

In line with that, the book *Science in Islam* Dr. Joni, M.Pd.B.I.'s work also emphasizes the importance of integrating revelation and reason as the foundation of Islamic science. According to him, "science in Islam is not just a collection of worldly knowledge, but part of human worship and responsibility as Allah's caliph on earth," which makes ecological awareness part of Islamic spirituality. (Joni, 2023)

The novelty of this research lies in the interdisciplinary and transformative curriculum approach, combining Islamic values, character education, and environmental

awareness. The purpose of this research is to formulate a curriculum design for Islamic education based on eco-theology which is systematic, applicable, and relevant in instilling the character of students who are environmentally friendly, socially responsible, and have a strong spiritual orientation in preserving nature.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Environmental Theology in Islamic Perspective

Draft *eco-theology in Islam* is rooted in the principle of monotheism which links all creation as part of the manifestation of Allah's power. Humans, as caliph *on earth*, responsible for maintaining the balance of nature, as stated in QS. Al-Baqarah: 30 and QS. Al-A'raf: 56. In this view, nature is not merely an exploitative object, but a partner in worship to God.

(Effendi, 2025) in his research revealed that the ecological awareness of the indigenous people of Kampung Dukuh was built on theological awareness, which he called eco-theology. This awareness places the values of monotheism, justice, and benefit as the basis for maintaining forest sustainability. This conservation model built on the basis of Islamic customs shows the success of the integration between religious and local values in environmental conservation efforts.

In line with that, (Joni, 2023) in his book *Science in Islam Explains* that science in an Islamic perspective must be understood as a manifestation of revelation and reason. The separation between natural sciences and religious sciences is considered a legacy of epistemic colonialism that is not in accordance with the holistic spirit of Islam. Therefore, an ecological approach in Islamic education must be built with an integrative framework between spiritual and rational values.

Islamic Curriculum and Integration of Environmental Values

The Islamic Religious Education (PAI) curriculum is generally still focused on normative aspects and has not explicitly included environmental issues as part of

transformative learning. The study (H Bahrudin & A Mundri, 2019) emphasized the need for a curriculum approach that not only prioritizes religious cognition, but is also applicable to social problems, including environmental issues. A curriculum that is responsive to ecology must contain the values of monotheism, trustworthiness, and social responsibility as the basis for forming students' character.

Furthermore, the spiritual approach through Sufism also has an important contribution to environmental education. (Nashihin, 2023) in his research revealed that Sufism values such as asceticism, *gratitude*, *tawakal*, and love-forming students' self-awareness to be moderate, love the environment, and avoid greedy behavior towards natural resources. In the context of the curriculum, the integration of Sufism can strengthen the ecological spiritual character which is the core of the approach to eco-theology.

Meanwhile, (Rahmatullah, 2020) in a study published in the journal *Genealogy PAI in mentioned* that the integration between moral and environmental awareness in learning has been proven to increase students' social empathy and increase their awareness of environmental damage as a form of violation of God's mandate.

In addition, according to the journal *PERSIS: Scientific Journal of Contemporary Islamic Studies*, draft *eco-method of jurisprudence* And *eco-sufism* also offered as a new approach in environmental fiqh. This approach combines maqasid al-syari'ah with environmental conservation values as part of the objectives of Islamic law (Effendi, 2025).

Thus, this literature review emphasizes the importance of designing an Islamic Religious Education curriculum that is not only based on Islamic values, but is also able to respond to global ecological challenges through a transdisciplinary approach and values.eco-theology as the main driver.

METHOD

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a study type *library research* and limited field studies as a complement. This approach was chosen because it is appropriate for exploring in depth the concept of a curriculum based on Islamic values and environmental awareness (*eco-theology*) and its implementation in the context of Islamic education.

Settings and Participants

The research was conducted in two stages. First, a literature review of classic and contemporary books relevant to Islamic and ecological education. Second, a limited field study was conducted at Madrasah Aliyah Hidayatullah which is developing environmental-based learning. Participants in the field study consisted of the head of the madrasah, Islamic Religious Education teachers, and environmental education practitioners, who were selected purposely based on their involvement in integrating environmental values into learning.

Data Collection Techniques

Data were obtained through three techniques:

1. **Literature study**, by studying books *Science in Islam* (Joni, 2023) and scientific journals such as articles (Effendi, 2025) regarding eco-theology and forest conservation in indigenous communities.
2. **In-depth interview**, conducted on 3 key informants: the head of the madrasah, the PAI teacher, and the environmental education facilitator. The interviews were conducted for 30–45 minutes with semi-structured guidelines, exploring their understanding and experience in developing or implementing an environmental-based curriculum.
3. **Limited observation**, conducted in classroom learning activities and environmental projects based on the Qur'an. The aspects observed include: integration of environmental values in materials, learning methods, and student involvement.

Data validation techniques are carried out through triangulation of sources and methods, as well as member checking of informants to ensure the accuracy of the information provided.

Data analysis

Data were analyzed using a thematic analysis approach, starting from the data reduction stage, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Coding was done manually to group information into main themes such as: integration of Islamic and environmental values, curriculum structure, pedagogical approaches, and implementation challenges.

FINDINGS

The results of this study are presented based on the main objective, namely to design an Islamic education curriculum model that integrates Islamic values.eco-theology systematically in the learning process. Based on the results of data analysis from literature and field studies, the following three main themes were found:

1. Theological Values in the PAI Curriculum

Document analysis and interviews show that the values of tauhid, amanah, and khilafah are spiritual foundations that have great potential to form ecological awareness. Islamic Religious Education teachers acknowledge the importance of instilling an understanding that protecting the environment is part of worship and a manifestation of faith. As conveyed by one of the teachers:

"When we teach about God as Creator, we relate it to our obligation to care for His creation, including trees, water, and animals."

This theme brings up codes such as: Environmental Monotheism, Caliph Ethics, and Ecological Charity.

2. Contextual Integration in Learning

Classroom observations and interviews revealed that the integration of environmental values in Islamic Religious Education learning can be done through a contextual and interdisciplinary approach. For example, verses about nature are

associated with the phenomena of climate change, flooding, or environmental pollution that occur around the students' residence/place of study. The learning activities found include: Analysis of verses of the Qur'an about nature (e.g. QS. Ar-Rum: 41, QS. Al-A'raf: 56), Discussion of the impact of environmental damage and Mini projects such as planting trees or recycling.

From this process emerged the codes: Contextual Learning, Environmental Projects, and Verses and Actions.

3. Environmentally Responsive Curriculum Design

From the results of the review and input from the madrasah principal, it was found that the curriculum design was based on *eco-theology* can be expressed through three components: (1) Basic competencies based on environmental values, (2) Material that links ecological principles and phenomena, and (3) Evaluation models based on real action (ecological projects). The following table presents a summary of the thematic structure of the analysis results:

Table 1. thematic structure of the analysis results

He	Code	Short Description
Theological Values	Environmental Monotheism, Ecological Charity	Environment as part of submission to Allah
Contextual Integration	Verses and Actions, Environmental Projects	Linking verses to environmental issues and real activities
Responsive Curriculum Design	Action Evaluation, Green Competence	Curriculum structure that includes ecological attitude indicators

All of the above findings indicate that the integration of Islamic values and environmental awareness in the Islamic education curriculum is not only possible, but also very relevant and urgent amidst the current ecological crisis. In addition to strengthening the spiritual aspect of students, this approach also fosters social empathy and responsibility towards nature.

DISCUSSION

Interpretation of Data Analysis Results

The results of the study indicate that theological values in Islam such as tauhid, amanah, and khilafah can be systematically integrated into the design of the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) curriculum to foster students' ecological awareness. This finding shows that the environment is not only an object in science or geography lessons, but can be interpreted spiritually as part of worship. The integration process can be realized through a contextual approach in learning and the design of basic competencies and evaluations that involve real actions towards the environment.

Comparison with Previous Research

This finding is in line with research (Effendi, 2025) which shows that the indigenous people of Kampung Dukuh have succeeded in practicing forest conservation based on Islamic values such as justice and welfare through an approach known as *seco-theology*. Likewise, research (Nashihin, 2023) confirms that the integration of Sufism in Islamic boarding school education is able to shape the spiritual character of students who are humble, love the environment, and avoid greed for natural resources. This study strengthens the idea that spirituality has a strategic role in shaping ecological awareness, and is not merely an aspect of ritual worship.

Integration of Results into Established Knowledge

The results of this study broaden the scope of understanding of the Islamic education curriculum which has so far been considered to only focus on the formation of morals and formal worship. By including values *seco-theology*, Islamic education becomes more responsive to contemporary global issues such as climate change, environmental pollution, and ecosystem damage. This also shows that Islamic education can be an important part of the education movement for sustainable development (*Education for Sustainable Development*), as long as the values are formulated in a planned curriculum structure.

Theory Development or Modification

This research also contributes to the development of value-based curriculum theory. A new framework is needed, called the Ecological Islamic Curriculum, which is a curriculum that is not only oriented towards the afterlife and moral goals, but also the sustainability of God's creation on earth. This modification of the curriculum theory combines elements of eco-theology as the core of character education, with integrative principles that include cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects that are environmentally aware.

Implications of Research Results

The implications of this study are very important for educational policy makers, especially in the formulation of Islamic Religious Education curriculum. The curriculum that is prepared must no longer be textual and normative, but must touch on real issues faced by humanity, including the ecological crisis. In addition, Islamic Religious Education teachers need to be trained to be able to integrate spiritual values with scientific and contextual approaches. At the practical level, madrasah and Islamic boarding schools can become models of environmental preservation based on Islamic values through concrete and spiritual learning projects.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the design of an environmentally aware Islamic Education curriculum can be built in an integrative manner through an approach *eco-theology*. Islamic values such as monotheism, trustworthiness, and caliphate have proven to be relevant and applicable in forming students' ecological awareness. The results of the study show that the curriculum based on eco-theology not only strengthens the spiritual dimension of students, but also encourages contextual and action-based learning that is in line with the principles of sustainability. The integration of Sufism values in learning also enriches the affective dimension and deepens students' relationship with nature as God's creation.

Conceptually, this approach implies the need for revision and development of the PAI curriculum to be more responsive to global environmental issues. Madrasahs and Islamic boarding schools play a strategic role as spaces for developing ecological awareness based on Islamic spirituality. This study also opens up opportunities for

further studies related to the implementation of eco-theology in other formal education contexts, including at primary and secondary levels, as well as its integration into teacher training and teaching materials development.

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