



## Strengthening Students' Islamic Character Education through Ecopedagogic-Based Learning; Case Study at Darul Huffadz Primary School

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### Abstract

The increasing neglect of moral and character education in the era of digitalization highlights the urgent need for ecopedagogy as a transformative approach to foster ecological awareness and prevent environmental degradation. This research aims to determine (1) the concept of ecopedagogics in natural school-based Islamic character education; (2) the application of ecopedagogic-based learning models at Daarul Huffadz Primary School; and (3) the implications of ecopedagogics in strengthening natural school-based Islamic character education at Daarul Huffadz Primary School. This research uses a qualitative analytical descriptive approach. Data was obtained through interview techniques with 7 school administrators, observation of learning activities in class III, totaling 28 students, and documentation studies through the Lesson Plan and intra-school student organization syllabus as comparison material with other formal schools. The research results found (1) the ecopedagogic concept in Islamic character education is applied using the concept of learning with nature referring to three core curricula and four basic foundations, namely moral, leadership, scientific logic, and entrepreneurship developments; (2) the implementation of learning refers more to the achievement of development and character formation of students which is determined through attitudinal or affective assessments; (3) the development of ecopedagogical education as character education has eight main character pillars as a reference for student outcomes. These findings highlight that ecopedagogic education integrates environmental awareness

with character development, providing a holistic approach that shapes students into responsible, ethical, and environmentally conscious individuals.

**Keywords:** *ecopedagogic, Islamic character education, natural school.*

### **Abstrak**

Meningkatnya pengabaian pendidikan moral dan karakter di era digitalisasi menyoroti kebutuhan mendesak akan ekopedagogi sebagai pendekatan transformatif untuk menumbuhkan kesadaran ekologis dan mencegah degradasi lingkungan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui (1) konsep ekopedagogi dalam pendidikan karakter Islam berbasis sekolah alam; (2) penerapan model pembelajaran berbasis ekopedagogi di Sekolah Dasar Daarul Huffadz; dan (3) implikasi ekopedagogi dalam penguatan pendidikan karakter Islam berbasis sekolah alam di Sekolah Dasar Daarul Huffadz. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif analitis kualitatif. Data diperoleh melalui teknik wawancara dengan 7 administrator sekolah, observasi aktivitas pembelajaran di kelas III yang berjumlah 28 siswa, dan studi dokumentasi melalui Rencana Pelaksanaan Pembelajaran dan silabus organisasi siswa intra sekolah sebagai bahan perbandingan dengan sekolah formal lainnya. Hasil penelitian menemukan (1) konsep ekopedagogi dalam pendidikan karakter Islam diterapkan menggunakan konsep belajar dengan alam mengacu pada tiga kurikulum inti dan empat landasan dasar, yaitu pengembangan moral, kepemimpinan, logika ilmiah, dan kewirausahaan; (2) pelaksanaan pembelajaran lebih mengacu pada pencapaian pengembangan dan pembentukan karakter peserta didik yang ditentukan melalui penilaian sikap atau afektif; (3) pengembangan pendidikan ekopedagogi sebagai pendidikan karakter memiliki delapan pilar karakter utama sebagai acuan capaian peserta didik. Temuan ini menyoroti bahwa pendidikan ekopedagogi mengintegrasikan kesadaran lingkungan dengan pengembangan karakter, memberikan pendekatan holistik yang membentuk peserta didik menjadi individu yang bertanggung jawab, beretika, dan sadar lingkungan.

**Kata kunci:** *ecopedagogic, pendidikan karakter Islam, sekolah alam.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

As a multidimensional being, humans are intrinsically connected to nature and the environment. This connection suggests that human development within the educational process cannot be separated from its spatial and temporal relationship with the natural world (Yunansah & Herlambang, 2017). Human interactions with nature have profound implications for maintaining ecological balance and sustainability. In educational settings, this relationship emphasizes the importance of cultivating ecological awareness, which can guide humans to preserve and protect the environment (Muhaimin, 2015). However, alarming trends such as environmental degradation, pollution, and over exploitation of natural resources are evident worldwide, reflecting a widespread lack of ecological consciousness. This situation is consistent with Prihatmoko's (2020) findings, which underscore the critical state of environmental issues at the national and global levels.

Ecological awareness is an urgent need, and the implementation of ecopedagogy is essential to address the ongoing environmental crisis. Ecopedagogy provides a framework for education that links ecological and ethical awareness, encouraging students to not only acquire knowledge but also develop a sense of responsibility toward the environment. Without such an approach, education remains limited to the transfer of knowledge, potentially

producing individuals who lack a meaningful understanding of their environmental responsibilities (Muhaimin, 2015). The concept of integrating environment-based character education into national education systems is crucial for fostering a generation that is environmentally conscious and behaviorally responsible toward nature (Berberoglu, 2015).

The application of environment-based learning models has been shown to significantly enhance students' connection to the environment, providing experiential learning opportunities where the environment serves as both a tool and a resource for education (Matitaputty et al., 2022). Such models aim to create an educational environment where students can develop a profound understanding of ecological systems through direct engagement with nature. Ecopedagogy, therefore, emerges as a vital pedagogical movement designed to cultivate individuals who are not only knowledgeable but also equipped with life skills that align with sustainable environmental practices (Kahn, 2010).

Ecopedagogy is more than just a curricular innovation; it is an academic movement that seeks to transform how students perceive their role in the world, encouraging them to adopt behaviors that promote ecological balance and conservation (Vioreza et al., 2022; Van der Beek & Lehmann (2024)). This pedagogical approach fosters critical thinking and empowers students to take ownership of their actions, ensuring that they recognize the interconnectedness of their choices with the broader ecological system (Wibowo, 2022). Researches by Nuryana & Sahrir (2021) and Sudaryat & Nurhadi (2024) further supports the idea that ecopedagogy encourages a shift from a traditional knowledge-based curriculum to one that incorporates environmental awareness and responsibility, enabling students to become active participants in sustainable development.

Moreover, the integration of ecopedagogy into formal education settings aligns with global efforts to achieve sustainable development goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 4 (Quality Education) and Goal 13 (Climate Action). By emphasizing the development of both cognitive and affective skills related to environmental issues, ecopedagogy helps to nurture a generation that is not only academically proficient but also environmentally literate and ethically motivated (Binasdevi et al., 2022).

In conclusion, the implementation of ecopedagogy in educational systems is essential to combat the ecological crises of the modern world. As an approach that blends environmental education with ethical and character development, ecopedagogy has the potential to create a generation that understands the impact of its actions on the planet and is motivated to act in ways that promote ecological sustainability. This movement is supported by extensive research and aligns with global educational goals aimed at fostering responsible, environmentally conscious citizens.

Several previous studies were used as references in this research. Among them is a research conducted by Hidayanti et al., (2018) examined the implementation of environmental education as part of a local curriculum in SDN Lowokwaru 2 Malang. The research focused on character development through eco-pedagogical content, exploring aspects such as the curriculum's objectives, content, learning resources, processes, and assessment. The study revealed that the eco-pedagogical approach significantly contributed to the development of students' environmental awareness and character. Similarly, Yunansah et al. (2020) analyzed the educational patterns at Sekolah Alam Bandung. The research explored how eco-pedagogical principles were integrated into the school's educational programs. The findings

highlighted the school's emphasis on humanization and the development of religiosity, which played a key role in shaping students' ecological awareness and ethical values.

Another relevant study by Yunansah & Herlambang (2017) explored ecopedagogy as a strategy for fostering ecological awareness and character development in elementary school students. The research demonstrated how an interdisciplinary, eco-pedagogical approach helped enrich students' knowledge and understanding of environmental issues, promoting both ecological consciousness and personal character development. Similarly, Yulianti (2014) examined the curriculum of SD Surya Buana Malang, focusing on its role in implementing character education at the primary school level. The study found that the integration of natural school principles into the curriculum effectively supported the development of students' character, with a particular emphasis on values related to environmental responsibility and sustainability.

This research is different from the four studies above. This research focuses on strengthening students' Islamic character education through ecopedagogic-based learning at Darul Huffadz primary School. This research is based on a field study which tries to examine the concept, the implementation of learning and the implications of ecopedagogics in strengthening natural school-based Islamic character education at Daarul Huffadz primary school. It is hoped that this research will be useful for the development of science, especially Islamic religious education. In particular, it is hoped that this research will be useful for government policy makers in making decisions so that it will produce wise decisions in designing new curricula in the future.

## **METHODS**

This research uses a qualitative approach with case studies. The qualitative research method is a research method that emphasizes analysis or descriptiveness. According to Rijali (2018), in qualitative research, conceptualization, categorization and description are developed on the basis of "events" obtained during field activities. Therefore, it is impossible to separate data collection and data analysis activities from each other. Therefore, qualitative methods prioritize observing phenomena and researching more into the substance of the meaning of these phenomena.

This research was conducted at the Daarul Huffadz Islamic Boarding School, specifically at the Sirampog primary school level, located in Sridadi Sirampog Village, Brebes Regency, Indonesia. The research was carried out over a period of approximately two months. The research subjects included teachers, the school principal, and students. The data collection procedures in this study involved three main techniques: interviews, observations, and documentation (Hasanah, 2017). The research involved in-depth interviews with three key informants: the Principal of Darul Huffadz Nature School, the Deputy Head of Curriculum, and the Homeroom Teacher of the third-grade class. These interviews aimed to gather insights into the implementation of the curriculum, teaching practices, and school management related to eco-pedagogy and environmental education. Observations were conducted during the third-grade learning activities, involving 28 students. These observations focused on how eco-pedagogical principles were applied in the classroom and how students engaged with environmental education through various learning activities. The documentation review included examining the school's curriculum, syllabus, and lesson plans.

This material was compared with the curriculum and teaching plans of other formal schools to assess the integration of eco-pedagogical content and environmental education practices.

The data analysis process followed a systematic approach based on the framework proposed by Miles & Huberman (2003). The steps included: (1) Data Reduction. In this phase, data collected through interviews, observations, and documentation were carefully sorted and summarized. The purpose was to identify key themes, patterns, and relevant information related to the research focus. (2) Data Display. After reducing the data, the key findings were organized and presented in a clear and coherent manner through data displays, such as tables, charts, and narrative summaries. This helped to visualize the results and facilitated further analysis. (3) Conclusion Drawing/Verification: Finally, conclusions were drawn from the displayed data. The conclusions were verified by comparing them with the initial research questions and objectives, ensuring that they accurately reflected the findings from the data collection and analysis processes. This systematic approach ensured a thorough and operationally grounded examination of the research subject, providing reliable insights into the application of eco-pedagogical principles in the Darul Huffadz Islamic Boarding School.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **The Concept of Ecopedagogics in Natural School-Based Islamic Character Education**

The foundation of the character education concept applied in ecopedagogical learning at Darul Huffadz primary school is characterized by 3 (three) core concepts: learning, worship and happiness. These three core concepts are the basic basis for character development through eco-pedagogy at the Darul Huffadz Sirampog primary school. According to Wakhidin, the head of Darul Huffadz Sirampog primary school, stated that; There are four pillars of coaching and developing students which are the main concepts in character building, namely:

*First*, moral development, this development is carried out through the habit of etiquette such as obeying the teacher and reciting prayers before doing something. Implementing these morals is done every day through a habituation model at the beginning of school, break time, after midday prayers and after school. Apart from that, children are also taught directly to experience what it's like to be in the bathroom, when eating, when in class, the office and other places they usually visit.

*Second*, leadership coaching, coaching carried out through leadership approaches such as rhetoric and responsibility for tasks. Students' leadership spirit is taught through routine Outbound extracurricular activities. One way to shape students' leadership spirit is through outbound activities which are carried out regularly every month.

*Third*, development of logic and scientific thinking. This development is carried out through enrichment and direct research during "*tadabur alam*" (reflection on nature). In implementing this coaching, students are taught to directly experience, for example, the process of converting heat to steam, so children will immediately practice boiling water. Likewise with other materials, students are invited to understand logic straight away.

*Fourth*, entrepreneurship coaching, coaching carried out through various entrepreneurial activities. Entrepreneurship at this school is implemented in routine extracurricular entrepreneurship activities, because one way to form students' entrepreneurial spirit is by

teaching entrepreneurial activities which are carried out regularly every month (The result of interview with the head of school, October 24, 2022).

In implementing the 4 forms of guidance above, in the eco-pedagogic concept, this school utilizes the surrounding natural resources for student learning such as: farms, plantations, markets, and other resources around the school environment which are utilized as fully as possible as a medium for student learning. In an effort to introduce local wisdom, there are SOP (standard operating procedures) that students must carry out in each activity (The result of interview with the head of school, October 24, 2022).

The aim of the ecopedagogical concept in nature school-based character education which is implemented in Darul Huffadz primary school is to prepare students to face life in the future, namely to become a generation with good morals. Therefore, it is not surprising that in the main concept of education that is applied, the affective domain are prioritized, then the cognitive and skills one.

Learning planning is carried out through two core aspects, namely the effectiveness aspect (achievement) and the literacy aspect (library). To fulfill these two aspects, the school uses a habituation approach in each subject, so that students do not feel like they are learning but rather as if they are learning while playing. Apart from habituation approach, before and after learning, students are required to read a book for the first 10 minutes every day with a different book title.

Meanwhile, ecopedagogical learning methods in nature school-based character education that are often applied include: 1) *tahfid* method. This method is implemented through the habit of reading the holy verses of the al-Qur'an before learning begins. The implementation of the *tahfid* method in this school is directed as a means of studying the holy verses of the al-Qur'an with reasoning for students, linked to existing learning; 2) study tour. Learning while playing is the main habit carried out at the Darul Huffadz Sirampog natural school. This study tour method involves visiting a place to search for information according to a theme. The core activities of a study tour include observing, taking notes, conveying and asking questions. The results of this series of learning activities aim to enable students to communicate important values from the results of student questions and answers with resource persons; 3) experience method. It is a learning method that is carried out by means of students experiencing firsthand what real learning is like, as well as the application of character education which is prioritized. This activity is more about getting used to wise attitudes towards the environment, society and parents. The experiential method invites students to participate in experiencing what happens in social interactions. This is in line with the explanation of one of the class 5 homeroom teachers, that: "The educational concept applied is based on the natural environment at school using experiential methods. This means that students can experience an event that can be used as material. So we don't focus on existing material, which is in accordance with the book or syllabus. Learning is directed at everyday events or occurrences that can be studied as learning material, for example rain. Students immediately learn what rain is? How to? is it raining? Who created rain? How do believers behave when it rains? What kind of prayer? They immediately analyzed the material about rain with their teacher. "This series of events is an experiential process applied to ecopedagogical concepts in schools" (the result of interview with the class 5 homeroom teachers, October 24, 2022).

## **The Application of Ecopedagogic-Based Learning Models at Daarul Huffadz Primary School**

### **Management of learning implementation**

Darul Huffadz Sirampog Nature School manages teaching staff and divides them into two categories: teachers and mentors. Teachers are tasked with providing learning according to scientific competence, while mentors are taken from Islamic boarding school graduates whose task is to accompany teachers in carrying out learning in the classroom and in nature. Other mentor duties include; supervise, and assist teachers in student practice and memorization. Apart from that, they also have the task of looking at the contents of an independent curriculum that is suitable for collaboration with the other two curricula (*tahfid* curriculum and natural school curriculum). This explanation was confirmed by an explanation from the school principal: "In managing learning, we have a plan: from class 1 to class 6, in the field of *tahfid*, students must have a minimum of 5 juz. The 5 juz include grades 1 and 2 with more emphasis on students being able to read and write the Koran then memorizing Juz 30, class 3 memorizing juz 29, class 4 memorizing juz 28, and classes 5 and 6 memorizing juz 1 and 2. Meanwhile "Teacher management, we divide it into *tahfid* teachers themselves, class teachers themselves with the help of mentors" (The result of interview with the head of school, October 24, 2022).

Ecopedagogical learning management at Darul Huffadz primary school is not much different from other learning management. The point of difference is in the students' habituation of character values or manners to their parents. The noble achievements in assessing students' attitudes are reflected in their daily activities.

### **Stages of implementing learning**

There are three core stages of implementing natural school learning Daarul Huffadz primary school as follows:

The initial stages of learning are activities carried out before entering the core learning activities. Once students arrive at school, literacy-friendly activities become the initial learning activity. Students are required to read books in the form of Islamic story texts with characters from grade 2 to grade 6. This activity aims to make students familiar with literacy and understand the importance of reading books. Literacy-friendly activities are carried out in each class with tutor assistance. Next, pray Dhuha in congregation. Students in grades 1 to 4 perform Dhuha prayers in their respective classes guided by their respective homeroom teachers, while students in grades 5 and 6 perform Dhuha prayers in the prayer room and are no longer accompanied by the homeroom teacher. After students perform the Dhuha prayer in congregation, they gather in their respective classes and perform muroja'ah (repeat) memorizing letters, hadith and prayers.

Core stage of learning. At this stage, teachers not only carry out learning in the classroom, but teachers and tutors also provide a lot of learning outside the classroom, both in the school environment and outside the school environment. For in-class and out-of-class learning, teachers and tutors will scan first to ensure students are ready with their respective learning equipment and sitting neatly on the carpet.

The learning model used in Darul Huffadz Sirampog natural school is the grouping model. The grouping model is a learning model that divides students based on criteria and

groups according to expertise. In the grouping model, one teacher accommodates 10 students and one tutor accommodates 20 students. The learning methods that are often used are the *halaqoh* method, comparative studies, *tadabbur alam*, educational games, and entrepreneurship, while the media and tools used are materials found in the surrounding environment.

Meanwhile, at the final stage of each lesson, teachers and tutors evaluate the learning delivered. The teacher provides motivation and statements to all students. Apart from that, the teacher provides a kind of question sheet for students to answer. The answer sheet given by the teacher consists of questions, observations and class projects. Sequentially, the stages of learning habituation at Darul Huffadz Sirampog natural school are related to each other. In general, the school management system is very good at supporting the achievement of targeted and planned goals and achievements.

### **Advantages of the learning management system**

There are several main things that are advantages in the Darul Huffadz Sirampog natural school management system, including: 1) the basic concept of learning offered by the school is in accordance with national education goals. Learning while worshipping is a spiritual foundation that educates students to practice the commandments of Islamic teachings by learning congregational prayers, reciting and memorizing the holy Qur'an, doing good deeds, being helpful and filial to parents, with fun learning in natural environment; 2) the development of learning models and methods from the results of a comparison of three curricula which include the independent learning curriculum, the *tahfidz* curriculum and the natural school curriculum, makes this school accommodate multicultural learning models; 3) a curriculum system that integrates four aspects of moral, logical or scientific development, leadership and entrepreneurship together in every learning pattern is a value of excellence for Darul Huffadz Sirampog primary school; 4) the management system is stable and runs consistently but remains flexible in accordance with developments in the needs and conditions of the school and students, so that the system is flexible and tends to be easy for the relevant parties to adapt; 5) the planning, organizing, actuating and controlling processes have been running regularly in accordance with patterns and directions that have been mutually agreed upon by all levels of school management; 6) an education system that prioritizes the development of students' morals and morals is an added value for Darul Huffadz Sirampog primary school to increase its competitiveness with other schools, because basically there are currently no schools that have a commitment to prioritizing the development of students' morals and morals rather than just prioritizing the development of intelligence or logic only; 7) educational programs are arranged in periodic programs ranging from yearly, semester, monthly, weekly and daily. This is an added value for Darul Huffadz primary school, namely being able to plan educational programs ranging from long, medium and short term in detail, directed and sustainable, so that implementation can be more controlled according to the planning of each program.

### **Assessment and evaluation of learning**

Learning assessment focuses on assessing students' affective (behavioral) domains. Rewards are given at the end of the semester as a substitute for rankings 1 to 10. These rewards include the best *tahfid* reward, mutual cooperation reward, environmental cleanliness reward and various other rewards depending on the appreciation needs of each student. This is



reinforced by the statement of the class 3 teacher: "I don't think all children are born cognitively intelligent, at the end of the year there will definitely be a distribution of prizes, not to the children who get the ranking, but to those who get the ranking. with the best *tahfid*, the best morals, the best cleanliness, the best cleanliness, the best help and so on according to class needs. We do not consider the value of numbers to be more important, but we look at the value of social intelligence and everyday attitudes because every child has a different character. So that children should not underestimate other people because of their intelligence" (The result of interview with the class 3 homeroom teachers, October 24, 2022).

### **The Implications of Ecopedagogics in Strengthening Natural School-Based Islamic Character Education at Daarul Huffadz Primary School**

As an Islamic character education based on natural schools, the expected outcomes of ecopedagogical learning are of course directed at Affective assessment (good morals and faith), as an evaluation of graduation and the self-confidence that emerges in each individual student. Meanwhile, according to the deputy head of curriculum at the school, there are 8 main pillars of character which serve as a reference for student achievement, namely: a) love for Allah SWT and truth, including: trust, discipline and independence. The core teaching in every religious study is to introduce an attitude of love for the creator of life, of course, in different ways and implementations. In this case, the implementation of loving Allah SWT, as a stage of teaching trustworthiness, discipline and independence, includes; learning to know friends, parents and His creation and helping each other; b) responsibility. An attitude of responsibility is one of the noble attitudes that must exist in every student. Implementing this attitude includes getting used to keeping the environment clean and carrying out tasks given by teachers and tutors; c) respectful and polite. Implementation of indicators of respect and politeness includes the habit of mutually respecting fellow students and not insulting or ridiculing other students' shortcomings. Be polite to teachers and parents by getting into the habit of regularly greeting each other before and after learning, as well as respecting each other; d) affection. The basic view of natural school education at Darul Huffadz Sirampog primary school is that all students are special, there are no boundaries in social life, all are equal so that they become one complete unit, through the character of mutual love and giving between breaks; e) caring and cooperation, including creativity, self-confidence, and never giving up. There is superior material in the local school curriculum, namely entrepreneurship. This entrepreneurial activity is a form of effort to develop a pattern of cooperation in completing the task of creating work that is useful for the environment. Entrepreneurship requires students to always be confident and never give up in achieving their desires in the future. Through this activity, students are trained to be creative and empower themselves and their environment; f) fair attitude and leadership spirit. These two attitudes are honed through natural tadabur or outbound activities, namely learning activities outside nature by exploring the natural surroundings. Natural tadabur is one of the learning methods that is often implemented in natural schools, namely the teacher divides the class into several groups, in one group there is a team leader who is appointed by other students. The leader of this group alternates every week. From here, students learn how to be fair and have good leadership skills; g) kind and humble. The noble attitude reflected in students is a kind and humble attitude towards others. Habits that are often carried out through daily activities require all

students to behave well; h) tolerant and peace loving. Tolerance is an open attitude in facing differences. It contains an attitude of mutual respect for each person's existence. In a tolerant life, balance in life takes priority. Diversity is not positioned as a threat, but instead becomes an opportunity for positive synergy. This attitude is reflected in students' daily habits as a form of mutual love and care (The result of interview with the class 5 homeroom teachers, October 24, 2022).

The eight learning outcomes mentioned above are carried out through habituation carrying out various daily activities with a predetermined time allocation, such as; Monday-Thursday through reading *sirah nabawiyah* (story telling), explaining the urgency of monotheism, kinds of good behaviors, and morality activities. By prioritizing good habits, students are accustomed to behaving politely towards fellow students and teachers, helping each other, respecting each other and being tolerant of differences. Students are also accustomed to practicing worship and reading daily prayers: prayers when riding in vehicles, prayers before and after eating, prayers for parents, etc.

In the implementation of ecopedagogy for Islamic character education based on Natural Schools, of course, many problems arise, such as there are students who cannot read, there are also those who have physical limitations, there are parents who misunderstand that natural schools are only for playing, there are state schools that feel competitive in participating in religious competitions, as well as payment problems. In resolving this problem, the principal said that: "the school's efforts to overcome this problem have been carried out through parenting activities carried out every 3 months, bringing in parenting experts, monthly meetings and teaching, monthly home visits, strengthening literacy of students, parents and teachers inside and outside the classroom, and collaboration with various agencies".

Ecopedagogy, as a learning approach, is supported by critical theory and pedagogy (Supriatna, 2016). Based on previous research, ecopedagogical education builds critical awareness and develops students' character by fostering an understanding of their relationship with nature, which is manifested through responsible behavior toward the environment. (Yunansah & Herlambang, 2017; Wibowo, 2022). The implementation of ecopedagogy in character education at Darul Huffadz Primary School focuses on aligning students with these values while simultaneously integrating the Islamic educational framework, particularly through the Tahfid and natural school curricula. This alignment ensures that students not only learn about ecological principles but also internalize Islamic values, such as trustworthiness, responsibility, and compassion.

The results of this study indicate that the combination of the tahfid curriculum (memorizing the Qur'an) and the natural school curriculum enhances the students' ecological awareness and moral development. These results support the findings of Yunansah & Herlambang (2017); Supriatna (2016); Nabilah et al. (2023) who argue that ecopedagogy promotes both ecological literacy and character development. However, this study also diverges from traditional models by incorporating religious education, showing that Islamic values can enrich ecopedagogical approaches. As discussed in Muawwanah & Darmiyanti (2022), the integration of Islamic character education aligns with the noble moral values taught in the Qur'an, such as trust (*amanah*), truth (*siddiq*), and wisdom (*fathonah*), which deepen students' sense of responsibility toward the environment and society.

Furthermore, the ecopedagogical model applied at Darul Huffadz introduces four main teaching systems: (1) addressing social and environmental issues, (2) fostering awareness of the environment, (3) translating knowledge into social action, and (4) teaching sustainable interconnections. These findings are consistent with Sang's (2013); Fadjarajani & As'ari (2021) framework on ecopedagogy but also reflect unique cultural adaptations, as the curriculum emphasizes both ecological and moral development. The results indicate that while the environmental education process is essential, the integration of Islamic ethical teachings provides an additional layer of depth in shaping students' character. This interpretation is supported by Muhaimin (2014), who stresses that without integrating ecological awareness with character education, students may lack true responsibility toward the environment.

The implementation of ecopedagogy at Darul Huffadz Primary School is further validated by the importance of community and family involvement in the learning process. The school's emphasis on affective values—such as mutual help, environmental cleanliness, and leadership—supports the findings of Matitaputty et al. (2022), who also emphasize the importance of learning beyond the classroom. Our study confirms that ecopedagogical principles, when combined with local cultural and religious values, provide a holistic approach to student development.

The results of this research demonstrate that ecopedagogy, particularly when integrated with Islamic character education, fosters both ecological literacy and moral development. This approach, focusing on the interconnection between humans and their environment, is consistent with previous research (e.g., Supriatna, 2016; Yunansah & Herlambang, 2017) but also introduces the novel contribution of Islamic moral principles to ecopedagogical education. These findings suggest that the Darul Huffadz model can be adapted to other contexts, enhancing both ecological and moral education in schools.

## **CONCLUSION**

The application of ecopedagogy in character education at Darul Huffadz Primary School integrates Islamic values, environmental awareness, and moral development into a cohesive educational system. This approach combines formal education, Qur'anic memorization, and nature-based learning to cultivate students' ethical character, leadership skills, scientific thinking, and entrepreneurial spirit. Emphasizing affective values over cognitive achievements, ecopedagogy fosters students' noble character, self-confidence, and social responsibility. The development of ecopedagogical education demonstrates its potential to shape individuals who are not only academically capable but also possess strong moral integrity and environmental consciousness.

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