



## The Formation of Students' Ecospirituality through Islamic Value Integration in Environmental-Based Islamic Boarding School Education

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### ABSTRACT

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This study aims to examine the nature of ecospirituality within Islamic education, the strategies for integrating Islamic educational values into an ecopesantren program, and the implementation of these values in shaping students' spirituality and ecological awareness. The research employed a qualitative design with a phenomenological approach to explore participants' lived experiences through non-participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation analysis. Data were analyzed using the interactive model of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing, while triangulation techniques were applied to ensure credibility and trustworthiness. The findings indicate that ecospirituality is constructed through the systematic integration of theological principles, thematic curriculum development, contextual interpretation of religious texts, exemplary leadership, and structured environmental habituation programs such as cleanliness movements, room inspections, and waste-free initiatives. These practices transform environmental care into a lived spiritual commitment, fostering ecological consciousness alongside religious devotion. The study implies that faith-based environmental education can function as an integrative model that bridges Islamic pedagogy, spirituality, and sustainability in responding to contemporary ecological challenges.

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## INTRODUCTION

The escalating environmental crisis has become one of the most urgent challenges facing global society today. Climate change, pollution, deforestation, and biodiversity loss threaten not only ecological balance but also human survival. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), rising global temperatures have intensified natural disasters and disrupted socio-economic systems worldwide. In Indonesia, hydrometeorological disasters such

as floods, droughts, landslides, and storms dominate annual disaster occurrences, accounting for the majority of reported cases. This condition demonstrates that environmental degradation is not an abstract issue but a tangible reality affecting communities (Hefniy & Alwahedi, 2025; Holidi, 2025; Khofsah, 2025; Manshur, 2026). Therefore, collective responsibility across all sectors, including education, is essential. Educational institutions play a strategic role in shaping values, attitudes, and behaviors that influence how future generations respond to ecological challenges. Integrating environmental awareness into moral and spiritual education is thus crucial to fostering long-term sustainability and social resilience.

Despite growing global awareness, society continues to face structural and cultural problems in addressing ecological degradation. Environmental exploitation driven by economic interests often neglects sustainability principles, resulting in long-term ecological damage. In many contexts, religious education remains predominantly ritualistic and less engaged with contemporary environmental concerns (Hikmah & Mudarris, 2026; Kusumawati, 2025; Syafiih, 2025). This separation between spirituality and ecological responsibility contributes to limited environmental consciousness among communities. As a result, environmental preservation is frequently perceived as a technical or governmental responsibility rather than a moral and spiritual obligation. The absence of integrative educational models that connect religious teachings with environmental ethics has further deepened this gap. Consequently, there is a pressing need to reorient religious educational institutions so that they actively contribute to ecological awareness and sustainable practices within society.

Field observations reveal that some Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) have begun integrating environmental programs into their educational systems. One example is Pondok Pesantren Asy-Syarifiy in Lumajang, which has adopted the *ecopesantren* concept as part of its institutional identity. Located in a coastal area prone to environmental vulnerability and natural disasters, this *pesantren* has developed initiatives such as organic farming, natural resource management, and environmentally friendly daily practices (Maulidia, 2023; Mulyadi & Sutiah, 2025; Prayoga, 2025; Safitri, 2024). In 2023, it was recognized by the local government as a model *eco-pesantren* for its environmental governance. These practical efforts demonstrate that *pesantren* can function not only as centers of religious learning but also as agents of ecological transformation at the grassroots level. However, the deeper process through which such programs shape students' spiritual and ecological consciousness requires further academic exploration.

Previous studies have highlighted the importance of integrating Islamic values into environmental education. Scholars have emphasized concepts such as *mīzān* (balance) and the prohibition of *fasād* (destruction) as foundational ethical principles within Islamic teachings that support ecological responsibility.

Research on eco-theology and Islamic environmental ethics has shown that religious values positively influence environmental attitudes and pro-environmental behavior among students (Eduzor, 2024; Hasanah et al., 2024; Putri et al., 2024; Wagner, 2025). Additionally, studies on ecopesantren programs indicate that environmental-based religious education can enhance social awareness and community participation in sustainable practices. These findings confirm the normative compatibility between Islamic teachings and environmental stewardship, providing a strong theological basis for ecological engagement within Islamic educational institutions.

Nevertheless, much of the existing research remains theoretical and normative in nature. Many studies discuss Islamic environmental ethics conceptually without deeply examining how these values are practically integrated into daily educational activities (Aisyah & Trianingsih, 2023; Bulqis & Fachri, 2025; Munif et al., 2025). Empirical investigations into how ecopesantren programs shape students' ecological spirituality particularly within pesantren contexts are still limited. Furthermore, previous research often focuses on environmental management aspects rather than the spiritual transformation process experienced by students. This gap indicates the need for a comprehensive study that explores the integration of Islamic educational values with environmental practices and analyzes their impact on the formation of students' ecospirituality. Addressing this gap is essential to understanding how religious education can effectively respond to contemporary ecological challenges.

The novelty of this study lies in its focus on the formation of ecospirituality through the integration of Islamic educational values within an operational ecopesantren model. Unlike prior studies that emphasize policy or environmental management, this research examines the pedagogical strategies and spiritual dimensions embedded in the ecopesantren program at Pondok Pesantren Asy-Syarifiy Lumajang. By analyzing both conceptual understanding and practical implementation, this study seeks to reveal how environmental ethics rooted in Islamic teachings are internalized by students as part of their spiritual identity. This approach contributes to the development of an integrative educational framework that connects theology, pedagogy, and sustainability. Consequently, the research offers a holistic perspective on how pesantren can become transformative agents in cultivating environmentally conscious Muslim generations.

Based on these considerations, this study addresses three main research questions: the nature of ecospirituality within Islamic education at Pondok Pesantren Asy-Syarifiy Lumajang; the strategies used to integrate Islamic educational values into the ecopesantren program; and the implementation of these values in shaping students' spirituality and ecological awareness. This research argues that ecospirituality emerges through systematic integration of

theological principles, daily environmental practices, and participatory learning models within the pesantren environment. By exploring these processes, the study aims to demonstrate that pesantren-based environmental education can effectively nurture students who are intellectually competent, spiritually grounded, and environmentally responsible. Ultimately, this research contributes to broader discussions on sustainable education and the role of religious institutions in addressing global ecological crises.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative research design using a phenomenological approach. The selection of qualitative methodology was grounded in the objective of gaining an in-depth understanding of social and spiritual phenomena through rich, descriptive data in the form of narratives, observations, and lived experiences. Phenomenology was chosen because the research seeks to uncover the essence and meaning of participants' experiences related to the integration of Islamic educational values within the ecopesantren program (Nasir et al., 2023; Niam et al., 2024; Okoko et al., 2023). Rather than measuring variables quantitatively, this approach allows the researcher to explore how students interpret and internalize ecological and spiritual values in their daily lives. By bracketing personal assumptions and minimizing bias, the phenomenological perspective facilitates an authentic interpretation of participants' experiences. This design is therefore appropriate for examining the process of constructing students' ecospirituality within the natural setting of the pesantren, emphasizing meaning, context, and subjective understanding.

The research was conducted at Pondok Pesantren Asy-Syarifiy in Pandan Wangi Village, Tempeh District, Lumajang Regency. The selection of this site was based on its distinctive identity as an ecopesantren and its recognition as a model Islamic boarding school with exemplary environmental governance in the Lumajang region. The pesantren has implemented various environmental sustainability initiatives, including organic farming, environmental cleanliness programs, and natural resource management practices integrated into daily educational activities. Its location in a disaster-prone coastal area further strengthens its relevance as a research site, as ecological awareness is particularly significant in such contexts. The institution's commitment to integrating Islamic educational values with environmental stewardship makes it a strategic and relevant setting for examining the formation of ecospirituality among students. Thus, the site selection aligns closely with the research objectives and ensures contextual depth.

Data were collected through multiple techniques to ensure comprehensive understanding, including non-participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation review (Salmona & Kaczynski, 2024; Takona,

2024). Non-participant observation allowed the researcher to systematically observe daily activities and environmental practices without direct involvement in participants' routines. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with key informants, including the pesantren leader, administrators, teachers, and students actively involved in the ecopesantren program. This flexible interview format enabled the exploration of predetermined themes while allowing space for emerging insights. In addition, documentation such as institutional records, program reports, photographs, and archival materials was examined to complement and validate primary data. Data analysis followed the interactive model of Miles and Huberman, consisting of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Data condensation involved selecting, focusing, simplifying, and transforming raw data into meaningful units. The organized data were then presented in narrative and thematic forms to facilitate interpretation, followed by continuous verification to identify patterns, relationships, and emerging conclusions.

To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, this study applied triangulation techniques, including source triangulation, technique triangulation, and time triangulation. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from different informants and documentary sources to identify consistency and credibility. Technique triangulation involved cross-checking data gathered through interviews, observations, and documentation to validate findings from multiple methodological perspectives. Time triangulation was implemented by collecting data at different moments to avoid situational bias and to assess the stability of responses. Through these systematic procedures, the research enhances credibility, dependability, and confirmability, ensuring that the findings accurately represent the lived experiences of participants and the phenomenon under investigation.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **The Essence of Ecospirituality in the Perspective of Islamic Education at Pondok Pesantren Asy-Syarifiy**

Ecospirituality within the perspective of Islamic education at Pondok Pesantren Asy-Syarifiy Lumajang is understood as an integral awareness that (Ilhamni et al., 2022). Nature is not perceived merely as an object of exploitation, but as part of Allah's creation that possesses intrinsic value and must be preserved responsibly. In this context, environmental care is interpreted as both an act of worship and a moral responsibility as khalifah (vicegerent) on earth.

This concept is rooted in Qur'anic teachings and the foundational values of Islamic education, which emphasize balance (tawazun), trust (amanah), and public benefit (maslahah). Ecological awareness is therefore seen as a concrete

manifestation of faith rather than a purely normative discourse. Spirituality is not limited to ritual devotion; instead, it extends into ethical responsibility toward environmental sustainability.

Furthermore, ecospirituality at this pesantren reflects a theological consciousness that the relationship between God, humans, and the environment is inseparable. Environmental damage is viewed not only as a social or ecological problem but also as a moral and spiritual deviation. This understanding strengthens the students' internal motivation to maintain cleanliness and environmental harmony as part of their religious identity.

The integration of spiritual values with environmental awareness forms a holistic educational paradigm. Through this paradigm, students are encouraged to internalize ecological ethics as part of their character formation. As a result, ecospirituality becomes a transformative force that shapes religious attitudes alongside ecological responsibility in everyday life.

### **Strategies for Integrating Islamic Educational Values in the Ecomesantren Program to Build Students' Ecological Awareness at Pondok Pesantren Asy-Syarifiy**

The integration strategy of Islamic educational values within the ecomesantren program is implemented through a thematic curriculum that explicitly incorporates environmental discussions. One of the primary references used is Tafsir al-Ibriz, which provides contextual interpretations of Qur'anic verses related to environmental stewardship (Muzakki et al., 2025). Through this approach, students gain both theological insight and practical understanding of environmental responsibility.

In addition to formal learning, value integration is reinforced through exemplary leadership and moral guidance delivered by the kiai, particularly Kiai Fawahim and Gus Ma'ad. Their consistent advice, delivered after lessons or congregational prayers, strengthens students' awareness that caring for the environment is an inseparable part of Islamic teachings. This method emphasizes moral persuasion alongside cognitive understanding.

The pesantren also employs a participatory and habituation-based strategy. Students are actively involved in environmental programs, fostering a sense of collective responsibility. By directly engaging in structured activities, ecological awareness develops not only intellectually but also emotionally and behaviorally.

Overall, the integration strategy combines curriculum development, religious interpretation, moral exemplification, and structured participation. This

comprehensive approach ensures that ecological awareness is cultivated systematically, gradually shaping students' perspectives and daily conduct.

### **Implementation of Islamic Educational Values in the Ecomesantren Program and Its Impact on Students' Spirituality at Pondok Pesantren Asy-Syarifiy**

The implementation of Islamic educational values within the ecomesantren program is reflected in various habituation activities, such as maintaining environmental cleanliness, conducting regular room inspections, and implementing a waste-free initiative. These activities serve as practical platforms for instilling discipline, responsibility, and accountability among students.

Daily and weekly cleaning routines function not only as environmental maintenance efforts but also as character-building mechanisms. Through these structured practices, students internalize values of orderliness, cooperation, and trust. Environmental care becomes a tangible expression of religious devotion manifested in daily actions.

The room inspection program strengthens moral discipline and reinforces collective responsibility (Sulaeman et al., 2025). By encouraging students to maintain cleanliness and organization in their personal spaces, the pesantren nurtures consistency between spiritual values and personal conduct. Supervision and evaluation mechanisms further ensure that these values are practiced sustainably.

Consequently, the implementation of Islamic educational values through the ecomesantren program contributes significantly to students' spiritual development. Spirituality is no longer confined to ritual observance but is reflected in ecological consciousness and responsible behavior. This integration demonstrates that environmental education grounded in Islamic principles can effectively foster both religious commitment and ecological awareness.

### **CONCLUSION**

This study reveals that ecospirituality within the ecomesantren program at Pondok Pesantren Asy-Syarifiy Lumajang is not merely an environmental initiative but a theological manifestation of worship and devotion to Allah. The most significant finding highlights that the integration of Islamic educational values through thematic curriculum development, the use of Tafsir al-Ibriz, and continuous moral guidance from religious leaders successfully transforms environmental care into a lived spiritual practice. Environmental preservation is internalized as part of religious responsibility, reflecting an integral relationship between God, human beings, and nature. The habituation programs, such as

cleanliness movements, room inspections, and waste-free initiatives, demonstrate that Islamic education moves beyond conceptual instruction toward embodied character formation. The key lesson derived from this research is that religious institutions, particularly pesantren, possess transformative potential to cultivate environmentally conscious individuals when theological values are systematically integrated into daily educational practices.

In terms of scholarly contribution, this study strengthens the discourse on Islamic environmental education by offering an empirical exploration of how ecospirituality is constructed through an operational ecopesantren model. It bridges theological concepts and practical implementation, providing a holistic framework that connects Islamic pedagogy, spirituality, and sustainability. However, the research is limited by its qualitative scope and its focus on a single institution, which restricts generalizability and does not quantitatively measure behavioral change or long-term program effectiveness. Future research is therefore recommended to adopt mixed-method approaches to assess measurable impacts on students' environmental attitudes and behaviors. Comparative studies involving different pesantren contexts, as well as perspectives from parents, alumni, and surrounding communities, would further enrich understanding and strengthen the development of environmentally oriented Islamic educational models.

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