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INTEGRATING QUR'ANIC ECO-THEOLOGY INTO ISLAMIC EDUCATION: PROMOTING ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL JUSTICE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACTS

The global ecological crisis requires a holistic response that extends beyond technical and policy-based solutions to encompass ethical, spiritual, and educational dimensions. This article examines the epistemological contribution of Islamic eco-theology, particularly through a Qur'anic perspective, in shaping an educational paradigm that promotes environmental sustainability and social justice. This study employs a qualitative library research method, drawing upon Qur'anic verses, Prophetic traditions (hadith), and contemporary literature on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). The findings reveal that the Qur'anic concepts of khalifah (stewardship), amanah (trust), and 'adl (justice) provide a comprehensive ethical framework for fostering ecological responsibility and social equity within Islamic education. These principles encourage a holistic understanding of the relationship between humans, society, and nature, thereby challenging anthropocentric approaches to development. Furthermore, the study demonstrates that Islamic eco-theology enriches the discourse of Education for Sustainable Development by integrating spiritual and theological dimensions that are often overlooked in contemporary sustainability frameworks. The study argues that incorporating Qur'anic eco-theological values into Islamic educational curricula can facilitate a paradigm shift from anthropocentrism toward a cosmocentric and justice-oriented worldview. This transformation has significant implications for educational practice, including the development of integrative curricula that connect environmental education, Islamic philanthropy (zakat, infaq, and waqf), and sustainability values in both formal and non-formal educational settings. Such an approach can contribute to nurturing environmentally responsible and socially conscious citizens capable of addressing contemporary ecological challenges.

A. INTRODUCTION

The global environmental crisis that is currently sweeping the world has raised deep concerns in various sectors of life (Alisya Afifah Maulidina Putri Abdilllah et al. 2024). Climate change, ecosystem damage, environmental pollution, and overexploitation of natural resources not only cause ecological imbalances, but also exacerbate social inequality and economic injustice (Muhamad Agil Aufa Afinnas 2023). In this context, sustainable development is a strategic response that demands the involvement of all sectors, including education, as a vehicle for collective awareness and behavior change.

Concept *Education for Sustainable Development* UNESCO-initiated (ESD) has provided a direction for educational transformation that emphasizes the importance of the values of justice, environmental responsibility, and global awareness (Prabawani 2021). However, the approach to ESD that is developing in the global world tends to be rooted in secular and technocratic paradigms, thus lacking in accommodating the spiritual and religious dimensions as a source of moral value and motivation. In this case, the Islamic tradition has a rich epistemology that can make an important contribution in enriching the discourse of sustainable development (Syafrianto et al. 2025).

Islam views the relationship between humans, nature, and God as a sacred cosmological unity. In the Qur'an, man is constructed as *Khalifah* who bears the responsibility of maintaining the earth (*Al-Ardh*) as a form of trust from God (Haidari 2024). This caliphate task presupposes a spiritual ethics that encourages human beings to act justly, not excessively, and uphold the value of sustainability in all their activities. This perspective is known in contemporary discourse as Islamic ecotheology, which is a theological approach that interprets the relationship between humans and the environment in the framework of monotheism and divine justice (Welch and Rahman 2024).

Islamic ecotheology not only speaks on a normative-theoretical level, but also offers practical principles that can be applied in education. Values such as '*adl* (justice), *Rahmah* (affection), and *Tazkiyah* (self-purification) is an important foundation in forming an Islamic educational paradigm that is not only oriented to academic achievements, but also to the formation of a complete human character who cares about the integrity of creation (Abdul Muid and Nasrulloh Nasrulloh 2024). In this context, Islamic education has a strategic responsibility to transform students' perspective on the environment as part of worship and moral responsibility (Mufid et al. 2024).

The link between Islamic education and ecotheology is even stronger when it is associated with Islamic philanthropic principles such as zakat, infaq, alms, and waqf. These instruments not only serve as a mechanism for wealth redistribution and social empowerment, but also have the potential to be used as a means of environmental conservation and community development based on ecological justice (Inayati et al. 2024). Unfortunately, this great potential is still not fully developed within the conceptual framework of contemporary Islamic education.

Islamic education integrated with the values of Qur'anic ecotheology allows for the formation of an ecological consciousness that is not solely rooted in science or environmental regulation, but in spirituality and divine responsibility (Latif et al. 2023). Thus, the educational process becomes more than just the transmission of knowledge,

but rather as a way of forming transcendental ethics that animates human actions towards others and the surrounding nature.

Although the discourse on environmental sustainability has increasingly attracted scholarly attention, existing studies have generally focused on environmental ethics, green education, and sustainable development from secular or policy-oriented perspectives. Research on eco-theology has also expanded in recent years, emphasizing the role of religious values in shaping ecological awareness and environmental responsibility. Several studies have highlighted the potential of Islamic teachings to promote environmental stewardship through concepts such as *khalifah* (stewardship), *amānah* (trust), and *mīzān* (balance). Nevertheless, much of this scholarship remains concentrated on theological interpretations and environmental ethics, with limited attention to their systematic integration into educational frameworks.

In the field of education, studies on Environmental Education and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) have demonstrated the importance of cultivating environmental awareness, sustainable lifestyles, and responsible citizenship. However, these educational models often prioritize scientific, technical, and behavioral dimensions while giving less consideration to spiritual and theological foundations as sources of moral motivation and ethical commitment. Existing research rarely examines how Qur'anic eco-theological principles can be translated into educational paradigms, curriculum development, and pedagogical practices within Islamic educational institutions.

Therefore, a significant research gap remains regarding the conceptual integration of Qur'anic eco-theology into Islamic education as a framework for promoting both environmental sustainability and social justice. This study seeks to address that gap by exploring the epistemological foundations of Islamic eco-theology and examining its implications for educational transformation. Unlike previous studies that primarily discuss environmental ethics from a theological perspective, this article proposes an integrative educational framework that connects Qur'anic values, environmental responsibility, social justice, and Islamic philanthropy within the broader agenda of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). In doing so, the study contributes to the development of a more holistic and spiritually grounded model of sustainable education.

As global environmental and social challenges become increasingly complex, Islamic education cannot continue to survive in conventional models that are detached from reality (Rainfall 2024). An educational framework that is responsive, relevant, and contextual is needed, and is able to integrate spiritual, social, and ecological dimensions as a whole. The concept of ecotheology in Islam offers an alternative that is holistic and able to bridge the gap between religious vision and sustainable development practices (Mufid et al. 2024).

In recent years, the discourse on sustainable development from an Islamic perspective has begun to gain attention, both among academics and education practitioners (Aboukhousa 2024). However, the integration between the Qur'anic ecotheology paradigm and the Islamic education system still faces conceptual and practical challenges that are not light. One of the main challenges is how to ground these noble values into the mindset, attitude, and behavior of students in a sustainable manner (Aboukhousa 2024).

The presence of Islamic teachings that uphold the value of balance (*mîzân*), moderation (*Wasatiyyah*), and preservation (*Imam*) shows that Islam has a theoretical and praxis framework that is relevant to the principles of sustainable development (Setiawan 2024). Therefore, it is important to re-examine the position and role of Islamic education in shaping a generation that is ecological in character and committed to social justice as part of the manifestation of faith.

Islamic education needs to be directed not only to produce intellectually capable individuals, but also to have ecological awareness and moral commitment to the sustainability of the earth (Santos 2023). In this case, the ecotheological approach can be an important foundation to foster a sense of responsibility towards nature as part of the caliphate's worship and mission on earth. Such education is not only symbolic, but is able to influence social structures and public policies that are more just and sustainable (Latif et al. 2023).

This article aims to examine the epistemological contribution of Qur'anic eco-theology in formulating an Islamic educational paradigm that promotes environmental sustainability and social justice. Specifically, it investigates how the Qur'anic concepts of *khalîfah*, *amānah*, and *‘adl* can be integrated into educational theory and practice to support the goals of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). By addressing the limited integration of eco-theological perspectives within contemporary Islamic educational discourse, this study offers a conceptual framework that bridges spirituality, environmental responsibility, and social transformation.

Through a qualitative approach based on literature studies, this article examines Qur'anic texts, hadiths, and contemporary literature on Islamic ecotheology and education. By offering a conceptual synthesis between Islamic values and sustainability principles, this paper is expected to make a theoretical and practical contribution in designing a transformative, contextual, and relevant model of Islamic education to the global challenges of the 21st century.

B. METHODS

This study employs a qualitative library research approach to explore the epistemological foundations of Qur'anic eco-theology and its implications for Islamic education, environmental sustainability, and social justice. Library research was selected because the study focuses on conceptual, normative, and theoretical sources rather than empirical field data. This approach enables an in-depth examination of Islamic teachings and contemporary scholarly discussions concerning environmental ethics, sustainable development, and educational transformation.

The primary data sources consist of selected Qur'anic verses and Prophetic traditions (hadith) that address themes of environmental stewardship, social responsibility, justice, balance, and human accountability toward nature. Particular attention is given to Qur'anic concepts such as *khalîfah* (stewardship), *amānah* (trust), *‘adl* (justice), *mîzân* (balance), and *islāḥ* (constructive preservation), which serve as the theological foundation of Islamic eco-theology.

The secondary data sources include peer-reviewed journal articles, scholarly books, conference proceedings, and policy documents related to Islamic education, eco-theology, environmental education, and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). In addition, reports and frameworks published by international organizations, particularly UNESCO and sustainability-related institutions, were consulted to

contextualize contemporary discussions on sustainable development and educational transformation.

Data analysis was conducted using a thematic content analysis approach. The analysis proceeded through several stages. First, relevant Qur'anic verses, hadiths, and scholarly texts were identified and categorized according to major themes related to environmental sustainability, social justice, stewardship, and education. Second, these texts were interpreted within their theological and historical contexts to identify their normative meanings and ethical implications. Third, the identified themes were critically compared with contemporary concepts of Environmental Education and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in order to explore areas of convergence and potential contributions of Islamic thought to sustainability discourse.

Furthermore, an interpretive-critical approach was employed to examine how Qur'anic eco-theological principles can respond to contemporary ecological challenges, including climate change, environmental degradation, and socio-economic inequality. Rather than merely describing religious teachings, the analysis seeks to construct a conceptual framework that integrates Islamic educational values, environmental responsibility, social justice, and sustainability principles. Through this process, the study aims to provide both a theoretical contribution to Islamic educational discourse and practical insights for the development of environmentally conscious and socially responsible educational models.

C. Results and Discussion

1. Ecotheological Paradigm in Islam: The Theological and Epistemological Foundations of the Qur'an

Ecotheology in Islam was born from the realization that human relations with the environment are not just a matter of ecological ethics, but concern the position of humans in a larger cosmological structure (Aboukhousa 2024). In Islam, the universe is not an inanimate entity that is free to exploit, but rather a part of God's created system that has spiritual and ethical value. The Qur'an presents nature as a creature who is subject to Allah (*Mussakhkhar*) and at the same time as the verses of God (*āyāt kauniyyah*) which teaches man about the order, balance, and greatness of the Divine (Haidari 2024; Islam et al. 2024). Thus, Qur'anic ecotheology positions the environment as a sacred entity and is inseparable from the dimension of faith.

One of the key concepts in Islamic ecotheology is *Khalīfah*, which means the representative or keeper of the earth. In Surah Al-Baqarah [2]:30, Allah states that man was created as a caliph on earth. The task of this caliphate is not a privilege to dominate, but a mandate that contains spiritual, social, and ecological responsibility. Man is commanded to build (*Imam*) and does not cause any damage (*Fasād*) on earth. This shows that man's relationship with the universe is ethical and spiritual, not just economic and material relations (Aboukhousa 2024).

Concept *Amanah* or divine belief is also an important foundation in Qur'anic ecotheology. Surah Al-Ahzab [33]:72 describes that the trust is offered to the heavens, the earth, and the mountains, but all of them reject it, while humans accept it. This mandate includes human responsibility in maintaining the natural order, upholding justice, and avoiding damage (Mufid et al. 2024). By accepting this mandate, humans have a moral burden to maintain the sustainability of God's creation and not act arbitrarily against the environment.

Principle *tauḥid* as the main foundation, Islamic theology also provides an important dimension in ecotheology. Tawḥeed not only contains the recognition of the oneness of God, but also affirms the unity of creation and the attachment of all the elements of the cosmos in an orderly system. Tawḥeed teaches that all beings are interconnected in the consciousness of God (Aboukhousa 2024). Therefore, any form of ecological imbalance, environmental destruction, or overexploitation is actually a form of violation of the principle of monotheism itself, because it damages the harmony of Allah's creation (Kutval 2024).

By combining concepts *Khalīfah*, *Amān* and *tauḥid*, Islamic ecotheology forms a comprehensive theological and epistemological framework. This paradigm rejects the dichotomy between the sacred and the profane, and opposes the exploitation of nature as a result of the dominance of anthropocentrism (Ismail and Berghout 2024). On the contrary, Islam teaches cosmocentrism, which is a view that places humans as part of the natural system, not the center. In this system, humans are obliged to maintain a balance (*mīzān*) and preserving creation as a form of devotion to God (Pandikar et al. 2024).

Ecological consciousness in Islam is not partial or sectoral, but is integrated into a system of religious teachings and rituals. Worship in Islam such as ablution, tayamum, and hajj all teach the principles of purity, prudence of resources, and awareness of human limitations (Rois et al. 2024). In this context, Islamic education has a great responsibility to instill a spiritual understanding of the environment, so that students not only understand environmental issues scientifically, but also faithfully and ethically.

Islamic ecotheology also offers a critique of modern development models that tend to emphasize economic growth without considering moral and ecological aspects (Fadillah et al. 2024). The Qur'an reminds that human greed in the pursuit of profit can bring damage on land and sea (QS. Ar-Rum [30]:41). This verse is relevant for analyzing a capitalistic development model that places nature as an object of exploitation, not a relational subject (Fadillah et al. 2024). Therefore, Islamic ecotheology can be the basis for alternative education that prioritizes spiritual ethics in environmental and resource management.

The ecotheological paradigm in Islam also reflects the vision of justice, both vertically (between man and God) and horizontally (between man and fellow man and nature) (Welch and Rahman, t.t.). Concept '*adl*' in Islam includes not only social relations, but also ecological relations. Forest destruction, water pollution, and overexploitation of land are forms of injustice that Islamic education must respond to seriously through an integrative approach between science, faith, and action (Kamal et al. 2023).

Islamic epistemology views knowledge not as a neutral product, but as a means to get closer to God and improve life. Within this framework, environmental science is inseparable from spiritual and ethical values (Mirza 2024). Islamic education rooted in the ecotheological paradigm can bridge the gap between knowledge and morality, between rationality and spirituality, thereby giving birth to a holistic and sustainable ecological consciousness (Latif et al. 2023).

It is important to understand that the paradigm of Qur'anic ecotheology is not just a theoretical discourse, but has practical implications in various aspects of life. Awareness of the position of human beings as *Khalīfah* and recipients *Amān* encourage the formation of environmentally friendly lifestyles, responsible

consumption, and socio-ecological solidarity (Aboukhousa 2024). These values can be instilled through an Islamic education system that not only teaches environmental science, but also builds a deep theological awareness of the earth as God's creation.

In the midst of a global ecological crisis, the Islamic ecotheology paradigm can be an alternative offer for the world in building a just and sustainable civilization. Islam not only provides technical solutions, but also presents a solid value framework in building a harmonious relationship between humans, nature, and God (Fadillah et al. 2024). Therefore, the integration of ecotheology into Islamic education is a strategic step to create cultural and behavioral changes for future generations.

Thus, Islamic education based on Qur'anic ecotheology not only functions as a vehicle for the formation of ecological character, but also as an instrument of social change. In a society trapped in materialism and consumerism, this approach re-presents spirituality as the foundation of change (Rainfall 2024). This is in line with the main goal of Islamic education, which is to form people who are pious and responsible in all aspects of their lives, including the environment.

The ecotheological paradigm in Islam is not a new concept, but needs to be revitalized and contextualized according to the challenges of the times. Islamic education, as a strategic medium in the transmission of values and the formation of awareness, must be a pioneer in reviving the Qur'anic values of sustainability (Abdul Muid and Nasrulloh Nasrulloh 2024). Through a theological and epistemological approach derived from revelation, Islamic education can make a real contribution to creating a just, sustainable, and merciful order of life for the whole of nature.

2. Social and Environmental Justice in Islamic Education: Integrating Qur'anic Values in the Vision of Sustainable Development

Justice is a fundamental value in Islamic teachings and is one of the main goals of the revelation of the sharia. The Qur'an expressly commands mankind to uphold justice, even against oneself and different groups (QS. Al-Ma'idah [5]:8). Concept *'adl* (justice) in Islam encompasses individual, social, and structural dimensions, including in the relationship between humans and the environment (Ali 2024). In the context of sustainable development, justice is not only related to the distribution of economic resources, but also concerns equitable access to a healthy and sustainable environment (Fall 2024).

In the framework of the Qur'an, social justice cannot be separated from ecological justice. When natural resources are monopolized, the environment is overexploited, and poor people are most severely affected by ecological disasters, the injustices that occur are systemic and layered (Suleiman Ibrahim and Suleiman Tijjani 2024). The Qur'an states that damage on land and sea occurs due to the actions of human hands (QS. Ar-Rum [30]:41). This verse not only reflects ecological reality, but also shows the causal relationship between human greed and socio-environmental inequality (Stuart S. Scott, 2024).

Islamic education as a value institution has an important role in building collective awareness of the relationship between social justice and sustainability. Qur'anic principles such as *mîzân* (balance), *Rahmah* (affection), and *Tazkiyah* (self-purification) must be integrated in the vision of education in order to be able to create a generation that is not only intellectually intelligent, but also concerned about justice and environmental preservation (Ibrahim et al. 2024). This kind of education demands

a holistic approach that touches on the cognitive, affective, and spiritual aspects of students.

The concept of sustainable development that has been developing in the global discourse still tends to be rooted in the utilitarian modern economic framework. This results in sustainability often being interpreted narrowly as the efficiency of resource management (Kudrina and Kovtun 2024). Islam offers an alternative approach by making justice at the heart of development. Unfair development—both to humans and the environment—is not development that is in accordance with the *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah* (Mursid et al. 2024).

The Qur'anic values of social justice include protection of vulnerable groups, prohibition of exploitation, and commands to share through zakat, infaq, and alms. In the environmental dimension, Islam also teaches the prohibition of *Isrāf* (waste) and *Fasād* (damage). This shows that the Islamic economic system, when implemented fairly, can support the simultaneous achievement of social and ecological goals (Gul et al. 2023). Therefore, Islamic education needs to teach that justice is not only about the relationship between humans, but also between humans and nature.

The integration of social and environmental justice values in Islamic education must start from a conceptual approach based on the Qur'an and the Sunnah (Mufid et al. 2024). Curriculum, learning materials, and educational practices need to be geared towards fostering awareness of social and ecological responsibility. For example, learning fiqh zakat can be associated with efforts to empower the poor and conserve local resources. Moral education can be developed by emphasizing morality towards nature as part of spiritual responsibility (Rohova 2024).

Justice in Islamic education also includes a participatory dimension. Students are not only trained to receive information, but are invited to reflect on the reality of social injustice and environmental crises that occur around them. Through a critical and contextual approach, Islamic education can be a means to mold agents of change who understand the importance of social solidarity and ecological concern as part of the faith (Budiyanto 2025).

One of the challenges in integrating social and environmental justice values in Islamic education is the dominance of technocratic approaches in the national education system. Moral and spiritual values are often marginalized by academic orientations that focus solely on cognitive achievement (Mohamed, N. et al. 2024). Therefore, a transformation of the Islamic education paradigm is needed that not only emphasizes academic competence, but also ethical commitment to the common good.

Islamic education based on the values of Qur'anic justice can encourage the creation of an inclusive and sustainable social order. In a pluralistic and complex society like Indonesia, it is important to instill the values of equality, tolerance, and social responsibility from an early age (Nasr Abdo Ali Mohammed Alselwii and Roslan Ab Rahman 2024). This is not only relevant for human relations, but also in terms of building harmonious relations between humans and the environment as a manifestation of cosmic justice.

In the midst of increasing global inequality, environmental degradation, and the climate crisis, the role of education has become crucial to shaping a generation that is aware of the urgency of change. Islamic education, if directed correctly, can be a strategic instrument in voicing ecological and social justice as an inseparable unit

(Tripathy et al. 2024). By drawing on Qur'anic values, Islamic education can build a stronger ethical basis for sustainability than the utilitarian-leaning secular approach.

The Qur'an presents profound prophetic narratives about man's role as the protector of the earth, the defender of the weak, and the keeper of balance. These narratives are not just spiritual discourses, but effective instruments of social transformation if used as a foundation in education (Pandikar et al. 2024). The story of Prophet Yusuf, Moses, and Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) contains important lessons about equitable leadership, resource distribution, and wise environmental management (Abd Rahman et al. 2024).

Thus, the integration of social and environmental justice values in Islamic education is a necessity in facing the global challenges of the 21st century. The vision of Islamic education based on the Qur'an must be directed to foster awareness that sustainability is not just a technical agenda, but a moral mandate that demands justice for all creation (Ibrahim et al. 2024). With this approach, Islamic education will have a significant contribution to building a just, civilized, and sustainable civilization.

3. Transformation of Environmental Awareness through the Integration of Ecotheological Values and Islamic Philanthropy

Ecological consciousness is not born suddenly, but rather is the result of the process of internalizing values, education, and social experiences that shape one's mindset and actions toward nature. In the context of Islam, this awareness has actually been structured in the basic teachings of religion, especially through an ecotheological approach that positions humans as caliphs on earth. The role of the caliphate requires a moral responsibility to maintain the balance of God's creation, including in treating nature wisely and justly (Abdul Muid and Nasrulloh Nasrulloh 2024).

Qur'anic ecotheology affirms that nature is not merely a passive object available for human exploitation, but is a living creature of God, subject to Him, and has a spiritual function in the universe of creation (Rois et al. 2024). In Surah Al-Hadid [57]:1, it is stated that everything in the heavens and on the earth is blessed to Allah. This indicates that nature has its own dimension of worship and therefore, the destruction of nature is a form of betrayal of the sanctity of creation (Leong and Saleh 2024).

In order to inculcate a deep and sustainable ecological awareness, Islamic education needs to play an active role in integrating spiritual values with social praxis. (Santos 2023). This is where the role of Islamic philanthropy becomes strategic. Zakat, infaq, and waqf are not only economic distribution systems in Islam, but also social solidarity mechanisms that have great potential for strengthening ecological justice (Abbas and Aravossis 2024). These three instruments, if managed with ecological awareness, can be a means of transforming people's awareness of the importance of protecting the environment as part of the responsibility of faith.

Zakat, for example, not only reduces social inequality, but can also be directed to fund environment-based projects such as greening, water source conservation, waste management, or mosque-based environmental education (Hulwati et al. 2024). Similarly, productive waqf is directed at organic agricultural lands, clean water facilities, or community-based forest management (Tirkey 2024). The use of infak funds for ecology-based empowerment programs also has the opportunity to strengthen the culture of sustainability in Muslim societies (Sukarni 2025).

The use of Islamic philanthropy for ecological purposes requires a transformation of the people's perspective on social worship. Worship, which has been more emphasized on ritual and individual aspects, needs to be transformed into a collective action that has a broad impact on environmental sustainability (Sharifah Nurulhuda S Ab Latif et al. 2024). This is where the importance of Islamic education lies in forming an understanding that protecting the environment is part of worship with a social and transcendental dimension. This awareness must be instilled from an early age in formal and non-formal Islamic educational institutions.

Furthermore, the integration of Islamic philanthropic values in education can be a pedagogical tool that shapes students' character and sensitivity to environmental problems. Through project-based learning or real action, students can be invited to manage school gardens, clean rivers, or recycle waste as a form of actualization of the value of zakat, infaq, and waqf. This kind of education is not only cognitive, but also transformative and applicative (Nsirat and Ghezlan 2024).

Spiritual values in Islam such as sincerity, gratitude, zuhud, and tawakkal can also be the foundation of a strong ecological character. Gratitude for the blessings of nature, for example, encourages a frugal and responsible attitude in using water, energy, and food. Zuhud does not mean staying away from the world, but avoiding consumptive and excessive attitudes. This attitude is relevant in building sustainable and environmentally friendly consumption patterns (Surbakti et al. 2024).

In Islam, the concept of *Al-Maslahah Al-'Āmmah* (the common good) becomes the ethical basis for all social and religious actions. Protecting the environment is part of the benefit because it relates to the right of current and future generations to enjoy a clean and healthy nature (Suleiman Ibrahim and Suleiman Tijjani 2024). Therefore, Islamic education needs to make this principle of benefit a framework in designing educational policies and practices based on ecotheology and philanthropy.

The transformation of environmental awareness also requires a deep spiritual approach. Islamic teachings on *Tazkiyah al-nafs* (purification of the soul) teaches the importance of controlling greedy desires that are the root of man's greed for nature. Spiritual education developed in Islam should be directed at the development of ecological awareness as a form of cleansing the soul from destructive and egocentric attitudes (Sari and Marhaban 2023).

Philanthropic values in Islam also teach about limited and trustworthy ownership. Wealth is not the absolute property of man, but the trust of Allah which must be used for the common good (Fadillah et al. 2024). This concept is particularly relevant to environmental issues, as the exploitation of nature is often driven by a misconception of absolute ownership of resources. Islamic education must dismantle this myth and replace it with a paradigm of trust and collective responsibility.

Equitable and holistic ecological awareness can only grow in an educational ecosystem that shapes intellect, heart, and behavior in an integrated manner (Ramos La Rosa et al. 2024). In this case, Qur'anic ecotheology and Islamic philanthropy are not two separate entities, but support each other in building a transformative Islamic education system. The integration of the two will result in a generation that has a strong social concern, ecological responsibility, and spiritual orientation in facing global sustainability challenges (Aboukhousa 2024).

Thus, the transformation of environmental awareness through Islamic education is not enough just with an informative approach or a green behavior campaign. More

important is the establishment of a new paradigm of life, rooted in the values of revelation and prophetic ethics. The integration of ecotheology and Islamic philanthropy in education not only strengthens ecological solidarity, but also makes sustainability part of the spiritual mission and Islamic civilization.

4. Positioning Qur'anic Eco-Theology within Contemporary Environmental Education Discourse

The findings of this study demonstrate that Qur'anic eco-theology provides a distinctive framework for environmental education by integrating spiritual, ethical, social, and ecological dimensions into a unified educational paradigm. This perspective differs from many secular approaches to Environmental Education (EE) and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), which generally emphasize scientific literacy, environmental awareness, behavioral change, and policy-oriented sustainability practices. While these approaches have made significant contributions to addressing environmental challenges, they often rely primarily on rational, technical, and economic considerations.

In contrast, the Islamic eco-theological approach situates environmental responsibility within a theological and moral framework rooted in the relationship between humans, God, and nature. The concepts of *khalifah* (stewardship), *amānah* (trust), and *'adl* (justice) provide not only ethical guidelines but also spiritual motivation for environmental action. Environmental protection is therefore understood not merely as a civic responsibility but as a religious obligation and an expression of faith. This spiritual dimension represents a distinctive contribution of Islamic education to contemporary sustainability discourse.

The findings also resonate with the objectives of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) promoted by UNESCO, particularly in fostering responsible citizenship, social equity, and environmental sustainability. However, while mainstream ESD frameworks often emphasize competencies, skills, and behavioral outcomes, the Qur'anic eco-theological model adds a transcendental dimension by linking sustainability practices to moral accountability before God. This perspective strengthens the ethical foundations of environmental action and may contribute to more enduring forms of ecological commitment.

From a theoretical perspective, the findings can be interpreted through the lens of environmental ethics and eco-theological theory. Environmental ethics emphasizes the moral relationship between humans and the natural world, while eco-theology explores how religious beliefs shape ecological attitudes and practices. The Qur'anic principles identified in this study support a cosmocentric worldview that recognizes the intrinsic value of creation beyond its instrumental usefulness to humans. This position challenges dominant anthropocentric paradigms that frequently underlie modern patterns of resource exploitation and environmental degradation.

Furthermore, the study aligns with transformative learning theory, which argues that education should foster critical reflection, value transformation, and behavioral change. The integration of eco-theological values and Islamic philanthropy into educational practice encourages learners to move beyond cognitive understanding toward ethical action and social engagement. Through this process, Islamic education becomes a transformative force capable of cultivating environmentally responsible and socially conscious individuals.

Therefore, the contribution of Qur'anic eco-theology extends beyond religious education and offers valuable insights for global discussions on sustainable development. By combining spiritual values, ecological responsibility, social justice, and educational transformation, Islamic eco-theology provides a holistic framework that complements existing environmental education models and enriches contemporary sustainability discourse.

D. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that Islamic education possesses significant potential to serve as a transformative force in fostering ecological awareness and advancing social justice through the integration of Qur'anic eco-theological values. The findings reveal that the concepts of *tawhīd* (divine unity), *khalīfah* (stewardship), *amānah* (trust), *mīzān* (balance), and *ʿadl* (justice) provide a comprehensive theological and epistemological foundation for an educational paradigm that extends beyond intellectual development to include moral, spiritual, social, and ecological responsibility. By positioning humans as responsible stewards of creation, Islamic eco-theology offers a holistic framework that contributes to contemporary discussions on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and enriches sustainability discourse with ethical and spiritual dimensions.

The study further highlights that the Qur'anic values of social justice and environmental responsibility can be translated into educational practice through the integration of Islamic philanthropic instruments such as zakat, infaq, and waqf. These instruments should not be viewed solely as mechanisms of social welfare but also as strategic resources for environmental conservation, community empowerment, and sustainable development initiatives. In this regard, Islamic education can play a crucial role in cultivating ecological citizenship and strengthening social solidarity within Muslim communities.

From a practical perspective, several recommendations can be proposed. First, curriculum developers should integrate eco-theological themes into Islamic studies, environmental education, and character education subjects through interdisciplinary learning approaches. Second, educators should adopt experiential and project-based learning activities, such as school greening programs, waste management initiatives, water conservation campaigns, and community-based environmental service projects that connect ecological action with Islamic ethical values. Third, Islamic educational institutions, including schools, madrasas, and pesantren, should collaborate with philanthropic organizations and local communities to develop sustainability programs funded through zakat, infaq, and waqf schemes. Finally, policymakers should consider incorporating eco-theological and sustainability-oriented competencies into national Islamic education frameworks to strengthen the contribution of education to environmental and social resilience.

Future research should move beyond conceptual and normative discussions by examining the practical implementation of Qur'anic eco-theology in educational settings. Empirical studies are needed to investigate how eco-theological values influence students' environmental attitudes, behaviors, and social responsibility over time. Comparative research across schools, madrasas, universities, and pesantren may also provide valuable insights into effective models of sustainability education within Islamic contexts. Furthermore, longitudinal studies are recommended to assess the

long-term impact of integrating eco-theological principles and Islamic philanthropy into educational curricula and community development programs. Such research would contribute to the development of evidence-based strategies for strengthening the role of Islamic education in achieving environmental sustainability and social justice.

In conclusion, the integration of Qur'anic eco-theology and Islamic philanthropy within educational frameworks represents a promising pathway toward the formation of environmentally conscious, socially responsible, and spiritually grounded generations. Through this approach, Islamic education can make a meaningful contribution to building a just, sustainable, and compassionate civilization capable of addressing the complex ecological and social challenges of the twenty-first century.

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