



The Transformation of Ecosufistic Values in Character Education at SMPIT Al Uswah Tuban: A Field Study Inspired by Jalaluddin Rumi's *Matsnawi*

Muhammad Romadlon Habibullah¹, Hamidatun Nihayah², Ana Rahmawati³,
Moh shahid bin mohd saufi⁴

^{1,2}Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Sunan Giri, Indonesia, ³Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Jepara, Indonesia, ⁴University Teknologi Mara, Malasyia

Email: ¹roma@unugiri.ac.id, ²neha@sunan-giri.ac.id,

³anarahmawati@unisnu.ac.id, ⁴azimsaufi@uitm.edu.my

Abstract

This study aims to explore how ecosufistic values found in *Matsnawi* are transformed into character education practices at SMPIT Al Uswah Tuban. The study adopts a qualitative interpretive approach with a descriptive-exploratory design. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and documentation, then analyzed thematically using an educational hermeneutic framework to interpret the school's implementation of ecosufistic values. Findings indicate that core ecosufistic principles such as harmony between humans and nature, ontological unity of all creation, and ecological balance are embedded within the school's spiritual routines, teacher modeling, and reflective learning processes. The use of *Matsnawi*'s narratives and symbols enhances students' ecological awareness and fosters a spiritually grounded transformation of character. This study has an impact on the development of an Islamic character-education model based on ecosufism that is not only spiritually meaningful but also pedagogically relevant for addressing today's ecological challenges. In addition, it provides practical contributions for curriculum developers, educators, and policymakers to integrate classical Islamic texts as a profound source of ecological ethics, thereby fostering sustainable ecological awareness among younger generations.

Keywords: Ecosufism, Islamic Character Education, *Matsnawi*, Sufistic Pedagogy, Ecological Ethics, Spiritual Ecology

Abstrak

. Penelitian ini berujuan untuk mengeksplorasi bagaimana nilai-nilai ekosufisme yang terdapat dalam Matsnawi ditransformasikan dalam praktik pendidikan karakter di SMPIT Al Usrah Tuban. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif interpretatif dengan desain deskriptif-eksploratif. Teknik pengumpulan data meliputi wawancara mendalam, observasi partisipatif, dan studi dokumentasi. Data dianalisis secara tematik menggunakan pendekatan hermeneutika pendidikan untuk menginterpretasi praktik sekolah dalam menginternalisasi nilai-nilai ekosufisme. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa prinsip-prinsip ekosufisme seperti harmoni antara manusia dan alam, kesatuan eksistensial ciptaan, dan keseimbangan ekosistem telah terintegrasi dalam kegiatan pembiasaan spiritual, keteladanan guru, serta praktik reflektif dalam proses pembelajaran. Pemanfaatan narasi dan simbol dari Matsnawi memperkuat kesadaran ekologis siswa yang bersifat transformatif dan spiritual. Penelitian ini berdampak pada pengembangan model pendidikan karakter Islam berbasis ekosufisme yang tidak hanya bermakna secara spiritual tetapi juga relevan secara pedagogis untuk menghadapi tantangan ekologis masa kini. Selain itu, penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi praktis bagi pengembangan kurikulum, pendidikan, dan pembuatan kebijakan untuk mengintegrasikan teks-teks klasik Islam sebagai sumber etika ekologis yang mendalam, sehingga dapat membentuk kesadaran ekologis generasi muda secara berkelanjutan.

Kata Kunci: Ekosufisme, pendidikan karakter, Matsnawi, pedagogi sufistik, ekopedagogi Islam, spiritualitas lingkungan

Introduction

The current global environmental crisis is not merely ecological in nature, but also reflects a deeper spiritual and moral crisis within human civilization.¹ Phenomena such as global warming, deforestation, pollution, and ecosystem degradation have occurred alongside the decline of collective ethics and the increasing alienation of humanity from nature.² This reality indicates that environmental problems cannot be solved solely through technological and policy interventions, but rather require a more profound transformation of human consciousness, particularly in regard to humanity's spiritual relationship with the universe.

In this context, various scholars have suggested that ecological education should not be grounded solely in scientific knowledge, but must

¹ Abdul Quddus, "Ecotheology Islam: Teologi Konstruktif Atasi Krisis Lingkungan," *Ulumuna* 16, no. 2 (2017), <https://doi.org/10.20414/ujis.v16i2.181>.

² Jacobus Samidjo and Yohanes Suharso, "Memahami Pemanasan Global Dan Perubahan Iklim," *Jurnal Pawiyatan* 24, no. 2 (2017).

also be rooted in spirituality and cultural value systems that shape the way humans interact with the natural world.³ Amidst the dominance of modern anthropocentric worldviews, transcendental approaches that integrate ethical, spiritual, and cosmological dimensions are increasingly relevant, especially in the field of character education.

Islam, as a religion with a rich intellectual and spiritual tradition, offers profound teachings on the human-nature relationship.⁴ Among these is the tradition of *tasawuf* (Sufism), which emphasizes inner awareness, love for creation, and cosmic harmony. In this context, Jalaluddin Rumi emerges as a central figure who articulates an ecosentric vision within Islam through his seminal work, *Matsnawi*. This work is not only regarded as a poetic masterpiece but also as a spiritual reflection on life and the existence of all beings.⁵

Matsnawi conveys ecological teachings in a non-dogmatic manner.⁶ Through symbols, animal parables, stories of prophets, and Qur'anic events, Rumi offers insights into the unity of the cosmos, the fragility of life, and the need for compassion toward all beings. The allegorical and contemplative nature of the text makes it a potent medium for spiritual and ecological learning, capable of fostering deep reflection in students.⁷

At least three key ecosufistic themes can be identified in *Matsnawi*: (1) the harmony between humans and nature, as seen in Volume 3, Line 2995: "This earth is not yours; you are only a guest here"; (2) cosmic unity, such as in Volume 6, Line 3502: "The rose and the thorn come from the same garden"; and (3) ecological balance, illustrated in Volume 6, Lines 3924–3925: "Do not

³ D W Orr, *Earth in Mind: On Education, Environment, and the Human Prospect* (Washington, DC: Island Press, 2004).54

⁴ S Siswanto, "Islam Dan Pelestarian Lingkungan Hidup: Mengagas Pendidikan Islam Berwawasan Lingkungan," *KARSA: Journal of Social and Islamic Culture* 14, no. 2 (n.d.): 81–90.

⁵ Akmal Rizki Gunawan Hasibuan and Alya Anjani, "Nilai-Nilai Pendidikan Karakter Dalam Kitab Fihi Ma Fihi Dan Matsnawi Karya Jalaluddin Rumi," *Ta'dibuna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 12, no. 1 (2023), <https://doi.org/10.32832/tadibuna.v12i1.8833>.

⁶ M. Maulana Marsudi, "Tasawuf Jalaluddin Ar-Rumi Perspektif Annemarie Schimmel," *Al-Hikmah* 3, no. 1 (2017).

⁷ Raid Al Daghistani, "Seyyed Hossein Nasr: »Man and Nature. The Spiritual Crisis in Modern Man«," in *Welt – Umwelt – Mitwelt*, 2022, 78, <https://doi.org/10.5771/978349599493-187>.

kill the birds in the garden, for the garden and the birds need each other.” These verses suggest that *Matsnawi* does not speak only of divine love, but also articulates a profound spiritual ecology.⁸

Despite its rich ethical and ecological content, *Matsnawi* has not yet been widely utilized as a source for Islamic education, particularly in the context of character development based on spiritual ecology. Islamic character education remains largely normative, focusing on memorization and compliance, but often fails to reach the depths of inner awareness and holistic relationships between humans and the cosmos.⁹

Several theoretical studies on Islamic environmental ethics—such as those by Afshar and Rahimi (2020) and Foltz (2003)—have emphasized the significance of incorporating Sufi values into ecological education.¹⁰ However, these works rarely examine how classical Sufi texts, particularly *Matsnawi*, can be applied within real-world educational practices. Interestingly, the narrative and reflective style inherent in Sufi literature aligns well with humanistic and spiritual approaches in character education, making it a valuable yet underexplored pedagogical resource.

This is where the concept of sufistic ecopedagogy offers a meaningful theoretical framework. It blends key Sufi principles such as *mahabbah* (divine love), *zuhd* (asceticism), and *ittihad* (unity with the Divine) with spiritual-ecological values like simplicity, reverence for nature, and an awareness of existential interconnectedness¹¹. Rather than merely enriching environmental discourse, this integrative model deepens the spiritual dimensions of Islamic character education.

⁸ Maulana Jalaluddin Rumi, *Terjemahan Bahasa Indonesia Dari Karya Agung Maulana Jalaluddin Rumi Matsnawi-Ye Ma’navi* (Yogyakarta: DIVA PRESS, 2021).

⁹ D Sukmawati, I.G.A.M. Sari, and M Abdullah, “Problematika Implementasi Pendidikan Karakter Pada Sekolah Menengah Di Indonesia,” *Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan* 26, no. 2 (n.d.): 122–134, <https://doi.org/10.17977/um048v26i2p122>.

¹⁰ H Afshar and S Rahimi, “Integrating Islamic Environmental Ethics into Educational Systems: A Sufi Perspective,” *Religions* 11, no. 3 (n.d.): 143, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel11030143>.

¹¹ A Mahmoudi and N Aziz, “Environmental Ethics in Sufi Traditions: Reconsidering the Concept of Human–Nature Relationship,” *Environmental Values* 31, no. 1 (n.d.): 65–83, <https://doi.org/10.3197/096327122X16406181897712>.

From a methodological standpoint, hermeneutic pedagogy as developed by Gadamer (1989) becomes highly relevant. In this approach, classical texts such as *Matsnawi* are not treated as rigid dogma, but as dialogical spaces open to personal interpretation. Within the classroom, the teacher acts as a facilitator of meaning, while learners become active interpreters drawing ethical insight from narratives, reflective encounters, and life experiences.¹²

Despite its pedagogical potential, empirical studies on how ecosufistic values in *Matsnawi* are implemented in Islamic educational settings remain limited. This gap is especially critical in the Indonesian context, where Sufi traditions have deep cultural roots and where the development of a contextual and transformative character education model is increasingly urgent.

This study aims to explore how ecosufistic values embedded in *Matsnawi* are translated into actual character education practices at SMPIT Al Uswah Tuban. This school presents an important case due to its emphasis on spiritual habituation, environmental concern, and narrative-based literacy as integral components of Islamic character formation. The research focuses on how values such as *mahabbah kauniyyah* (cosmic love), ecological asceticism, and ecological monotheism are enacted through exemplary behavior, symbolic practice, and institutional culture.

By exploring real practices in schools, this study contributes to the development of an Islamic character-education model based on ecological Sufism while also opening a pathway for reinterpreting classical Islamic texts such as *Matsnawi* within the context of modern education. This represents the primary novelty of the study: repositioning *Matsnawi* not only as a spiritual work but also as an epistemic and pedagogical foundation for Islamic education that fosters ecological awareness and transformative spirituality.

Although previous studies have emphasized the importance of integrating Sufi values into environmental education.¹³ they have generally remained theoretical and conceptual without examining their

¹² H.-G. Gadamer, ed., *Truth and Method*, 2nd ed. (New York, NY: Continuum, n.d.).

¹³ Frederick Foltz, Richard, *Islam and Ecology: A Bestowed Trust*. (Cambridge, 2023).

implementation in educational institutions. This study takes a different position by combining a semiotic analysis of *Matsnawi* with an empirical investigation of the application of ecosufistic values at SMPIT Al Usrah Tuban. In doing so, it not only views *Matsnawi* as a spiritual text but also traces how its symbols, signs, and values are internalized through spiritual habituation, teacher modelling, and school culture bridging the gap between theoretical discourse and practical application, and producing a contextual, transformative, and relevant Islamic character-education model to address today's ecological challenges.

Method

This study employed a qualitative interpretive approach, aiming to uncover the meaning behind the transformation of ecosufistic values in character education inspired by *Matsnawi*. Such an approach allowed the researcher to deeply interpret the lived experiences, narratives, and symbolic expressions embedded in the educational practices at SMPIT Al Usrah Tuban.¹⁴ Methodologically, the study was designed as descriptive-exploratory, as it sought to provide a detailed account of how ecosufistic values are instilled through daily school activities. Theoretical frameworks underpinning this study included sufistic ecopedagogy and educational hermeneutics (Gadamer, 1989), both of which view learners as active spiritual agents engaged in the co-construction of meaning and character.¹⁵

Primary and secondary data were utilized. Primary data were gathered through in-depth interviews with the school principal, Islamic education teachers, literacy educators, and students involved in spiritual and ecological programs. Participants were selected through purposive sampling based on their direct engagement in value formation processes. Secondary data included internal school documents, such as lesson plans, religious and environmental activity manuals, student reflection journals, and excerpts

¹⁴ N K Denzin and Y S Lincoln, *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 4th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2011).

¹⁵ Mahmoudi and Aziz, "Environmental Ethics in Sufi Traditions: Reconsidering the Concept of Human–Nature Relationship."

from the school's morning literacy sessions. This triangulated data strategy was employed to enrich contextual depth and ensure interpretive rigor.¹⁶

Three key techniques were used in the data collection process: (1) semi-structured interviews, aimed at eliciting teachers' and students' spiritual experiences and reflections on values found in *Matsnawi*; (2) participant observation, to closely examine daily practices that embody values such as *mahabbah kauniyyah* and ecological asceticism; and (3) document analysis, focusing on school materials and Sufi texts used in literacy or reflective activities. This multi-method approach was adopted to maximize the richness and contextual accuracy of the data.¹⁷

Data were analyzed using thematic analysis following the six-phase model by Braun and Clarke (2006): (1) data familiarization, (2) initial coding, (3) theme generation, (4) theme review, (5) theme definition and naming, and (6) report writing. Core themes such as cosmic unity, human-nature harmony, and ecological balance were identified through recurring patterns in narratives and practices, then interpreted hermeneutically in relation to relevant verses from *Matsnawi*. This approach enabled a dialogical understanding between text and context. In the Results and Discussion section, this thematic analysis was operationalized by coding participants' statements and school documents, grouping them into the core themes above, reviewing the coherence of each theme with theoretical constructs, and presenting them as structured sub-sections that integrate empirical findings with hermeneutical interpretation.¹⁸

To ensure validity and trustworthiness, the study employed triangulation across data sources, collection techniques, and theoretical perspectives (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).¹⁹ Findings were validated through member checking, in which key informants confirmed the accuracy of the

¹⁶ Creswell, *Research Design Pendekatan Kualitatif, Kuantitatif Dan Mixed*, Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2013.

¹⁷ M Q Patton, *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*, 3rd ed. (Sage Publications, 2002).

¹⁸ S Gallagher, *Hermeneutics and Education* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2022).

¹⁹ Feny Rita Fiantika et al., *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*, Rake Sarasin, 2022.

analysis. An audit trail was also maintained to document the logical process at each stage of the research. Furthermore, the study utilized thick description (Geertz, 1973) to richly convey contextual and interpretive details, allowing readers to grasp how the transformation of values unfolded as a living spiritual experience within the school's educational practices.

Result And Discussion

MTs Yanbu'ul Qur'an 2 Muria Kudus as an Adiwiyata Madrasa

The concept of ecosufism emerges from the Sufi worldview that regards nature not merely as material substance but as a spiritual entity.²⁰ In Jalaluddin Rumi's thought, every element of the natural world is a manifestation of the Divine Being (*wahdat al-wujud*), and thus possesses intrinsic value.²¹ This view aligns with the notion of ecological monotheism (*tauhid ekologis*), which understands nature as a unified creation of God that is inseparable from human spirituality.²² According to Chittick (2000), Sufism perceives the world as a collection of *ayat* signs of the Divine that should be contemplated rather than exploited.²³ Therefore, environmental degradation is essentially a reflection of humanity's spiritual disconnection from its metaphysical roots.

The ecosufistic vision embedded in Rumi's *Matsnawi* offers not only a spiritual interpretation of nature from an Islamic perspective, but also an ethical and pedagogical foundation for cultivating transcendent ecological consciousness.²⁴ As a deeply allegorical and symbolic poetic work, *Matsnawi* conveys narratives that teach human-nature harmony, emphasize the unity of all beings, and call for the maintenance of ecological balance. In Rumi's

²⁰ Fransiskus Suryo Adi, "Ekosufisme Dan Etika Lingkungan" (Universitas Gadjah Mada, 2021).

²¹ Hasibuan and Anjani, "Nilai-Nilai Pendidikan Karakter Dalam Kitab Fihi Ma Fihi Dan Matsnawi Karya Jalaluddin Rumi."

²² S H Nasr, *The Need for a Sacred Science* (SUNY Press, 2013).

²³ W C Chittick, "Sufism and Environmental Responsibility," *CrossCurrents* 50, no. 3 (n.d.): 488–502.

²⁴ R A Nicholson, *The Mathnawi of Jalaluddin Rumi*, trans. Trans.), vol. Vols. 1–6 (London: E.J.W. Gibb Memorial Trust, 1926).6

spiritual tradition, nature is viewed not as inert matter to be consumed, but as a living reality that maintains a cosmic relationship with humanity.²⁵

Rumi's use of animals, trees, wind, water, and birds as spiritual interlocutors reflects a pedagogical approach that speaks directly to the soul. For instance, in Volume 3, Line 2995 of *Matsnawi*, he writes:

"This land is not yours; you are merely a guest here. The source of your life is the spring and the green trees. If you burn the trees, you burn the very spring of your own life" (Rumi, trans. Nicholson, 1926, Vol. III, p. 145).²⁶

This passage underscores that harming nature is a betrayal of life itself. Here lies the central principle of ecosufism: environmental stewardship is a spiritual imperative, not merely an ethical recommendation. Indifference to nature reflects a rupture in one's relationship with the Divine. Within *Matsnawi*, ecology and theology are not separate, but deeply integrated within a profound Sufi cosmology.

Three recurring ecosufistic principles drawn from *Matsnawi* and used as the analytical foundation of this study are: (1) Harmony between humans and nature, highlighting the idea that humans are part of a larger cosmic system requiring balance and care; (2) Ecological unity (*wahdat al-wujud ekologis*), affirming that all creatures are spiritually interconnected; and (3) Ecosystem balance, positing that every being has a purpose, and ecological harmony must be preserved to avoid both cosmic and spiritual disarray.²⁷

The interpretive engagement with *Matsnawi* suggests that nature-based spirituality can serve as a viable framework for character education. This theoretical insight was examined through a field study conducted at SMPIT Al Usrah Tuban. Although the school does not explicitly employ ecosufism as a formal framework, its daily practices through spiritual routines, role modeling, and reflective pedagogy demonstrate a lived internalization of these values.

²⁵ Chittick, "Sufism and Environmental Responsibility."

²⁶ Nicholson, *The Mathnawi of Jalaluddin Rumi*.145

²⁷ Mahmoudi and Aziz, "Environmental Ethics in Sufi Traditions: Reconsidering the Concept of Human–Nature Relationship."

This section analyzes the significance of the research findings through the lens of sufistic ecopedagogy and educational hermeneutics, emphasizing how the ecosufistic values in *Matsnawi* are practically translated into the context of Islamic character education at SMPIT Al Uswah Tuban. The study contributes to contemporary Islamic education discourse by positioning classical Sufi texts as sources of reflective and transformative ecological values—redefining *Matsnawi* not only as a spiritual classic, but also as a foundational epistemic and pedagogical resource.

The first major finding relates to the harmony between humans and nature. A verse from *Matsnawi* reads, “This land is not yours; you are merely a guest here. The source of your life is the spring and the green trees. If you burn the green trees, you have burned the spring of your life”.²⁸ This verse is not merely ethical advice; it serves as a philosophical foundation for spiritual ecological consciousness. At SMPIT Al Uswah Tuban, this value is manifested through the *Tafakur Alam* (Nature Contemplation) program, which encourages students to reflect spiritually on the natural world. This aligns with Nasr’s (2013) view that nature is a living sign (*ayat*) of God, and preserving it constitutes an act of worship.²⁹ The Qur'an also affirms this in Surah Al-A'raf [7]: 56: “And do not cause corruption upon the earth after it has been set in order.”³⁰

This program functions not only as a routine activity but also as a medium for internalizing values. In students’ daily reflections, many link their spiritual experiences to natural elements such as sunlight, cool breezes, and the sound of rainfall. This supports Palmer’s (1998) argument that direct, affective experiences with nature can nurture authentic ecological awareness.³¹

The second finding highlights the idea of cosmic unity. In *Matsnawi*, Volume 6, Line 3502, Rumi writes: “The rose and the thorn come from the

²⁸ Nicholson, *The Mathnawi of Jalaluddin Rumi*, Vol. III. 2995

²⁹ Seyyed Hossein ï Nasr, *Man in The Universe; The Islamic View* (London: Longman, n.d.).

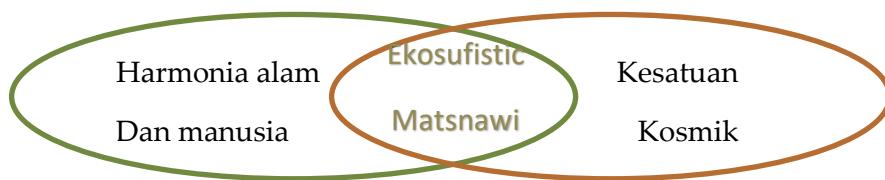
³⁰ Terjemah Kemenag, *Terjemah Al Qur'an* (Jakarta: Kemenag RI, 2019).

³¹ P J Palmer, *The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1998).

same garden.”³² This poetic insight reflects the principle of ecological monotheism, emphasizing that all beings are interconnected in one divine system. This corresponds with Chittick’s (2000) interpretation that Sufi metaphysics sees the universe as a network of interrelated meanings.³³ The Qur'an similarly cautions in Surah Al-An'am [6]: 141: “And do not be excessive. Indeed, Allah does not like those who commit excess.”³⁴

At SMPIT Al Uswah, this principle is realized through interdisciplinary teaching. For instance, science teachers contextualize photosynthesis not only as a biological process but also as a divine miracle manifesting God's attribute of Ar-Razzaq (The Sustainer). This reinforces the notion that life processes are not mechanistic but deeply spiritual. Capra and Luisi (2014) further argue that understanding systemic interconnectivity is foundational for ecological ethics in both science and education.

Conceptual Diagram of Ecosufistic Values from *Matsnawi* (SMPIT Al Uswah Tuban)



The third principle, ecological balance, is clearly expressed in school practices. In *Matsnawi*, Rumi states: “Do not kill the birds in the garden, for the garden and the birds need each other” (Vol. VI, Lines 3924–3925).³⁵ This principle guides practical policies at the school, such as prohibiting tree cutting without permission and encouraging students to care for plants. A related hadith recorded in Bukhari and Muslim notes: “No Muslim plants a tree or sows a seed, and then a bird, person, or animal eats from it, except that it is a charity for him.” Thus, environmental preservation is seen as an act of piety.

³² Nicholson, *The Mathnawi of Jalaluddin Rumi*.

³³ Chittick, “Sufism and Environmental Responsibility.”

³⁴ Terjemah Kemenag, *Terjemah Al Qur'an*.

³⁵ Nicholson, *The Mathnawi of Jalaluddin Rumi*.

This is supported by structured environmental duties. The school has implemented a reflection-based cleaning rotation where students are asked to write a sentence of wisdom after performing environmental tasks. These are displayed on the “Wisdom of Nature” board in each classroom, demonstrating the internalization of ecological *zuhd* (asceticism).

Another verse “Do not hurt the ant; it may be the Prophet Khidr in disguise” (Vol. II, Line 1267) is used as a foundation for instilling compassion toward small creatures. Even simple actions, such as gently moving ants from desks, are framed as spiritual acts. This resonates with Foltz’s (2003) view that protecting small beings reflects Qur’anic ecological ethics.

These findings highlight the significance of narrative and symbolic pedagogies. Rather than conveying values dogmatically, teachers employ storytelling, reflection, and discussion to cultivate spiritual and ecological awareness. This aligns with Gadamer’s (1989) educational hermeneutics, which posits that true understanding emerges from a fusion of horizons between the text and the reader’s experience.³⁶

One method used is “verse literacy,” where a line from *Matsnawi* is read each morning and students are asked to interpret its meaning from their own perspective. This practice empowers students as co-constructors of meaning and aligns with Vygotsky’s (1978) social constructivist approach, which emphasizes learners’ active role in building understanding through cultural and dialogical interaction.³⁷

Taken together, these findings demonstrate that the integration of ecosufistic values into Islamic character education is not only feasible but urgently needed in light of current moral and ecological crises. This study’s primary contribution lies in expanding the epistemological horizon of Islamic education by reinterpreting classical Sufi texts through a reflective ecological lens.

These practices show that Sufi spirituality fosters loving relationships with the environment not out of fear or obligation, but out of divine love. This

³⁶ H.-G. Gadamer, ed., *Truth and Method*, 2nd ed. (New York, NY: Continuum, 1989).

³⁷ L S Vygotsky, *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, n.d.).

supports Mahmoudi and Aziz's (2022) argument that sufistic education cultivates ecological actions rooted in inner spiritual depth.³⁸

Moreover, teacher modeling plays a crucial role in embedding these values. A teacher who litters undermines the message, while one who waters plants without being asked embodies ecological *akhlaq* in action. Such modeling reinforces that values are best taught by being lived.

This discussion also broadens the notion that classical Islamic texts like *Matsnawi* are not only relevant to personal spirituality but can serve as foundational pedagogical texts for environmental ethics. Nasr (2013) reminds us that "the modern ecological crisis is a spiritual crisis, and the solution lies in the recovery of a sacred cosmology."³⁹

Methodologically, this study affirms that hermeneutic interpretation can effectively bridge classical texts and contemporary educational realities. By positioning students as interpretive agents and teachers as spiritual facilitators, sufistic values are not merely taught they are embodied and experienced.

Ultimately, *Matsnawi* emerges not only as a spiritual or literary work but as a flexible, relevant, and context-sensitive pedagogical text that can inform multidimensional Islamic character education. The implications go beyond school practices they call for a curricular shift toward ecosufistic Islamic education that promotes transcendence, love for creation, and spiritual ecological sustainability.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the principles of ecosufism, as derived from Jalaluddin Rumi's *Matsnawi*, can be contextually transformed into the practice of character education within Islamic schools. Through a qualitative interpretive approach, the research identified that SMPIT Al Uswah Tuban has implemented sufistic-ecological values through spiritual habituation

³⁸ Mahmoudi and Aziz, "Environmental Ethics in Sufi Traditions: Reconsidering the Concept of Human–Nature Relationship."

³⁹ Al Daghistani, "Seyyed Hossein Nasr: »Man and Nature. The Spiritual Crisis in Modern Man.«"

activities, environmental engagement, and reflective learning processes. The three core principles of ecosufism—namely, harmony between humans and nature, ontological unity of all creation, and ecological balance are enacted through teacher exemplarity, contemplative learning design, and the internalization of values in daily school routines.

This value transformation does not occur through formal instruction alone but is embedded within the school's culture and the interpretive interactions between students, educators, and their environment. This aligns with the principles of educational hermeneutics, which view learning as a dynamic process of meaning-making. Moreover, the integration of ecosufistic principles into character education provides a deeper spiritual foundation than secular moral approaches or technocratic environmental education. Rumi, through *Matsnawi*, offers a framework that touches the spiritual, affective, and symbolic dimensions of ecological awareness.

Thus, this study not only affirms the continuing relevance of classical Sufism in contemporary educational contexts but also broadens the discourse of ecopedagogy by introducing a transcendental dimension as the ethical and epistemological foundation of Islamic ecological thought. The practices observed at SMPIT Al Usrah Tuban may serve as an alternative model for developing Islamic character education curricula that are spiritually grounded, ecologically responsive, and deeply rooted in Islamic intellectual heritage.

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