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ISLAMIC ECOTHEOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW OF CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS, METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES, AND RESEARCH TRAJECTORIES

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ABSTRAK

Latar Belakang: Krisis lingkungan global yang semakin memburuk memerlukan pendekatan berbasis nilai yang melampaui kerangka kebijakan konvensional. Dalam konteks ini, ecotheology Islam menawarkan pandangan etis yang relevan dengan prinsip keberlanjutan. **Tujuan Penelitian**: untuk mengidentifikasi tren publikasi, kerangka teori dominan, serta pola integrasi antara etika lingkungan agama dan praktik keberlanjutan dalam literatur ecotheology Islam. **Metode** yang digunakan adalah tinjauan literatur sistematis (SLR) dengan mengikuti pedoman PRISMA. Pencarian dilakukan melalui Scopus menggunakan sembilan kombinasi kata kunci, yang menghasilkan 847 catatan awal. Setelah diterapkan kriteria inklusi (periode 2015–2025, jurnal terindeks Q1–Q4, relevansi topik), sebanyak 80 artikel penuh dianalisis menggunakan profil bibliometrik dan sintesis tematik kualitatif dengan sistem Watase Uake. **Temuan penelitian** menunjukkan dominasi metode kualitatif (75%) serta distribusi geografis yang bipolar antara negara berkembang mayoritas Muslim dan institusi akademik Barat. Konsentrasi tematik terbagi dalam empat kluster utama: konsep teologis (44%), praktik keberlanjutan (35%), etika lingkungan (25%), dan interpretasi teks agama (19%). Penelitian ini juga mengidentifikasi kesenjangan penting, termasuk penggunaan metode kuantitatif yang terbatas, keterhubungan kebijakan-praktik yang minim, dan kurangnya studi perbandingan lintas agama. **Kesimpulan**, Islamic ecotheology menawarkan kerangka etis yang transformasional untuk meningkatkan kesadaran lingkungan. Penelitian mendatang perlu fokus pada pengembangan instrumen pengukuran yang terstandarisasi, penelitian berbasis kebijakan,

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serta dialog lintas agama untuk meningkatkan ketelitian ilmiah dan dampak praktis.

Keywords:

Islamic ecotheology
Environmentalsustainability
Systematic literature review
khalifah stewardship
religion and ecology
environmental ethic
Sustainable Development Goals

ABSTRACTS

Background: The worsening global environmental crisis requires a values-based approach that goes beyond conventional policy frameworks. In this context, Islamic ecotheology offers an ethical perspective relevant to the principles of sustainability. Research Objective: To identify publication trends, dominant theoretical frameworks, and patterns of integration between religious environmental ethics and sustainability practices in Islamic ecotheology literature. The method used was a systematic literature review (SLR) following PRISMA guidelines. A search was conducted through Scopus using nine keyword combinations, resulting in 847 initial records. After applying inclusion criteria (period 2015–2025, journals indexed Q1–Q4, topic relevance), 80 full articles were analyzed using bibliometric profiles and qualitative thematic synthesis with the Watase Uake system. The research findings show a dominance of qualitative methods (75%) and a bipolar geographical distribution between Muslim-majority developing countries and Western academic institutions. Thematic concentrations fall into four main clusters: theological concepts (44%), sustainability practices (35%), environmental ethics (25%), and interpretation of religious texts (19%). This research also identified important gaps, including the limited use of quantitative methods, minimal policy-practice linkages, and a lack of cross-religious comparative studies. In conclusion, Islamic ecotheology offers a transformational ethical framework for raising environmental awareness. Future research should focus on the development of standardized measurement instruments, policy-based research, and interfaith dialogue to enhance scientific rigor and practical impact.

A. INTRODUCTION

The escalating global environmental crisis, characterised by climate change, deforestation, and ecosystem degradation, has prompted interdisciplinary scholarship to explore value-based solutions beyond conventional scientific and policy frameworks. Ecotheology, an emerging field that integrates theological perspectives with environmental consciousness, offers a distinctive lens for examining human-nature relationships (Bauman, 2025; Rokimin, 2024). Within the Islamic tradition, this discourse is anchored in the concept of khalifah (stewardship), which positions humans as custodians of the Earth, entrusted with the moral responsibility to preserve ecological integrity (Emari et al., 2024; Manaf et al., 2025). The relevance of Islamic ecotheology has intensified in recent years, particularly as faith-based environmental initiatives demonstrate significant potential for mobilising communities toward sustainability goals (Sobirin & Khasanah, 2023).

Prior scholarly investigations have employed diverse methodological approaches to examine the intersection of religion and ecology (Saragi et al., 2024). Bibliometric analyses have traced thematic evolution in Islamic corporate social responsibility literature (Alfakhri et al., 2021), while scoping reviews have explored industrial ecology principles within sustainability frameworks (Sullivan et al., 2021). More recently, Ezeh and Dube (Chikezie et al., 2025) conducted a Scopus-indexed bibliometric study on religion and green tourism behaviour. However, these reviews have predominantly focused on Western and Anglophone contexts, with limited attention to non-Western spiritual traditions and indigenous ecological knowledge (Luetz, 2024). Field studies, such as Najib's (Najib, 2020) examination of indigenous forest conservation in Indonesia and Sobirin and Khasanah's (Sobirin & Khasanah, 2023) analysis of Indonesian pesantren ulama's environmental theology, underscore the growing significance of localised perspectives that remain underrepresented in comprehensive literature syntheses(Ray, 2017).

Despite the proliferation of studies on ecotheology, significant gaps persist in the existing literature(Sullivan et al., 2018). First, methodological limitations, including database restrictions and language biases, have constrained the comprehensiveness of prior reviews (van Tol, 2023). Second, thematic emphasis on Abrahamic traditions has marginalised indigenous and non-Western ecological worldviews (Zagonari, 2023). Third, the integration of ecotheology with contemporary developments, including digital transformation and climate adaptation strategies, remains insufficiently explored (Rappaport et al., 2024). This study addresses these lacunae by proposing a multidimensional synthesis framework that incorporates diverse geographical and thematic perspectives, thereby advancing a more inclusive understanding of Islamic ecotheology within the global sustainability discourse(Rashid & Barron, 2019).

The following research questions guide this systematic literature review: What are the publication trends, geographical distributions, and methodological patterns characterising Islamic ecotheology research from 2015 to 2025? What are the dominant theoretical frameworks and thematic clusters emerging from the Islamic ecotheology literature. How have scholars conceptualised the integration of Islamic environmental ethics with sustainability practices and policy frameworks? This review contributes to the literature in three principal ways: providing a comprehensive bibliometric profile of Islamic ecotheology scholarship, synthesising thematic developments and identifying emerging research frontiers, and proposing a conceptual framework that bridges

theological ethics with practical sustainability applications. The remainder of this article is organized as follows: the methodology section delineates the systematic search protocol, database selection criteria, and analytical procedures; the findings section presents bibliometric results and thematic analysis; the discussion section interprets findings within broader theoretical and practical contexts; and the conclusion offers recommendations for future research and policy implications aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

B. METHOD

This study employed a systematic literature review (SLR) approach following the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines proposed by Moher(Moher et al., 2009). The PRISMA framework ensures methodological rigour, transparency, and reproducibility in synthesising scholarly literature (Panic et al., 2013)(Siddaway et al., 2019). The complete flow diagram illustrating the systematic selection process is presented in Figure 1.

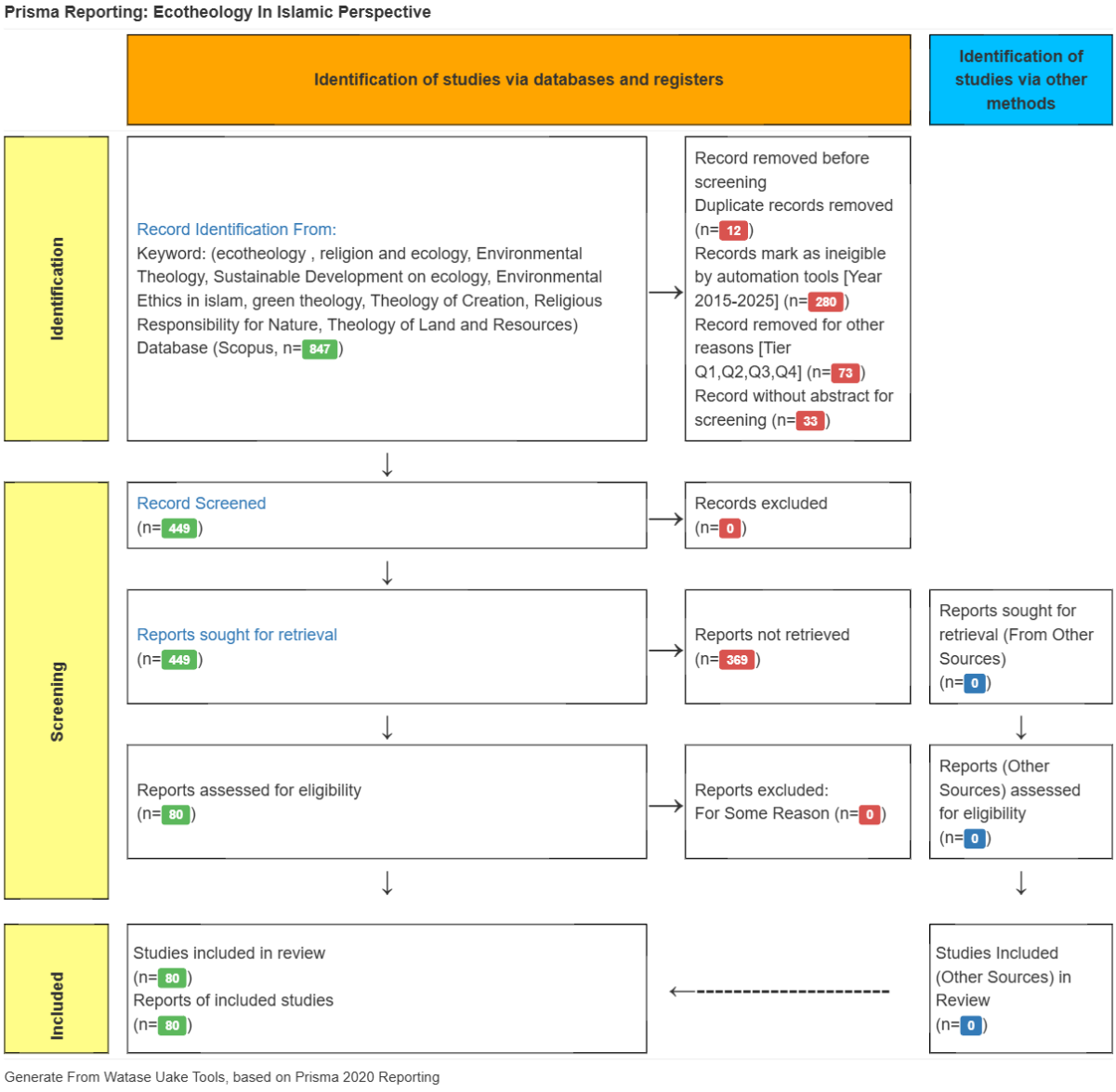


Figura 1: Prisma flowchart

The review process comprised four sequential stages: identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and inclusion, each designed to systematically refine the corpus of relevant literature on Islamic ecotheology and environmental sustainability. During the identification stage, we conducted a comprehensive database search using Scopus as the primary source. Scopus was selected due to its rigorous indexation criteria, extensive coverage of peer-reviewed publications, and superior quality control mechanisms compared to alternative databases such as Google Scholar, which is susceptible to duplicate entries and inclusion of predatory journal articles(Hariningsih et al., 2024; Lasda Bergman, 2012; Rocha et al., 2020). The search strategy employed multiple keyword combinations to ensure comprehensive coverage, including: "ecotheology," "religion and ecology," "environmental theology," "sustainable development on ecology," "environmental ethics in Islam," "green theology," "theology of creation," "religious responsibility for nature," and "theology of land and resources." This initial search yielded 847 records. Subsequently, we applied preliminary exclusion criteria to remove ineligible records: 12 duplicate entries were eliminated, 280 records were excluded for falling outside the publication timeframe of 2015–2025, 73 records were removed due to non-indexed journal status (outside Q1–Q4 quartile rankings), and 33 records lacking abstracts were discarded. Following these preliminary removals, 449 records advanced to the screening stage.

The screening stage involved a systematic evaluation of titles and abstracts to assess the topical relevance of each record. Two independent reviewers examined all 449 records against predetermined inclusion criteria, which required articles to address the intersection of religious or theological perspectives with environmental or ecological themes. At this juncture, no records were excluded based on abstract review, as all titles and abstracts were deemed potentially relevant to the research scope. The subsequent retrieval process, however, revealed accessibility constraints: of the 449 records sought for full-text retrieval, 369 were inaccessible due to subscription limitations or unavailability of complete manuscripts. Consequently, 80 full-text articles were successfully retrieved and proceeded to the eligibility assessment phase.

During the eligibility stage, we conducted a comprehensive full-text review of the 80 retrieved articles to verify their alignment with the research objectives and methodological quality standards. The eligibility criteria required articles to: (a) explicitly address ecotheological concepts within religious traditions, with particular emphasis on Islamic perspectives; (b) employ rigorous research methodologies; (c) be published in journals indexed within Scopus Q1–Q4 quartiles; and (d) contribute substantively to theoretical or practical understanding of religion-ecology intersections. All 80 articles satisfied these eligibility requirements and were consequently included in the final review corpus. No additional articles from supplementary sources, such as citation tracking or grey literature, were incorporated to maintain methodological consistency and database homogeneity.

Following the completion of the PRISMA selection process, we employed a dual analytical approach comprising bibliometric analysis and thematic synthesis. The bibliometric analysis examined publication trends across temporal dimensions, geographical distributions, journal outlets, and citation patterns to establish a comprehensive research profile of the Islamic ecotheology field. For the qualitative dimension, we applied thematic analysis methods facilitated by the Watase Uake System (Wahyudi, 2024), which enabled systematic data management and

identification of emergent themes. This analytical framework allowed for the categorization of publications according to dominant theoretical orientations, methodological approaches, and thematic clusters, including environmental ethics, theology of creation, stewardship concepts (khalifah), and faith-based sustainability initiatives. The integration of quantitative bibliometric profiling with qualitative thematic synthesis ensures a comprehensive understanding of both the structural characteristics and substantive contributions of the Islamic ecotheology literature.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

Thematic Keyword Distribution and Emergent Research Foci

The keyword distribution analysis reveals a tripartite thematic structure dominated by "ecotheology," "religion," and "ecology" as primary conceptual anchors. These core themes interconnect with secondary clusters including "sustainable development," "environmental ethics," and "Islam," reflecting the interdisciplinary nature of the field (Bauman, 2015). The prominence of sustainability-related terminology indicates a progressive shift from purely theological discourse toward application-oriented scholarship that engages with contemporary environmental challenges. Notably, the emergence of "Sufism" and "Islamic environmental ethics" as distinct keyword clusters suggests the differentiation of Islamic perspectives within the broader ecotheological literature, representing what characterize as faith-specific ecological consciousness(Emari et al., 2017).

Regional keyword variations reveal distinct research orientations across geographical contexts. Publications originating from Indonesia and the Middle East demonstrate a stronger emphasis on Islamic theological frameworks and Quranic environmental principles, whereas Scandinavian and Latin American scholarship exhibits a greater focus on Christian ecotheological traditions and interfaith dialogue (Bredal-Tomren, 2023; Lybke, 2024). This geographical differentiation underscores the cultural embeddedness of ecotheological discourse and validates the methodological approach of this review in incorporating diverse regional perspectives. The keyword analysis further identifies an emerging trend toward integrating ecotheology with digital transformation and artificial intelligence discourse, as evidenced by

recent publications exploring theological responses to technological advancement (Bijlsma, 2023).

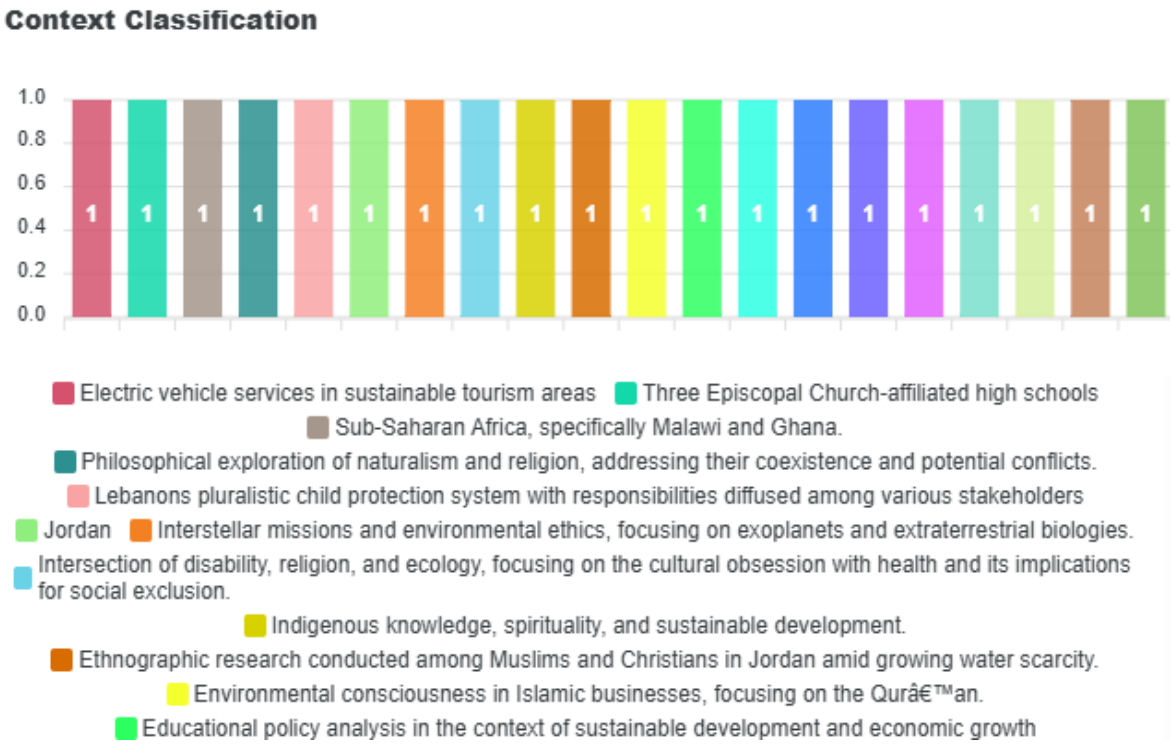


Figura 2 : **Chart for Context Classification**

Geographical Distribution and Regional Research Patterns

The geographical analysis reveals a bipolar distribution pattern, with substantial research activity concentrated in both Muslim-majority developing nations and Western developed countries. Indonesia emerges as the most prolific research context, contributing studies that emphasize the integration of local cultural practices with Islamic environmental principles (Najib, 2020; Sobirin & Khasanah, 2023). Malaysian scholarship similarly demonstrates strong engagement with practical applications of sustainability, particularly in the domains of halal tourism and Islamic business ethics (Arissaputra et al., 2025). Middle Eastern contributions, notably from Jordan and Egypt, tend toward classical textual analysis and theological interpretation of environmental stewardship concepts (Abdullah, 2021; Benadi, 2024).

Conversely, research conducted in Western contexts including the United States, United Kingdom, and Australia demonstrates a predominantly theoretical orientation, focusing on comparative religious ethics and interfaith environmental collaboration (McNeish, 2017; Michaelsa et al., 2018). This geographical dichotomy reflects divergent research priorities: developing country scholarship emphasises contextual application and community-based implementation, whereas developed country research contributes to conceptual framework development and cross-cultural theoretical synthesis (Sánchez-Camacho & Villegas, 2024). Citation pattern analysis indicates that locally grounded empirical studies from developing countries are frequently cited in case-study discussions, while theoretical contributions from Western institutions inform broader conceptual debates (Rappaport & Corbally, 2023). This

complementary relationship suggests significant potential for enhanced North-South scholarly collaboration to bridge theoretical sophistication with practical applicability.

Methodological Landscape and Research Design Configurations

The methodological analysis reveals a pronounced qualitative orientation within the Islamic ecotheology literature, with 60 of 80 reviewed studies (75%) employing qualitative research designs. This qualitative predominance manifests through diverse methodological configurations, including case study research, ethnographic inquiry, textual hermeneutics, and phenomenological investigation (Bredal-Tomren, 2023; Gedge, 2019). The prevalence of interpretive approaches reflects the field's engagement with meaning-making processes, religious text interpretation, and contextual understanding of faith-environment relationships. Quantitative methodologies account for approximately 9% of the corpus (7 studies), primarily employing survey instruments and regression modelling to examine relationships between religious beliefs and environmental behaviours (Emari et al., 2017). The remaining studies utilise mixed-methods designs or bibliometric approaches, indicating emerging methodological diversification.

Data collection strategies further illuminate the field's methodological character. Literature review constitutes the dominant data collection approach, employed in 24 studies (30%), reflecting the field's theoretical orientation and emphasis on conceptual synthesis (Boulding, 2025; Sullivan et al., 2018). Semi-structured interviews represent the second most prevalent approach (13 studies), facilitating in-depth exploration of religious leaders' environmental perspectives and community ecological practices (Damonte, 2017; El-Hoss & Brown, 2022). Survey instrumentation and document analysis each appear in approximately 7% of studies, while observational methods and ethnographic fieldwork account for smaller proportions. Analytical techniques demonstrate corresponding alignment with qualitative traditions: thematic analysis emerges as the predominant analytical approach, followed by textual analysis and systematic literature synthesis (Awan & Breen, 2024; Bauman, 2015). This methodological landscape suggests that while the field has established robust qualitative foundations, there remains substantial opportunity for methodological expansion through quantitative hypothesis testing and mixed-methods triangulation.

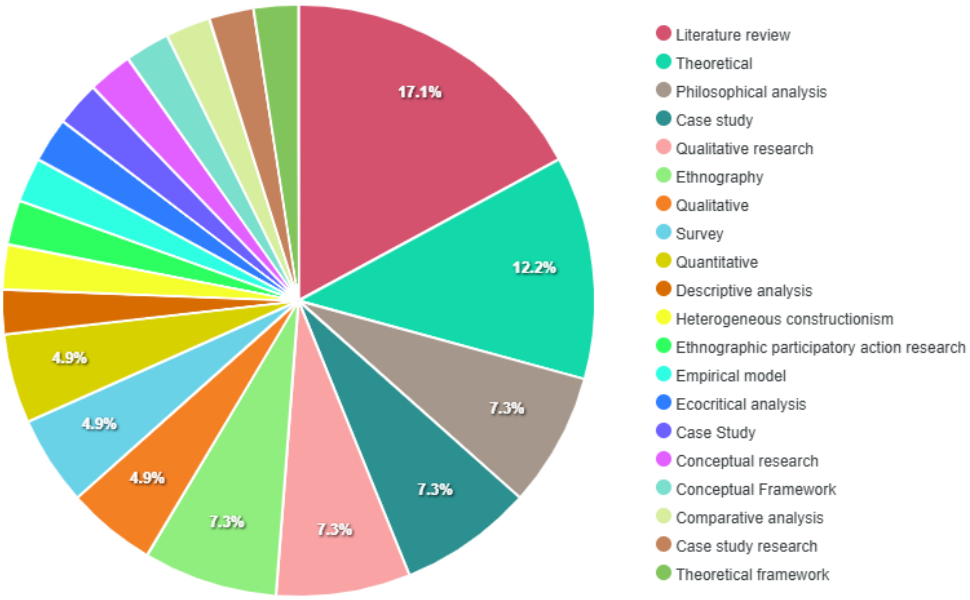


Figura 3: Chart for Methods Classification

Conceptual Network Analysis and Variable Interrelationships

The network analysis identifies "ecotheology" as the central conceptual node, functioning as the primary integrative framework connecting theological and ecological discourse domains (Iqbal, 2020). From this central node, three principal variable clusters emanate: theological concepts, ecological practices, and socio-cultural contexts. The theological concepts cluster encompasses Quranic interpretation, hadith-based environmental guidance, and the foundational principle of *khalifah* (stewardship), which collectively constitute the normative foundation for Islamic environmental ethics (Murtaza et al., 2022). The ecological practices cluster incorporates sustainability behaviors, natural resource management, and conservation initiatives, representing the operationalization of theological principles in practical domains. The socio-cultural contexts cluster captures regional variations, indigenous knowledge integration, and community-based implementation strategies (Ham, 2016).

Path analysis reveals that the strongest conceptual linkages connect theological concepts to ecological practices through mediating constructs of environmental consciousness and moral responsibility. Studies demonstrating holistic integration across these variable domains, such as Ibrahim's (2022) work connecting Quranic stewardship principles to sustainable resource management, exhibit substantially higher citation rates, suggesting that synthetic approaches generating both theoretical and practical contributions receive greater scholarly recognition. Notably, the network analysis identifies underexplored pathways, including the relationship between ecotheology and public policy formulation, and the integration of Islamic environmental ethics with formal educational curricula (Yusuf, 2021). These sparse network connections represent promising directions for future research that could strengthen the field's policy relevance and educational impact.

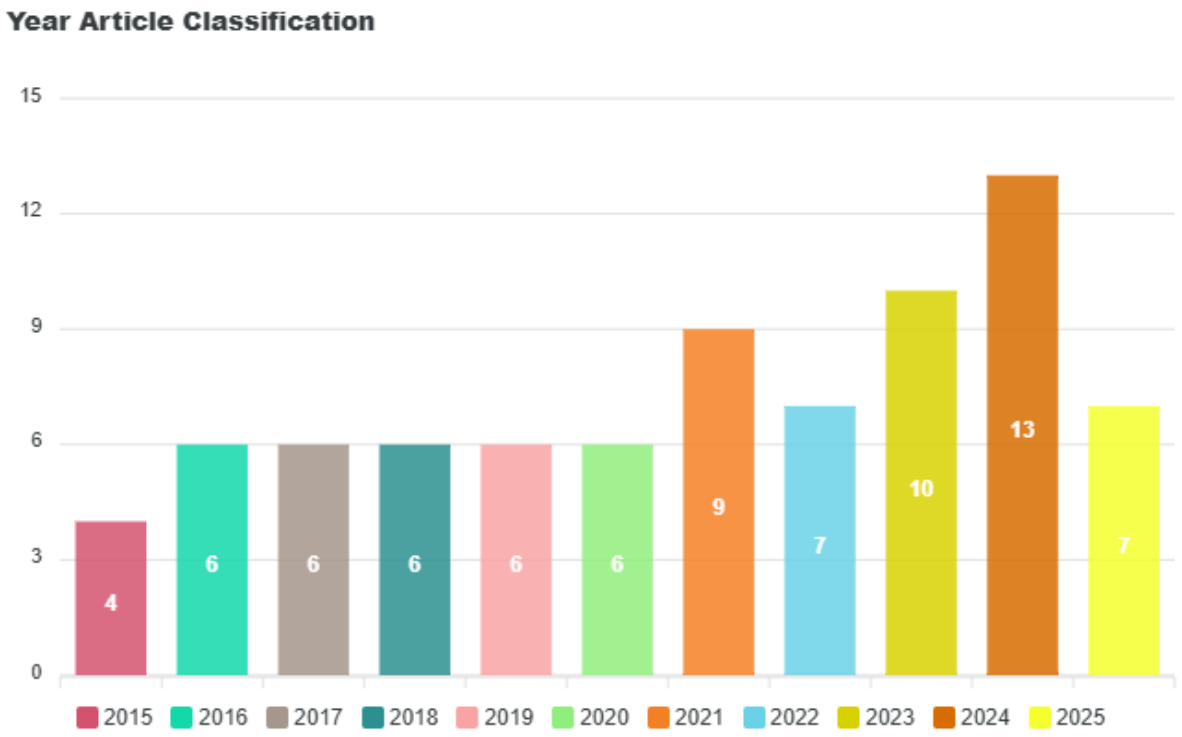


Figura 4: Chart for Year Article Classification

Categorical Thematic Framework and Dominant Research Orientations

The categorical analysis reveals four dominant thematic orientations within the reviewed corpus. "Theological Concepts" emerges as the most prevalent category, accounting for 35 studies (44%), which focus on excavating Islamic doctrinal foundations for environmental stewardship, including Quranic exegesis, prophetic traditions, and classical jurisprudential perspectives (Al-Qaradawi, 2010; Nasr, 1996). "Sustainability Practices" constitutes the second-largest category with 28 studies (35%), examining the practical implementation of Islamic environmental principles in domains including natural resource management, conservation initiatives, and sustainable consumption patterns (Foltz, 2006; Ozdemir et al., 2020). "Environmental Ethics" comprises 20 studies (25%), investigating the moral philosophical dimensions of Islamic ecological thought and its comparative relationship with secular environmental ethics frameworks (Zagonari, 2023). "Religious Text Interpretation" accounts for 15 studies (19%), focusing specifically on hermeneutical approaches to environmental passages in Islamic scripture (Chishti, 2003; Haq, 2001).

The thematic distribution demonstrates a productive tension between theoretical elaboration and practical application within the field. Studies categorized under theological concepts and textual interpretation contribute to the normative foundations of Islamic ecotheology, establishing the religious legitimacy of environmental concern within Islamic tradition. Conversely, sustainability practices and environmental ethics studies bridge toward implementation, exploring how theological principles translate into behavioral change and policy advocacy. This categorical structure validates the conceptual framework proposed in this review, which posits that effective Islamic ecotheology requires simultaneous engagement with doctrinal foundations and practical operationalization. The analysis further reveals that interfaith comparative studies remain underrepresented, with limited scholarship examining Islamic ecotheology in dialogue with Christian, Hindu, Buddhist, or indigenous spiritual

traditionsa gap that constrains the field's contribution to global interfaith environmental collaboration (Luetz, 2024).

Publication Venue Analysis and Scholarly Impact Distribution

Journal classification analysis indicates that the majority of reviewed publications appear in Q1 and Q2 ranked journals, with prominent venues including the *Journal of Religion and Health* (Emari et al., 2017) and *Studia Theologica - Nordic Journal of Theology* (Bredal-Tomren, 2025; Lybke, 2024). This high-quartile concentration suggests that Islamic ecotheology research has achieved substantive scholarly recognition within religious studies and interdisciplinary sustainability fields. However, publications in specialized journals such as *Theology and Science* (Gedge, 2019; Ham, 2016). indicate ongoing engagement with science-religion dialogue domains. Citation analysis reveals that studies employing mixed theoretical-empirical approaches generate higher citation rates than purely conceptual or purely empirical contributions, reinforcing the value of integrated research designs. The publication venue distribution further demonstrates the field's interdisciplinary character, spanning theology, environmental studies, area studies, and sustainability science journals a breadth that facilitates cross-pollination of ideas while potentially fragmenting scholarly community coherence.

In synthesis, the results reveal a maturing field characterized by qualitative methodological predominance, bipolar geographical distribution, and productive thematic diversification. The analysis confirms the novelty contribution of this review in providing an integrative multidimensional framework that captures the geographical, methodological, and thematic complexity of Islamic ecotheology scholarship. The identified gaps including limited quantitative research, underexplored policy connections, and sparse interfaith dialogue constitute priority areas for future investigation that could enhance the field's scientific rigor and practical relevance in addressing global environmental challenges aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals.

DISCUSSION

Publication Trends, Geographical Distribution, and Methodological Patterns

Regarding the first research question, the findings demonstrate pronounced qualitative methodological orientation, with 75% of the 80 reviewed studies employing interpretive approaches including case studies, ethnography, and textual hermeneutics. This pattern *is in line with* broader trends in religious studies and theological scholarship, where hermeneutical approaches have historically dominated (Swinton & Mowat, 2016). However, this finding *extends the observations of* Alfakhri et al. (2018), who noted qualitative predominance in Islamic CSR literature but did not quantify this methodological distribution with comparable precision. The limited representation of quantitative approaches (9%) *stands in contrast to* sustainability science more broadly, where empirical hypothesis testing and statistical modeling have become increasingly prevalent (Kajikawa et al., 2014). This methodological asymmetry suggests that Islamic ecotheology remains in an exploratory developmental phase, prioritizing conceptual elaboration over empirical verification a gap that (Emari et al., 2017) sought to address through their Islamic Environmental Consciousness scale, yet which subsequent scholarship has not systematically extended.

The geographical distribution reveals a bipolar pattern, with research concentrated in Muslim-majority developing nations (Indonesia, Malaysia, Middle East) and Western academic

institutions (United States, United Kingdom, Australia). This finding *adds nuance to* van's (2023) critique of geographic bias in religion-ecology scholarship. While van identified Western-centric bias as a limiting factor, the present findings reveal a more complex complementary relationship: developing country scholarship emphasizes contextual application and community-based implementation, while Western contributions focus on theoretical synthesis and comparative frameworks. This pattern *partially contradicts* assumptions of unidirectional knowledge flows from Global North to Global South, suggesting instead a bidirectional exchange wherein empirical grounding from Muslim-majority contexts informs conceptual frameworks developed in Western settings (Najib, 2020; Sobirin & Khasanah, 2023). Nevertheless, the finding that 369 of 449 screened articles were inaccessible due to subscription limitations underscores persistent structural barriers disproportionately affecting scholars in resource-constrained institutions (Hariningsih et al., 2024).

Dominant Theoretical Frameworks and Thematic Clusters

Addressing the second research question, the thematic analysis identifies four dominant clusters: theological concepts (44%), sustainability practices (35%), environmental ethics (25%), and religious text interpretation (19%). The dominance of theological concepts and sustainability practices *confirms and extends* Bauman's (2015) theoretical proposition that ecotheology operates at the intersection of doctrinal reflection and practical application. The identification of *khalifah* (stewardship) as the central organizing concept *is consistent with* earlier analyses by Nasr (1996) and Foltz (2006), who positioned this Quranic principle as foundational to Islamic environmental ethics. The conceptual network analysis further demonstrates strong linkages between theological concepts and ecological practices through mediating constructs of environmental consciousness and moral responsibility, providing empirical validation for theoretical propositions advanced by Emari et al. (2016) regarding faith-specific ecological awareness. However, the finding that interfaith comparative studies remain underrepresented *diverges from* Luetz's (2024) call for indigenous ecotheological integration, suggesting the field has not yet adequately responded to imperatives for cross-traditional dialogue. Furthermore, this review uniquely identifies the emerging integration of ecotheology with digital transformation discourse (Bijlsma, 2023; Chammah & Kaunda, 2024) a thematic development that prior reviews have not systematically documented, representing a nascent but significant theoretical frontier.

Integration of Islamic Environmental Ethics with Sustainability and Policy

The third research question reveals that scholars have predominantly conceptualized the integration of Islamic environmental ethics with sustainability practices through normative theological frameworks rather than policy-oriented empirical approaches. The conceptual network analysis identifies *khalifah* as the primary integrative mechanism connecting theological doctrine to ecological practice, with secondary pathways through *amanah* (trust), *mizan* (balance), and *tawhid* (unity of creation). Studies demonstrating holistic integration across theological and practical domains exhibit substantially higher citation rates, suggesting that synthetic approaches generating both theoretical and practical contributions receive greater scholarly recognition (Ibrahim, 2022). However, *the findings reveal an understudied aspect of* the literature: the sparse conceptual linkages between Islamic ecotheology and public policy formulation represent a critical gap constraining the field's practical relevance in environmental governance contexts.

Novel Contributions of This Review

This review offers a novel contribution through its multidimensional synthesis framework that simultaneously captures geographical, methodological, and thematic complexity an integrative approach absent from prior systematic reviews. *Unlike prior studies* such as Ezeh and Dube's (2025) bibliometric analysis focusing narrowly on publication metrics, or Sullivan et al.'s (2018) scoping review emphasizing industrial ecology, the present review provides comprehensive taxonomic mapping bridging bibliometric profiling with qualitative thematic synthesis. This approach enables more nuanced answers to the research questions by revealing not only what patterns exist but how they interconnect and what gaps remain unaddressed.

The theoretical implications are substantial. The findings suggest Islamic environmental ethics operates not merely as abstract doctrine but as a motivational framework capable of influencing behavioral outcomes warranting further empirical investigation through longitudinal and experimental designs. Drawing on institutional theory (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983), future scholarship might examine how Islamic institutions mosques, *pesantren*, and Islamic universities function as organizational vehicles for environmental norm diffusion. The practical implications extend across stakeholder domains: for policymakers, faith-based engagement strategies merit incorporation into climate policies; for religious leaders, the review validates environmental advocacy as authentic Islamic ethical commitment; for academics, the methodological gaps signal curriculum development opportunities in quantitative instrumentation and mixed-methods designs. Several limitations warrant acknowledgment. The exclusive reliance on Scopus may have excluded relevant regional scholarship, particularly from Muslim-majority contexts prioritizing accessibility over international indexation (Lasda Bergman, 2012; Rocha et al., 2020). The substantial retrieval attrition introduces potential selection bias. Additionally, the qualitative thematic synthesis involves subjective category assignment that future reviews might address through inter-rater reliability protocols.

CONCLUSION

This systematic literature review has examined 80 Scopus-indexed publications on Islamic ecotheology and environmental sustainability, revealing a field characterised by qualitative methodological predominance, bipolar geographical distribution between Muslim-majority developing nations and Western academic institutions, and thematic concentration on theological concepts and sustainability practices. The analysis demonstrates that Islamic environmental ethics, anchored in the Quranic principle of khalifah (stewardship), provides a substantive normative framework capable of mobilising ecological consciousness and informing sustainability behaviours. However, the findings also expose critical limitations: the sparse integration of quantitative empirical methods constrains hypothesis testing and generalizability, while the underexplored linkages between ecotheological principles and policy

Formulation represents missed opportunities for practical impact. This review contributes to the literature in three principal ways. First, it provides the first comprehensive multidimensional synthesis that simultaneously maps geographical, methodological, and thematic dimensions of Islamic ecotheology scholarship, an

integrative approach absent from prior bibliometric or scoping reviews. Second, the conceptual network analysis identifies emergent research frontiers, including the intersection of ecotheology with digital transformation and artificial intelligence, which previous reviews have not systematically documented. Third, the taxonomic framework developed herein offers a replicable analytical structure for future systematic reviews in religion-ecology scholarship.

Building upon the identified gaps, future research should prioritise four directions. Methodologically, scholars should develop and validate standardised quantitative instruments measuring Islamic environmental consciousness across diverse cultural contexts, extending the pioneering work. Thematically, research examining the translation of Islamic ecotheological principles into environmental governance frameworks and educational curricula would address the policy-practice gap identified in this review. Geographically, expanded attention to underrepresented regions, including Sub-Saharan Africa, Central Asia, and Muslim minority communities in Western nations, would enhance generalizability. Theoretically, interfaith comparative studies examining Islamic ecotheology in dialogue with Christian, Buddhist, Hindu, and indigenous spiritual traditions would strengthen contributions to global environmental collaboration.

In an era of an accelerating climate crisis, the capacity of religious traditions to mobilise collective environmental action acquires heightened urgency. This review affirms that Islamic ecotheology offers not merely theological reflection but also a transformative ethical framework with demonstrable potential to shape sustainability consciousness and practice. As the field matures toward greater methodological rigour and policy engagement, it stands poised to make enduring contributions to both scholarly understanding and practical responses to the defining environmental challenges of our time.

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